



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*

*100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900*

*Boston, MA 02114-2524*

MITT ROMNEY  
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

STEPHEN R. PRITCHARD  
SECRETARY

August 9, 2006

Tel. (617) 626-1000  
Fax. (617) 626-1181  
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

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

PROJECT NAME : Swansea Desalinization Project  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Swansea  
PROJECT WATERSHED : Narragansett Bay  
EOEA NUMBER : 13183  
PROJECT PROPONENT : **Swansea Water District**  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : July 10, 2006

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

In the Supplemental Final EIR, the project consisted of the proposed desalination plant project with three elements: installation of an intake structure and pumping station on the Palmer River, including a pipeline to transmit the raw water; construction of a desalination plant and an ultrafiltration/membrane filtration plant at the site of an existing well-field; and construction of a brine concentrate pipeline and discharge structure back to the Palmer River. The Supplemental Final EIR included significant changes in the project design since the submittal of the Final EIR. The changes included the proposed use of an infiltration bed structure on the river bottom with a footprint of approximately 2500 square feet as the intake structure and increasing water withdrawal rates (up to 1.6 million gallons per day varying seasonally) to allow blending to ensure that the brine water discharge will never exceed a salinity of 32 parts per thousand.

The proponent submitted an NPC on July 10, 2006. The proponent is requesting approval to move the discharge diffuser approximately 1,800 feet upstream from the thalweg location off the golf course to the south scour hole location near the Old Providence Road Bridge. The primary project elements including those related to water withdrawal, discharge flow rate, and maximum salinity will remain unchanged as a result of the Project Change. The purpose of the

project change is focused solely on the location of the discharge diffuse.

The configuration and orientation of the diffuser in the south scour hole would allow a comparatively larger cross-sectional area and water depth to achieve dilution thereby decreasing potential impacts on fish passage. The new location in the scour hole will have a deeper starting location and a greater overall depth and width. This will increase vertical dilution and maximize the distance between the plume and the bottom waters.

Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent and after consultation with the state permitting agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project change do not warrant the preparation of an EIR and can be addressed through the local and state permitting processes. No further MEPA review is required.

August 9, 2006

Date

  
Stephen R. Pritchard

Comments received:

07/31/06 Eileen Simonson