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May 26, 2006

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CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
ON THE  
NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE

PROJECT NAME : MGP Property Remediation Project at Collins Cove  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : 20 Pierce Avenue – Salem  
PROJECT WATERSHED : North Shore  
EOEA NUMBER : 13541  
PROJECT PROPONENT : Massachusetts Electric Co.  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : April 26, 2006

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.10 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I have reviewed the Notice of Project Change (NPC) submitted for this project and determine that it **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The project originally consisted of the installation of a multi-layer cap that included placing a geotextile material over the existing beach fill materials and placing a riprap layer over the geotextile layer. This capping would restrict the transport of surface material from the beach, isolating the contaminated sediment and debris from the waters of Collins Cove. The riprap layer would stabilize the beach area, protect the geotextile material from wave action, and prevent erosion by providing improved armor for the coastal beach. All work would be conducted at the lower end of the tide-cycle to minimize impacts to water quality.

The reinforced geotextile material would cover approximately 81,000 sf of coastal beach. The cap would extend from the toe of the coastal beach to the top of the coastal bank. It would begin approximately 270 feet to the south of the steel transformer tower on the eastern edge of the property. The cap would be 100 feet wide at the southern end and extend about 940 feet north along the beach. The cap size would vary in width depending on the beach width. At the northern end, the cap would taper and join to meet the existing granite seawall. The project site is approximately 20.7 acres. On June 24, 2005, the Secretary determined that the proposed project did not require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The proponent submitted an NPC on April 18, 2006. The project now consists of reducing the size of the proposed containment cap to 47,500 sf, and incorporating additional remedial actions including dredging the removal of approximately 7,800 cubic yards of sediment containing non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL) from 70,300 sf of tidal flats, and dredging an additional 700 cubic yards for a trench at the toe of the beach cap to accommodate absorbent material for collecting NAPL. The purpose of the project is to eliminate NAPL, which is a substantial hazard under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP) from the upper one-foot of the intertidal flat sediment. The proponent is seeking flexibility related to alternative dredge material dewatering and treatment within wetland resource areas including land subject to coastal storm flowage (LSCSF), coastal bank, and coastal beach including tidal flats. The total potential alteration of wetland resource areas is approximately 136,650 sf. The installation of an engineered cap on the coastal beach, dredging and offsite disposal of the tidal flat sediment comprise the selected Comprehensive Remedial Action (CRA) for the marine portion of the project site. The implementation of the selected CRA will result in a Temporary Solution (Response Action Outcome C (RAO-C)) for the coastal beach and a Permanent Solution (RAO-A) for the tidal sediment.

The proponent is seeking amendments to the following permits: Order of Conditions; Chapter 91 Waterways License Transmittal Number WO62327; and an Army Core of Engineers (ACOE) NAE-2005-2431 Programmatic General Permit. It will also require a 401 Water Quality Certificate from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

According to the proponent, the project change would affect the following wetland resource areas: approximately 500 linear feet of Coastal Bank, 113,400 sf Coastal Beach, and 32,160 sf of Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage (LSCSF). The temporary impacts include 70,300 sf of Coastal Beach (dredging), 28,800 sf of LSCSF (staging & dewatering), and 4,500 sf of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW).

The project's impacts to wetland resource areas can be adequately addressed during the DEP permitting processes. The proponent should demonstrate that the project has been designed to meet all performance standards. There are remaining Chapter 21E/MCP issues to be resolved by the proponent. However, DEP will deal with these issues during project permitting.

In its comment letter from the prior ENF review, the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management (MCZM) Office recommended a monitoring program that would survey several key points along predetermined transects along the beach and return to those points periodically to assess any shifting of the beach cap. The proponent should incorporate this recommendation into its final plans for the project and consult with the MCZM Office before they are finalized.

Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent and after consultation

with relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project change do not warrant the preparation of an EIR and can be properly addressed in the federal, state, and local permitting processes. During the permitting process, DEP should consider the issues raised by the Division of Marine Fisheries in its comment letter of May 16<sup>th</sup>.

May 26, 2006  
Date

  
Stephen R. Pritchard

cc: Nancy Baker, DEP/NERO  
Ben Lynch, DEP/Boston

Comments received:

Division of Marine Fisheries, 5/16/06  
BSC Group, 5/19/06

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SRP/WTG/wg