



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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June 24, 2019

William Short
PO Box 237173
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RE: Project Location: Chicopee River at River Mile 7.6-8.6
Town: SPRINGFIELD, LUDLOW
NHESP Tracking No.: 12-31432

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for contacting the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (the "Division") for information regarding state-listed rare species in the vicinity of the above referenced site. Based on the information provided (aerial imagery with major features labeled), at this time the project sites **Indian Orchard Bypassed Reach ZoE & Indian Orchard Tailrace ZoE** are not mapped as Priority or Estimated Habitat. The project site **Indian Orchard Impoundment ZoE** is located **within** *Priority Habitat 990* (PH 990) and *Estimated Habitat 778* (EH 778) as indicated in the *Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas* (14th Edition) for the following state-listed rare species:

| <u>Scientific name</u> | <u>Common Name</u> | <u>Taxonomic Group</u> | <u>State Status</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> | Bald Eagle | Bird | Threatened |

The species listed above is protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (M.G.L. c. 131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00). State-listed wildlife are also protected under the state's Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) (M.G.L. c. 131, s. 40) and its implementing regulations (310 CMR 10.00). Fact sheets for most state-listed rare species can be found on our website (www.mass.gov/nhESP).

Please note that projects and activities located within Priority and/or Estimated Habitat must be reviewed by the Division for compliance with the state-listed rare species protection provisions of MESA (321 CMR 10.00) and/or the WPA (310 CMR 10.00).

Wetlands Protection Act (WPA)

If the project site is within Estimated Habitat and a Notice of Intent (NOI) is required, then a copy of the NOI must be submitted to the Division so that it is received at the same time as the local conservation commission. If the Division determines that the proposed project will adversely affect the actual Resource Area habitat of state-protected wildlife, then the proposed project may not be permitted (310 CMR 10.37, 10.58(4)(b) & 10.59). In such a case, the project proponent may request a consultation with the Division to discuss potential project design modifications that would avoid adverse effects to rare wildlife habitat.

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A streamlined joint MESA/WPA review process is available. When filing a Notice of Intent (NOI), the applicant may file concurrently under the MESA on the same NOI form and qualify for a 30-day streamlined joint review. For a copy of the NOI form, please visit the MA Department of Environmental Protection's website: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/wpa-form-3-wetlands-notice-of-intent>.

MA Endangered Species Act (MESA)

If the proposed project is located within Priority Habitat and is not exempt from review (see 321 CMR 10.14), then project plans, a fee, and other required materials must be sent to Natural Heritage Regulatory Review to determine whether a probable Take under the MA Endangered Species Act would occur (321 CMR 10.18). Please note that all proposed and anticipated development must be disclosed, as MESA does not allow project segmentation (321 CMR 10.16). For a MESA filing checklist and additional information please see our website: <https://www.mass.gov/regulatory-review>.

We recommend that rare species habitat concerns be addressed during the project design phase prior to submission of a formal MESA filing, as avoidance and minimization of impacts to rare species and their habitats is likely to expedite endangered species regulatory review.

This evaluation is based on the most recent information available in the Natural Heritage database, which is constantly being expanded and updated through ongoing research and inventory. If the purpose of your inquiry is to generate a species list to fulfill the federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) information requirements for a permit, proposal, or authorization of any kind from a federal agency, we recommend that you contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978)281-9328 and use the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Conservation website (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac>). If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact Melany Cheeseman, Endangered Species Review Assistant, at (508) 389-6357.

Sincerely,



Everose Schlüter, Ph.D.
Assistant Director