



NEWS RELEASE

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Massachusetts Department of Transportation seeks Corps permit to place fill to replace bridge in Oak Bluffs, Tisbury

CONCORD, Mass. – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Highway Division (MassDOT) 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 a bridge replacement in Oak Bluffs and Tisbury, Mass.

MassDOT is proposing to discharge fill material into approximately 0.37 acre of waters of the U.S., including wetlands, associated with the replacement of the bridge conveying Beach Road over Lagoon Pond in Oak Bluffs and Tisbury. The work includes the replacement of a previously existing bascule bridge with a new, seven-span bascule bridge, removal of an existing temporary bridge, installation of a multi-use walkway, installation of two navigation piles, approach work and associated fills, and dredge and fill associated with the installation of bridge piers, retaining walls, and a seawall.

As a result of the bridge replacement, the limits of the Lagoon Pond Federal Navigation Channel would change to match the new bascule pier location. (The U.S. Coast Guard is the permitting authority for the bridge structures and work. The Corps only has permitting authority over the placement of fill material in waters of the U.S. and adjacent wetlands for the bridge-related portion of this project).

The project will impact approximately 0.18 acre of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for various species and life stages. This habitat consists primarily of sand plus areas of salt marsh and eel grass. Loss of this habitat may adversely affect these species. However, the Corps has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding EFH conservation recommendations is being conducted.

The application for the federal permit was filed with the Corps in compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge or fill of material in U.S. waters, including wetlands; and 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. The public notice can be viewed on the Corps website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/Public%20Notices/>.

Public comments on this proposed work (file # NAE-2005-01385) should be forwarded no later than Sept. 13, 2012 to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Regulatory Division (ATTN: Dan Vasconcelos), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751. Additional information is available from Permit Project Manager Dan Vasconcelos at 978-318-8653 or toll free 800-343-4789 or 800-362-4367 (if calling from within Massachusetts) or by email to: daniel.b.vasconcelos@usace.army.mil.

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