

/For Office Use Only  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

EOEA No.: 12850  
MEPA Analyst: Andrea James  
Phone: 617-626-1028

# ENF

## Environmental Notification Form

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: Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)		
Municipality: Marlborough and Hudson	Watershed: SuAsCo	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: (start) E: 289638.6230 N: 4691429.7692 (end) E: 291220.7077 N: 4696600.9595	Latitude: (start) 42 20 55.039204 (end) 42 23 44.070630	Longitude: (start) -71 33 14.015909 (end) -71 32 11.677002
Estimated commencement date: Spring 2003	Estimated completion date: Fall 2004	
Approximate cost: \$2,700,000	Status of project design: 75% complete	
Proponent: Massachusetts Highway Department		
Street: 10 Park Plaza, Room 4260		
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02115
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Matthew F. DeSorbo		
Firm/Agency: MassHighway	Street: 10 Park Plaza,	
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Phone: (617) 973-7882	Fax: (617) 973-8879	E-mail: Matthew.DeSorbo@MassHighway.state.us.ma

- Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?  
 Yes  No
- Has this project been filed with MEPA before?  
 Yes  No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?  
 Yes (EOEA No. \_\_\_\_\_)  No  
 Yes (EOEA No. \_\_\_\_\_)  No
- Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
- a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8))  Yes  No
  - a Special Review Procedure? (see 301 CMR 11.09)  Yes  No
  - a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11)  Yes  No
  - a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11)  Yes  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): Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Grant, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), FY98 Enhancement Grant, and others. Hudson ROW is being transferred from the MBTA to the Town, approx. 27.5 acres.

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?  
 Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)  No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals:

Order of Conditions issued by the Hudson Conservation Commission and Marlborough Conservation Commission; Army Corps of Engineers Programmatic General Permit Category II.

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03):

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land | <input type="checkbox"/> Rare Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water           | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Air          | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid & Hazardous Waste               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACEC            | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical & Archaeological Resources |

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total	State Permits & Approvals
<b>LAND</b>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Superceding Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 91 License <input type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/ Extension Permit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Permits (including Legislative Approvals) – Specify:  <u>Army Corps of Engineers:</u> <u>Programmatic general Permit Category II</u>  <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Total site acreage	11.6			
New acres of land altered		11.6 acres		
Acres of impervious area	0	5.85 acres +/-	5.85	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		3,600 SF (temporary impacts)		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		0		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0		
<b>STRUCTURES</b>				
Gross square footage	0	0	0	
Number of housing units	0	0	0	
Maximum height (in feet)	0	0	0	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
Vehicle trips per day	0	-425	0	
Parking spaces	0	15 + 25 = 40	40	
<b>WATER/WASTEWATER</b>				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	0	0	0	
GPD water withdrawal	0	0	0	
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	0	0	0	
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0	0	

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



Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

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

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  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  No Specify: The Marlborough and Hudson segment does not include estimated habitat of rare species, vernal pools, priority sites, rare species or exemplary natural communities. See correspondence letter from Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program dated March 27, 2002

**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: The project area is located within the Silas Felton Historic District in Hudson. See attached map identifying the historic area. No adverse impacts to the Silas Felton Historic District are anticipated since the proposed work will remain within the existing layout of the railroad bed.  No

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

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

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

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  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.)

The Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT) is a "rails to trails" project involving the conversion of abandoned railways to pedestrian and bicycle paths in the city of Marlborough and the town of Hudson. The ARRT section in the city of Marlborough, approximately 1,557 meters (5,108 feet, 1 mile) begins near the intersection of Lincoln, Cashman, and Highland Streets and ends where the abandoned railroad line intersects with Fairbanks Boulevard. The portion from Fairbanks Boulevard to Fitchburg Street (3/4 of a mile) was constructed by an abutting development and the portion from Fitchburg Street to the Marlborough/Hudson line (1/2 of a mile) is in the process of being constructed by an abutting developer. The Hudson portion of the project starts at the Marlborough Town Line, follows the abandoned Central Mass Railroad Right of Way and ends at Wilkins Street (Route 62). It is approximately 5000 meters (15,700 feet, 3 miles) long in Hudson. The potential total length distance of the entire ARRT trail is 12.5 miles and may include the towns of Stow, Maynard, and Acton. Currently, the Stow, Maynard, and Acton segments have not proceeded beyond the initial concept stage. Therefore, the trail location, right-of-way acquisition, and any resulting impacts are not known at this early stage. As a result of this, only the Marlborough Center to Hudson Center portion is proposed for approval in this ENF. The communities will benefit from the reduction of vehicular traffic between the two cities for many years before the entire conceptual ARRT project is complete.

The proposed project is designed to meet the needs of recreational users such as cyclists, wheelchairs, pedestrians, roller bladers, and cross-country skiers while providing an alternative means of transportation from vehicular use. The majority of the project route follows an existing abandoned railroad bed and therefore, is not expected to have a negative impact on the surrounding landscape.

The proposed trail will be paved with bituminous concrete, 3.6 meters (11.81 feet) wide with a minimum of 0.3 meters stone infiltration trench at the shoulders. A 4.2 meter high wood post and rail fence will be installed 0.3 meters from the edge of pavement where a trailside hazard exists.

The proposed trail crosses under Route 85 Connector via a new precast concrete underpass proposed as part of this project. The trail also crosses the Assabet River in two locations, north of the Route 85 Connector an existing railroad bridge will be used. Modifications to the existing rail bridge will include the construction of new bridge decks and the placement of riprap around the bridge piers for scour protection. The project will also utilize an existing bridge carrying Route 62 to cross the Assabet River. The Route 62 bridge is scheduled to be replaced under a separate project, by MassHighway. The bridge will be constructed with a separate paved area for the trail. Two parking lots are proposed to accommodate up to 40 vehicles.

At all grade crossings, a collapsible bollard will be used to restrict motorized vehicles from entering while still allowing maintenance and or emergency vehicles to enter.

Drainage improvements will include stone infiltration trenches on either side of the recreational path. Each stone infiltration trench will allow infiltration of the runoff into adjacent land areas. In areas where the existing alignment is lower than the surrounding area, or where there are existing drainage discharges coming into the proposed trail alignment, grass swales, in addition to the stone infiltration trenches, will convey storm water and outlet this flow into existing wetland systems or connect into existing closed drainage systems.

The federal government recently designated the Assabet River as a "Wild and Scenic River". This designation strengthens protection of natural areas along the river. The majority of the trail follows the Assabet River, with two crossings of the river in the town of Hudson.

The Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) has committed to advertising the construction of the ARRT as a MassHighway project. The participating communities have committed to the responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and policing of the trail once it is built. The communities have set up a steering committee, which together with the volunteers now incorporated as the Assabet River Rail Trail, Inc. are actively pursuing additional funding sources for the remainder of the project cost.