



January 14, 2022

CE Group
Attn: Mr. Mark Ashness, PE LEED AP
301 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 220
Raleigh, NC 27603

RE: Response to Request from Planning Board Public Meeting on January 5, 2022
The Conservancy at Jordan Lake Subdivision
Chatham County, NC
Sage Project #2020.041

Dear Mr. Ashness,

In response to comments expressed during the Chatham County Planning Board Meeting held on January 5, 2022, Sage Ecological Services, Inc. provides the following clarification regarding the natural communities observed within the proposed Conservancy at Jordan Lake Subdivision (Project).

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) completed a natural communities identification survey on the majority of the Project and generated a report dated August 7, 2020. A few areas were not included in the NCNHP survey and a few additional parcels were added after the survey had been completed. Sage Ecological Services, Inc (Sage) conducted a survey on the missed and added parcels later in 2020.

The NCNHP survey and report identified one area of Dry Oak-Hickory Forest which was identified in subsequent mapping and incorporated into the Primary Natural Area. The NCNHP report identified the remaining areas surveyed as "...uneven-aged forest composed of loblolly pine stands. Recently harvested examples of Piedmont Swamp Forest and Piedmont Headwater Stream Forest (Typic Subtype) also occur within the project area." Based on the significant pine content of the canopy and surrounding intensely managed areas, Sage concurred with NCNHP that these natural communities are not structurally or ecologically significant. These forests identified by NCNHP as "pine stands" surround the areas identified by Sage and were logged at the same time and contain the same canopy species as those identified by Sage.

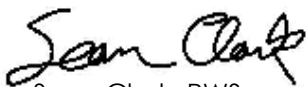
The areas Sage identified as mesic mixed hardwood forest and dry oak-hickory forest contain canopies that are co-dominated by pines as identified in NCNHP's report. Weedy, successional species were observed throughout all the communities, and many contained dense understories.

The natural communities Sage identified are what the areas are tending towards or will develop into once the mixed pine component has died out. The On-Site Inventory Map intended to identify this mixed pine component of the communities by adding "pine" to the end of the natural community's name (e.g., Mixed Hardwood/Pines).

Based on the degraded conditions and the co-dominant presence of pines within the canopy, Sage agreed with the NCNHP conclusions on the surrounding synonymous stands that these natural communities are not structurally or ecologically "pure" stands and do not meet the criteria to be considered as such. For these reasons the preservation of these areas as Primary Natural Areas was not recommended when coordinating with County staff.

Please contact me via email at SClark@SageEcological.com or call me at (919) 559-1537 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Respectfully submitted:



Sean Clark, PWS
Sage Ecological Services, Inc.



Kim Hamlin, PWS
Sage Ecological Services, Inc.