Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office

ENF Environmental Notification Form

For Office Use Only *Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*
EOEA No.: 13503
MEPA Analyst: Rick Boorée
Phone: 617-626-1130

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: Near shore dredged material disposal off Plum Island Beach in Newbury/Newburyport, MA.		
Street: n/a		
Municipality: Newburyport	Watershed: n/a	
Universal Tranverse Mercator Coordinates:	Latitude: 42° 47' 54" Longitude: 70° 48' 29"	
Estimated commencement date: 2006 – dependent upon availability of funds	Estimated completion date: 2006 – dependent upon availability of funds	
Approximate cost: $1,100,000	Status of project design: 75 %complete	
Proponent: City of Newburyport, c/o Ralph Steele, Harbormaster		
Street: 90 Pleasant Street		
Municipality: Newburyport	State: MA	Zip Code: 01950
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Jack Karalius, Project Manager		
Firm/Agency: U.S. Army Corps of Eng.	Street: 696 Virginia Road	
Municipality: Concord	State: MA	Zip Code: 01742
Phone: (978) 318-8288	Fax:(978) 318-8891	E-mail:

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

Has this project been filed with MEPA before?
x☐ Yes (EOEA No._____) ☐No

Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?
☐ Yes (EOEA No._____) x☐No

Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8)) ☐Yes x ☐No
a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09) ☐Yes x☐No
a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11) ☐Yes x☐No
a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11) ☐Yes x ☐No

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): n/a

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?
☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: WQC, Order of Conditions, Chapter 91 License, CZM Approval

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03): Disposal of 10,000 cy or more of dredged material in sub-tidal area off Plum Island Beach

- ☐ Land
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ ACEC
- ☐ Rare Species
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Air
- ☐ Regulations
- x☐ Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Solid & Hazardous Waste
- ☐ Historical & Archaeological Resources

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total
LAND			
Total site acreage	n/a...subtidal nearshore area		
New acres of land altered		Approx. 35 acres	
Acres of impervious area	n/a	n/a	n/a
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		none	
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		none	
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		none	
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage n/a			
Number of housing units n/a			
Maximum height (in feet) n/a			
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day n/a			
Parking spaces n/a			
WASTEWATER			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use n/a			
GPD water withdrawal n/a			
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment n/a			
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles) n/a			

State Permits & Approvals

- x☐ Order of Conditions
- ☐ Superseding Order of Conditions
- x☐ Chapter 91 License
- x☐ 401 Water Quality Certification
- ☐ MHD or MDC Access Permit
- ☐ Water Management Act Permit
- ☐ New Source Approval
- ☐ DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/ Extension Permit
- ☐ Other Permits (*including Legislative Approvals*) – Specify:

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CONSERVATION LAND: Will the project involve the conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

Will it involve the release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

RARE SPECIES: Does the project site include Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

HISTORICAL /ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Does the project site include any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

If yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN: Is the project in or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

☐Yes (Specify_____) x ☐No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project description should include **(a)** a description of the project site, **(b)** a description of both on-site and off-site alternatives and the impacts associated with each alternative, and **(c)** potential on-site and off-site mitigation measures for each alternative (*You may attach one additional page, if necessary.*)

This proposal is to revise the disposal site for about 150,000 cy of sand to be maintenance dredged from the Federal Navigation Project in Newburyport Harbor. The material was previously approved for disposal at a subtidal site east of Plum Island, one of two near shore locations historically used for Newburyport Harbor dredgings. The newly proposed disposal site is essentially a 1500' southerly extension of the approved site and is adjacent to Plum Island Beach, as shown on the attached plan. The municipalities of Newbury and Newburyport expressed interest in depositing the material at this location to (1) indirectly nourish the public beach via inshore summer migration of the deposited sand and (2) provide a measure of protection against further erosion of shoreline public utilities and properties.

The roughly 1500' x 1000' disposal site runs longitudinally along Plum Island Beach and is situated in water depths ranging from about –10' to -18' mllw. Its center is about 250 yards beyond mhw @ latitude 42° 47' 54" and longitude W 70° 48' 29". Benthic and physical sampling conducted in the area indicate that both the sediments and the benthic community are similar to those at the other disposal sites. Furthermore, the sand would remain in the same sediment transfer system.

Alternatives to the proposed action include: (1) the "no work" option, (2) the utilization of upland disposal sites, (3) consideration of the alternate near shore disposal areas, and (4) directly placing the material above the intertidal zone for beach nourishment and erosion control.

The "no work" option would severely impact both commercial and recreational boaters utilizing the harbor and is not viable.

Upland disposal would be more costly and would adversely impact coastal processes. Depositing the material upland would remove it from the sediment transfer system, exacerbating longterm coastal erosion, in particular, Plum Island Beach and nearby public utilities. From a cost perspective, upland disposal involves the added expense of double handling the material and securing/preparing a temporary drying area. In addition, the process of trucking 150,000 cy of material through local streets would disrupt the community.

(continued on attached sheet)

Project Description continued from Page 3

The basic physical characteristics of the alternate and proposed nearshore disposal sites such as water depth, sediment composition, dynamic energy, and benthic community makeup are similar. It follows that environmental and other impacts of the disposal operation can be expected to be roughly equivalent for each site. Choosing a disposal area then becomes a matter of determining what public interests are best served at the time of each 4-5 year dredging operation. The proposed disposal plan best satisfies this objective by addressing an immediate need in the community, the alleviation of ongoing erosion at Plum Island Beach.

The direct placement option was discussed among Corps and local community proponents. It was explained to Newburyport officials that the added cost of double handling the material (i.e. pumping the sand from the dredge to a barge and piping it to shore) would roughly double the cost of the project. Our regulations require that excess costs beyond the least cost environmentally viable option be borne by the proponent seeking modification. In this instance the town declined to assume the additional cost.