Coastal Sand Dune Rules

The Maine Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA: Title 38 Section 480-D) requires that new coastal development will not unreasonably (1) interfere with the natural supply or movement of sand or gravel within or to the sand dune system; (2) increase the erosion hazard to the sand dune system; (3) cause or increase the flooding of the dunes or adjacent properties; (4) interfere with the natural flow of any surface or subsurface waters; (5) inhibit the natural transfer of soil from the terrestrial to marine or freshwater environments; (6) harm any significant wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered plant habitat, travel corridor, freshwater, estuarine or marine life; or (7) interfere with existing scenic, aesthetic, recreational, or navigational uses.

Permits are usually required for building projects located in Maine's coastal sand dune system. The Coastal Sand Dune Rules, Chapter 355, of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection clarify the criteria for obtaining a permit under NRPA (in regard to coastal sand dune systems). The rules outline classes of projects which are exempt from the requirement of obtaining a permit. For all other projects, the rules outline standards which must be met to satisfy the statutory criteria. The rules are based on the location of the project within the sand dune system.

Additional Sources of Information

Contact the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Land and Water Quality, 17 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 for information regarding the Coastal Sand Dune Rules and the Natural Resources Protection Act.

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