



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New England District

696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Public Notice

In Reply Refer to: Mr. Mark Godfrey
nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil
Engineering Division
Date: June 12, 2020
Comment Period Closes: July 14, 2020

**30 DAY PUBLIC NOTICE
OPERATIONS PROJECT
Naugatuck River Basin
Colebrook River Dam
O & M Access Road Relocation
Massachusetts Route 8
Sandisfield, Massachusetts**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District, plans to perform work in this District, under Section 4 of the Flood Control Act of December 22, 1944 (Public Law 534, 78th Congress, 2nd session), as amended. The work involves the construction of a new entrance and connector road to the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Access Road (also known as Old Massachusetts Route 8), in Sandisfield, Massachusetts (MA). The work will be performed in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management and is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (P.L. 91-190)." Attachment No. 1 lists pertinent laws, regulations, and directives.

Project Description: The project site is located on Federally owned property that is part of the USACE Colebrook River Lake Project. The proposed action consists of the construction of a new entrance and connector road to the O&M access road that will be relocated off MA Route 8 approximately 880 feet south of the existing entrance between MA Route 8 mile markers 2.2 and 2.3. The new connector road will be approximately 1,150 feet long. It will extend from the new tie-in at MA Route 8 to a point on the existing access road that is approximately 900 feet southeast of the Old Route 8 Bridge. This project will disturb and require clearing and grubbing of approximately 1.66 acres of wooded area. The design will include the layout and grading of a new paved connector road, road tie-ins at MA Route 8 and the existing O&M access road, gravel shoulders, a rock-lined swale along the southerly edge of new bypass road, rock-lined side slopes, drainage culverts and provisions for managing stormwater runoff, the installation of new guardrail, and a manual swing gate barrier with locking post at the new entrance with MA Route 8.

Purpose of Work: The purpose of the project is to provide new access to the northern end of Colebrook River Lake's O&M access road that eliminates the need for vehicles to use the Old MA Route 8 Bridge, but supports the same traffic levels the existing infrastructure experiences.

The northern end of the O&M access road floods when Colebrook River Lake is at an elevation greater than 684.00 ft. From the Old MA Route 8 Bridge south to the Corps access gate at Thorp Brook, there is 0.60 miles of road that remains above water most of the time. This stretch of roadway is vital for natural resources operations, public recreation and access for Corps staff. The USACE has plans to remove the Old MA Route 8 Bridge in the future. When the bridge is removed, there will be no way for vehicular traffic to access Old MA Route 8 between the bridge and the Corps access gate when lake elevation levels are greater than 684.00 ft.

The current project is needed to maintain the functionality and accessibility of the northern end of the O&M access road throughout the year, independent of the elevation of Colebrook River Lake. Establishing a new way to access the northern end of Old MA Route 8 is essential to Corps staff, Hartford Metropolitan District Commission staff, Massachusetts and Connecticut environmental agencies and the public, who rely on the road to provide reliable access for operations and maintenance, recreation and flood management, observation and monitoring of the lake and wildlife, and public recreational use.

Alternatives: The following proposals were considered as solutions to provide new access to Old MA Route 8 that were part of the alternative analysis process.

Proposed Action (Southern Layout): Construction of a new entrance to the O&M access road located off of MA Route 8 approximately 880 feet south of the existing entrance between MA Route 8 mile markers 2.2 and 2.3.

No Action Alternative: The Corps would continue to use the existing entrance to the O&M access road and the old MA Route 8 Bridge, maintaining and inspecting the bridge as required. A new entrance and connector road would not be constructed.

Additional Information: Additional information may be obtained from the USACE Project Manager, Mark Godfrey, Civil Engineer or from the environmental team member, Janet Cote, Supervisory Biologist at the address provided below. These individuals may also be reached by phone or email, Mark Godfrey at (978) 318-8689 or email at mark.e.godfrey@usace.army.mil and for Janet Cote at 978-318- 8728 or email at janet.cote@usace.army.mil.

Coordination: The proposed work has, or will be coordinated with the following agencies:

Federal:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer
Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Tribe

Environmental Impacts: An Environmental Assessment is available for review upon request. I have made a preliminary determination that an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed

project is not required under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. This determination will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice.

Other Information:

- a. Local Sponsor: No Local Sponsor
- b. Floodplain Management: In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the USACE has determined that the proposed work is not located within the floodplain and will not contribute to negative impacts or damages caused by floods.
- c. Endangered Species: It is our preliminary determination that the project is not likely to adversely affect threatened or endangered species. The Corps is in consultation with the Wildlife Service to ensure that the proposed activity will not significantly affect any species or critical habitat designated as endangered or threatened pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844).
- d. Cultural Resources: The Corps is in coordination with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.
- e. Additional Requirements: The project will be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Construction Permit under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act from the US Environmental Protection Agency, because it disturbs more than one acre of land.

Any person who has an interest that may be affected by this project may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the comment period of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest that may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity.

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: Janet Cote; or emailed to nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil within 30 days of this notice.

Date

William M. Conde
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer

Attachments

Attachment 1

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 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. 460L-12 et. seq.)

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended (54 U.S.C. 200301 et. seq.)

Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, 24 May 1977

Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, 24 May 1977

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority
Populations and Low Income Populations, 11 February 1994

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

Attachment 2

Figure 1. Location of the O&M Access Road Relocation Project, Sandisfield, Massachusetts

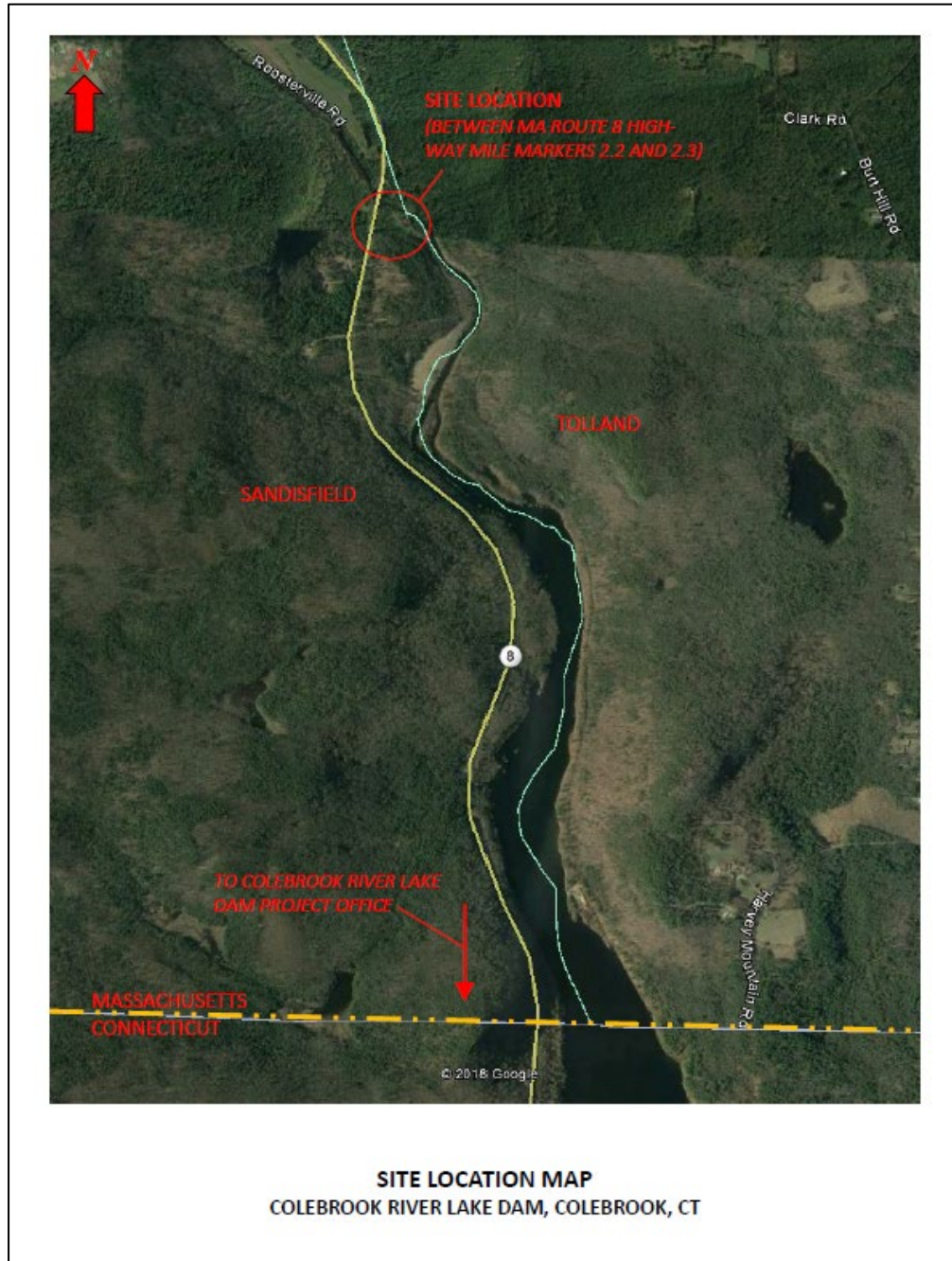


Figure 2: The Project Area with the Alignment of the New Access Road

