

Forward to: Marcia Spencer-Famous

Comments - Environmental Project Review Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	
Fisheries Division Comments - Region D	
Applicant's Name: TransCanada Maine Wind Development	
Project #: DP 4860	Regulatory Agency: LURC
Project Type: 15 wind turbines and associated road construction/transmission line connectors	Project Manager: Marcia Spencer-Famous
Comments Due Date: 2/26/10	Date Comments Sent: 2/23/10
Project Location	
Town: Chain of Ponds, Kibby Twps.	County: Franklin
Waterbody: Chain of Ponds, Gold Brook, Clear Stream, North Branch Dead River, Kibby Stream, and minor tributaries.	
Fisheries Biologist: Dave Boucher	

After review of the application and consideration of the proposal's probable effect on the environment, and on our agencies programs and responsibilities, we provide the following comments:

I. Resources Affected:

Chain of Ponds supports brook trout and landlocked sport fisheries that are of regional significance; the ponds' salmon population is sustained entirely by natural reproduction that occurs in the N. Branch Dead River and Horseshoe Stream. Clear Brook is tributary to Chain of Ponds and supports wild brook and slimy sculpins. Gold Brook is a tributary to the North Branch of Dead River and supports wild brook trout. Both streams provide temperature refuge for brook trout and landlocked salmon residing in the North Branch and Chain of Ponds. Kibby Stream, a major tributary to Spencer Stream, supports a robust wild brook trout population. Most of these waterbodies also provide habitat for a variety of native non-salmonid fishes that are common to the region.

II. Comments/Recommended Considerations or Conditions:

There are about 57 stream crossings associated with the turbine access roads and the collector line corridor. Of these, about 27 and 30 were classified by the applicant as perennial and intermittent, respectively. The potential for stream sedimentation is high because soils are moderately to highly erodible, and slopes are steep in most locations. Streams may also be negatively impacted (flow volume and timing, temperatures) if vegetated buffers are inadequate and if existing hydrological features are disturbed. In addition, free passage of fish and other organisms through road culverts could be compromised.

Our recommendations to minimize negative impacts to stream resources include the following:

- 100-foot vegetated buffers should be maintained along each side of all perennial streams that cross the transmission line corridors, and vegetation within the buffers should be allowed to grow to 10-15 feet, or higher where pole structures are placed within the buffer and wire heights are greater. (Both recommendations have been incorporated into the applicant's construction and maintenance plans).
- No special treatment of the 30± non-jurisdictional intermittent streams is proposed by the applicant. We urge LURC to encourage the applicant to at least minimize the disturbance of vegetation adjacent to

these small streams. In addition, channelization (road ditching in particular) of intermittent streams should be minimized or eliminated where feasible.

- We will rely on the State's Soils Scientist for a thorough review of the applicant's stormwater management plan's effectiveness for maintaining water flows off the mountain that remain as natural as possible. This would include a careful review of TransCanada's plans for winter construction in certain areas to assure underlying hydrology is properly identified and protected.
- New culverts should be sized at least 1.2x the width of the stream crossing.
- Culverts should be embedded to facilitate passage of fish and other aquatic organisms, where downstream and upstream slopes don't naturally impede their free passage.
- The instream work window should be narrowed to July 15-September 1 to better reflect the sub-alpine conditions and earlier staging and spawning of brook trout.

[x] Check if requesting copy of draft findings of fact and order.