

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office

Environmental Notification Form

For Office Use Only

EEA#: _____

MEPA Analyst: _____

The information requested on this form must be completed in order to submit a document electronically for review under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: Aldana Rd, Halifax, swap "the sliver" (.89 ac) for Parcel B (7.32 ac)		
Street Address: 0 Aldana Rd		
Municipality: Town of Halifax	Watershed: Taunton River Basin	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:	Latitude: 42.0105083102115 Longitude: -70.8174156372929	
Estimated commencement date:	Estimated completion date: 6/30/2021	
Project Type: land swap: 0.89 acres for 7.32 acres	Status of project design: 100 %complete Art. 97 legislation has passed; Chpt. 303 of Acts of 2020	
Proponent: Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game and Town of Halifax		
Street Address: 251 Causeway Street (Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game)		
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02114
Name of Contact Person: Joan Pierce (Land Agent, SE District Office)		
Firm/Agency: Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game	Street Address: SE District office, 195 Bournedale Rd	
Municipality: Buzzards Bay	State: MA	Zip Code: 02532
Phone: (508) 743-9066	Fax: _____	E-mail: Joan.Pierce-FWE@mass.gov

Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
 Yes No

If this is an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (ENF) (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) or a Notice of Project Change (NPC), are you requesting: **No** **N/A**

a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8)) Yes No **N/A**

a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09) Yes No **N/A**

a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No **N/A**

a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No **N/A**

(Note: Greenhouse Gas Emissions analysis must be included in the Expanded ENF.)

Which MEPA review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
310 CMR 11.03 (1) 3 and 5 Release in an interest in land held for conservation

Which State Agency Permits will the project require? None

Identify any financial assistance or **land transfer from an Agency of the Commonwealth**, including the Agency name and the amount of funding or land area in acres:
In accordance with Chapt. 303 of 2020 (Art. 97 legislation), DFG will convey to the Town of Halifax a parcel shown on Plan Bk 43 Pg 56 as 39,120 sq ft.; the Town of Halifax will convey to DFG Parcel B (7.32 ac), Plan Bk 35 Pg 240, Ply. Co. Reg. of Deeds.

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total
LAND			
Total site acreage	39, 120 sq ft (= 0.898 acres)		
New acres of land altered		N/A	
Acres of impervious area	None N/A	N/A	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		N/A	
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		N/A	
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		N/A	
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of housing units	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maximum height (feet)	N/A	N/A	N/A
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	N/A	N/A	N/A
Parking spaces	N/A	N/A	N/A
WASTEWATER			
Water Use (Gallons per day)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Water withdrawal (GPD)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wastewater generation/treatment (GPD)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Length of water mains (miles)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Length of sewer mains (miles)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Has this project been filed with MEPA before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (EEA # _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (EEA # _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION – all proponents must fill out this section

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Describe the existing conditions and land uses on the project site:

The “sliver” (so-called, owned by DFG) is 39,120 sq. ft (0.898 acres) and runs along the south side of Aldana Rd. for a distance of 2,546+/- ft, with an average width of 15 ft. (Plan Bk 43 Pg 56). The “sliver” lies along the toe of the slope of Aldana Rd. The surface of Aldana Rd. is several feet higher than the adjacent wetland. The “sliver” is wetland but has negligible habitat value because of its long, very narrow configuration.

It is proposed by both the Town of Halifax and the Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game, that the “sliver” be swapped, for no further consideration, for Parcel B (Plan Bk 34 Pg 240; 7.32 acres).

Parcel B is a triangle-shaped parcel, abutted on 2 of the 3 sides by the Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game Peterson Swamp WMA. Parcel B has considerable habitat value as it is predominantly Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, a plant community of importance to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Rare and Endangered Species Program. Parcel B is also an in-holding in the Peterson Swamp WMA which Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game has wanted for many years to acquire.

Describe the proposed project and its programmatic and physical elements:

The proposed swap of land (the “sliver” in exchange for Parcel B) is a straight forward land conveyance involving no further consideration, action or commitments by either party. Article 97 legislation has been passed (Attachment A: Chapt. 303 of Acts of 2020). The swap is mutually beneficial to both parties and will have a positive impact to the ecological resources of the Peterson Swamp WMA.

The Town of Halifax desires to acquire the “sliver” in order to create a safer layout at the location of a pronounced sharp curve in Aldana Rd., a gravel surfaced public way. This sharp curve is shown on Plan Bk 43 Pg 56.

The Town of Halifax is aware that wetlands along the toe of the slope of the south side of Aldana Rd may be impacted if the Town proceeds with any changes in the layout of Aldana Rd (i.e., roadway improvements). Currently the Town has no proposal for any such changes or improvements, no plans have been prepared, no funds have been approved, and the Town does not anticipate generating any such proposal within the next 5 years. The Town understands that if or when the Town decides to make any changes to the layout of Aldana Rd and if those changes involve wetland impacts, the Town may need to submit an ENF to MEPA, as well as obtain any other required permits, regarding wetland impacts.

The Town is amenable to having language in the conveyancing document for the “sliver” to the effect that the Town of Halifax shall complete the MEPA process for roadway improvements if it is found that said improvements meet or exceed a MEPA review threshold and if the Town proposes to proceed with roadway improvements within 5 years of the granting of a MEPA certificate for the proposed swap of “the sliver” for Parcel B.

NOTE: The project description should summarize both the project’s direct and indirect impacts (including construction period impacts) in terms of their magnitude, geographic extent, duration and frequency, and reversibility, as applicable. It should also discuss the infrastructure requirements

of the project and the capacity of the municipal and/or regional infrastructure to sustain these requirements into the future.

Describe the on-site project alternatives (and alternative off-site locations, if applicable), considered by the proponent, including at least one feasible alternative that is allowed under current zoning, and the reasons(s) that they were not selected as the preferred alternative:

There are no feasible alternatives; there is no other strip that could be added to Aldana Rd to make the road layout safer; and there is no other parcel that could be added to Peterson Swamp WMA that has the Atlantic White Cedar plant community.

Specifically this “swap” project meets the six Conditions for Disposition Exceptions in the EOE Article 97 Land Disposition Policy (Feb. 19, 1998) as follows:

1. All other options to avoid the Art. 97 disposition have been explored:

Yes. There is no other narrow strip of land that can be added to the road layout of Aldana Road. And, as explained with the remaining Conditions, the environmental benefit from the “swap” far outweighs any negative of the disposition of the narrow strip of land to the Town of Halifax.

2. Disposition of the subject 39,120 sq. ft parcel and its proposed use does not destroy or threaten unique or significant resources: ***Yes. While the 39,120 sq ft parcel (average width of 15 ft) is wetland, none is designated Priority Habitat or Estimated Habitat of Rare Species. By contrast, the Parcel B (7.32 acres) that will become Art. 97 land is almost all Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, a wetland plant community of great interest to the Mass. Natural Heritage Program.***

3. Real estate of equal or greater fair market value or value in use of proposed use and of significantly greater resource value is granted to the disposing Agency (DFG). ***Yes. Parcel B (7.32 acres) is much larger than the 39,120 sq. ft (0.89 acres) parcel to be disposed of. Parcel B is an in-holding in the Peterson Swamp WMA and it is important to make Parcel B “Art. 97” land. The “sliver” to be disposed of has little habitat value. Both parcels have minimal fair market value because they are both unbuildable; however, to the extent that Parcel B has fair market value (DFG might pay up to \$1,000/acre for Parcel B), Parcel B has the greater financial value.***

4. Minimum acreage necessary proposed for disposition and its resources will be protected to the extent possible. ***Yes. Only the minimum acreage necessary to improve traffic safety of the layout of Aldana Rd is being conveyed to the Town of Halifax. The Town will be filling only that amount of the 39,120 sq. ft that is necessary to improve the layout of the road; however at least some of the 39,120 sq. ft will be filled and its wetland values will be lost.***

5. The disposition serves an Art. 97 purpose or other public purpose: ***Yes. The much larger Parcel B will be conveyed to the Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game in exchange for the “sliver” (39,120 sq. ft.). The natural resource value of Parcel B is much greater than that of The “sliver”. Currently Parcel B is general municipal land without permanent conservation protection.***

6. Disposition of the “sliver” is not contrary to the express wishes of the person(s) who conveyed the “sliver” to the Commonwealth. ***Yes. Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game acquired the “sliver” in 1974 as part of the purchase of 200+/- acres, from Bay State Company. The 200+/- acre property was conveyed to Mass. DFG because Bay State Company had no further use for the property, not because Bay State Company had any concern about conservation.***

NOTE: *The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to consider what effect changing the parameters*