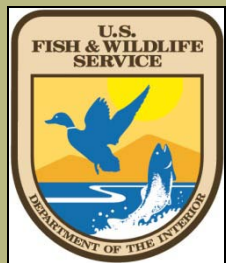




Housatonic River
Natural Resource Restoration
Massachusetts SubCouncil
*Round 2 Draft Restoration Plan and
Supplemental Environmental Assessment*



Public Information Meeting
August 3, 2010
Lenox Town Hall
Lenox, Massachusetts





Introduction of MA SubCouncil

- Karen Pelto – MA DEP
One Winter Street, 8th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
email: Karen.Pelto@state.ma.us
phone: (617) 292-5785

- Ken Munney – USFWS
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301
email: Kenneth_Munney@fws.gov
phone: (603) 223-2541 ext. 19



Status of Round 1 Projects

- \$4 million approved for funding of 10 restoration projects.
- Funding initiated in late 2007.
- 1 project complete:
 - Great Barrington Housatonic River Walk.



Status of Round 1 Projects

- 4 projects to be completed this year:
 - Old Mill Trail
 - Rare Species Recovery on the Housatonic River
 - Housatonic Environmental Literacy Program for the River
 - Berkshire Conservation Agent Program
- 3 projects making substantial progress:
 - Enhanced Public Access to the Housatonic River
 - Housatonic River Floodplain Forest Restoration Project
 - West Branch of the Housatonic River Revitalization Project (Dam Removal Component)



Status of Round 1 Projects

- 2 land acquisition projects on hold:
 - Rising Pond Land Acquisition Project
 - Clapp Park to Wild Acres Greenway



What is the Round 2 Draft RP/SEA?

- Plan that presents Trustees' proposed restoration projects for compensatory restoration of the Massachusetts portion of the Housatonic River.
- Formal NEPA documentation.
- 5 projects proposed for funding.
- \$1.3 million proposed disbursement.
- Subject to public comment.



Round 2 – Habitat Restoration Priority Categories

Restoration projects must address at least one of the following two habitat restoration categories:

- Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat
- Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Restoration projects could additionally address the following secondary restoration categories:

- Recreational Uses
- Environmental Education and Outreach



Review Process

- Stage 1
 - Threshold Criteria
- Stage 2
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Independent Review
 - Consensus Based Review
- Stage 3
 - NEPA and MEPA Compliance



Threshold Criteria (TC)

TC No. 1: Does the application contain the information necessary to proceed with an evaluation as described in the Restoration Project Selection Procedure (RPSP)?

TC No. 2: Does the proposed project restore, rehabilitate, replace, and/or acquire the equivalent of natural resources or natural resource services that were injured by the release of PCBs or other hazardous substances?



Threshold Criteria (continued)

TC No. 3: Is the proposed project, or any portion of the proposed project, an action that is presently required under other federal, state, or local law?

TC No. 4: Is the proposed project, or any portion of the proposed project, inconsistent with any federal, state, or local law, regulation, or policy?



Threshold Criteria (continued)

TC No. 5: Will the proposed project, in terms of its cost, be consistent with the stated goals of the MA SubCouncil to retain sufficient funds to 1) accomplish restoration over at least three rounds of proposal solicitations and 2) serve a wide geographic area that benefits the restoration priority categories?

TC No. 6: Will the proposed project, or any portion of the proposed project, be inconsistent with any ongoing or anticipated remedial actions (i.e., primary restoration) in the Housatonic River watershed?



Threshold Criteria Results

- 12 Applications passed review and proceeded to the evaluation phase
- 3 Applications did not pass review
 - Proposal No. 202 – Horsekeeping Best Management Practices for Water Quality Protection and Restoration
 - Proposal No. 205 – Proposal for Aquatic Invasive Species Management in the Housatonic River
 - Proposal No. 211 – Housatonic River Restoration Ecostation



Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance and Applicability of Project
 - 7 Criteria (maximum of 85 points)
- Technical Merit
 - 6 Criteria (maximum of 65 points)
- Project Budget
 - 6 Criteria (maximum of 60 points)
- Socioeconomic Merit
 - 7 Criteria (maximum of 35 points)



Preferred Alternatives

- Blended Restoration Approach
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Diversity and Magnitude of Potential Benefits
 - Available Funding
 - Public Comments



Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat

Restoration Project No. 215 – *Habitat Continuity Project*,
Housatonic Valley Association/Berkshire Environmental
Action Team

- Assess culvert barriers to fish passage.
- Prioritize habitat continuity barriers.
- Replace up to 3 high-priority barriers impeding wildlife passage.

Requested NRD Funding \$ 498,394

Proposed NRD Funding \$498,394



Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat

Restoration Project No. 212 – *Sackett Brook Restoration Project*, Massachusetts Audubon Society

- ❖ Potential mitigation project to be funded by others.
 - Removal of Gravesleigh Pond Dam.
 - Restoration of 1.2 acres of floodplain forest.
 - Provision of educational programs to school children and general public.

Requested NRD Funding \$396,828

Proposed NRD Funding \$396,828



Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Restoration Project No. 207 – *Installation of Gates over Bat Hibernacula*, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

- Install protective gates over 3 critical overwintering locations.
- Provide safe habitat and possible recovery area for bats impacted by White Nose Syndrome.

Requested NRD Funding \$30,900

Proposed NRD Funding \$30,900



Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Restoration Project No. 204 – *Invasive Species Control in the Housatonic River Watershed*, Native Habitat Restoration

- Reduce invasive species cover on 266 acres of protected land.
- Provide community education on threats and control of invasive species.

Requested NRD Funding \$199,429

Proposed NRD Funding \$199,429



Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Restoration Project No. 203 – *Bartholomew's Cobble Floodplain Forest Restoration and Habitat Improvement Project*, Project Native

- Restore 10 acres of floodplain forest at Bartholomew's Cobble.
- Control invasive species on 75 acres adjacent to Housatonic River.

Requested NRD Funding \$285,410

Proposed NRD Funding \$171,850



Non-Selected Project Applications – Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat

- Project Application No. 208 – *Upper Hathaway Dam Removal Project*, City of Pittsfield (\$500,000)
- Project Application No. 210 – *Secum Brook: Habitat and Geomorphic Assessment and Habitat Implementation*, Inter-Fluve, Inc. (\$64,300)
- Project Application No. 213 – *Springside Pond Restoration Project*, City of Pittsfield (\$605,000)



Non-Selected Project Applications– Wildlife Resources and Habitat

- Project Application No. 201 – *Sheffield Covered Bridge Park, Town of Sheffield (\$7,800)*
- Project Application No. 206 – *Pittsfield State Forest Skyline Restoration Project, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (\$298,000)*



Non-Selected Project Applications– Wildlife Resources and Habitat

- Project Application No. 209 – *Proposal for Riparian Corridor Enhancement along the Housatonic River*, ESS Group, Inc. (\$274,710)
- Project Application No. 214 – *Columbia Mill Dam Removal*, Housatonic Valley Association (\$250,000)



Round 2 Timeline to Present

- 09/25/08 – Public Meeting to Discuss Round 2 Process
- 01/23/09 – Round 2 Request for Responses
- 02/25/09 – Applicant Conference
- 04/23/09 – Response Deadline
- 06/29/09 – Project Applications Posted
- 06/09/10 – Threshold Criteria Results Announced
- 07/21/10 – Draft RP/SEA Released
- 08/03/10 – Presentation of Draft RP/SEA

Proposed (subject to change)

- 08/23/10 – Public Comment Deadline
- 10/31/10 – Final RP/SEA & FONSI Released
- 11/31/10 – Round 2 Disbursement Begins



Round 3 Considerations

- Analyze remaining NRD funding available
- Evaluate ROR remedy and potential impacts to restoration options
- Potentially focus on Land Acquisition



Public Comment Period

Public Comment on Draft RP/SEA accepted until
August 23, 2010.

Housatonic Draft RP/SEA
c/o Stantec Consulting Inc.
30 Park Drive
Topsham, ME 04086
todd.chadwell@stantec.com

(Subject line: Housatonic Draft RP/SEA)

End