



U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
New England District

PUBLIC NOTICE

In Reply Refer to: CENAE Environmental Branch

Email: NAE-ENV@usace.army.mil

Planning Division

Date: 5/8/2025

Comment Period Closes: 6/9/2025

21 DAY PUBLIC NOTICE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE PROJECT

THORP BROOK BOX CULVERT REPLACEMENT PROJECT COLEBROOK LAKE SANDISFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District, plans to perform work within in the navigable waters of this District subject to the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (CWA) (P.L. 95-217). Preparation of a 404(b)(1) evaluation is underway pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA for discharges of dredged and fill materials into waters of the U.S.

Project Description:

The USACE Colebrook River Lake project is a flood control project in Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Colebrook River Lake project includes the Old Route 8, which crosses over the west branch of the Farmington River and Thorp Brook (Attachment 1). A concrete box culvert currently carries Old Route 8 over Thorp Brook. The Thorp Brook Box Culvert Replacement Project (Project) would replace the existing concrete box culvert with an aluminum box culvert. The depth of water varies seasonally within the project area. Under normal conditions, the depth of water may be less than one foot (ft). During storm events the water levels in the project area have exceeded the height of the culvert. This has resulted in road inundation, in which the depth of water may be greater than five feet.

The Proposed Action will replace the concrete box culvert with an aluminum box culvert. The aluminum box culvert will be a larger scale than the existing culvert. The existing culvert has an eight foot span and an overall length of 20 ft. The outside width of the culvert, from headwall to headwall, is 22 ft. The proposed aluminum box culvert will have a 16-ft 4-inch (in) span and overall length of 36-ft 3-in. The outside width of the culvert will be 21 ft. During construction, the Contractor may be required to divert Thorp Brook around the culvert. If deemed necessary, a temporary diversion channel would be constructed. If diversion occurs, the site would be restored to near original condition (Attachment 2).

Construction, including the discharge of fill material, is anticipated to last around 210 days. Equipment to be used includes construction vehicles and common excavation equipment, such as excavators, loaders, and compaction equipment.

Replacement of the culvert will also include the excavation and removal of the existing concrete culvert, swale, and gabion blankets and replacement of the existing streambank protection with riprap and backfill. The Proposed Action would result in discharges of fill material to Thorp Brook from the installation of riprap and backfill. Site restoration in which upland areas will be stabilized, seeded, and landscaped will occur following construction.

Purpose of Work: The purpose of the Proposed Action is to improve flow capacity and fish passage at the Thorp Brook stream crossing.

Alternatives: The USACE is preparing a Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) evaluation to evaluate the effect of discharges of fill material into waters of the U.S. No discharge of fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences (40 CFR 230.10(a)). The Section 404(b)(1) evaluation will consider practicable alternatives which would minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

Additional Information: Additional information may be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District's Environmental Branch, at NAE-ENV@usace.army.mil

Coordination: The project has been or will be coordinated with the following federal, state, and tribal entities subject to pertinent laws, regulations, and directives.

State

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)
Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office (MA SHPO)

Tribal Nations

Delaware Tribe of Indians
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
Wampanoag Tribe of Gayhead (Aquinnah)
Stockbridge Munsee Community
Narragansett Indian Tribe

Environmental Impacts: The USACE has made a preliminary determination that the Proposed Action is categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as described in 33 CFR 230.9(b): “Activities at completed Corps projects which carry out the authorized project purposes. Examples include routine operation and maintenance actions, general administration, equipment purchases, custodial actions, erosion control, painting, repair, rehabilitation, replacement of existing structures and facilities such as buildings, roads, levees, groins and utilities, and installation of new buildings utilities, or roadways in developed areas”. The Proposed Action is within a completed Corps project (the Colebrook River Lake) and consists of the replacement of the existing culvert structure. No reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts or extraordinary circumstances are anticipated; therefore, neither an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement are required, and will not be prepared.

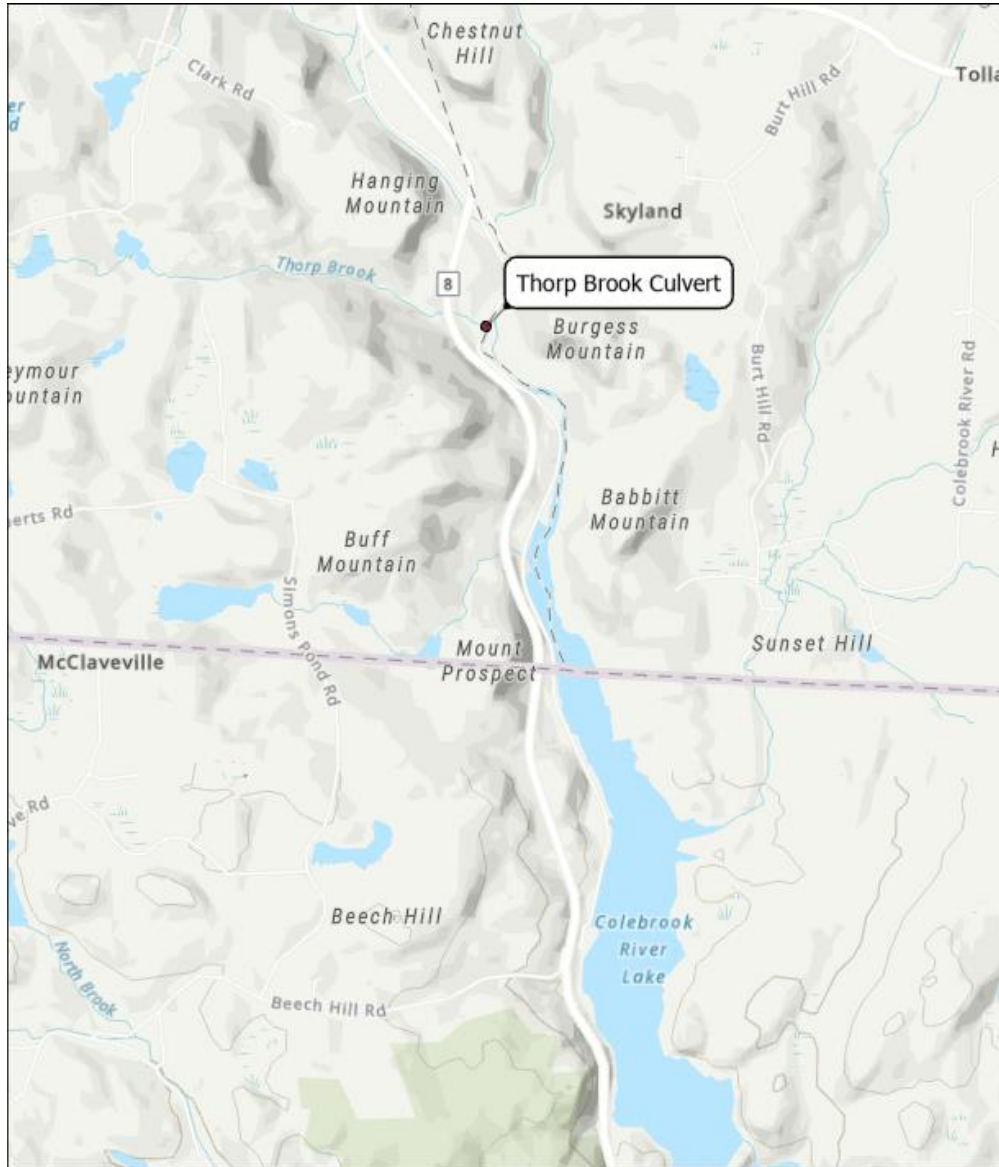
Other Information:

- a. Local Sponsor: There is no local sponsor for the Project.
- b. Floodplain Management: In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the USACE has determined that the Project will not contribute to negative impacts or damages caused by floods.
- c. Endangered Species: The USACE determined that the Project would not effect any federally listed threatened or endangered species.
- d. Cultural Resources: In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the USACE will consider the Project’s effects on historic properties. The USACE will consult on the Project with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer (MA SHPO) and the Tribes.

Please bring this notice to the attention of anyone you know to be interested in this project. Comments are invited from all interested parties and should be directed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751, ATTN: Environmental Branch; or emailed to NAE-ENV@usace.army.mil within 21 days of this notice. A public hearing may be requested within 21 days of this notice. Requests shall be submitted in writing and shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

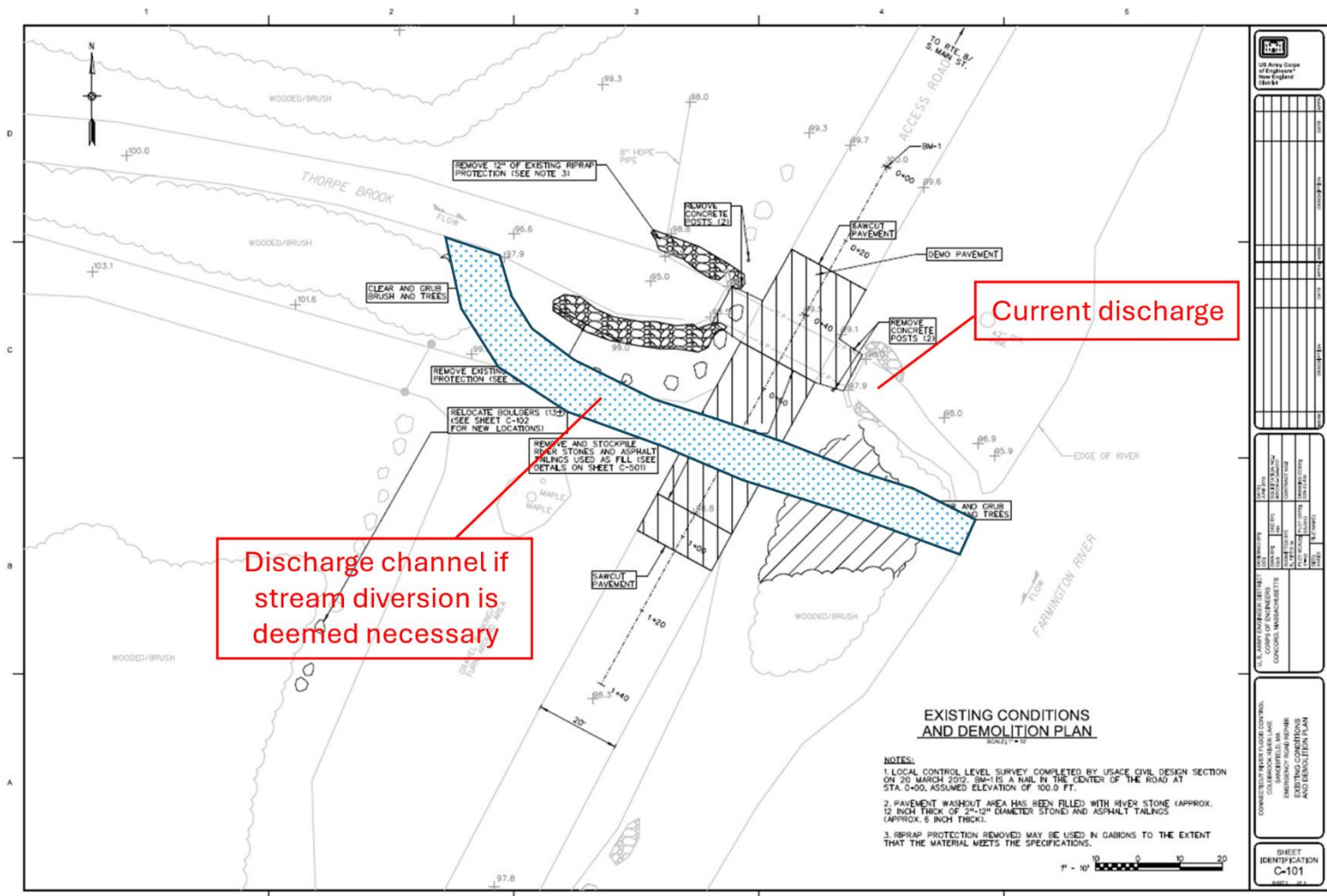
Attachment 1

Location of Thorp Brook Culvert



Attachment 2

Plan showing existing conditions and the proposed Thorp Brook culvert replacement



Discharge channel if stream diversion is deemed necessary

Current discharge

Attachment 3

PERTINENT LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND DIRECTIVES

Clean Water Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.)

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq)

Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a et seq.)

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.)

Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.)

Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.)

Federal Water Project Recreation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460I-12 et seq.)

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended (54 U.S.C. 200302 et seq.)

Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, 24 May 1977

Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, 24 May 1977

Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks, 21 April 1997