

**§482. Definitions**

As used in this article, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings. [PL 1995, c. 700, §2 (AMD).]

**1. Board.**

[PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. A, §40 (AFF); PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. B, §85 (RP).]

**1-A. Borrow pit.** "Borrow pit" means a mining operation undertaken primarily to extract and remove sand, fill or gravel. "Borrow pit" does not include any mining operation undertaken primarily to extract or remove rock or clay.

[PL 1993, c. 350, §2 (NEW).]

**2. Development of state or regional significance that may substantially affect the environment.** "Development of state or regional significance that may substantially affect the environment," in this article also called "development," means any federal, state, municipal, quasi-municipal, educational, charitable, residential, commercial or industrial development that:

A. Occupies a land or water area in excess of 20 acres; [PL 1997, c. 502, §5 (RPR).]

B. Is an oil or gas exploration or production activity that includes drilling or excavation under water; [PL 2011, c. 653, §16 (AMD); PL 2011, c. 653, §33 (AFF).]

C. Is a structure as defined in this section; [PL 1997, c. 502, §5 (RPR).]

D. Is a subdivision as defined in this section; [PL 2009, c. 615, Pt. E, §13 (AMD).]

E. [PL 1999, c. 468, §7 (RP).]

F. Is an oil terminal facility as defined in this section; [PL 2023, c. 481, §12 (AMD).]

F. [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. C, §7 (RP).]

G. [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. C, §7 (RP).]

H. [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. C, §7 (RP).]

I. [PL 1997, c. 502, §5 (RP).]

J. Is an offshore wind power project with an aggregate generating capacity of 3 megawatts or more; or [PL 2023, c. 481, §13 (AMD).]

K. Is an offshore wind terminal as defined in Title 35-A, section 3410, subsection 1, paragraph D. [PL 2023, c. 481, §14 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 481, §§12-14 (AMD).]

**2-A. Exploration.**

[PL 1993, c. 383, §4 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**2-B. Metallic mineral mining or advanced exploration activity.**

[PL 2011, c. 653, §17 (RP); PL 2011, c. 653, §33 (AFF).]

**2-C. Hazardous activity.**

[PL 1993, c. 383, §6 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**2-D. Multi-unit housing.**

[PL 1993, c. 383, §7 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**2-E. Coastal wetlands.** "Coastal wetlands" has the same meaning as in section 480-B, subsection 2.

[PL 1993, c. 383, §8 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**2-F. Freshwater wetlands.** "Freshwater wetlands" has the same meaning as in section 480-B, subsection 4.

A. [PL 1993, c. 383, §9 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

B. [PL 1993, c. 383, §9 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

C. [PL 1993, c. 383, §9 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]  
[PL 1993, c. 383, §9 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**3. Natural environment of a locality.**

[PL 1993, c. 383, §10 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**3-A. Overburden.** "Overburden" means earth and other materials naturally lying over the product to be mined.

[PL 1979, c. 466, §13 (NEW).]

**3-B. Normal high-water line.** "Normal high-water line" has the same meaning as in section 480-B, subsection 6.

[PL 1993, c. 383, §11 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**3-C. Passenger car equivalents at peak hour.**

[PL 1999, c. 468, §8 (RP).]

**3-D. Oil terminal facility.** "Oil terminal facility" means a facility and related appurtenances located in, on, over or under the surface of any land or water that is used or capable of being used to transfer, process, refine or store oil as defined in section 542, subsection 6. "Oil terminal facility" does not include:

A. A facility used or capable of being used to store less than 1,500 barrels or 63,000 gallons of oil;  
[PL 1997, c. 502, §6 (NEW).]

B. A facility not engaged in the transfer of oil to or from the waters of the State; or [PL 1997, c. 502, §6 (NEW).]

C. A facility consisting only of a vessel or vessels as defined in section 542, subsection 11. [PL 1997, c. 502, §6 (NEW).]  
[PL 1997, c. 502, §6 (NEW).]

**4. Person.** "Person" means any person, firm, association, partnership, corporation, municipal or other local governmental entity, quasi-municipal entity, state agency, federal agency, educational or charitable organization or institution or other legal entity.

[PL 1993, c. 383, §12 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**4-A. Product.**

[PL 1995, c. 700, §5 (RP).]

**4-B. Reclamation.** "Reclamation" means the rehabilitation of the area of land affected by mining under a plan approved by the department, including, but not limited to, the stabilization of slopes and creation of safety benches, the planting of forests, the seeding of grasses and legumes for grazing purposes, the planting of crops for harvest and the enhancement of wildlife and aquatic resources, but not including the filling in of pits and the filling or sealing of shafts and underground workings with solid materials unless necessary for protection of ground water or safety.

[PL 1993, c. 383, §13 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**4-C. Primary sand and gravel recharge areas.**

[PL 1993, c. 383, §14 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**4-D. Significant ground water aquifer.** "Significant ground water aquifer" means a porous formation of ice-contact and glacial outwash sand and gravel or fractured bedrock that contains significant recoverable quantities of water which is likely to provide drinking water supplies. [PL 1987, c. 812, §§5, 18 (AMD).]

**4-E. River, stream or brook.** "River, stream or brook" has the same meaning as in section 480-B, subsection 9. [PL 1993, c. 383, §15 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**4-F. Shoreland zone.** "Shoreland zone" has the same meaning as "shoreland areas" in section 435. Terms used within this definition have the same meanings as in section 436-A. [PL 1993, c. 383, §16 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**5. Subdivision.** A "subdivision" is the division of a parcel of land into 5 or more lots to be offered for sale or lease to the general public during any 5-year period, if the aggregate land area includes more than 20 acres; except that when all lots are for single-family, detached, residential housing, common areas or open space a "subdivision" is the division of a parcel of land into 15 or more lots to be offered for sale or lease to the general public within any 5-year period, if the aggregate land area includes more than 30 acres. The aggregate land area includes lots to be offered together with the roads, common areas, easement areas and all portions of the parcel of land in which rights or interests, whether express or implied, are to be offered. This definition of "subdivision" is subject to the following exceptions:

A. [PL 1989, c. 769, §2 (RP).]

B. [PL 1989, c. 769, §3 (RP).]

C. Lots of 40 or more acres but not more than 500 acres may not be counted as lots except where:

(1) The proposed subdivision is located wholly or partly within the shoreland zone; [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. A, §35 (RPR).]

C-1. Lots of more than 500 acres in size may not be counted as lots; [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. A, §35 (RPR).]

D. Five years after a subdivider establishes a single-family residence for that subdivider's own use on a parcel and actually uses all or part of the parcel for that purpose during that period, a lot containing that residence may not be counted as a lot; [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. A, §35 (RPR).]

E. Unless intended to circumvent this article, the following transactions may not be considered lots offered for sale or lease to the general public:

(1) Sale or lease of lots to an abutting owner or to a spouse, child, parent, grandparent or sibling of the developer if those lots are not further divided or transferred to a person not so related to the developer within a 5-year period, except as provided in this subsection;

(2) Personal, nonprofit transactions, such as the transfer of lots by gift, if those lots are not further divided or transferred within a 5-year period or the transfer of lots by devise or inheritance; or

(3) Grant of a bona fide security interest in the whole lot or subsequent transfer of the whole lot by the original holder of the bona fide security interest or that person's successor in interest; [PL 1995, c. 493, §5 (AMD).]

F. In those subdivisions that would otherwise not require site location approval, unless intended to circumvent this article, the following transactions may not, except as provided, be considered lots offered for sale or lease to the general public:

(1) Sale or lease of common lots created with a conservation easement as defined in Title 33, section 476, provided that the department is made a party; and [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. A, §35 (RPR).]

G. [PL 1987, c. 864, §1 (RP).]

G-1. [PL 1987, c. 864, §2 (RP).]

H. The transfer of contiguous land by a permit holder to the owner of a lot within a permitted subdivision is exempt from review under this article, provided that the land was not owned by the permit holder at the time the department approved the subdivision. Further division of the transferred land must be reviewed under this article. [PL 1993, c. 680, Pt. A, §35 (RPR).]

The exception described in paragraph F does not apply, and the subdivision requires site location approval, whenever the use of a lot described in paragraph F changes or the lot is offered for sale or lease to the general public without the limitations set forth in paragraph F. For the purposes of this subsection only, a parcel of land is defined as all contiguous land in the same ownership provided that lands located on opposite sides of a public or private road are considered each a separate parcel of land unless that road was established by the owner of land on both sides of the road subsequent to January 1, 1970. A lot to be offered for sale or lease to the general public is counted, for purposes of determining jurisdiction, from the time a municipal subdivision plan showing that lot is recorded or the lot is sold or leased, whichever occurs first, until 5 years after that recording, sale or lease.

[PL 1997, c. 603, §2 (AMD).]

**6. Structure.** A "structure" means:

A. [PL 1993, c. 383, §18 (RP); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

B. Buildings, parking lots, roads, paved areas, wharves or areas to be stripped or graded and not to be revegetated that cause a total project to occupy a ground area in excess of 3 acres. Stripped or graded areas that are not revegetated within a calendar year are included in calculating the 3-acre threshold. [PL 1993, c. 383, §18 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

[PL 1993, c. 383, §18 (AMD); PL 1993, c. 383, §42 (AFF).]

**7. Storage facility.**

[PL 1995, c. 704, Pt. A, §6 (RP); PL 1995, c. 704, Pt. C, §2 (AFF).]

**8. Offshore wind power project.** "Offshore wind power project" means a project that uses a windmill or wind turbine to convert wind energy to electrical energy and is located in whole or in part within coastal wetlands as defined in section 480-B, subsection 2. "Offshore wind power project" includes both generating facilities as defined by Title 35-A, section 3451, subsection 5 and associated facilities as defined by Title 35-A, section 3451, subsection 1, without regard to whether the electrical energy is for sale or use by a person other than the generator.

[PL 2009, c. 615, Pt. E, §16 (NEW).]

## SECTION HISTORY

PL 1969, c. 571, §2 (NEW). PL 1971, c. 593, §22 (AMD). PL 1971, c. 613, §§2,3 (AMD). PL 1971, c. 618, §12 (AMD). PL 1973, c. 625, §276 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 214 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 297 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 712 (AMD). PL 1979, c. 466, §§12,13 (AMD). PL 1979, c. 541, §A263 (AMD). PL 1981, c. 227, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 1981, c. 449, §§4-6,9 (AMD). PL 1981, c. 698, §190 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 500, §2 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 513, §2 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 743, §13 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 788, §§1-3 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 819, §A63 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 162, §7 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 479, §5 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 654 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 130 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 737, §§C90,106 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 810, §§9-11 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 812, §§2-8,18 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 864, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 104, §§C8,C10 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 497, §12 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 600, §A19 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 769, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 890, §§A40,B85,86 (AMD). RR 1991, c. 2, §146 (COR). PL 1991, c. 160, §1 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 500, §3 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 350, §§1-3 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 366, §§1-3 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 366, §4 (AFF). PL 1993, c. 383, §§3-18 (AMD). PL 1993, c.

383, §42 (AFF). PL 1993, c. 680, §§A35,C7 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 493, §5 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 700, §§2-5 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 704, §§A3-6 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 704, §C2 (AFF). PL 1997, c. 502, §§5,6 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 603, §2 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 468, §§6-8 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 330, §18 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 615, Pt. E, §§13-16 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 653, §§16, 17 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 653, §33 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 481, §§12-14 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

*All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the First Special Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature and is current through October 1, 2025. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.*

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.
--