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May 23, 2008

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

PROJECT NAME : Boardwalk Construction to Access Existing Pier
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Wareham
PROJECT WATERSHED : Buzzards Bay
EOEA NUMBER : 14237
PROJECT PROPONENT : Onset Islanders Association, Inc.
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : April 23, 2008

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 (EIR).

The project consists of the construction of a boardwalk within an easement granted to the Onset Islanders Association. The approximately 1 acre site is located within Pleasant Harbor in Buzzards Bay. Wetland resources include coastal dune and Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage (LSCSF). The boardwalk is proposed to replace an existing boardwalk that extends from the end of Sagamore Street and provides access to an existing pier, ramp and float system which residents use to access Onset Island. The pier is the only means available for residents to access the island. The existing boardwalk was constructed outside of the right-of-way granted to the Onset Islanders Association.

In addition to the boardwalk construction, a May 19, 2008 email submitted by the proponent identifies maintenance activities planned for the adjacent pier and the Onset Island pier, both of which are owned by the Onset Island Association. The email indicates that 13 deteriorated pilings, and associated bracing, will be replaced (8 on the mainland pier and 5 on the



island pier). Orders of Conditions have been issued for this work and, as maintenance work, it is permitted by the existing Chapter 91 License.

The project is undergoing MEPA review pursuant to Section 11.03 (3)(b)(1)(a) because it requires a state permit and consists of alteration of coastal dune, barrier beach or coastal bank. Because the proponent appealed the November 27, 2007 Order of Conditions issued by the Wareham Conservation Commission, the project requires a Superseding Order of Conditions from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).


Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth, MEPA jurisdiction extends to those aspects of the project that may have significant environmental impacts and that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits.

The project will alter 396 square feet of coastal dune and LSCSF. Efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to the coastal dune include elevating the boardwalk to maintain stabilization of the existing vegetation, shortening the boardwalk to the extent possible and reducing the number of support piles.

Comment letters submitted by state agencies do not identify any significant concerns with the project or request additional mitigation. Comments from MassDEP confirm that the revised plan submitted with the ENF responds to issues previously identified by MassDEP. The comment letter from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's (DFW) Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) indicate that the project will not adversely affect rare species habitat and note that the proponent must submit a filing for review pursuant to the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA).

The review of the ENF has served to adequately disclose the potential impacts associated with this project. Any outstanding issues can be addressed during the state permitting and review process. Based on the information in the ENF and after consultation with relevant public agencies, I find that no further MEPA review is required.

May 23, 2008
Date


Ian A. Bowles

Comments Received:

- 5/12/08 Department of Environmental Protection /Southeast Regional Office (MassDEP/ SERO)
- 5/12/08 MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife/Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (DFW/NHESP)
- 5/9/08 Division of Marine Fisheries

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