

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The proposed Malden River Ecosystem Restoration Project involves restoring various components of the Malden River ecosystem. The plan includes the restoration of impacted wetland and riparian habitat, the creation of wetland habitat, and physical improvements to riverine habitat for native fish species.

Specific activities include the removal of approximately 14.9 acres of invasive species and 36,000 cubic yards of soil along the riverbank corridor and the replanting of the 14.9 acres of wetland area with native wetland species; the creation of 5.4 acres of emergent wetland within the river; debris removal and disposal within the wetland areas of the river; the placement of 4,400 cubic yards of gravel/sand substrate in various areas of the river to create 2.8 acres of fish spawning habitat; and operational changes at the Amelia Earhart Dam to improve fish passage.

Several alternatives were considered for the project. The alternatives included: 1) a no action alternative which would make no improvements to the project area, and therefore, the wetland and open water areas of Malden River would continue to degrade; 2) the removal of various areas of invasive species; 3) the restoration of native plant communities within the Malden River wetland and riparian areas; 4) the creation of new wetland areas; 5) improvement of the physical habitat within the river for native fish species, and 6) the improvement of fish passage into the Malden River.

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and all applicable environmental statutes and executive orders. My determination that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required is based upon the following information contained in the Environmental Assessment and the following considerations:

1. Based on physical analyses, the material in the project area will have no significant adverse effect upon existing water quality at the filling, excavating, or disposal areas if best management practices are implemented during construction.
2. The project will not affect any State or Federally threatened, endangered, or rare species, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.
3. Impacts to significant cultural resources as a result of dredging or restoration will be avoided or else minimized and/or mitigated as a result of coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Offices.

Based on my review and evaluation of the environmental effects as presented in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that implementation of the proposed Malden River Ecosystem Restoration Project will have no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human or natural environment. Because no significant environmental impacts will result, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not need to be prepared.

Date

Curtis L. Thalken
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer