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May 11, 2007

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

PROJECT NAME : Proposed Access Path on Existing Path for Cross Country
 Sewer Maintenance
 PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Mansfield
 PROJECT WATERSHED : Taunton
 EOE NUMBER : 13986R
 PROJECT PROPONENT : Town of Mansfield
 DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : April 11, 2007

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.03 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I hereby determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the project consists of improvements to an existing cross-country sewer main easement to facilitate maintenance in accordance with the Town of Mansfield's Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) program. The cross-country sewer main and associated access easement was constructed in 1986 through an area within and proximate to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVWs). It was anticipated that future access along the easement would be feasible; however, final construction grades have led to the area being inundated with water (either due to heavy rainfall or high groundwater) making access impossible, and in some instances, rendering sewer manholes underwater. The project will entail the placement of a gravel base to raise an access road approximately one foot above existing topography, raising several manhole elevations, and the replication of approximately 11,800 square feet (sf) BVWs.

While the project will result in the direct alteration of a considerable area of BVWs, the amount of potential impact has been minimized and mitigated through a reduced project area and the provision of wetland replication areas. The Town has proposed an 8-foot wide pathway in lieu of a standard 10 to 12-foot access road, and has determined an alternative means of accessing some portions of the sewer easement through an existing path, eliminating the need for a stream crossing. Due to the nature of the project, complete avoidance of wetland resource area impacts is not feasible, as the entire project site is within BVWs. Maintenance of the sewer easement in 2002 failed, and several manholes have been identified as leaking and in need of repair. At least three manholes were observed to be entirely underwater during the April 24, 2007 MEPA site visit. This project has been identified by the Town of Mansfield as a key component within their I&I mitigation program.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03 (3)(b)(1) (d) because the project requires a state action and will involve the alteration of 5,000 sf or more of BVWs. The project will require a Section 401 Water Quality Certificate from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The project will also require an Order of Conditions from the Mansfield Conservation Commission, and in the case of an appeal, a Superseding Order of Conditions from MassDEP. Additionally, the project must obtain approval under the Programmatic General Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (U.S. ACOE).

Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction extends to those aspects of the project that may have significant environmental impacts and that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction exists over wetlands and stormwater.

Wetlands

The project will require the direct alteration of approximately 11,710 sf of BVWs subsequent to the placement of an 8-foot wide gravel access path within the sewer easement. The proposed work includes removing and replacing suitable material for the length of the gravel access path, raising sewer manhole rims to proper elevations, and the placement of cross drains under the access road. The proponent has proposed to replicate BVWs in six areas within or adjacent to the sewer easement at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio. Impact to wetland resource areas has been avoided and minimized through the construction of an 8-foot wide path; the minimum practical width to facilitate future maintenance of the sewer main. Additionally, the proponent has avoided a stream crossing within the sewer easement by determining that several man holes can be accessed from an existing path off King Arthur Way. The ENF included construction specifications and a planting schedule for the wetland replication areas, including a monitoring plan to assess replication success in accordance with performance standards within the Wetlands Protection Act regulations.

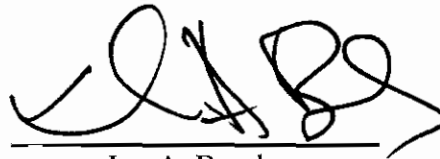
The project requires a Water Quality Certificate from MassDEP and approval under the Programmatic General Permit from the U.S. ACOE. I anticipate that the Town of Mansfield will work with these agencies to ensure that the project is designed and constructed in a manner consistent with applicable performance standards.

Stormwater

The proposed project will not introduce impervious surfaces within the sewer easement as a result of access path construction. Stormwater will be directed to adjacent swales or will infiltrate directly into the ground along the access path. The project proponent should take measures to control erosion and sedimentation during the construction period through the use of approved best management practices (BMPs) and limit exposure of soils in stockpile areas.

Based on the information in the ENF and after consultation with relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of the project and appropriate mitigation can be addressed during the permitting process. No further MEPA review is required at this time.

May 11, 2007
Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments received:

05/01/2007 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection - SERO

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