



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
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November 23, 2020

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

PROJECT NAME : Cohasset Boat Ramp Reconstruction
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Cohasset
PROJECT WATERSHED : South Coastal
EEA NUMBER : 16287
PROJECT PROPONENT : Town of Cohasset
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : October 22, 2020

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M.G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I hereby determine that this project **does not require** an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Project Description

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the project consists of the reconstruction and expansion of a concrete boat ramp in Cohasset Harbor. The existing boat ramp is approximately 120 feet (ft) long and 18 ft wide and extends at a 10-percent slope from the shore to the mean low water mark (MLW) at elevation -4.98 ft North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88). Because the existing boat ramp does not extend below MLW, it can only be used at higher tides. The proposed ramp will be constructed generally within the same footprint as the existing ramp, but will be 52 ft longer (172 ft total length) and terminate at an elevation of -9.4 ft NAVD 88 so that it can be used under low tide conditions. The additional length will include a 30-ft extension of the concrete portion of the ramp with a one-foot high curb at its seaward end, 10 ft of riprap and 12 ft of crushed stone for scour protection. The ramp will be 18.5 ft wide, including a 16.5-ft wide area supporting vehicles and boat trailers and a one-foot wide curb on each side of the vehicular lane. The curbs at the end and sides of the ramp will help guide the boat trailer as it is backed into the water. In addition, scour protection will be provided by a four-foot wide grouted stone apron along the west side of the ramp and a six-foot wide grouted apron on the east side of the ramp. The ramp will be constructed at a 13.5-percent slope, which will increase the depth of water in which the boat is released from the trailer and

minimize scouring caused by direct contact with the seafloor and by turbulence associated with the boat propeller operating in shallow water (“prop wash”).

The work area will be enclosed by a cofferdam and dewatered so that all demolition and construction activities can take place in dry conditions and to avoid impacts to marine fisheries and adjacent wetland resource areas. After the existing concrete ramp is removed, the area of the proposed 172-ft long structure will be dredged and replaced with 1.5-ft layer of crushed stone to provide a stable base for the new concrete ramp, curbs and scour protection. Concrete will be poured over a 150-ft long section of crushed stone to form the new ramp structure. Riprap will be placed over the crushed stone for a distance of 10 ft seaward of the end of the concrete ramp and the final 12-ft long section of the structure will consist solely of the crushed stone layer.

Project Site

The boat ramp is located off Parker Avenue on the south side of the area of Cohasset Harbor known as Cohasset Cove. It is owned by the Town of Cohasset (Town) and is the only public boat ramp in Cohasset. A Town-owned pier and dock system is located adjacent to the west side of the boat ramp and a private marina is located to the east. In 1999, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) issued Chapter 91 (c. 91) License No. 8421 to the Town which authorized the existing boat ramp and pier and dock system. A gravel parking area serving these boating facilities is located on land south of the boat ramp. The Cohasset Harbormaster maintains 200 moorings in Cohasset Cove which are accessed from the pier and dock system.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) number 25021C0256E (effective July 17, 2012), the site is located in the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE) with a Base Flood Elevations of 10 ft to 14 ft NAVD 88. The section of Cohasset Harbor in which the site is located is protected from direct exposure to ocean waves by a barrier beach that is denoted as St-1 in the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management’s (CZM) Barrier Beach Inventory and is a FEMA-designated Coastal Barrier Resource System (CBRS). According to the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), Cohasset Harbor includes mapped shellfish habitat for blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) and spawning habitat for winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*).

The Town’s boat ramp and pier and dock system are known as Mariner’s Park (COH.910) and the site is located within the Cohasset Maritime Historic Area (COH.G), both of which are listed in the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s (MHC) Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth. According to the Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (BUAR), there is no record of any underwater archaeological resources in the vicinity of the site. However, significant commercial maritime activities occurred in Cohasset Harbor between the 1600s and 1900s, and important terrestrial archaeological resources have been found nearby that date to the Late Archaic period (approximately 5,000 to 3,000 years ago). The Town should notify BUAR and MHC if archaeological resources are encountered during construction and implement measures to limit adverse effects in accordance with the BUAR’s *Policy Guidance for the Discovery of Unanticipated Archaeological Resources*.

Environmental Impacts and Mitigation

Potential environmental impacts associated with the project include the alteration of 1,536 sf of Land Under Ocean (LUO), 2,764 sf of Coastal Beach, 33 linear feet (lf) of Coastal Bank and 2,776 sf of Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage (LSCSF). Alteration of LUO and Coastal Beach will convert approximately 4,300 sf (0.1 acres) of benthic habitat from natural sediment to rock or concrete. The project will dredge approximately 559 cubic yards of material within the footprint of the proposed structure. Construction activities disturbing sediment will cause turbidity that may impact water quality and nearby marine resources.

The project will enhance boating activities in tidelands by providing an expanded boat ramp that can be used under low tide conditions. Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts identified in the ENF include designing the ramp with a steeper slope to minimize prop wash, using a cofferdam to enclose the work area and installing and removing the cofferdam outside of the time-of-year (TOY) restriction recommended by DMF. According to CZM and DMF, State and federal permits may require additional mitigation for impacts to marine habitat.

Jurisdiction and Permitting

The project is undergoing MEPA review and requires preparation of an ENF pursuant to 301 CMR 11.03(3)(b)(6) because it requires Agency Actions and involves the reconstruction and expansion of a solid fill structure of 1,000 or more sf base area. The project requires a c. 91 license and 401 Water Quality Certificate (WQC) from MassDEP.

The Cohasset Conservation Commission issued an Order of Conditions (OOC) for the project (DEP File No. SE 13-1300) on January 8, 2020 that was not appealed. The project requires the filing of a Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) pursuant to the General Permits for Massachusetts.

Because the project will receive Financial Assistance from the Seaport Economic Council, MEPA jurisdiction is broad in scope and extends to all aspects of the project that may cause Damage to the Environment, as defined in the MEPA regulations.

Review of the ENF

The ENF reviewed existing site conditions and environmental resources. It provided a description of the project, including detailed plans, identified potential impacts and analyzed the project's compliance with applicable regulatory standards. The ENF included an alternatives analysis and identified measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate Damage to the Environment.

Alternatives Analysis

The ENF reviewed two alternatives to the Preferred Alternative. Alternative 1 (No Build Alternative) would make no modifications to the existing ramp and avoid new impacts to wetland resource areas and water quality associated with the proposed expansion and reconfiguration of the ramp. However, because the ramp currently ends at MLW as noted above, use of the ramp would be limited to higher tidal conditions. In addition, impacts would continue to occur due to prop wash because of the ramp's shallow grade (10 percent slope) and limited water depth under some tidal conditions.

Alternative 2 would extend the existing ramp by 40 ft at a 10 percent grade and add 20 ft of stone material at the end of the ramp to act as scour protection. This alternative would extend the ramp below MLW and enable its use under low tide conditions. It would have a similar permanent footprint on Coastal Beach and LUO as the Preferred Alternative but would minimize construction period impacts to Coastal Beach by limiting expansion of the ramp to LUO and maintaining the existing 10 percent slope. Alternative 2 would not have the benefits associated with a ramp with a steeper slope, including easier loading and unloading of boats and minimizing impacts from prop wash.

The Preferred Alternative has been designed at a 13.5 percent slope to make it easier to load and unload boats from a trailer and to minimize scouring from prop wash. It will be constructed largely within the footprint of the existing boat ramp to minimize impacts to wetland resource areas. Construction activities will be undertaken within a cofferdam to prevent impacts to marine resources from construction activities and associated turbidity.

Wetlands, Waterways and Marine Fisheries

Construction impacts of the project will be minimized by maintaining a cofferdam around the work site for the duration of the construction period and completing the work under dry conditions. The cofferdam will enclose the minimum area necessary within which to install the new ramp structure; this construction method will avoid direct and indirect impacts to nearby wetland resource areas and marine habitat by limiting the areal extent of construction activities and avoiding turbidity in the water column. The cofferdam should be installed and removed after June 30 and before February 1 to minimize impacts on winter flounder spawning. The Town has received an OOC from the Cohasset Conservation Commission for the construction of the ramp.

The project will increase the area of LUO and Coastal Beach occupied by the ramp by approximately 0.1 acres and convert habitat characteristics of this area from natural sediment to stone and concrete. According to the ENF, no mitigation for habitat conversion is necessary because the project has been designed to minimize impacts to benthic habitat and water quality caused by prop wash associated with the use of the existing ramp. However, according to comments from CZM and DMF, the conversion of habitat type may require mitigation during State and federal permitting, including a monetary contribution to the In-Lieu Fee program to fund habitat restoration efforts.

A new c. 91 License will be required for the proposed reconstruction and expansion of the boat ramp. According to MassDEP, the Town's pier and dock system has been modified since License No. 8421 was issued in 1999. The c. 91 license application for the ramp structure should include the pier and dock system as currently configured so that both structures can be authorized.

Construction

All construction and demolition activities should be managed in accordance with applicable MassDEP's regulations regarding Air Pollution Control (310 CMR 7.01, 7.09-7.10), and Solid Waste Facilities (310 CMR 16.00 and 310 CMR 19.00, including the waste ban provision at 310 CMR 19.017). The project should include measures to reduce construction period impacts (e.g., noise, dust, odor, solid waste management) and emissions of air pollutants

from equipment, including anti-idling measures in accordance with the Air Quality regulations (310 CMR 7.11). I encourage the Town to require that its contractors use construction equipment with engines manufactured to Tier 4 federal emission standards, or select project contractors that have installed retrofit emissions control devices or vehicles that use alternative fuels to reduce emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter (PM) from diesel-powered equipment. Off-road vehicles are required to use ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD). If oil and/or hazardous materials are found during construction, the Town should notify MassDEP in accordance with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (310 CMR 40.00). All construction activities should be undertaken in compliance with the conditions of all State and local permits. I encourage the Town to reuse or recycle construction and demolition (C&D) debris to the maximum extent. The Town should consult MassDEP's comment letter, which provides additional details on applicable regulations for construction period activities.

Conclusion

The ENF has sufficiently defined the nature and general elements of the project for the purposes of MEPA review and described measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate environmental impacts. Based on review of the ENF and comments received, and in consultation with State Agencies, I have determined that no further MEPA review is required. The project may proceed to State permitting.

November 23, 2020

Date

K. Theoharides

Kathleen A. Theoharides

Comments received:

11/05/2020	Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF)
11/12/2020	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)/Southeast Regional Office (SERO)
11/12/2020	Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)
11/12/2020	Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (BUAR)

KAT/AJS/ajs



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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Kathleen A. Theoharides
Secretary

Martin Suuberg
Commissioner

November 12, 2020

Kathleen A. Theoharides
Secretary of Energy and Environment
Executive Office of Energy and
Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
ATTN: MEPA Office
Boston, MA 02114

RE: ENF Review. EOEEA 16287
COHASSET. Cohasset Boat Ramp
Reconstruction at the Right-of-Way
Abutting 40 Parker Avenue

Dear Secretary Theoharides,

The Southeast Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has reviewed the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for the Cohasset Boat Ramp Reconstruction at the Right-of-Way Abutting 40 Parker Avenue, Cohasset, Massachusetts (EOEEA #16287). The Project Proponent provides the following information for the Project:

The project site is located within the municipal Right-of-way in abutting 40 Parker Ave, Cohasset (see **Attachment B**) (Assessor's Map G6, see **Attachment C**) and within Cohasset Cove (Bailey's Creek). The new boat ramp will replace the existing asphalt and concrete block ramp. The existing boat ramp has an average grade of 10% and is use restricted to the upper tidal range. The proposed project includes the reconstruction and expansion of the existing boat ramp to increase the safety and ability to use the boat ramp. The new boat ramp will expand slightly to the east into an abutting easement agreement with the abutting property owner, and the ramp will extend seaward to allow access throughout the tidal cycle.

The new concrete boat ramp will have a 13.5% slope with curbing and a sloped perimeter rip rap for scour protection. The concrete ramp will extend 150 feet seaward to a 1 foot high curb, and an additional 10 feet of riprap will be placed to slope from the ramp to the creek bed grade. Existing unsuitable material will be removed and replaced with crushed stone from the toe of the existing ramp to 50 feet seaward. The proposed concrete ramp includes an extension with the first 29 feet of the extension being concrete ramp over crushed stone, an additional 9 feet will have riprap over the crushed stone, and then the remaining 12 feet will be just a crushed stone surface.

This information is available in alternate format. Contact Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Director of Diversity/Civil Rights at 617-292-5751.

TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370

MassDEP Website: www.mass.gov/dep

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The proposed ramp will be a total of 16.5 feet wide for vehicles and trailers to traverse. In addition to this there will be 12-inch wide curbing on each side, approximate 4-foot wide grouted stone apron on the west side (pier side), and approximate 6-foot wide grouted stone apron on the east side. The curbing on the east side will transition from 6" high curbing to 3" high curbing approximately half way down the ramp to allow trailers to offload their vessel to the east of the ramp at higher tides. The curb at the toe of the proposed ramp will be approximately 1 foot high to assist vehicle drivers feel the location of the bottom of the ramp when not visible. The riprap slope along the side of the ramp will be grouted. The project plan set is located in **Attachment G**.

The concrete boat ramp will transition to the existing paved road at the landward end with necessary paving to match the existing. The proposed project does not include any work to the parking area or pier, ramp and float.

Bureau of Water Resources Comments

Wetlands and Waterways. The Wetlands and Waterways Program offers the following comments on the ENF submitted by the Town of Cohasset to reconstruct an existing boat ramp.

Wetlands:

- DEP-SERO Wetlands Program notes that the Cohasset Conservation Commission has issued an Order of Conditions approving the Project under Wetlands File No. SE 13 - 1300 on January 8, 2020. The Order of Conditions was not appealed.
- Portions of the Project lie within Land Under the Ocean (310 CMR 10.25), Coastal Beach (310 CMR 10.27), Coastal Bank (310 CMR 10.30) and Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage.
- The proposed dredge volume reported in the ENF is approximately 559 cubic yards of material related to the removal of the demolished existing ramp and excavated material for the construction of the new ramp. In accordance with 314 CMR 9.04(12) a Water Quality Certification issued by the Department will be required as the dredged material is greater than 100 cubic yards.

Waterways:

- The proposed boat ramp will be located within flowed tidelands and therefore will require the submittal of a Chapter 91 License Application. Since the Project will entail dredging associated the boat ramp reconstruction, the Proponent may choose to file a BRP WW26 Combined Application Form for Chapter 91 and 410 Water Quality Certification. The Project will be reviewed as a water-dependent use Project in accordance with the Waterways Regulations at 310 CMR 9.12(2)(a).
- The boat ramp, pier, ramp, floats and seawall were previously authorized under Chapter 91 License No. 8421. In reviewing the plans and aerial photos included in the ENF, it appears that modifications have made to the float system adjacent to the boat ramp. If these float modifications have not been authorized, the Waterways Program requests that the existing float system be included in the c.91 License Application and shown on the license plans.

Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup Comments

ENF #16287 – Based upon the information provided, the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup (BWSC) searched its databases for disposal sites and release notifications that have occurred at or might impact the proposed Project area. A disposal site is a location where there has been a release to the

environment of oil and/or hazardous material that is regulated under M.G.L. c. 21E, and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan [MCP – 310 CMR 40.0000].

There are no listed MCP disposal sites located at or in the vicinity of the property that would appear to impact the proposed Project area. Interested parties may view a map showing the location of BWSC disposal sites using the MassGIS data viewer (Oliver) at: http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/map_ol/oliver.php Under “Available Data Layers” select “Regulated Areas”, and then “DEP Tier Classified 21E Sites”. MCP reports and the compliance status of specific disposal sites may be viewed using the BWSC Waste Sites/Reportable Release Lookup at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/portal#!/search/wastesite>

The Project Proponent is advised that if oil and/or hazardous material are identified during the implementation of this Project, notification to MassDEP may be required pursuant to the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (310 CMR 40.0000). If oil and/or hazardous material is encountered a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) should be retained to determine if notification is required and, if need be, to render appropriate opinions and/or conduct response actions. The BWSC may be contacted for guidance if questions arise regarding cleanup.

Bureau of Air and Waste (BAW) Comments

Air Quality. Construction and operation activities shall not cause or contribute to a condition of air pollution due to dust, odor or noise. To determine the appropriate requirements please refer to:

- 310 CMR 7.09 Dust, Odor, Construction, and Demolition
- 310 CMR 7.10 Noise

Construction-Related Measures

MassDEP requests that all non-road diesel equipment rated 50 horsepower or greater meet EPA’s Tier 4 emission limits, which are the most stringent emission standards currently available for off-road engines. If a piece of equipment is not available in the Tier 4 configuration, then the Proponent should use construction equipment that has been retrofitted with appropriate emissions reduction equipment. Emission reduction equipment includes EPA-verified, CARB-verified, or MassDEP-approved diesel oxidation catalysts (DOCs) or Diesel Particulate Filters (DPFs). The Proponent should maintain a list of the engines, their emission tiers, and, if applicable, the best available control technology installed on each piece of equipment on file for Departmental review.

Massachusetts Idling Regulation

The ENF reports that the Project Proponent proposes that the “Project will be conditioned to reduce idling of construction equipment when not in use.” MassDEP reminds the Proponent that unnecessary idling (i.e., in excess of five minutes), with limited exception, is not permitted during the construction and operations phase of the Project (Section 7.11 of 310 CMR 7.00). With regard to construction period activity, typical methods of reducing idling include driver training, periodic inspections by site supervisors, and posting signage. In addition, to ensure compliance with this regulation once the Project is occupied, MassDEP requests that the Proponent install permanent signs limiting idling to five minutes or less on-site.

Proposed s.61 Findings

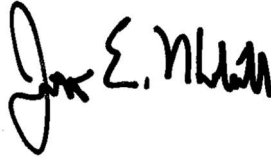
The “Certificate of the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs on the Environmental Notification Form” may indicate that this Project requires further MEPA review and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. Pursuant to MEPA Regulations 301 CMR 11.12(5)(d), the Proponent will prepare Proposed Section 61 Findings to be included in the EIR in a separate chapter updating and summarizing proposed mitigation measures. In accordance with 301 CMR

11.07(6)(k), this chapter should also include separate updated draft Section 61 Findings for each State agency that will issue permits for the Project. The draft Section 61 Findings should contain clear commitments to implement mitigation measures, estimate the individual costs of each proposed measure, identify the parties responsible for implementation, and contain a schedule for implementation.

Other Comments/Guidance

The MassDEP Southeast Regional Office appreciates the opportunity to comment on this ENF. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact George Zoto at (508) 946-2820.

Very truly yours,



Jonathan E. Hobill,
Regional Engineer,
Bureau of Water Resources

JH/GZ

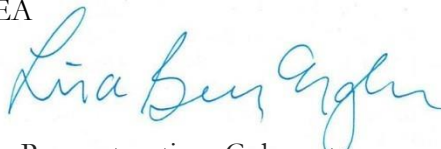
Cc: DEP/SERO

ATTN: Millie Garcia-Serrano, Regional Director
David Johnston, Deputy Regional Director, BWR
Gerard Martin, Deputy Regional Director, BWSC
Seth Pickering, Deputy Regional Director, BAW
Jennifer Viveiros, Deputy Regional Director, ADMIN
Nate Corcoran, Wetlands and Waterways, BWR
Carlos Fragata, Wetlands and Waterways, BWR
Mark Dakers, Solid Waste, BAW
Alison Cochrane, Solid Waste, BAW
Allen Hemberger, Site Management, BWSC



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary, EEA
ATTN: Alex Strycky, MEPA Office
FROM: Lisa Berry Engler, Director, CZM 
DATE: November 12, 2020
RE: EEA# 16287 – Cohasset Boat Ramp Reconstruction: Cohasset

The Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) has completed its review of the above-referenced Environmental Notification Form (ENF), noticed in the *Environmental Monitor* dated October 22, 2020. Based on our review of the ENF and participation in the MEPA consultation meeting, CZM recommends the following comments be addressed in permitting.

Project Description

This project, as proposed, entails the reconstruction and expansion of an existing boat ramp. The existing ramp is in an advanced state of deterioration and is of insufficient length to provide the ability to launch and retrieve trailered boats during the lower portion of the tidal cycle. The proposed ramp will be 16.5 feet wide, will have 12-inch wide curbing on each side, an approximately 4-foot wide grouted stone apron on the west side (pier side), an approximately 6-foot wide grouted stone apron on the east side, with the curbing on the east side transitioning from 6 inch high curbing to 3 inch high curbing approximately half way down the ramp. The project will result in 1,536 square feet (SF) of impact to Land Under the Ocean, 2,764 SF of impact to Coastal Beaches, 33 Linear Feet (LF) of impact to Coastal Bank, and 2,776 SF of impact to Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage. All impacts are listed as permanent. The project will include dredging of 559 cubic yards of material with a footprint 149 feet in length, 28.5 feet in width, and an average depth of 3.6 feet. The dredging will impact an intertidal area of approximately 2,764 SF. In order to reduce impacts to winter flounder habitat during construction a cofferdam will be constructed around the work area and construction will be performed in the dry. Concrete and sediment removed during the demolition of the existing ramp will be reused during the reconstruction of the boat ramp, where applicable, with the remainder being disposed of at an approved upland facility

As described in the ENF, the project will require a combined BRP WW 26 Combined License/Permit and 401 Water Quality Certificate from the MA Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) authorization. The project will also require approval from the Cohasset Conservation Commission and CZM Federal Consistency concurrence. Funding for the project is being provided, in part, by a grant from the Seaport Economic Council.

Project Comments

This project will result in an expansion of the ramp and apron footprint in intertidal and subtidal resource areas. As part of the permitting process the proponent should characterize the impacts to these areas from physical displacement of habitat and should develop commensurate mitigation to offset these impacts. Absent proposed mitigation an In-Lieu fee assessment by the USACE may be appropriate.



During the MEPA consultation it was noted that the location of the proposed ramp and apron were in close proximity to the existing municipal pier and float and that, due to the scope of the bottom anchored float, there was low tide lateral shifting of the float which appeared to encroach on the proposed ramp/apron footprint. To address this issue and avoid impacts between the float, ramp and apron the proponent should evaluate the feasibility of utilizing piles to secure the float which would prevent any lateral shifting of the float at low tide. Due to the proximity of the float to the proposed ramp the proponent may also wish to designate the easterly side of the float as a vessel drop-off and pickup area in order to avoid conflicts between trailers attempting to utilize the ramp and boats tied to the float.

Federal Consistency

The proposed project will be subject to CZM federal consistency review, in which case the project must be found to be consistent with CZM's enforceable program policies. For further information on this process, please contact, Robert Boeri, Project Review Coordinator, at robert.boeri@mass.gov or visit the CZM web site at www.state.ma.us/czm/fcr.htm.

LBE/jb

cc:

Greg DeCesare and David Hill, MassDEP

Christine Jacek, USACE

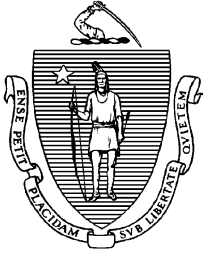
John Logan, Eileen Feeney, and Kathryn Ford, MA DMF

Ed Reiner, US EPA

Kaitlyn Shaw, National Marine Fisheries Service

Lauren Gibbons, Cohasset Harbormaster

Jeffery Summers, Cohasset Conservation Agent



The COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
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November 12, 2020

Kathleen A. Theoharides, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attention: Alex Strycky, MEPA Unit
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Town of Cohasset: Cohasset Boat Ramp Reconstruction, (EOEA #16287), Cohasset, MA

Dear Secretary Theoharides,

The staff of the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources has reviewed the above-referenced proposed project as detailed in the *Environmental Monitor* of 22 October 2020 and offers the following comments.

The Board has conducted a preliminary review of its files, the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Massachusetts Cultural Resources Inventory System (MACRIS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Coast Survey's Wreck and Obstructions database, historical charts and maps, and secondary literature sources to identify known and potential submerged cultural resources in the proposed project area.

No record of any underwater archaeological resources was found. Based on the results of this review and the limited nature of the proposed project, the Board expects that this project is unlikely to impact submerged cultural resources.

However, the Board notes the area may be considered to be generally archaeologically sensitive. It is located within the MACRIS-inventoried Cohasset Harbor Maritime Historic Area (COH.G), identified as significant for its commercial maritime activities between the 1600-1900s, and is approximately 1,000 ft north of the terrestrial Late Archaic period Quonabussit archaeological site (19-PL-19). Therefore, should heretofore unknown archaeological resources be encountered during the course of work, the Board expects that the project's sponsor will take steps to limit adverse effects and notify the Board and the MHC, as well as other appropriate agencies, immediately in accordance with the Board's *Policy Guidance for the Discovery of Unanticipated Archaeological Resources*.

The Board appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments as part of the MEPA review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at david.s.robinson@mass.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David S. Robinson".

David S. Robinson
Director

/dsr

Cc: Brona Simon, MHC
Robert Boeri and Jason Burtner, MCZM (via email attachment)
Bettina Washington, WTGH/A (via email attachment)
David Weeden, MWT (via email attachment)



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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RONALD S. AMIDON
Commissioner

DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN
Director

November 5, 2020

Secretary Kathleen Theoharides
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strycky, EEA No. 16287
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Theoharides:

The Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) has reviewed the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) by the Town of Cohasset for the Cohasset Boat Ramp Reconstruction Project and offers the following comments.

The project site is located along Bailey's Creek within Cohasset Cove on 40 Parker Avenue in the Town of Cohasset. The proposed boat ramp replacement includes both widening and lengthening. The current boat ramp terminates at MLW. The proposed replacement would extend below MLW to a depth of -4.1 MLLW to allow for use at all tides. The new ramp would be set at a 13.5% slope and widened to 16.5 feet with 1-foot curbing being added to each side. Crushed stone would be added at the seaward end of the ramp. Construction is proposed "in the dry" with the use of a cofferdam around the work area. Existing marine fisheries resources and habitat and potential project impacts to those resources are outlined in the following paragraphs.

The project site borders mapped habitat for blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*). The nearshore area to the west of the ramp contains habitat suitable for this species. Land containing shellfish is deemed significant to the interest of the Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.34) and the protection of marine fisheries.

The project site is bordered to the east and west by salt marsh vegetation. Salt marsh provides a variety of ecosystem services, including habitat and energy sources for many fish and invertebrate species (Boesch and Turner 1984; Deegan and Garritt 1997; Deegan et al. 2000).

MA DMF has identified Cohasset Cove as winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*) spawning habitat. Winter flounder enter the area and spawn from February through May, laying clumps of eggs directly on the substrate. These demersal eggs hatch approximately fifteen to twenty days later. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries

Commission has designated winter flounder spawning habitat as “Habitat Areas of Particular Concern” (HAPC). Every effort should be made to protect winter flounder spawning habitat.

MA DMF offers the following comments for your consideration:

- Turbidity associated with boat ramp removal and installation could impact spawning winter flounder and their demersal eggs. The ENF notes that a cofferdam would be installed around the work area to contain turbidity. MA DMF recommends that the cofferdam be installed outside of the winter flounder time-of-year restriction period (**February 1 to June 30**) to ensure that the area is contained before spawning commences (Evans et al. 2011). This approach would close off the work area prior to the spawning period and as a result reduce the risk of flounder eggs being deposited within the area enclosed by the cofferdam.
- While the proposed ramp extension may reduce turbidity impacts by limiting propeller scouring, it will also result in habitat conversion that may require mitigation during the state and federal permitting process.

Questions regarding this review may be directed to John Logan in our New Bedford office at john.logan@mass.gov.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. McKiernan

Director

cc: Cohasset Conservation Commission
Catherine Ricks, Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC
Kaitlyn Shaw, NMFS
Jason Burtner, CZM
Ed Reiner, EPA
Bev Vucson, DFG
Eileen Feeney, Kathryn Ford, Ryan Nuttall, DMF

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DM/JL/sd