



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

217 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2010  
(804) 786-7951 FAX (804) 371-2674

April 29, 2009

Judi Birkitt  
County of Loudoun  
1 Harrison Street, S.E.  
Leesburg, VA 20175

Re: SPEX 2009-0009 & CMPT 2009-0001 Hybrid Energy Park at Stonewall Secure Business Park

Dear Ms. Birkitt:

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 our files, several rare plants, which are typically associated with prairie vegetation and inhabit semi-open diabase glades in Virginia, may occur at this location if suitable habitat is present. Diabase glades are characterized by historically fire-dominated grassland vegetation on relatively nutrient-rich soils underlain by Triassic bedrock. Diabase flatrock, a hard, dark-colored volcanic rock, is found primarily in northern Virginia counties and is located within the geologic formation known as the Triassic Basin. Where the bedrock is exposed, a distinctive community type of drought-tolerant plants occurs. Diabase flatrocks are extremely rare natural communities that are threatened by activities such as quarrying and road construction (Rawinski, 1995). In Northern Virginia, diabase supports occurrences of several global and state rare plant species: Earleaf foxglove (*Agalinis auriculata*, G3/S1/NL/NL), Blue-hearts (*Buchnera americana*, G5/S1S2/NL/NL), Purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*, G5/S2/NL/NL), Downy phlox (*Phlox pilosa*, G5T5/S2/NL/NL), Stiff goldenrod (*Oligoneuron rigidum* var. *rigidum*, G5T5/S2/NL/NL), and Marsh hedgenettle (*Stachys pilosa* var. *arenicola*, G5T4/S1/NL/NL).

Due to the potential for this site to support populations of natural heritage resources, DCR recommends an inventory for the resource in the study area. With the survey results we can more accurately evaluate potential impacts to natural heritage resources and offer specific protection recommendations for minimizing impacts to the documented resources.

DCR-Division of Natural Heritage biologists are qualified and available to conduct inventories for rare, threatened, and endangered species. Please contact J. Christopher Ludwig, Natural Heritage Inventory Manager, at (804) 371-6206 to discuss arrangements for field work. A list of other individuals who are qualified to conduct inventories may be obtained from the USFWS."

Our files do not indicate the presence of any State Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

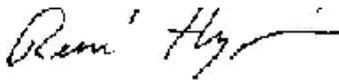
Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect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

New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please contact DCR for an update on this natural heritage information if a significant amount of time passes before it is utilized.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries 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 Shirl Dressler at (804) 367-6913.

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 "S. Rene' Hypes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

S. Rene' Hypes  
Project Review Coordinator

## Literature Cited

Rawinski, T.J. 1995. Natural communities and ecosystems: Conservation priorities for the future. Unpublished report for DCR-DNH.