



## **Section 9**

### **Unusual Natural Areas**



## Section 9. Unusual Natural Areas

### 9.1 State Standards

Pursuant to the State's Site Law, applicants must:

*Submit information demonstrating that the proposed development will not adversely affect an unusual natural area.*

### 9.2 Unusual Natural Areas Assessment

Information was requested from the Maine Natural Areas Program ("MNAP") regarding potential impact to any unusual natural areas in the project area (Exhibit 9-1).

Based on the MNAP's response to the Project's inquiry, there are no rare botanical features documented within the Project area (Exhibit 9-2).



Exhibit 9-1  
MNAP Inquiry Letter



September 27, 2021

Lisa St. Hilaire  
Information Manager  
Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP)  
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
177 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333  
Sent via email: maine.nap@maine.gov

**Subject: Information Request for Known, Historic and/or Potential Rare or Unique Botanical Resources**

Dear Ms. St. Hilaire:

I am writing to request information from the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) on any known, historic and/or potential rare or unique botanical resources within or nearby the area shown on the attached map. We have included a shapefile of the review area with this correspondence to support your database search. This information will aid in our initial planning of proposed wind development at this location.

If shapefiles of the requested data are available please include this with your response. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to me or Katelin Nickerson ([katelin@flycatcherllc.com](mailto:katelin@flycatcherllc.com) or 207-233-6175). We understand that the MNAP charges a per hour fee when conducting project reviews. Please submit your invoice for the review along with the response via email and Flycatcher will remit payment. Thank you very much for your assistance with this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessie Hutchinson".

Jessie Hutchinson

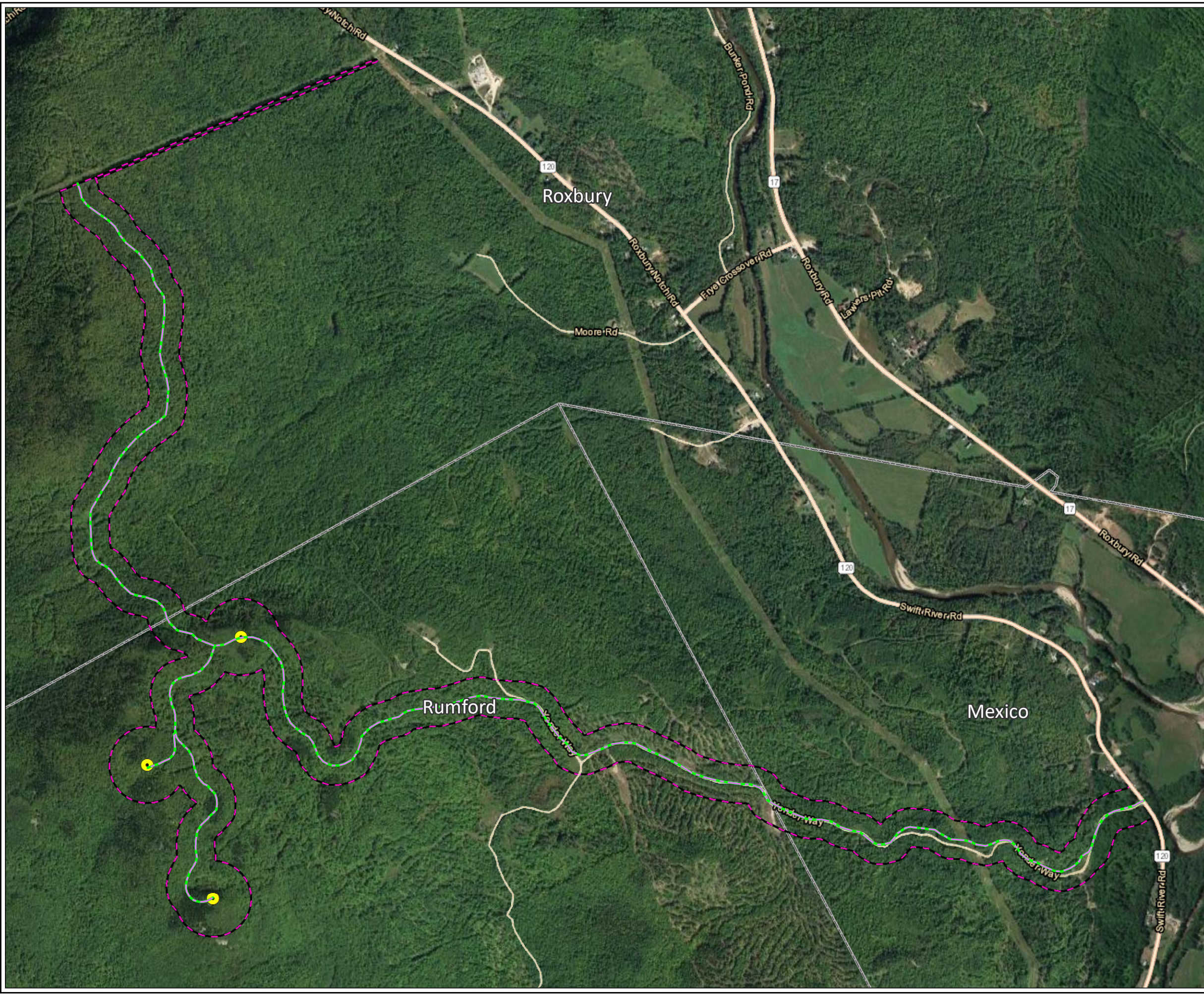
Flycatcher LLC  
Lower Falls Landing  
106 Lafayette St.  
Yarmouth, ME 04096

Att (1)





Cc: Katelin Nickerson ([katelin@flycatcherllc.com](mailto:katelin@flycatcherllc.com))

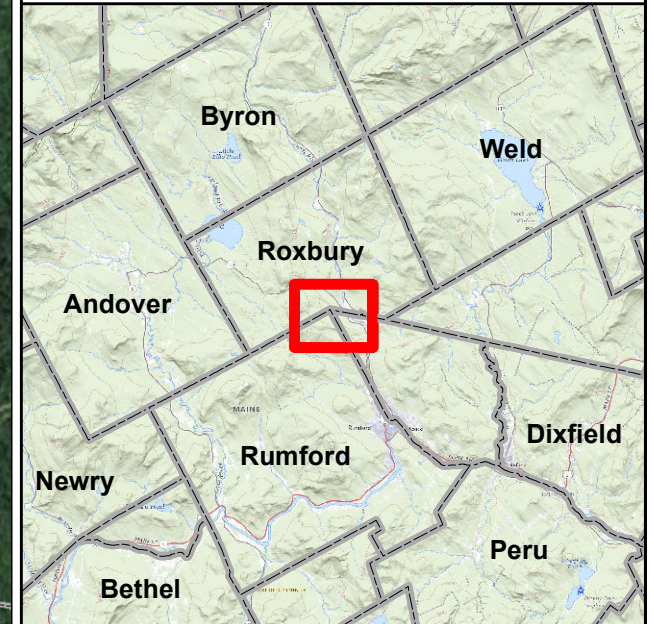
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Maine West FIPS 1802 Feet (Foot US)  
Map Rotation: 0

Plot Date: 9/12/2021 19:01:49 PM by JAKEN -- LAYOUT: ANSIB(11"x17")  
Path: D:\flycatcher\Projects\Solaya\_TwinWind\_WetProposal\_11x17L.mxd



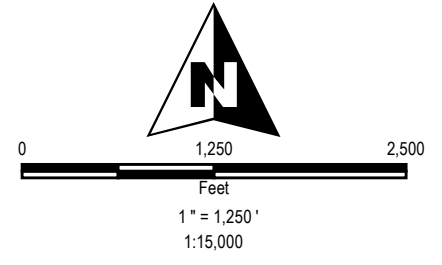
**LEGEND**

-  PROPOSED WIND TURBINE
-  PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD
-  PROPOSED SURVEY AREA (~342 ACRES)
-  TOWN BOUNDARY



**NOTES:**

- 1 BASEMAP IMAGERY FROM ESRI/NAIP, "WORLD IMAGERY" WEB BASEMAP SERVICE LAYER, 2021.
- 2 PROPOSED SURVEY AREAS BASED ON 250' BUFFER FROM ROAD CENTERLINE AND 500' BUFFER FROM TURBINE LOCATIONS.





PROJECT:		<b>SOLAYA TWIN WIND PROJECT OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE</b>	
TITLE:		<b>PROPOSED NATURAL RESOURCES SURVEY AREA</b>	
DRAWN BY:	D. KENWORTHY	PROJ NO.:	PP
CHECKED BY:	D. BRENNEMAN	<b>EXHIBIT A</b>	
MONTH:	AUGUST		
YEAR:	2021		
			
FILE NO:		Solaya_TwinWind_WetProposal_11x17L.mxd	



Exhibit 9-2  
MNAP Response



**STATE OF MAINE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY**

177 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

**JANET T. MILLS**  
GOVERNOR

**AMANDA E. BEAL**  
COMMISSIONER

September 29, 2021

Jessie Hutchinson  
Flycatcher LLC  
106 Lafayette Street, Suite 1C  
Yarmouth, ME 04096

Via email: [jessie@flycatcherllc.com](mailto:jessie@flycatcherllc.com)

Re: Rare and exemplary botanical features in proximity to: Solaya Twin Wind Project, Roxbury, Rumford, and Mexico, Oxford County, Maine

Dear Ms. Hutchinson:

I have searched the Maine Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Data System files in response to your request received September 27, 2021 for information on the presence of rare or unique botanical features documented from the vicinity of the project in Roxbury, Rumford, and Mexico, Oxford County, Maine. Rare and unique botanical features include the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant species and unique or exemplary natural communities. Our review involves examining maps, manual and computerized records, other sources of information such as scientific articles or published references, and the personal knowledge of staff or cooperating experts.

Our official response covers only botanical features. For authoritative information and official response for zoological features you must make a similar request to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 284 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333.

According to the information currently in our Biological and Conservation Data System files, there are no rare botanical features documented specifically within the project area. This lack of data may indicate minimal survey efforts rather than confirm the absence of rare botanical features. You may want to have the site inventoried by a qualified field biologist to ensure that no undocumented rare features are inadvertently harmed.

If a field survey of the project area is conducted, please refer to the enclosed supplemental information regarding rare and exemplary botanical features documented to occur in the vicinity of the project site. The list may include information on features that have been known to occur historically in the area as well as recently field-verified information. While historic records have not been documented in several years, they may persist in the area if suitable habitat exists. The enclosed list identifies features with potential to occur in the area, and it should be considered if you choose to conduct field surveys.

This finding is available and appropriate for preparation and review of environmental assessments, but it is not a substitute for on-site surveys. Comprehensive field surveys do not exist for all natural areas in Maine, and in the absence of a specific field investigation, the Maine Natural Areas Program cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of unusual natural features at this site.

**MOLLY DOCHERTY, DIRECTOR**  
MAINE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM  
BLOSSOM LANE, DEERING BUILDING



PHONE: (207) 287-804490  
WWW.MAINE.GOV/DACF/MNAP

The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) is continuously working to achieve a more comprehensive database of exemplary natural features in Maine. We would appreciate the contribution of any information obtained should you decide to do field work. MNAP welcomes coordination with individuals or organizations proposing environmental alteration or conducting environmental assessments. If, however, data provided by MNAP are to be published in any form, the Program should be informed at the outset and credited as the source.

The Maine Natural Areas Program has instituted a fee structure of \$75.00 an hour to recover the actual cost of processing your request for information. You will receive an invoice for \$150.00 for two hours of our services.

Thank you for using MNAP in the environmental review process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions about the Natural Areas Program or about rare or unique botanical features on this site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kristen Puryear".

Kristen Puryear | Ecologist | Maine Natural Areas Program  
207-287-8043 | [kristen.puryear@maine.gov](mailto:kristen.puryear@maine.gov)



## Rare and Exemplary Botanical Features within 4 miles of Project: Solaya Twin Wind Project, Roxbury, RUmford, and Mexico, Oxford County, Maine

Common Name	State Status	State Rank	Global Rank	Date Last Observed	Occurrence Number	Habitat
Canada Mountain-ricegrass						
	SC	S2	G4G5	1959-09-01	6	Dry barrens (partly forested, upland)
	SC	S2	G4G5	1924-06-27	7	Dry barrens (partly forested, upland)
Fragrant Wood Fern						
	SC	S3	G5	1885-07	25	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland),Alpine or subalpine (non-forested, upland)
Mid-elevation Bald						
	<null>	S3	G2G3	2019-07-01	10	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland),Alpine or subalpine (non-forested, upland)
Mountain Sandwort						
	SC	S3	G5	2019-07-01	2	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland),Alpine or subalpine (non-forested, upland)
Red Pine Woodland						
	<null>	S3	G3G5	2019-07-01	12	Dry barrens (partly forested, upland)
Sandbar Willow						
	E	S1	G5	2003-09-17	3	Non-tidal rivershore (non-forested, seasonally wet)
Showy Orchis						
	E	S1	G5	1974-07-21	9	Hardwood to mixed forest (forest, upland)
Silverling						
	T	S1	G4	2019-07-01	3	Alpine or subalpine (non-forested, upland),Non-tidal rivershore (non-forested, seasonally wet)
Smooth Sandwort						
	SC	S3	G4	1926	8	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland)

## Conservation Status Ranks

**State and Global Ranks:** This ranking system facilitates a quick assessment of a species' or habitat type's rarity and is the primary tool used to develop conservation, protection, and restoration priorities for individual species and natural habitat types. Each species or habitat is assigned both a state (S) and global (G) rank on a scale of 1 to 5. Factors such as range extent, the number of occurrences, intensity of threats, etc., contribute to the assignment of state and global ranks. The definitions for state and global ranks are comparable but applied at different geographic scales; something that is state imperiled may be globally secure.

The information supporting these ranks is developed and maintained by the Maine Natural Areas Program (state ranks) and NatureServe (global ranks).

Rank	Definition
<b>S1</b> <b>G1</b>	<b>Critically Imperiled</b> – At very high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, very steep declines, very severe threats, or other factors.
<b>S2</b> <b>G2</b>	<b>Imperiled</b> – At high risk of extinction or elimination due to restricted range, few populations or occurrences, steep declines, severe threats, or other factors.
<b>S3</b> <b>G3</b>	<b>Vulnerable</b> – At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a fairly restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, threats, or other factors.
<b>S4</b> <b>G4</b>	<b>Apparently Secure</b> – At fairly low risk of extinction or elimination due to an extensive range and/or many populations or occurrences, but with possible cause for some concern as a result of local recent declines, threats, or other factors.
<b>S5</b> <b>G5</b>	<b>Secure</b> – At very low risk of extinction or elimination due to a very extensive range, abundant populations or occurrences, and little to no concern from declines or threats.
<b>SX</b> <b>GX</b>	<b>Presumed Extinct</b> – Not located despite intensive searches and virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
<b>SH</b> <b>GH</b>	<b>Possibly Extinct</b> – Known from only historical occurrences but still some hope of rediscovery.
<b>S#S#</b> <b>G#G#</b>	<b>Range Rank</b> – A numeric range rank (e.g., S2S3 or S1S3) is used to indicate any range of uncertainty about the status of the species or ecosystem.
<b>SU</b> <b>GU</b>	<b>Unrankable</b> – Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.
<b>GNR</b> <b>SNR</b>	<b>Unranked</b> – Global or subnational conservation status not yet assessed.
<b>SNA</b> <b>GNA</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b> – A conservation status rank is not applicable because the species or ecosystem is not a suitable target for conservation activities (e.g., non-native species or ecosystems).
<b>Qualifier</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>S#?</b> <b>G#?</b>	<b>Inexact Numeric Rank</b> – Denotes inexact numeric rank.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Questionable taxonomy that may reduce conservation priority</b> – Distinctiveness of this entity as a taxon or ecosystem type at the current level is questionable. The “Q” modifier is only used at a global level.
<b>T#</b>	<b>Intraspecific Taxon (trinomial)</b> – The status of intraspecific taxa (subspecies or varieties) are indicated by a "T-rank" following the species' global rank.

**State Status:** Endangered and Threatened are legal status designations authorized by statute. Please refer to MRSA Title 12, §544 and §544-B.

Status	Definition
<b>E</b>	<b>Endangered</b> – Any native plant species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the State or Federally listed as Endangered.
<b>T</b>	<b>Threatened</b> – Any native plant species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range in the State or Federally listed as Threatened.
<b>SC</b>	<b>Special Concern</b> – A native plant species that is rare in the State, but not rare enough to be considered Threatened or Endangered.
<b>PE</b>	<b>Potentially Extirpated</b> – A native plant species that has not been documented in the State in over 20 years, or loss of the last known occurrence.

**Element Occurrence (EO) Ranks:** Quality assessments that designate viability of a population or integrity of habitat. These ranks are based on size, condition, and landscape context. Range ranks (e.g., AB, BC) and uncertainty ranks (e.g., B?) are allowed. The Maine Natural Areas Program tracks all occurrences of rare plants and natural communities/ecosystems (S1-S3) as well as exemplary common natural community types (S4-S5 with EO ranks A/B).

Rank	Definition
<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b> – Excellent estimated viability/ecological integrity.
<b>B</b>	<b>Good</b> – Good estimated viability/ecological integrity.
<b>C</b>	<b>Fair</b> – Fair estimated viability/ecological integrity.
<b>D</b>	<b>Poor</b> – Poor estimated viability/ecological integrity.
<b>E</b>	<b>Extant</b> – Verified extant, but viability/ecological integrity not assessed.
<b>H</b>	<b>Historical</b> – Lack of field information within past 20 years verifying continued existence of the occurrence, but not enough to document extirpation.
<b>X</b>	<b>Extirpated</b> – Documented loss of population/destruction of habitat.
<b>U</b>	<b>Unrankable</b> – Occurrence unable to be ranked due to lack of sufficient information (e.g., possible mistaken identification).
<b>NR</b>	<b>Not Ranked</b> – An occurrence rank has not been assigned.

Visit the Maine Natural Areas Program website for more information  
<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap>

