



Maura Healey, Governor
Kimberley Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor
Monica Tibbitts-Nutt, Secretary & CEO
Jonathan L. Gulliver, Highway Administrator



March 12, 2024

Sabrina Pereira, Marine Resources Management Specialist
NOAA Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

SUBJECT: MassDOT Project 605311
Route 6 (Marion and Wareham Roads) over Weweantic River
(M-05-001=W-06-013 & W-06-016)
Bridge Replacement Project
Marion & Wareham, Massachusetts
NOAA - Abbreviated EFH Consultation – Conservation Recommendations Response

Dear Ms. Pereira,

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Highway Division (MassDOT) is replying to NOAA/NMFS/GARFO/HESD's Federal Interagency Comment Form (attached) provided to MassDOT on February 22, 2024 identifying Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Conservation Recommendations. MassDOT intends to incorporate the proposed Conservation Recommendations as follows:

- 1. Turbidity producing work should be completed outside of the provided Time of Year Restriction from March 1 to June 30 of any given year, to minimize adverse effects to NOAA trust resources. If work cannot meet the TOY restriction above, then to minimize adverse effects to fish, controls should not encroach >25% of the stream width measured from the OHW mark during the TOY restriction.*

MassDOT intends to perform turbidity producing work such as the installation of cofferdams outside of the March 1 to June 30 Time of Year Restriction in order to minimize adverse effects to NOAA trust resources. However, the cofferdams are proposed to take up approximately one-quarter (Marion-Wareham bridge) to one-third (Wareham bridge) of the existing river width at each of the bridge crossings and so MassDOT requests that the proposed recommendation be amended to allow this width during the TOY restriction, if required, due to the nature of the proposed work which will maintain the natural flow of the river through the project site at all times.

2. *Cofferdams should be used to minimize sedimentation and acoustic impacts within the surrounding areas and allow for construction of the proposed piers in the dry.*

Cofferdams will be installed in order to minimize sedimentation and acoustic impacts within the surrounding areas and allow for construction in the dry.

3. *Turbidity curtains should be deployed where feasible and as needed prior to in-water activities during the construction process. Turbidity curtains should be used during demolition of the existing bridges to mitigate the potential suspension of sediment in the water column.*

Turbidity curtains will be deployed where feasible and as needed prior to in-water activities during the construction process, including the demolition of the existing bridges.

4. *Protective shielding or a debris containment system should be used to prevent any debris from falling into the open water. All demolition debris should be recovered and removed from the project site.*

Protective shielding or a debris containment system will be used to prevent any debris from falling into the open water. Additionally, all demolition debris will be recovered and removed from the project site.

We look forward to discussing this with you further. Please contact me by email at david.j.paulson@dot.state.ma.us, or at (857) 262 3378.

Sincerely

David Paulson

Dave Paulson, Wildlife & Endangered Species Supervisor
MassDOT

CC: Bryan Cordeiro, MassDOT (Project Manager) Cassie Ostrander (FHWA)
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