



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

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April 14, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME: Agawam Southwest Area Wastewater Treatment  
Improvements Project  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Agawam  
PROJECT WATERSHED: Westfield River  
EOEA NUMBER: 13393  
PROJECT PROPONENT: Agawam Department of Public Works  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: March 8, 2006

As Secretary of Environmental Affairs, I hereby determine that the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), submitted on this 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).

## **Overview**

The Town of Agawam is expanding its existing sewer collection system to service the southwest area of the Town of Agawam. As currently designed, the Town's preferred alternative will include the phased installation of approximately 18.6 miles of new sewers and force mains and four new pumping stations. According to the proponent, nearly all of the proposed new sewers will be located within the rights-of-way of existing public roadways. The proposed project will involve two cross-country connections (approximately 1,000 linear feet (lf) total) and will directly impact approximately 40 lf of inland bank, 600 sf of Land Under Water, and 100 sf of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW). The sewer expansion project is to be completed by the year 2009. The Town's sewer system has the capacity to accommodate the additional wastewater flow (1.02 mgd) anticipated from the proposed sewer expansion project.

The additional wastewater flow to be conveyed by the proposed sewer expansion project will not exceed the Town of Agawam's total allocation for sewage treatment and disposal (8.2 mgd) at the City of Springfield's Bondi's Island Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) located in Agawam.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03 (5)(a)(3) of the MEPA regulations, because the project involves construction of sewer mains ten or more miles in length (approximately 19.4 miles total). The project will require an Order of Conditions from the Agawam Conservation Commission, a Construction Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), and 401 Water Quality Certification and a Sewer Extension Permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The project will likely also require a 404 Programmatic General Permit from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and a National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Permit from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Because the proponent is seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction extends to all aspects of the project that may cause significant Damage to the Environment.

### **Wetlands and Drainage**

The proposed sewer extension plan will involve two small cross-country sections (approximately 1000 lf total) located in the Tanglewood Lane/North Street Extension, and the Kosak Court/Proposed Route 57 areas of the project site. The proponent has committed to installing construction phase Best Management Practices BMPs including staked haybales and siltation fences, and will reseed temporarily disturbed areas located within wetland resource areas with appropriate wetland seed mix. According to the proponent, the project will be accomplished in a manner that is consistent with the Performance Standards of the Wetlands Regulations (310 CMR 10.00).

### **Rare Species**

Portions of the proposed sewer expansion project, including at least 1 proposed pump station, are located within known rare species habitat. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has identified rare species habitat for the Eastern Pondmussel (*Ligumia nasuta*), the Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*), the Wood Turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*), the Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene Carolina*), the Jefferson Salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*), the Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*), and the Climbing Fumitory (*Adlumia fungosa*) within the project site area. In their comments on the FEIR, NHESP indicated that the construction activities associated with the proposed sewer construction project will not result in an adverse impact to rare species habitat located within the project area.

**Historic / Archeological Resources**

In their comments, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), identified two areas of the project site the South West Street Pumping Station, and the Tanglewood Lane cross-country sewer segment that were not included as part of the proponent's archaeological investigations and field surveys for the project site due to access issues. According to MHC, these areas will need to be surveyed to determine the full extent of project impacts on historic and archeological resources. The proponent should respond to MHC's comments and should continue to consult with the MHC in the design and completion of its archeological investigations for the proposed project.

**Cost to Homeowners**

The proponent's recommended plan will be constructed over several years (2006-2009), and has an estimated Capital Costs of \$27,500,000.00, and Annual O/M Costs of \$27,500.00 – \$160,000.00. Project funding will be comprised of a general bond, and Betterment Fees. According to the information provided in the FEIR, the average household Capital costs and O/M costs for households directly served by the new sewer service is estimated to be \$18,350.00 and \$287.50, respectively.

**Growth Management**

Executive Order #385 requires that state and local agencies engage in proactive and coordinated planning oriented towards resource protection and sustainable economic development. For reasons of both environmental protection and fiscal prudence, investments in public infrastructure should be carefully targeted toward those areas for which clear existing needs have been established and for areas where denser development is appropriate, thereby relieving development pressures on open space, agricultural lands, and other valuable natural resources.

According to the information provided in the FEIR, the Town of Agawam will continue to pursue the adoption of new zoning ordinances, including an Open Space Residential Cluster Development Ordinance, and a Right-to-Farm Ordinance, and other land use regulations and practices to manage growth within the proposed sewer expansion areas. I continue to encourage the proponent to consult with DEP, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and the Growth Management Policy staff at the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs as it develops and implements its growth management strategy.

**Construction Period**

According to the comments received from the MHD on the DEIR, the project will require a construction permit from the MHD for the proposed construction of sewer lines within the Route 57 bypass. The proponent should continue to consult with the MHD's District Office 2 during final project design. All construction-related refueling and equipment maintenance activities should be conducted under cover on impervious surface areas with containment, and outside of any wetlands resource areas, endangered species habitat areas, residential areas and wellhead protection areas. I ask that the proponent require its contractors to retrofit diesel-powered equipment with emissions controls, such as particulate filters or traps, and use low-sulfur diesel fuel pursuant to DEP's Clean Construction Equipment Initiative.

**Mitigation/Section 61**

The proponent has committed to a number of mitigation measures, listed below, for all areas of project impact. The proponent should work closely with MHD, the Town of Agawam's Conservation Commission, and abutting property owners located throughout the project site to establish a schedule for the implementation of mitigation, based on the construction phases of the project.

- Installation of odor control equipment (chemical feed systems) at three of the four proposed pump stations (Pine Street, Barry Street, South West Street);
- Monitor for potential odors from the proposed White Fox Road pump station;
- Archeological field surveys for the South West Street Pumping Station, and the Tanglewood Lane cross-country sewer segment areas;
- Design and implementation of a Traffic Control Plan for project work within collector roads and state highway right-of-ways; and
- Installation of construction phase Best Management Practices BMPs including staked haybales and siltation fences, and reseeded areas located within wetland resource areas with appropriate wetland seed mix.

The final Section 61 Finding will be included with all state permits issued for this project, and will be considered binding upon the proponent as mitigation commitments. A copy of the Final Section 61 Findings must be forwarded to the MEPA Office.

April 14, 2006  
DATE

  
Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary

Comments received:

03/22/06      Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)  
03/29/06      Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP)  
04/05/06      Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD)

FEIR #13393  
SRP/NCZ/ncz