

Northeast Archaeology Research Center, Inc.

Maureen McGlone
Ransom Consulting, Inc.
400 Commercial Street
Suite 404
Portland, Maine 04101

October 4, 2018

RE: Nordic Aquafarms Development Project Archaeological Phase I Survey, MHPC # 0737-18

Dear Maureen:

We write to inform you of the completion of the archaeological phase I survey of the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project, MHPC #0737-18, conducted by the Northeast Archaeology Research Center, Inc (NE ARC) on behalf of Ransom Consulting Engineers, Inc. and their client Nordic Aquafarms, Inc. The project involves development of an aquaculture facility on an approximately 45-acre parcel located at 285 Northport Avenue in Belfast, Waldo County, Maine (Figure 1). The project area is located primarily to the west of Route 1, on the north side of the Town of Belfast Reservoir Number One, which is formed by the impoundment of the Little River (Figure 2). The Little River is a short river which flows eastward from its source in Belmont, a total length of approximately 8.0 mi (12.9 km) to Belfast Bay. A limited area on the east side of Route 1 where discharge and intake lines from the facility proper to the ocean are proposed is also included in the project.

The goal of the archaeological phase I survey was to determine if archaeological sites of potential significance are located within the area of potential effect (APE) of the proposed project or to determine if such site area unlikely to be present. Significant archaeological sites are those that meet eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The area is generally considered archaeologically sensitive based on its setting on landforms adjacent to the Little River at its outlet into Belfast Bay and the broader Penobscot Bay. Specifically, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) in their review of the project indicates that an archaeological site, as identified by a local collector, may be present in the project in the former agricultural field(s) that comprise a portion of the project area (see MHPC review letter, 9/6/2018). Little detailed information pertaining to the site is available.

382 Fairbanks Rd / Farmington Maine 04938 / 207-860-4032 / 207-860-4031 fax
nearchaeology.com

NE ARC conducted the phase I survey between September 19 and 26, 2016. As detailed below the study included the excavation of 196 0.5 m x 0.5 m test pits along 27 sampling transects. No archaeological site(s) were identified, and it is considered unlikely that the project as planned will have an adverse effect on significant, NRHP eligible or other archaeological deposits; therefore, no additional archaeological work is recommended prior to commencement of the project.

Project Area Description and Archaeological Phase I Survey

The majority of the roughly 45-acre project area is located to the west of U.S Route 1 and south of Perkins Road and is comprised of relatively high landforms above the Little River, which to the south is dammed, forming the Town of Belfast Water Reservoir Number 1 (Figure 2). The western margin of the area drops steeply to a non-inundated section of the river. The overall area is characterized by a series of four deeply incised southerly flowing drainages and is predominately wooded with areas recently and heavily logged (Figure 3). The northeast most area is an open, agricultural field (Figure 4). Archaeological testing within in this broad portion of the project included 147 test pits along 19 sampling transects (T1 to T14 and T23-T27). Test pits were placed at 10 m intervals, with some limited tighter 5.0 m interval testing in select locations (Figure 2). Test pits generally reached approximately 40 to 50 cm below ground surface with stratigraphy including an approximately 25 cm “Ap” horizon/plowzone directly overlying a basal “C” horizon within which all testing was terminated. Soils are fine sand and silt which increase in compactness with depth. Some developed soil was noted, and some test pits indicate disturbance related to the recent logging. Field observations match the soil classification for the area as predominately Boothbay silt loam which forms on marine terraces from a parent material of glacio-lacustrine and/or fine silty marine deposits (USDA 2018). No artifacts were recovered.

The eastern portion of the project (on the west side of Route 1) contains a church and the Water District facility, with currently undeveloped sections including two relatively high, fairly level elevated landforms separated by an unnamed drainage and overlooking Belfast Bay to the east (Figure 2). Testing in this location included 39 test pits along six sampling transects (T16 to T21) with test pits placed at 5.0 and/or 10 m sampling intervals (Figure 2). Stratigraphy is similar to that described above. No artifacts were recovered from this area.

The proposed discharge/intake lines as planned, extend from the east side of Route 1, approximately 80 m along a narrow linear landform to the shoreline, which is represented by a stone sea wall at this location (Figures 2, 5 and 6). Testing in this area included 10 test pits along a single sampling transect (T15) with pits placed at 5.0 m intervals along the length of the landform and route of the line.

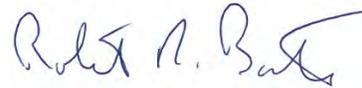
Stratigraphy indicates that the landform is disturbed or partially artificial with stratigraphy including an overburden deposits of sand/gravel directly measuring 15 to 35 cm in thickness overlying the natural “C” horizon of compact silt clay. Survey work in this area also included careful examination of the shoreline. No artifacts, shell middens or other evidence of Native American habitation was identified.

Conclusions and Recommendations

NE ARC has completed an archaeological phase I survey of the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project, MHPC #0737-18,) on behalf of Ransom Consulting Engineers, Inc. and their client Nordic Aquafarms, Inc. No Native American or significant historic period archaeological sites were newly identified, nor was there any evidence of the site reported by a local collector within the project area. Given these negative results, in light of the relative intensity of archaeological coverage, it is unlikely that significant NRHP eligible archaeological site(s) are present or will be adversely affected by construction of the project. Therefore, no additional archaeological work is recommended prior to commencement of the project.

Please call if you have any questions or comments and thank you for the opportunity to conduct this study.

Sincerely



Robert N. Bartone, M.A.
Director, NE ARC

References

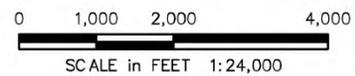
USDA
2018 Web Soil Survey. Electronic Source, <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>. Accessed 2018.



TAKEN FROM U.S.G.S. 7.5 MINUTE BELFAST AND SEASPORT, MAINE-1976 (REVISED 1979).

CONTOUR INTERVAL IS 20 FEET

SITE COORDINATES: LATITUDE 44° 23'43.8"N
LONGITUDE 68° 59'17.0"W



RANSOM Consulting Engineers and Scientists

SITE LOCATION MAP

PREPARED FOR:

NORDIC AQUAFARMS, INC.
159 HIGH STREET
PO BOX 283
BELFAST, MAINE

SITE:

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL LAND-BASED
AQUACULTURE FACILITY
285 NORTHPORT AVENUE
BELFAST, MAINE

PROJECT: 171.05027.008

FIGURE: 1

PM File: NAF-FT_SLM.mxd

Figure 1. Topographic map showing the location and approximate boundaries of the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine.



Figure 2. Aerial photograph with 2ft contours showing the approximate boundaries of the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine. Note locations of archaeological phase I sampling transects.



Figure 3. General view south of crew excavating along archaeological phase I sampling Transect T6 within the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine. Note recent logging activity.



Figure 4. General view west of crew excavating along archaeological phase I sampling Transect T1 within the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine.



Figure 5. General view northwest of crew excavating along archaeological phase I sampling transect T15 in the area of the proposed discharge and intake lines within the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine.



Figure 6. General view northeast of shoreline in the vicinity of the discharge and intake lines within the proposed Nordic Aquafarms Development Project (MHPC# 0737-18), Belfast, Waldo County, Maine. Note lines will meet shoreline at the break in the seawall.