



NEWS RELEASE

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Applicant seeks Corps of Engineers permit to place structures to perform oyster harvesting in Nantucket Harbor

CONCORD, Mass. – Andy Roberts is seeking a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District to conduct work in waters of the United States in conjunction with placing structures to perform oyster harvesting in Nantucket Harbor, in Nantucket, Mass.

The project includes structures and work below the mean high water line of waters of the U.S. to perform culturing and harvesting of bivalve molluscs (oysters) in the subtidal habitat of a 4-acre area. The culturing will be performed via wire mesh cages containing oyster bags under plastic floats. The area of the floating structures may cover the entire 4-acre area; however, it is planned to phase in coverage of the area over time. This is an after-the-fact permit application. Approximately, 3,000 square feet of the 4-acre area has been in operation since July 2011.

The structures will be floated in lines of 10 with each cage attached to a sinking line. The sinking lines for each float will be attached to a horizontal longline with mushroom anchors at each end. Seed oyster will be introduced into the cages in mesh bags in June/July each season. As they grow, they will be graded and transferred into larger mesh sized bags. Each cage will hold approximately 1,200, 3-inch oysters in 6 oyster bags.

Maintenance of the cages and bags will be necessary to keep them free of biofouling by either flipping the cages to allow air drying or by pressure washing or hand scrubbing with brushes. Over the wintertime, the cages will be submerged in the water column to avoid winter ice and storms. In the spring, the cages will be re-floated. The four corners of the grant area and each end of the longlines at the mushroom anchor will be marked with 18-inch diameter yellow floating mooring balls, except during the winter months when ice is possible. The corners of the site will be marked with winter marking sticks. Access to the site will be by boat.

The project will impact 4 acres of Essential Fish Habitat for various species and life stages. This habitat consists of subtidal open water. Loss of this habitat may adversely affect these species. However, the Corps has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effects will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding Essential Fish Habitat conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final permit decision.

The application for the federal permit was filed by the applicant, Andy Roberts, with the Corps of Engineers in compliance with Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, which provides for federal regulation of any work in, or affecting navigable waters of the United States.

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT
696 VIRGINIA ROAD, CONCORD, MA 01742-2751
<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>



Applicant seeks Corps permit/2-2-2-

The public notice, with more detailed information, can be viewed on the Corps website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>. Select Regulatory and then public notices or go directly to <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/Public%20Notices/>.

Public comments on this permit request by Andy Roberts (file # NAE-2011-1344) should be forwarded no later than June 1, 2012 to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Regulatory Division (ATTN: Kevin Kotelly), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751. Additional information is available from Permit Project Manager Kevin Kotelly at 978-318-8703 or toll free 800-343-4789 or 800-362-4367 (if calling from within Massachusetts) or by email to: kevin.r.kotelly@usace.army.mil.

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