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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

September 15, 2020

Jay Martin
U.S. Forest Service
110 Southpark Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Re: Sandy Ridge Short-Leaf Pine Restoration Project- Wolf Gap and Sugar Knob Camp Recreation Enhancement Projects

Dear Mr. Martin:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage (DCR) has searched its Biotics Data System for occurrences of natural heritage resources from the area outlined on the submitted map. Natural heritage resources are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations.

According to the information currently in Biotics, natural heritage resources have not been documented within the submitted project boundaries including a 100 foot buffer. The absence of data may indicate that the project areas have not been surveyed, rather than confirm that the area lacks natural heritage resources. In addition, the project boundaries do not intersect any of the predictive models identifying potential habitat for natural heritage resources.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the DCR, DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect species. The current activities will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects.

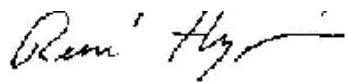
There are no State Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please re-submit a completed order form and project map for an update on this natural heritage information if the scope of the project changes and/or six months has passed before it is utilized.

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (VDWR) maintains a database of wildlife locations, including threatened and endangered species, trout streams, and anadromous fish waters that may contain information not documented in this letter. Their database may be accessed from <http://vafwis.org/fwis/> or contact Ernie Aschenbach at 804-367-2733 or Ernie.Aschenbach@dwr.virginia.gov.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 804-371-2708. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "René Hypes", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

S. René Hypes
Natural Heritage Project Review Coordinator