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Waterbury Police Activity League seeks Corps permit to discharge fill to extend culvert, build youth athletic facility

CONCORD, Mass. – The Waterbury Police Activity League 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 discharging fill material to extend a culvert and build a youth athletic facility in Waterbury, Conn.

The work proposed by the Waterbury Police Activity League includes the discharge of fill material below the ordinary high water mark of Great Brook to extend an existing culvert in order to create an athletic facility for the youths of Waterbury. The work is proposed in Great Brook at 27 and 57 Division Street in Waterbury.

The Waterbury Police Activity League (PAL), a non-profit organization geared to helping inner city youths, proposes to build a park that will include four basketball courts, a multi-purpose court, a baseball diamond, a concession stand and a “river walk,” along a portion of Great Brook. In order to build this, PAL proposes to install a 5.5-foot-high by 9.5-foot-wide concrete box culvert in Great Brook, which will extend the existing culvert 135 feet upstream. This section will then be covered by gravel and dirt to create the baseball field. This extension will require the discharge of 2,100 square feet of fill below the ordinary high water mark of Great Brook. In addition, approximately 500 square feet of riprap will be added to the eastern bank of the stream.

Mills and factories operated along Great Brook as early as the mid-1800s, which resulted in diversion and channelization of Great Brook through most of its length in the city, including through underground culverts beneath buildings. The property is also contaminated from these past industrial activities and is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield program. PAL applied for and received two grants from the EPA to oversee the remediation of soil and groundwater contamination, guided by the EPA-approved Remedial Action Plan. The site measures 2.1 acres for the 27 Division Street parcel and 0.5 acre for the 57 Division Street parcel. Structures at the site have been demolished with environmental remediation work set to begin.

The project area is surrounded by urban residential and commercial properties, interspersed with sporadic forested areas.

The Waterbury Police Activity League will use best management practices to minimize impacts to the stream and bordering wetlands during construction, including doing construction during low-water periods and using silt fences. PAL proposes compensation for impacts to the stream by improving the functions and values of the remaining approximately 280 feet of stream which will be left uncovered; the introduction of a riparian

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shelf on the eastern side of the brook; and the planting of native wetland and upland plants will provide habitat for wildlife and increase the aesthetic value of the landscape.

The application for the federal permit was filed by the Waterbury Police Activity League with the Corps in compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge or fill of material in United States waters, including wetlands. The public notice, with more specifics on the proposed work, 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 proposal by the Waterbury Police Activity League (file #NAE-2012-00334) should be forwarded no later than June 22, 2012 to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Regulatory Division (ATTN: Barbara Newman), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751. Additional information is available from Permit Project Manager Barbara Newman at 978-318-8515 or toll free 800-343-4789 or 800-362-4367 (if calling from within Massachusetts) or by email to: barbara.h.newman@usace.army.mil.

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