



MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board, Town of Sugar Hill
Julie Libby, Administrator, Grafton County Board of Commissioners
Michelle Moren-Grey, Executive Director, North Country Council
Members, Council on Resources and Development (CORD)

FROM: Heather Shank, Director, Division of Planning and Community Development
Brendan McDowell, Principal Planner, Office of Planning and Development

DATE: June 22, 2026

SUBJECT: Surplus Land Review
2026-002 SLR – Sugar Hill

The Council on Resources and Development (CORD) will hold a public meeting on the attached request on August 6, 2026, at 3 pm in the Caswell Conference Room at the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (DBEA), 100 N. Main Street, Concord.

Please review the request and provide any comments in writing to Brendan.M.McDowell@livefree.nh.gov by July 28, 2026.

Please note, the application is also reviewed by the following organizations:

- The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources/NH Division of Historical Resources, in accordance with RSA 227-C:9.
- Members of the Public Water Access Advisory Board, in accordance with RSA 233-A.
- The Lakes Management and Protection Program, through the Rivers and Lakes Program Coordinator, in accordance with RSA 483-A:5, II.
- The Rivers Management and Protection Program, through the Rivers and Lakes Program Coordinator, in accordance with RSA 483:8, VII and 14.

For more information, see [DBEA – Office of Planning & Development – CORD](#).



New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301-6500
(603) 271-3421
FAX: (603) 271-5829

www.wildlife.nh.gov
Email: info@wildlife.nh.gov
TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964

Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director

June 18, 2026

Lucy Lange
Commissioner, Business and Economic Affairs
100 North Main St, Suite 100
Concord, NH 03301

Heather Shank
CORD Chair
Department of Business and Economic Affairs
100 North Main St, Suite 100
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Transfer of Coffin Pond Parcel

Dear Ms. Lange and Ms. Shank,

New Hampshire Fish and Game (NHFG) is providing this summary regarding the potential transfer of the Coffin Pond property, located in Sugar Hill, NH, to the town of Sugar Hill.

In mid-March 2026 a New Hampshire Dam Bureau identified the Coffin Pond Dam as being "in active failure". On March 19th, 2026, the Bureau initiated emergency removal of the Coffin Pond Dam to minimize the risk of a release of water and sediment into the Gale River. Shortly after removing the dam, the Town of Sugar Hill approached NHFG to express interest in acquiring the property.

Following internal review, the NHFG determined it would not rebuild the dam and would move forward with the potential transfer. The parcel includes all land deeded to the State of New Hampshire from Curran -approximately 5.6-acre (from tax map) encompassing the former Coffin Pond Dam site, the town-maintained park and cartop boat launch, and the Coffin Pond inlet structure.

It is the NHFG's understanding that, if the transfer is approved, the Town of Sugar Hill intends to rebuild the Coffin Pond Dam and continue to allow public access to the site. It is important to note that the subject parcel currently has no legal access to the former dam location for construction or maintenance. If the parcel were to remain under NHFG ownership, it would be kept in its current condition, with no plans to rebuild a dam due to the negative water-quality impacts an impoundment has on the Gale River.

Our Environmental Review Coordinator, Michael Dionne, will serve as NHFG's point of contact for this project. He can be reached at michael.a.dionne@wildlife.nh.gov or 603-271-1136. Feel free to contact Michael with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,



Stephanie L. Simek, PhD
Executive Director
NH Fish & Game Department



Town of Sugar Hill

1411 Route 117 P.O. BOX 574 SUGAR HILL, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03586
603-823-8468

June 18, 2026

Michael Dionne, Environmental Review Coordinator
NH Fish & Game Department
11 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301-6500

Dear Michael:

The Town of Sugar Hill is looking forward to proceeding with the transfer of the property deeded to the State of New Hampshire from Curran (approx. 5.6 acres) which encompasses the former Coffin Pond Dam site, the Town maintained park and cartop boat launch and the Coffin Pond inlet structure.

We understand that the CORD meeting is August 6th and that there is a June 22nd due date for agenda items. We are assuming that you will be taking care of the application. Select Board Chair Chris Ellms will plan on attending the August 6th meeting.

The town is currently in the process of finding an appraiser for the parcel.

If there is something that the town needs to do at this point, please advise.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Gaudette
Town Administrator

Council on Resources and Development
REQUEST FOR SURPLUS LAND REVIEW ACTION

Name of Requesting Agency: NH Fish & Game Dept

Agency Contact Person: Mike Dionne
Address: 11 Hazen Drive
Phone Number: 603-271-1136
E-Mail: Michael.a.dionne@wildlife.nh.gov

Applicant Contact Person: Chris Elms-Chair of Sugar Hill Selectboard
Address: 1411 RT 117, Sugar Hill NH 03586
Phone Number: 603-823-8468 Cell #603-496-5614
E-Mail: selectmen@sugarhillnh.org

Location of Property: NH State RT 18 and Streeter Pond RD, Sugar Hill NH

Acreage: 5.6 (per tax map)

Requested Action: Fair market value sale of property to Town of Sugar Hill

Term of Lease or Easement: NA

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Please complete ALL questions below and submit one digital copy via email and one hardcopy with original signatures, of the completed application to:

NH Bureau of Economic Affairs
Attn: NH Office of Planning & Development
100 North Main St, Suite #100,
Concord, NH 03301
Attn: Brendan McDowell, Principal Planner brendan.m.mcdowell@livefree.nh.gov

1. What is the current use of this property?

Recreational use, former site of Coffin Pond (dam removed)

2. What is the proposed use of this property if surplus? Please note if proposed use is intended to create a public benefit.

Recreational use, Sugar Hill proposes reconstruction of dam

3. Does the proposed use of this property entail new development? ☒ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes, is it consistent with adjacent and existing development? ☒ Yes ☐ No

b. Please describe how the proposed new development differs from or is similar to its surroundings. Also indicate how it may initiate a future change in the use of the property or its surroundings.

Proposed dam reconstruction and use of property consistent with historic use

4. Are there any structures located on this property? ☒ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes, please describe the structures including how many and what kind?

Parking area with car top boat launch, pond inlet structure and channel

5. Are there historical architectural or archaeological resources identified on this site?

☐ Yes ☒ No

a. If yes, describe the resource(s)?

NA

b. If no, contact the NH Division of Historical Resources prior to application submission.

6. Is there any existing development or structures on adjacent sites? ☒ Yes ☐ No

- a. If yes, describe the use and number of structures of adjacent sites.
If no, where is the nearest development? (Describe distance, use, and number)

One residential home to the northwest and approximately five homes to the east

7. Does the site represent the entire state property in this location? ☒ Yes ☐ No

- a. If no, please describe its relationship to the entire state holding (percentage of total acreage, percentage of overall rail length, etc).

NA

8. Is access to this property available? ☒ Yes ☐ No

- a. If yes, how is the site accessed? (from rail, water, across applicant's property, etc)

Access from Sugar Hill maintained parking area on RT 18, no access to former dam site

- b. If yes, is there a potential for public access interruption? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9. Are there water resources related to this property, such as:
Lakes/Ponds - ☐ Yes ☒ No OR Rivers - ☒ Yes ☐ No OR Wetlands - ☒ Yes ☐ No?

- a. If yes, please indicate the size or extent of such resources.

Formerly Coffin Pond, now drained due to dam removal and adjacent to Gale River

- b. If yes, briefly describe how the requirements of RSA 483-B (Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act) apply to potential development of this property:

Plan is to reconstruct dam recreating Coffin Pond

- c. If yes, briefly describe how any municipal zoning requirements for buffers or setbacks from lakes, rivers or wetlands apply to potential development of this property:

NA

- d. Is the property within 250 feet of a lake/pond or river/stream? ☒ Yes ☐ No

- e. If lakes or rivers are related to this property, describe current public or private access from the site to the water body? ☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ No Access Available

Description: There is existing public access to the Gale River/former Coffin Pond

- f. How would the proposal affect the access opportunities described in e?

Access opportunities will remain unchanged

10. Please identify any other significant resources or sensitive environmental conditions known to be located on or adjacent to this property.

	Yes (property)	Yes (adjacent property)	No
a. Steep slopes	☒	☐	☐
b. Wetlands (Prime and NWI)	☐	☐	☒
c. Threatened or endangered species	☐	☒	☐
d. Wildlife Action Plan Critical Habitats	☒	☐	☐

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| e. Increased impervious surface | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☒ |
| f. Potential stormwater flow changes..... | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☒ |
| g. Agricultural soils of prime, statewide, or
local importance | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☒ |
| h. Potential river channel change | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☒ |
| i. Other special designations | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☒ |

Please provide a description for any "yes" responses to question #10.

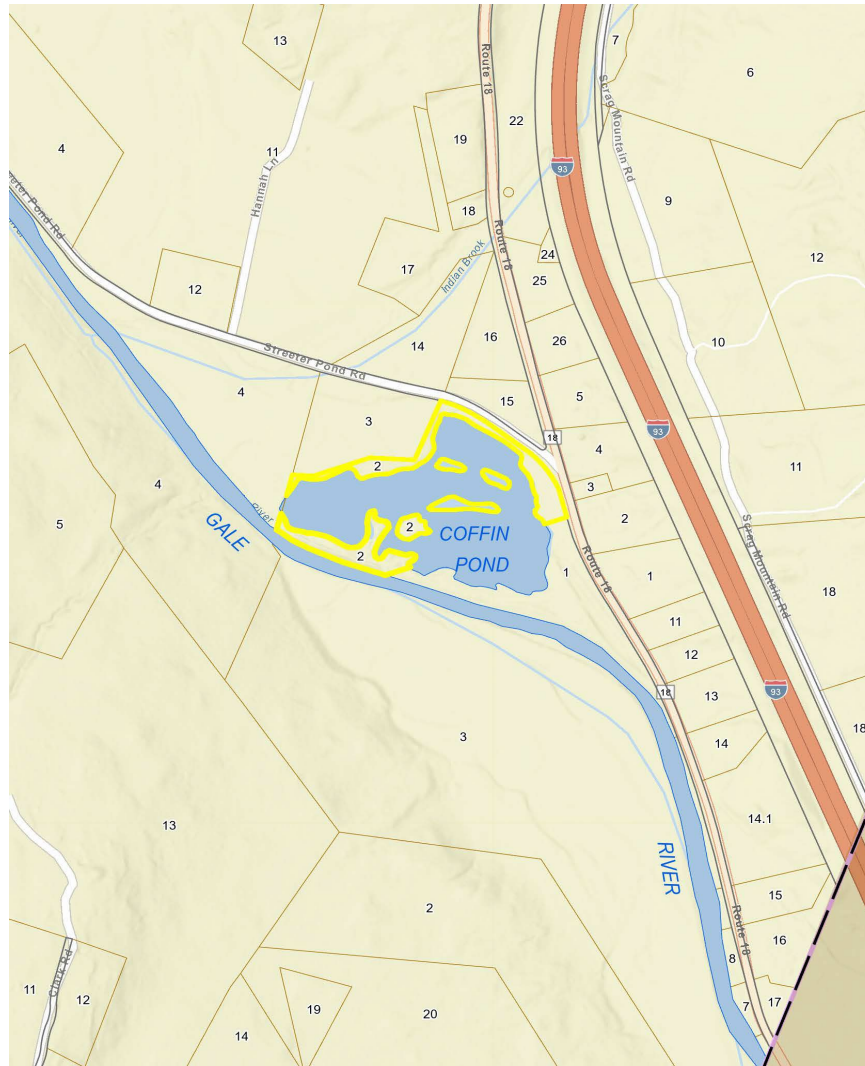
Some of the slopes adjacent to the Gale River are steep. Property contains highest ranked habitat according to NH WAP. Occurrences of wood turtle and common loon nearby.

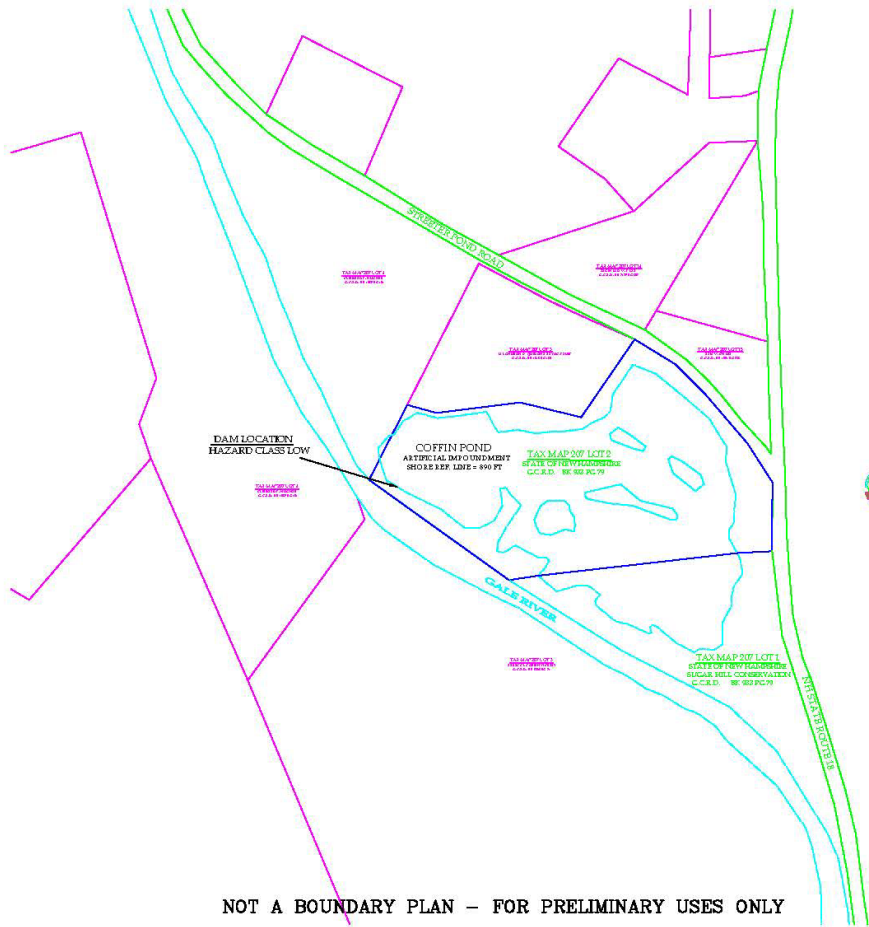
11. Attach photographs and maps of the property. Maps should highlight the requested property location and help to adequately place the property within the town.

- a. Municipal tax map copy showing all abutters
- b. General location map with scale, north arrow, nearby roads, and water bodies/features*
- c. Aerial Photograph*
- d. Any site plans for new or proposed development prepared at the time of application
- e. Maps depicting rail lines, wetlands, conservation lands, rare species and exemplary natural communities, or topographic features are welcome but not required

* Maps can be created with GIS, Google, Mapquest, GRANIT data mapper, or any other readily available mapping service.

Please paste any maps and photographs submitted as part of this application here.





LEGEND
UPDATE ACCORDING TO JOB

- EXISTING PROPERTY LINE
- EXISTING TREELINE
- EXISTING WOODS ROAD
- EXISTING EDGE OF WATER
- EXISTING STONEWALL
- EXISTING CONCRETE
- ABUTTER PROP. LINE

REFERENCES

- 1. "PLAN OF PROPERTY OF SARAH G. LAWRENCE", BY WILLIAM S. SMITH, DATED JAN 1987, G.C.R.D. PLAN # 9687.
- 2. TOWN OF SUGAR HILL, NH TAX MAP # 207

NOTES

- 1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN IS TO SHOW THE EXISTING CONDITIONS FOR THE COFFIN DAM AND LAND SHOWN ON SUGAR HILL TAX MAP 207
- 2. OWNER OF RECORD:
THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
11 HAZEN DRIVE CONCORD, N.H. 03302
SEE G.C.R.D. BK. 933, PG. 79 .
- 3. PLAN DATA OBTAINED VIA RECORDED DEEDS AND PLANS ALONG WITH TOWN OF SUGAR HILL TAX MAPS. NO ACTUAL SURVEY WAS PERFORMED FOR THIS SKETCH
- 4. SUBJECT TO TERMS, COVENANTS, EASEMENTS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER PROVISIONS IF STILL APPLICABLE SET FORTH IN DEED

NOT A BOUNDARY PLAN – FOR PRELIMINARY USES ONLY

REV.	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE

\\CONCORD\DESIGN\DWG-ENG AND CONST\PROJECT\00000\dwg\ENG.DWG



EXISTING CONDITION SKETCH
FOR
THE COFFIN POND DAM
SUGAR HILL, N.H.

DATE: SEPT 2024	DWG NUMBER: 227A.05
ENG. BY:	DRAWN BY: ETFS
CHECKED BY:	SCALE: 1" = 200'
SHEET 1 OF 1	DWG NAME: MASTER
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DAM SURVEY 10 HAZEN DRIVE CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03302	





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Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director

July 21, 2026

Lucy Lange
Commission, Business and Economic Affairs
110 North Main St. Suite 100
Concord, NH 03301

Heather Shank
CORD Chair
Department of Business and Economic Affairs
110 North Main St. Suite 100
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Transfer of Coffin Pond parcel

Dear Ms. Lange and Ms. Shank,

We are providing an updated area plan and corrected estimate of the acreage associated with the subject property. Earlier materials included tax maps and an initial approximation of the parcel size; however, the adjusted estimated acreage is 25.11+/-.

Our Environmental Review Coordinator, Michael Dionne, will serve as NHFG's point of contact for this project. He can be reached at michael.a.dionne@wildlife.nh.gov or 603-271-1136. Please feel to contact Michael with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephanie L. Simek".

Stephanie L. Simek, PhD
Executive Director
NH Fish and Game Department

