



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

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January 29, 2007

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CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS ON THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT NAME : Restoration of the Saugus Iron Works Turning Basin & Dock
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : 244 Central Street – Saugus
PROJECT WATERSHED : Saugus River
EOEA NUMBER : 13563
PROJECT PROPONENT : National Park Service (NPS)
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : December 23, 2006

The Secretary of Environmental Affairs determines that the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) submitted on the above project **adequately and properly complies** with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L., c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and with its implementing regulations (301 CMR 11.00).

The proposed project consists of the restoration/excavation of the Saugus River turning basin and the reconstruction of the dock (443 square foot (sf)) and bulkhead (110 linear feet) at the Saugus Iron Works. The project will remove approximately 163,350 sf of existing bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) dominated by *Phragmites australis* and other non-native species. The proponent will restore approximately 65,776 sf of native BVW, and it will replace about 97,574 sf of BVW with mud flat/open water and riparian berm. The project will include the disposal of approximately 7,200 cubic yards of sediment from the riverbed to a landfill after dewatering has occurred on-site. The project site is approximately 8.51 acres.

This project is subject to a mandatory EIR. It will require a Chapter 91 License and Permit, a Section 401 Water Quality Certificate, and a Superseding Order of Conditions from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). MassDEP has determined that the project meets the "limited" project provisions for a wetland restoration under the Wetlands Protection Act, and the Saugus Conservation Commission has denied the proponent's request for an Order of Conditions. The project will require Federal Consistency Review by the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management (MCZM) Office. It must comply with the National Pollutant

Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges from a construction site. The project may need a Section 10 Permit (Rivers & Harbors Act of 1899) and a Section 404 Programmatic General Permit (Category II) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction is limited to those aspects of the project within the subject matter of required state permits (wetlands, waterways, and stormwater) that may have significant environmental impacts.

The proponent has estimated that the disposal of excavated material will generate approximately 30 to 40 truck trips per day for four to six weeks.

Summary of Mitigation:

The proponent committed to implement the following mitigation measures:

- Limit operation of equipment to weekday daytime hours and monitor noise compliance with local regulations.
- Install silt fencing along the perimeter of the project area to collect and contain sediment generated by the project, approximately \$4,500.
- Install a sediment barrier along the perimeter of the excavation where it abuts the Saugus River channel to filter sediment out of the water, approximately \$235,000.
- Install a gravel and cobble berm planted with native woody vegetation to enhance smelt habitat, approximately \$6,000.
- Conduct weekly monitoring of anadromous fish and American eel populations throughout the spawning season for a minimum of three years in partnership with Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and the Saugus River Watershed Council, approximately \$5,250 (NPS portion only).
- Control water quality during construction, approximately \$52,000.
- Conduct a Monitoring Plan (in Appendix E) on a semi-annual basis for three years after project completion to verify the successful reestablishment of the native ecological habitat, approximately \$120,000.
- Restrict access to the historic slag pile, approximately \$5,000.
- Replace contaminated sediments and a *Phragmites australis* dominated wetland with diverse native tidal marsh, open water/mud flat and riparian berm habitats and restore natural floodplains, native emergent freshwater tidal wetland habitat, and intertidal mudflat habitat, approximately \$2,800,000 (proposed project).
- Conduct no work within the Saugus River channel in order to protect the annual spawning of rainbow smelt.
- Facilitate the removal of the Hamilton Street Weir from the Saugus River with the other stakeholders, approximately \$5,000 (NPS portion only).

The above listed mitigation costs are part of the overall project costs of \$2.8 million. The proponent is providing leadership with the Town of Saugus to remove the existing weir structure

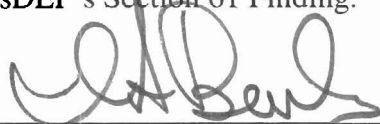
that is located downstream of the project site within the Saugus River. This weir structure reduces the natural tidal flow to the project site.

The proposed project is the restoration of the degraded bordering vegetated wetlands along the Saugus River. I consider the proposed project as mitigation for the 1957 breach of the Prankers Pond dam upstream of the Iron Works site, which has resulted in nearly 4 acres of wetlands that are choked by invasive plant species and some industrial contaminants that were contained in the sediments released.

The Certificate on the DEIR (dated December 15, 2006) stated that no major issues remained that warranted the preparation of a separate FEIR. On December 21, 2006, the proponent submitted the Response to Comments on the DEIR and a proposed Section 61 Finding for MCZM.

I commend the proponent for its efforts to cooperate with MassDEP to resolve the concerns raised during the comment period. The proponent should continue its efforts to resolve the remaining concerns of MassDEP as stated in comment letter of January 22, 2007. These concerns can be addressed within MassDEP's Section 61 Finding.

January 29, 2007
Date


Ian A. Bowles

Cc: Nancy Baker, MassDEP/NERO

Comments received:

NPS, 12/20/06
NPS, 12/21/06
NPS, 12/21/06
NPS, 12/21/06
NPS, 12/21/06
MassDEP/NERO, 1/22/07

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