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April 20, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
ON THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION FORM

PROJECT NAME : Ballard Street Marsh-Gateway Improvement Project  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITIES : Saugus  
PROJECT WATERSHED : North Coastal  
EOEA NUMBER : 13993  
PROJECT PROPONENT : **Massachusetts** Department of Conservation and  
Recreation (DCR)  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : March 21, 2007

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I hereby determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the Ballard Street Marsh-Gateway Improvement Project is the kick-off project for the Ballard Street Marsh improvement initiative (EOEA # 12889). The Gateway Improvement Project described in the ENF involves improvements to the existing parking lot. The proposed improvements include regrading the parking area to eliminate surface ponding and resurfacing the area with gravel. The existing parking lot is comprised of approximately 0.76 acres of compacted earth with a 1,700 square foot area of standard asphalt. Presently, the parking lot is being used as a dumping ground for construction debris which will be removed as part of this project. The proposed plans reduce the parking area to 0.45 acres which will be graded to ensure proper drainage to the eastern perimeter of the site towards a proposed storm water infiltration trench. The project area is bordered by Eastern Avenue on the west and the Rumney Marsh Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) on the north and east and the abandoned Bristow Street right-of-way to the south. All the lands within the project area are owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).



The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03 (11)(b) of the MEPA regulations because the project is located within a designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Lands within the project area are owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The project will require an Order of Conditions from the Saugus Conservation Commission (and hence a Superseding Order from MassDEP if the local Order is appealed). Because the project may involve state funding, MEPA jurisdiction extends to all aspects of the project that may have significant environmental impact.

The Gateway Improvement Project lies within the boundary of the Rumney Marshes Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), which is defined generally as the outer boundary of the 100-year flood elevation surrounding the Saugus and Pines Rivers and estuarine wetlands to the west of North Shore Road (Route 1A). The water bodies and wetlands of the Rumney Marshes ACEC are classified as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) in the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards.

The overall Ballard Street Marsh improvement initiative (EOEA # 12889) involves the restoration of portions of the Rumney Marshes ACEC, a project which emerged as a result of extensive multi agency and community cooperation. The overall project is listed as a priority project in the Rumney Marshes ACEC Salt Marsh Restoration Plan prepared by the Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Program (MWRP) and the former Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (DEM), and it has been designed to have a significant positive impact on environmental resources. The site improvements for the Gateway Improvement Project are intended to create an aesthetically pleasing entrance for the local community to enjoy the surrounding Rumney Marsh ACEC as well as to provide enhanced stormwater management. I commend DCR for proposing to use Low Impact Development for stormwater management in order to meet compliance with the Stormwater Management Policy.

The review of the ENF has served to adequately disclose the potential impacts and mitigation associated with this project. Based on a review of the ENF, the comment letters, and consultation with the relevant public agencies, I find that the impacts of the project do not warrant further MEPA review

April 20, 2007

Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments Received:

03/29/07 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
04/10/07 Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

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