



March 9, 2022

Debra Kaczowski  
Land Use Planning Commission  
43 Lakeview Street  
PO Box 1107  
Greenville, ME 04441

## RE: DP 3639-F, REDEVELOPMENT OF BIG MOOSE SKI RESORT

Dear Ms. Kaczowski:

Big Lake Development LLC would like to provide the following update in response to the ongoing MDIFW review of the project. Based upon a previously submitted response by Big Lake Development LLC, MDIFW posed additional questions relative to the planned work and the methodology associated with the wildlife studies. Since their response was received, we have finalized these additional studies that provide more definitive information and will hopefully answer any remaining concerns.

**Northern Bog Lemming:** In response to MDIFW comments, no potential signs of Lemmings were identified within the area associated with the current LUPC Permit application. Potential signs of Lemming were identified at a nearby location that will be included in a future development application, however it was determined that it was improbable that they were associated with Northern Bog Lemmings. Please see the attached report relative to the methodologies that were employed in the survey and the results.

**Bicknell's Thrush:** Attached is a plan that provides more detail on the land proposed to be set aside for Bicknell's Thrush habitat. Within the potential habitat range, it has been proposed that an area slightly greater than ½ acre will require some disturbance to accommodate the upper terminal of the zipline. We have conservatively estimated this area as the installed cable will actually run above the canopy in this area. The upper terminal construction requires the installation of a substantial concrete foundation that will support the cable. Details of this proposed construction are included in the original LUPC permit application. The total area that will be set aside as protected habitat exceeds 127 acres, creating a ratio of approximately 223: 1, well in excess of the suggested 4:1 ratio. Additionally, the proposed habitat preservation area borders an additional 97+ acres that is part of the SD Warren parcel that is owned by the State of Maine and managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. The relationship of this contiguously protected habitat relative to the proposed disturbed area is shown on the attached plan.

Due to the duration of construction associated with the zipline foundations, it is difficult to fully avoid disturbances in the area prior to the return of the Bicknell's Thrush. Based upon typical winter snowpack, installation of the foundations could most likely not be completed prior to May 1. Delay of construction would most likely necessitate delay in opening of a full year as construction could most likely not be fully completed in a single season subsequent to July 31. To allow for appropriate curing time for concrete prior to application of live and dead loads, it would be difficult to complete construction before the onset of winter in the fall. Weather permitting, it would be our intention to start construction as early as possible in order to complete necessary clearing and install foundations

prior to May 1. The habitat area could then be avoided until later in the season (after July 31) to complete the installation.

However, if weather conditions would not allow for early clearing and installation, we would propose that we would work with Tetra Tech, consulting with MDIFW, to develop a plan that would limit disturbance and potentially avert nesting attempts within the proposed area of disturbance, but still allow for installation of the foundation subsequent to May 1. As the area of proposed disturbance is on the edge of the potential habitat and there is substantial adjacent habitat, it would be our intent to create a plan that would encourage nesting in other nearby habitat that would not be disturbed.

**Roaring Brook Mayfly/Northern Spring Salamander:** Attached is a report completed by Tetra Tech that details the wildlife studies in general with specific research relative to the presence of Northern Spring Salamander and methodologies used in the study. No evidence of their presence within the proposed areas of disturbance was identified and it was determined that their presence was unlikely. Their presence was identified in one area, located below the proposed areas of disturbance in the current LUPC Permit application.

An additional report, prepared by Lotic, details a similar process to determine the presence or absence of Roaring Brook Mayfly within the same study area. The report details the area, protocol and methodologies utilized. This study also indicates that Roaring Brook Mayflies do not appear to be present within the wider study area.

**Riparian Buffer Mitigation:** The proposed plan minimizes impacts within 100 feet of riparian assets and based upon the results of both the Northern Spring Salamander and Roaring Brook Mayfly studies, we understand that mitigation outside of the 100 foot buffer will not be required. We further understand that in absence of the presence of either species, that the MDIFW recommendation of 100% of the ILF formula be used to calculate compensation associated with disturbance within the 100 foot buffer area. The extent of this disturbance is limited to areas around a single bridge crossing and potentially some small areas on the relocated roadway associated with the new access roadway. Although there will be clearing within the 100 foot buffer on the western area, it can be very easily argued that this is an improvement environmentally, as a portion of the roadway (larger in area than the new impact) is being moved away from the existing stream and this area adjacent to the stream will be allowed to regrow in a natural state. An attached plan shows the maximum extent of the clearing associated with this bridge crossing and the road relocation associated with this application.

**Vernal Pools:** There are no vernal pools. The entire area associated with the LUPC Permit application was surveyed for potential vernal pools and none were identified.

**New Access Road:** The new access road was extensively analyzed to provide a second means of access to the core area of the resort (hotel and base lodge area) and minimize impacts. Currently the secondary access utilizes an existing parking lot. Based upon the anticipated demand for day skier parking, studies indicated that all three of the existing parking lots would be necessary to accommodate future use. Additionally and more importantly, the current roadway/parking area does not meet current road standards relative to turning radius that would provide a safe means of access/egress where the parking lot meets the existing roadway on the west end of the lots. In order to provide safe vehicular access, a roadway with a larger turning radius and better visibility was required. The new location also moves the roadway away from the existing stream. The new roadway alignment effectively creates a 100 foot buffer areas along this stream that does not currently exist. We understand that mitigation with the 100'

buffer is required, but as stated above, based upon the absence of Roaring Brook Mayfly and Northern Spring Salamander, that this mitigation would occur at a 1:1 ratio.

**Lagoon Expansion:** It has been determined that expansion of the existing lagoon is not practicable at this time and this portion of the project has been removed for consideration by LUPC under the current permit application.

**Proposed Park Areas:** In order to streamline approval at this time, construction of park areas have been removed from the current permit application. Any future parks will be included with residential neighborhood permit applications in the future.

We look forward to your review and response.

Please contact Matthew Dieterich (207) 817-5410, [matthew.dieterich@sewall.com](mailto:matthew.dieterich@sewall.com) if you have questions or require assistance.

Sincerely,

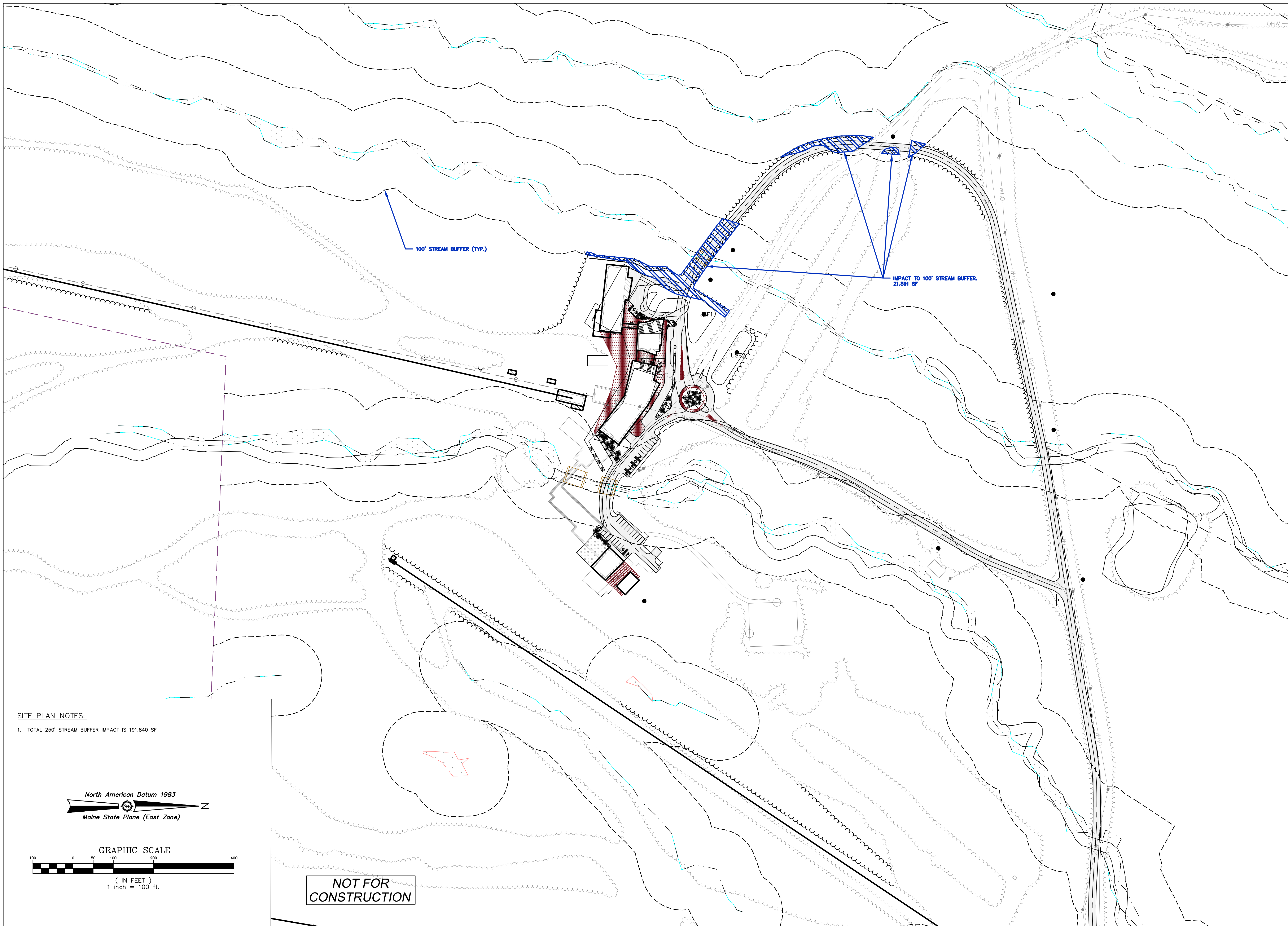
**JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY**



Matthew Dieterich  
Executive Vice President

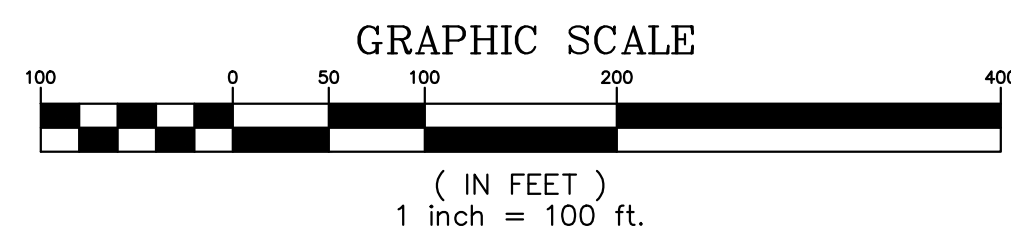
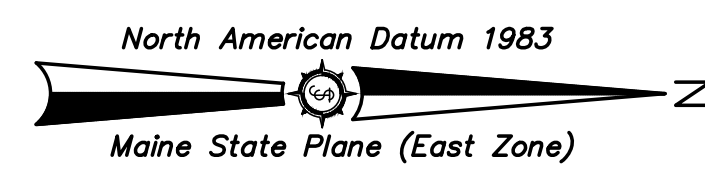






**SITE PLAN NOTES:**

1. TOTAL 250' STREAM BUFFER IMPACT IS 191,840 SF



**NOT FOR  
CONSTRUCTION**

Rev. #	Date	Description
1	04/26/2021	REVISED PER DEP STORMWATER COMMENTS
2		
3		
4		
5		
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8		
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10		

Designed By FAB/JAO	Drawn By FAB/JAO
Date 03/04/2022	Scale AS SHOWN
<b>BIG LAKE DEVELOPMENT, LLC</b> <b>BIG MOOSE RESORT</b> SKI RESORT RD. Project Location BIG MOOSE TOWNSHIP, MAINE Drawing Description <b>SITE PLAN - CHAIRLIFT</b>	
Approved	Checked

Project No. **85716E**

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Phase  
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**WE-2**