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June 8, 2007

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

PROJECT NAME : Maintenance Dredging
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : North Entrance of the Annisquam River - Gloucester
PROJECT WATERSHED : North Coastal
EOEA NUMBER : 14023
PROJECT PROPONENT : City of Gloucester
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : May 9, 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 determine that the above project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

According to the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the proposed project consists of the maintenance dredging of approximately 10,282 cubic yards (cy) at the Federal Channel across the Ipswich Bay Bar at the north end of the Annisquam River. The area to be dredged is approximately 708 feet by 200-feet (approximately 141,600 sf of Land Under the Ocean (LUO)). It will be dredged to a depth of (-)8 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). The dredged material, which has been analyzed as clean soil, would be disposed at a near shore disposal site east of the channel approximately 1.5 nautical miles north of Coffins Beach in water approximately 30-feet deep. The proponent has completed a sediment analysis that indicates that the dredged material is appropriate for this disposal area. The proponent is proposing to use a special purpose hydraulic hopper dredge (CURRITUCK) for the project. This project will restore safe navigation to the Ipswich Bay Bar portion of the Federal Channel for deeper draft vessels, such as the U.S. Coast Guard. The dredging area is about 3.25 acres. The disposal area for the dredged material is approximately 5.5 acres.

The project is subject to MEPA review pursuant to Sections 11.03(3)(b)(1)(f), 11.03(3)(b)(3), and 11.03(3)(b)(4) because the project alters 0.5 acres or more of any wetland (LOU), dredges 10,000 or more cubic yards of material, and includes the disposal of 10,000 or more cubic yards of dredged material. It will require a Chapter 91 Waterways Permit and a 401


Water Quality Certificate from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The project will also need to obtain an Order of Conditions from the Gloucester Conservation Commission. On May 24, 2007, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) issued a Programmatic General Permit (PGP) for the dredging. The project may require Federal Consistency Review by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (MCZM). MEPA jurisdiction extends to those aspects of the project that require state permits and may have significant environmental impacts (waterways/dredging and wetlands).

According to the proponent, the project would affect the following wetland resource areas: approximately 3.25 acres of LUO/Land Containing Shellfish (LCS)/Anadromous Fish Runs (dredged area), and 5.5 acres of LUO (dredge disposal site). The proponent considered alternative dredging methods and multiple disposal alternatives for the dredged material such as open water, upland, beach re-nourishment, and near shore disposal. The USACOE determined that near shore disposal was the most viable and environmentally sound alternative. This alternative keeps the sand in the littoral system and affords the possibility of indirect nourishment to nearby beaches over time.

According to the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MDMF), the dredge and dredge disposal project should have a no dredging/dumping time-of-year (TOY) restriction of February 1 to June 30 to protect winter flounder spawning and rainbow smelt. DEP should consider this MDMF recommendation in its permitting process. If submerged cultural/archaeological resources are encountered during the course of the project, the proponent should take steps to limit adverse impacts and notify the Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (BUAR).

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 do not warrant the preparation of an EIR and can be properly addressed in the DEP and local permitting processes.

June 8, 2007
Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments received:

CLE Engineering, 5/17/07
NHESP, 5/18/07

EOEEA #14023

ENF Certificate

June 8, 2007

BUAR, 5/25/07

Division of Marine Fisheries, 5/29/07

CLE Engineering, 6/4/07

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