



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Forestry Services

Mail Code 501-04

ONLM -Natural Heritage Program

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Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

January 9, 2014

Theresa A. Albanese
Gannett Fleming, Inc.
2189 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 17
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Re: Route 35 Sheeting Project/Dune Restoration Project

Dear Ms. Albanese:

Thank you for your data request regarding rare species information for the above referenced project site in Brick Township and Mantoloking Borough, Ocean County.

Searches of the Natural Heritage Database and the Landscape Project (Version 3.1) are based on a representation of the boundaries of your project site in our Geographic Information System (GIS). We make every effort to accurately transfer your project bounds from the topographic map(s) submitted with the Request for Data into our Geographic Information System. We do not typically verify that your project bounds are accurate, or check them against other sources.

We have checked the Landscape Project habitat mapping and the Biotics Database for occurrences of any rare wildlife species or wildlife habitat on the referenced site. The Natural Heritage Database was searched for occurrences of rare plant species or ecological communities that may be on the project site. Please refer to Table 1 (attached) to determine if any rare plant species, ecological communities, or rare wildlife species or wildlife habitat are documented on site. A detailed report is provided for each category coded as 'Yes' in Table 1.

We have also checked the Landscape Project habitat mapping and Biotics Database for occurrences of rare wildlife species or wildlife habitat in the immediate vicinity (within ¼ mile) of the referenced site. Additionally, the Natural Heritage Database was checked for occurrences of rare plant species or ecological communities within ¼ mile of the site. Please refer to Table 2 (attached) to determine if any rare plant species, ecological communities, or rare wildlife species or wildlife habitat are documented within the immediate vicinity of the site. Detailed reports are provided for all categories coded as 'Yes' in Table 2. These reports may include species that have also been documented on the project site.

The Natural Heritage Program reviews its data periodically to identify priority sites for natural diversity in the State. Included as priority sites are some of the State's best habitats for rare and endangered species and ecological communities. Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 (attached) to determine if any priority sites are located on or in the vicinity of the site.

A list of rare plant species and ecological communities that have been documented from Ocean County can be downloaded from <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/countylist.html>. If suitable habitat is present at the project site, the species in that list have potential to be present.

Status and rank codes used in the tables and lists are defined in EXPLANATION OF CODES USED IN NATURAL HERITAGE REPORTS, which can be downloaded from http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/nhpcodes_2010.pdf.

If you have questions concerning the wildlife records or wildlife species mentioned in this response, we recommend that you visit the interactive NJ-GeoWeb website at the following URL, <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/geoweb splash.htm> or contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Endangered and Nongame Species Program at (609) 292-9400.

PLEASE SEE 'CAUTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS ON NHP DATA', which can be downloaded from <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/newcaution2008.pdf>.

Thank you for consulting the Natural Heritage Program. The attached invoice details the payment due for processing this data request. Feel free to contact us again regarding any future data requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Cartica', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert J. Cartica
Administrator

c: NHP File No. 14-4007411-4649

Table 1: On Site Data Request Search Results (7 Possible Reports)

Rare Plants/Ecological Communities Possibly On Site:	Yes
Rare Plants/Ecological Communities On Site/Immediate Vicinity:	Yes
Natural Heritage Priority Sites On Site:	Yes
Landscape 3.1 Species Based Patches On Site:	Yes
Landscape 3.1 Vernal Pool Habitat On Site:	No
Landscape 3.1 Stream/Mussel Habitat On Site:	No
Other Animals Tracked by ENSP On Site:	No

**On or In the Immediate Vicinity of the
Project Site Based on Search of the
Natural Heritage Database: Rare Plant Species and
Ecological Communities Currently Recorded in the New
Jersey Natural Heritage Database**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Protection	State Protection	Regional Status	Grank	Srank	Identified	Last Observed	Location
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Nonvascular Plants

Sphagnum perichaetiale	Sphagnum			HL	G5	S2	Y - Yes	1987-08-06	1987: Mantoloking, Barnegat Bay.
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Total number of records: 1

<p>Rare Wildlife Species or Wildlife Habitat on the Project Site Based on Search of Landscape Project 3.1 Species Based Patches</p>
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Class	Common Name	Scientific Name	Feature Type	Rank	Federal Protection	State Protection	Grank	Srank
<i>Aves</i>								
	Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Common Tern	Sterna hirundo	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Least Tern	Sternula antillarum	Foraging	4	NA	State Endangered	G4	S1B,S1N
	Least Tern	Sternula antillarum	Nesting Colony	4	NA	State Endangered	G4	S1B,S1N
	Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	Foraging	3	NA	State Threatened	G5	S2B
	Piping Plover	Charadrius melodus	Nesting Area	5	Federally Listed Threatened	State Endangered	G3	S1B,S1N
<i>Mammalia</i>								
	Fin Whale	Balaenoptera physalus	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G3G4	S1
	Humpback Whale	Megaptera novaeangliae	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G4	S1
	North Atlantic Right Whale	Eubalaena glacialis	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G1	S1
<i>Reptilia</i>								

Class	Common Name	Scientific Name	Feature Type	Rank	Federal Protection	State Protection	Grank	Srank
	Atlantic Leatherback	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Occupied Habitat	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G2	S1
	Atlantic Loggerhead	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Occupied Habitat	5	Federally Listed Threatened	State Endangered	G3	S1

Table 2: Vicinity Data Request Search Results (6 possible reports)

Rare Plants/Ecological Communities within the Vicinity:	Yes
Natural Heritage Priority Sites within the Vicinity:	Yes
Landscape 3.1 Species Based Patches within the Vicinity:	Yes
Landscape 3.1 Vernal Pool Habitat within the Vicinity:	No
Landscape 3.1 Stream/Mussel Habitat within the Vicinity:	No
Other Animals Tracked by ENSP within the Vicinity:	No

Immediate Vicinity of the Project Site
Based on Search of Natural Heritage Database
Rare Plant Species and Ecological Communities Currently Recorded in
the New Jersey Natural Heritage Database

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Protection	State Protection	Regional Status	Grank	Srank	Identified	Last Observed	Location
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Nonvascular Plants

Sphagnum perichaetiale	Sphagnum			HL	G5	S2	Y - Yes	1987-08-06	1987: Mantoloking, Barnegat Bay.
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Total number of records: 1

**Rare Wildlife Species or Wildlife Habitat Within the
Immediate Vicinity of the Project Site Based on Search of
Landscape Project 3.1 Species Based Patches**

Class	Common Name	Scientific Name	Feature Type	Rank	Federal Protection	State Protection	Grank	Srank
<i>Aves</i>								
	Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Foraging	4	NA	State Endangered	G5	S1B,S2N
	Black-crowned Night-heron	Nycticorax nycticorax	Foraging	3	NA	State Threatened	G5	S2B,S3N
	Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Common Tern	Sterna hirundo	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Glossy Ibis	Plegadis falcinellus	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Least Tern	Sternula antillarum	Foraging	4	NA	State Endangered	G4	S1B,S1N
	Little Blue Heron	Egretta caerulea	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S3N
	Northern Harrier	Circus cyaneus	Breeding Sighting	4	NA	State Endangered	G5	S1B,S3N
	Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	Foraging	3	NA	State Threatened	G5	S2B
	Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	Nest	3	NA	State Threatened	G5	S2B
	Piping Plover	Charadrius melodus	Nesting Area	5	Federally Listed Threatened	State Endangered	G3	S1B,S1N
	Snowy Egret	Egretta thula	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S4N
	Tricolored Heron	Egretta tricolor	Foraging	2	NA	Special Concern	G5	S3B,S3N

Mammalia

Class	Common Name	Scientific Name	Feature Type	Rank	Federal Protection	State Protection	Grank	Srank
	Fin Whale	Balaenoptera physalus	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G3G4	S1
	Humpback Whale	Megaptera novaeangliae	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G4	S1
	North Atlantic Right Whale	Eubalaena glacialis	Live Individual Sighting	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G1	S1
Reptilia								
	Atlantic Leatherback	Dermochelys coriacea	Occupied Habitat	5	Federally Listed Endangered	State Endangered	G2	S1
	Atlantic Loggerhead	Caretta caretta	Occupied Habitat	5	Federally Listed Threatened	State Endangered	G3	S1

Craig Shirk

From: Cartica, Bob
Sent: Wednesday, March 05, 2014 12:25 PM
To: 'Theresa Albanese'
Cc: Kristen Maines; Williams, Elena
Subject: RE: Question regarding Beach Amaranth
Attachments: Albanese Report Revised.pdf

Categories: NJDEP

Theresa,

In response to your inquiry, we conducted an extensive review of our records as well as the information we provided in our original January 9, 2014 review letter and attachments. Here is a summary of our findings and responses to questions posed in your February 26, 2014 email:

Project: Ocean Grove Boardwalk, Neptune
Applicant: Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association

Federal Species: I recommend that you contact the US Fish & Wildlife Service, New Jersey Field Office, for information on occurrences of *Amaranthus pumilus* and other federal species relevant to this project area.

NJ Species: Information in the Natural Heritage Database indicates that there is a record for an historic (last observed 1902) occurrence of *Honckenya peploides* var. *robusta* (state endangered) documented from Asbury Park, New Jersey. The January 9, 2014 Heritage Database report lists this occurrence in the immediate vicinity, but not on, the Ocean Grove Boardwalk site. *Honckenya peploides* var. *robusta* is found on ocean beach and sand dune habitats. Although the Heritage Program has conducted recent and repeated surveys for this species in this area, no occurrences have been found. It is also likely that Superstorm Sandy has altered much of the potential habitat for this species within Ocean Grove and its vicinity.

Project: Route 35 Sheeting Project, Mantoloking and Brick
Applicant: NJDEP

Federal Species: Due to an apparent problem in the Heritage Program's automated review process, a documented on-site occurrences of *Amaranthus pumilus* (and *Polygonum glaucum*, see NJ Species below) was not included in our response. Attached is a corrected report (onsite.pdf) referencing this occurrence. *Amaranthus pumilus* has been documented at scattered locations along the beach throughout the Route 35 project area south to Cummins

Street in Brick Township. *Amaranthus pumilus* is found on ocean beach and sand dune habitats. It is not known if the current habitat conditions along the Route 35 project area are conducive to the continued presence of this species.

NJ Species: The attached corrected report also includes a 2003 occurrence of *Polygonum glaucum* that should have been included in our January 9, 2014 response. *Polygonum glaucum* is found in the same habitats as *Amaranthus pumilus*, and the statement above about current habitat conditions along Route 35 applies to this species as well. The Heritage Program's original response letter also reported an occurrence of *Sphagnum perichaetiale* (plant species of concern) listed as possibly on site or the immediate vicinity of the site. The precise location of this occurrence is not known, but we agree that the upland beach habitat at the project site is not suitable for this species.

Regarding your request for additional feedback on *Amaranthus pumilus*, I was not able to locate hard-copy or pdf but offer the following citation for a recent publication by Jay Kelly on the status and distribution of this species:

Kelly, J.F. 2013. The status and distribution of *Amaranthus pumilus* (seabeach amaranth) and other rare beach plant species in New Jersey: Field surveys and historical records. *Bartonia* 66:28-60.

If, after reviewing this response, you have any questions or prefer to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Robert J. Cartica

NJDEP-Office of Natural Lands Management

Mail Code 501-04

P.O. Box 420

Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

609-984-1339

bob.cartica@dep.state.nj.us

From: Theresa Albanese [<mailto:talbanese@gfnet.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2014 3:38 PM

To: Cartica, Bob

Cc: Kristen Maines; Dey, Amanda

Subject: Question regarding Beach Amaranth

Good afternoon Bob,

Amanda Dey, biologist with ENSP, provided your name as the person who heads the Natural Heritage Program. Gannett Fleming serves as an EAF contractor for the NJDEP- CGBG Program. I am working on two separate projects performing an Environmental Assessment and review. The NH databases identified endangered plants on or in vicinity of these project sites describe below. Patrick Sheppard from ENSP informed me that we need to contact NHP to address plants and NH Priority sites.

One applicant is for the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Assoc. who is pursuing the DCA- Neighborhood Community Revitalization Grant. The Project is for reconstruction of the Ocean Grove Boardwalk (Neptune). The NHP database indicated that the state endangered Seabeach Sandwort is in the immediate vicinity of the project site; however this is an old observation – 1902. We need to make a determination that the reconstruction of the boardwalk will not adversely impact this species. Would you be able to provide an update as to whether any recent plant surveys were done in this location and if you can provide feedback as to the status of habitat for this species since Superstorm Sandy? The majority of the boardwalk is intact but portions need to be rebuilt; for the most part the boardwalk will be reconstructed in its original footprint.

The other project is the Route 35 sheeting project (4.0 miles) extending through Mantoloking and Brick; the NJDEP is pursuing Shore Protection Funds and we are preparing an EA for this project as well. This project received a CE from FHWA. This is currently being reviewed for the piping plover by USFWS and coordination is ongoing with DEP- ENSP and USFWS. The NH database lists the majority of the site as within the NH Priority Site “Mantoloking Beach”. Additionally the database lists Sphagnum perichaetiale as a rare plant on or in immediate vicinity of the site; the last observed date is 6-8-1987: Mantoloking, Barnegat Bay. I assume since we are on the upland beach that the habitat is not present for the Sphagnum. Please confirm.

Also the federally threatened seabeach amaranth is noted in the CE and also shows up in the iPaC database review on FWS website. I noticed that your staff has performed plant surveys in this area last fall by Jay Kelly and the results of his 2013 coastal surveys, including Amaranthus plants, were provided in email correspondence from Chris Constantino, to Kelly Staffieri, NJDEP- office of Construction and engineering to support DEP’s CAFRA Permit application. No Amaranth plants were identified in this location. Could you offer any additional feedback for this plant species?

Thanks, Theresa

Theresa A. Albanese | Professional Wetland Scientist
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**Possibly On Project Site
Based On Search Of Natural Heritage Database
Rare Plant Species And Ecological Communities Presently Recorded In
The New Jersey Natural Heritage Database**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	Regional Status	G Rank	S Rank	Last Obs	Ident	Location
Vascular Plant <i>Amaranthus pumilus</i>	Seabeach Amaranth	LT	E	LP, HL	G2	S1	2011-08-25	Y	2011: Located approximately 8.1 kilometers of ocean beaches, from Washington Avenue in Point Pleasant to Cummings Street in Brick Township.
<i>Polygonum glaucum</i>	Sea-beach Knotweed		E	LP, HL	G3	S1	2003-08-15	Y	2003: Brick Township.

2 Records Selected