

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (USACE) has prepared a Draft Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment (EA), and is reviewing plans under 33 U.S.C. 408 (Section 408) to allow for the construction of a 600 foot long boardwalk on the USACE-constructed flood risk management project (Haverhill Local Protection Project) by the city of Haverhill, Massachusetts. This Notice of Availability is being issued pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Procedures for Implementing NEPA (33 CFR 230).

Section 408 allows USACE to grant permission for the alteration, occupation, or use of a USACE civil works project if it is determined that the activity will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of the Federal project. A decision on a Section 408 request is a Federal action, and therefore subject to NEPA and other environmental compliance requirements.

The action that affects the Federal project involves the construction and maintenance of a 600-foot long boardwalk on the Haverhill Local Protection Project (LPP) as part of the city's 1,200-ft long riverfront public boardwalk construction for the comprehensive rehabilitation of the Haverhill waterfront. The boardwalk is a component of a State Priority Development Area for the Merrimack River Basin. The preliminary determination is that the minor modification will not adversely affect environmental resources on the affected area of the existing LPP. The public is invited to provide comment. To request more information contact: Kirk Bargerhuff, Biologist, New England District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742, (978) 318-8029, Kirk.E.Bargerhuff@usace.army.mil. The comment period will end on January 15, 2016. Letters should be postmarked by this date.