



P.O. BOX 114 • TOWN HALL • ROUTE 152 • NOTTINGHAM, NH 03290

Nottingham Planning Board  
Attn: Dirk Grotenhuis  
139 Stage Road  
Nottingham, NH 03290

Re: Case # 21-003-SIT

Dear Planning Board Members,

It is our understanding that 9 days of water cross events are proposed at the site of Nottingham Sand and Gravel on Raymond Road. Recreational outdoor sports can be a great way for community members to connect with nature, which in turn promotes understanding and appreciation for natural resources and the need to steward them for future generations. Given the mission of the Nottingham Conservation Commission to collaborate with local and regional boards and organizations to inventory, map, and protect Nottingham's natural resources and open space, we are writing today with requests and recommendations in consideration of this event and those similar in nature.

NH Fish and Game's Wildlife Action Plan is a blueprint for conserving Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and their habitats in New Hampshire. New Hampshire's Plan identifies 169 SGCN, which represent a broad array of wildlife, and it focuses on the 27 habitats that support these species. In Nottingham these habitats include warm water lakes and ponds, vernal pools, and hemlock hardwood forest. Although the sand and gravel pit is a manufactured pond, it sits among the highest ranked habitat in New Hampshire and our biological region (NH Fish and Game Wildlife Action Plan Map attached). This means many of the songbirds, bats, turtles and amphibians that are listed as threatened, endangered, or species of concern are highly likely to be found utilizing this region to breed, raise young, and/or hibernate. Ecologically diverse wildlife communities are not only enjoyed by residents for birdwatching, photography, and other past-times that contribute to overall wellbeing, they also provide a critical role in balancing insect and plant species which promotes physical wellbeing for humans as well.

The site also sits on an aquifer, which plays an important role in water quality and storage. With a changing climate and rapid development in our region, attention to both water quality and resilient and diverse wildlife communities is an imperative. To this end, we advise the following recommendations to be included in any decisions on the use of land for water cross events:

**Noise:** Excessive human noise can impact animal behavior, which includes communication necessary for successful breeding and rearing young. Threatened and endangered wildlife have been documented to avoid nesting in areas with persistent noise, and intermittent noise shows a startle response. We recommend limiting the number of water cross events, and holding them outside of peak breeding and nesting season which for our region is typically April-July, though with milder winters and a changing climate this can extend beyond. Additionally, we recommend the types of vehicles utilized in the races



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are low noise emission, or outfitted with reduction technology/equipment if possible.

**Water Quality:** To promote water quality and drinking water protection, we recommend that diligence and best practices are employed to prevent any fuel spillage or dumping from both the vehicles involved in the race, along with campers, etc. from participants. We also recommend best practice in waste management of trash and refuse generated by attendees, and possible education included in the promotion of the event on the unique habitat the event is held in. A summary and key words could be pulled from this letter.

**Vehicle Traffic:** To minimize negative impact to wildlife such as ground nesting birds, turtles, and amphibians, we recommend putting a reasonable limit on the number of event attendees, along with the number of the events approved and the timing of the events (recommended outside of peak nesting season).

Signed on behalf of the Conservation Commission,

*Kristen Lamb*

Kristen Lamb  
B.S. Wildlife Ecology  
Executive Director, Center for Wildlife  
Nottingham Conservation Commission Member



# 2020 HIGHEST RANKED WILDLIFE HABITAT BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION

- Highest Ranked Habitat in New Hampshire
- Highest Ranked Habitat in the Biological Region
- Supporting Landscapes
- Conservation or public

Biological region = TNC ecoregional subsection for terrestrial habitats or Aquatic Resource Mitigation region for wetlands and floodplain forest.

Base map data provided by NH GRANIT at UNH May 2020. Intended for planning use only.



Sept. 2015, spatial data Apr. 2020

