



## MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

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Frederick A. Laskey  
Executive Director

May 30, 2003

Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder  
Attn: MEPA Office  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900  
Boston MA 02114

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**MAY 30 2003**

**MEPA**

Re: MWRA Combined Sewer Overflow Control Projects-EOEA #10335  
Response to Comments on the Notice of Project Change for the Alewife Brook  
CSO Control Project

Dear Secretary Herzfelder:

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and the City of Cambridge hereby submit this Response to Comments (RTC) on the Notice of Project Change (NPC) for the Alewife Brook CSO Control Project (EOEA # 10335). MEPA received numerous comment letters on the April 2001 NPC and, in the Secretary's June 15, 2001 Certificate, required MWRA and Cambridge to prepare a Response to Comments document to address the concerns and issues raised. Preparation of the RTC entailed additional technical evaluations, especially related to hydraulic modeling of Cambridge's drainage system and design of the proposed stormwater wetland. These efforts, along with interagency coordination and stakeholder involvement, demanded considerable time.

This project is part of MWRA's overall CSO control plan for Boston Harbor and its tributaries and was initially evaluated in MWRA's *Final Combined Sewer Overflow Facilities Plan and Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)*. The Secretary's Certificate on the FEIR was issued on October 30, 1997. Although this project was discussed in the FEIR, it had earlier received a Phase I Waiver from further environmental review in 1995 (See Volume IV, Chapter 25 "Projects Not Subject to Facilities Plan Environmental Review" of the FEIR. The Alewife Brook project was one of several sewer separation and facilities upgrade projects that received a Phase 1 Waiver.)

In April 2001, MWRA and Cambridge submitted the NPC for MEPA review and public comment. The NPC presented the reevaluation of CSO control alternatives for the Alewife Brook/Upper Mystic River, necessary after discovery of previously unknown conditions in Cambridge's sanitary and drainage system that considerably altered



estimations of CSO flows and the cost of the project; described the impacts, mitigation, benefits and costs of the alternatives and identified a revised recommended CSO control plan. While the level of CSO control for the revised plan was comparable to the original plan and the plan remains essentially one of targeted sewer separation, certain elements of the original plan, including areas slated for separation, were modified, resulting in a change in expected impacts and mitigation measures. Notably, sewer separation associated with the CAM004 CSO outfall required construction of a new storm drain and a stormwater wetland, located within the Metropolitan District Commission's (MDC) Alewife Reservation, to attenuate peak flows and provide additional treatment of stormwater discharges. For further details on the MEPA, public participation and regulatory background of the Alewife Brook CSO control project, please refer to the Executive Summary and Chapter 1 of the RTC, as well as the cover letter, Executive Summary and Chapters 1 and 2 of the NPC.

Please note that, as part of the DEP-issued Variance for the Alewife Brook/Upper Mystic River, a parallel regulatory process to resolve water quality standards issues, MWRA will submit the required Final Variance Report on July 1, 2003 for MEPA review and public comment. At the conclusion of the Variance period, and after conducting a public process, DEP is expected to recommend, for EPA approval, a determination of water quality standard (Class B or Class B<sub>(CSO)</sub>) and level of CSO control for this receiving water. For further information about the Variance process please refer to the Executive Summary and Chapter 1 of the RTC.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have regarding these issues. Further, if MEPA staff would like a briefing on the project, the MWRA/Cambridge project team will schedule one at your convenience. Please do not hesitate to call me at 617-788-4399 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Moura - MWRA  
Project Manager, CSO