



# Housatonic River Natural Resource Restoration Massachusetts SubCouncil *Round 1 Results of Review Team's Evaluation of Proposals and Ideas*

Public Information Meeting  
September 21, 2006  
Lenox Town Hall  
Lenox, Massachusetts





## *Review Process*

---

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



## *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 75 points)

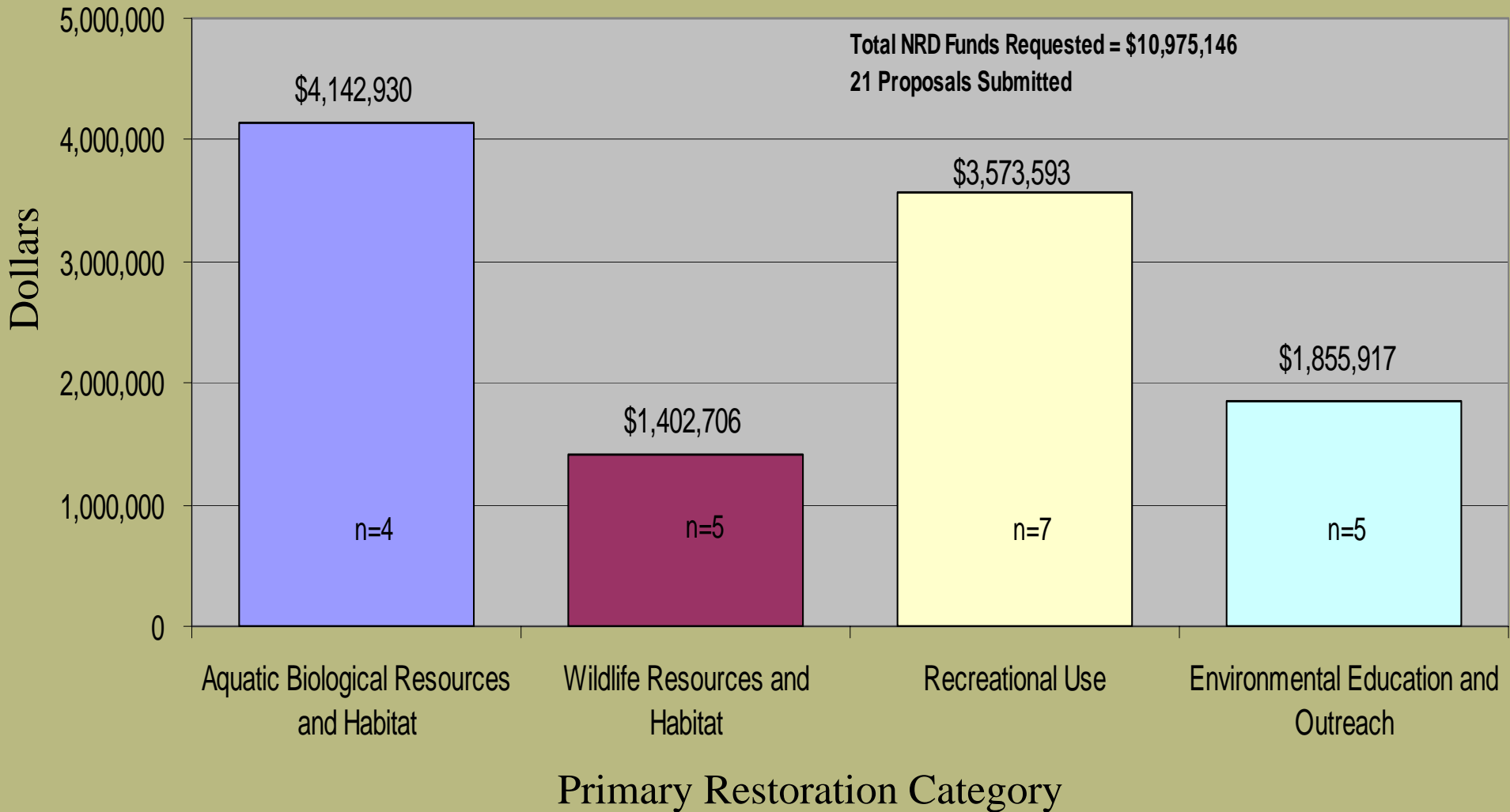


## *Reviewer Affiliations*

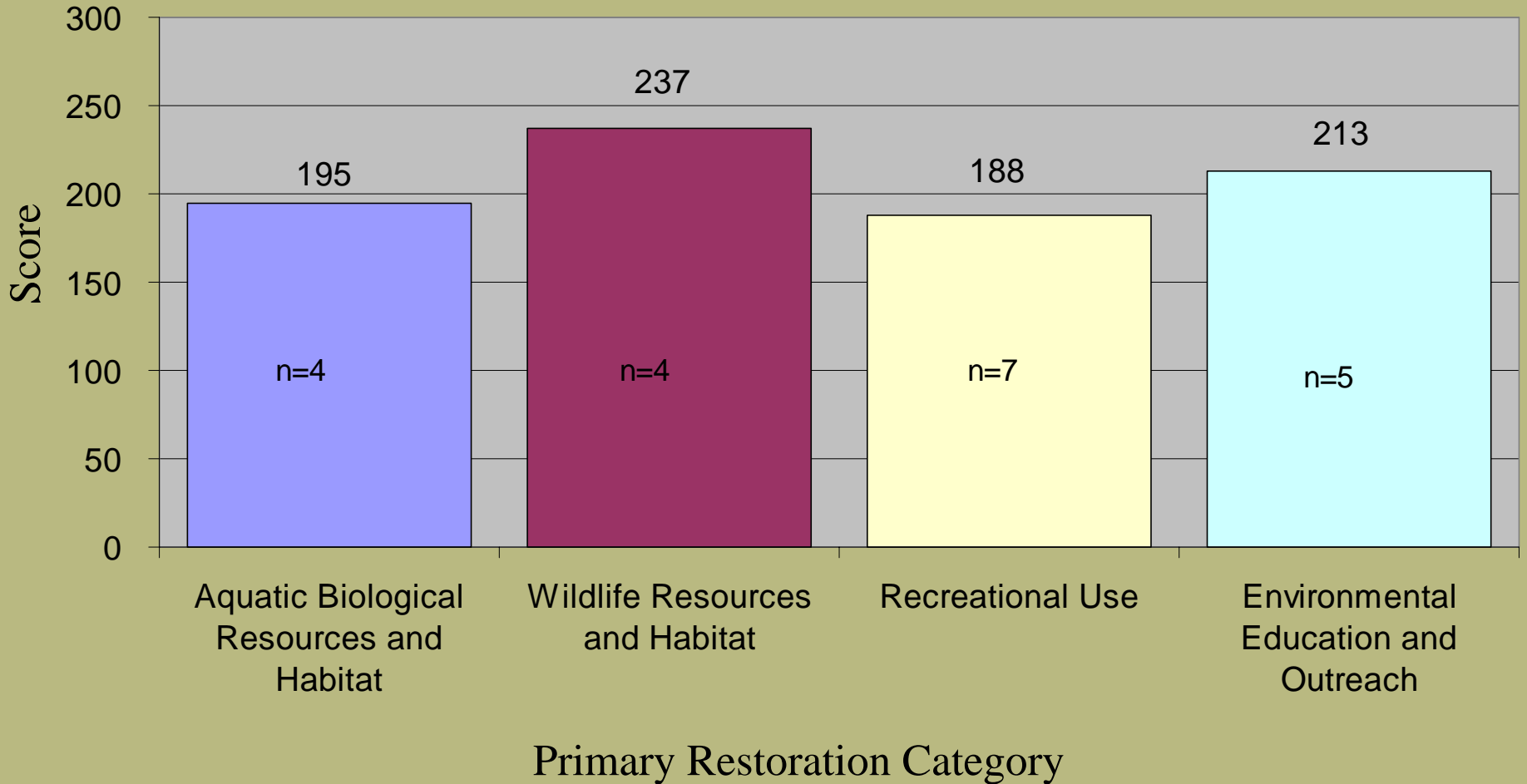
---

- *Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)*
- *Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG)*
- *Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW)*
- *Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture (DFA)*
- *Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)*
- *United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)*
- *Woodlot Alternatives, Inc.*

# Proposal Summary Information – NRD Funds Requested by Category



# Evaluation Summary Information – Average Score by Category





## *Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat*

---

### Proposal No. 7 – *West Branch of the Housatonic Revitalization Project*, City of Pittsfield

- Develop greenway from Wahconah Park to Clapp Park.
- Remove Mill Street Dam.

\$2,057,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 7*

---

- Two components should be separated into two distinct proposals.
- Dam removal preferable to “rock ramp” alternative.
- Concerns include:
  - Dam owner liability and cooperation with the proposed work?
  - A lack of discussion of the current condition of the dam and associated liability.
  - Determination of a potentially responsible party as related to potentially-contaminated sediments.



## *Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat*

- Proposal No. 9 – *Proposal to Perform Aquatic Habitat Restoration of the Housatonic River*, ENSR Corporation
- Collect and assess data from Housatonic River.
  - Implement projects to improve communities of fish and related aquatic biota.

\$1,308,980



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 9*

---

- Potential benefits but uncertainty associated with such benefits.
- Schedule and budget for the second phase of work (implementation) does not appear realistic.
- Does not appear to be sufficient consideration for contingency actions, particularly with regard to permitting work.



## *Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat*

---

Proposal No. 11 – *Housatonic Watershed Fisheries Assessment*, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

- Survey fisheries resources in watershed.
- Monitor brown trout movement with radiotelemetry.

\$220,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 11*

---

- Lack of discussion of coordination and integration with other groups, such as Trout Unlimited.
- Contingency actions not well addressed.
- Increased public outreach is recommended.



## *Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat*

---

Proposal No. 18 – *Rare Species Recovery on the Housatonic River*, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

- Identify and protect rare species.
- Identify and prioritize sites for restoration.
- Provide conservation planning materials.

\$556,950



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 18*

---

- “Project was well thought out.”
- Lack of outside funding and public outreach.
- Apparent lack of coordination with NGOs such as TNC and Audubon Society.



## *Wildlife Resources and Habitat*

---

Proposal No. 2 – *Rising Pond Land Acquisition*, Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Inc.

- Acquire and protect 161 acres of land adjacent to the Housatonic River.

\$261,750



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 2*

---

- Tangible, long-term benefits through land acquisition.
- Plan for long-term maintenance not addressed well.
- Considered high quality application.



## *Wildlife Resources and Habitat*

---

Proposal No. 10 – *Proposal to Perform Bartholomew's Cobble Restoration*, ENSR Corporation

- Develop a plan to protect rare species habitat from sediment laden runoff near Half River oxbow.

\$18,700



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 10*

---

- Planning project only – future funding would be required.
- Applicant team seems technically capable.
- Concern as to whether the Trustees of Reservations would have sufficient involvement with the project.
- Desire for inclusion of other members of Housatonic River watershed community in proposal.



## *Wildlife Resources and Habitat*

---

### Proposal No. 15 – *Clapp Park to Wild Acres Greenway Project*, City of Pittsfield

- Acquire 2 parcels of land on Southwest Branch of Housatonic River for protection from development and contribute to the eventual formation of a public-use greenway.

\$250,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 15*

---

- Concern about feasibility of trail crossing railroad tracks.
- Consensus that acquired land would be protected from future development and future degradation.
- Adverse impact could result from creating trails in undisturbed areas.
- Lack of detail concerning final linkage between Clapp Park and Wild Acres.



## *Wildlife Resources and Habitat*

---

Proposal No. 19 – *Housatonic River Floodplain Forest Restoration Project*, Project Native

- Restore native habitat at Kampososa Bog.
- Place 100 acres of floodplain forest and buffer zone under conservation easements.

\$522,456



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 19*

---

- General concern about applicant's apparent lack of experience on projects of this scale.
- Management and stewardship may be required beyond project timeframe.
- Potential conflict with private nurseries.
- Anticipated that project would be slow to start up.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 1 – *Great Barrington Housatonic River Walk*,  
Great Barrington Land Conservancy

- Reclaim 2.63 acres of riparian area.
- Provide environmental education.
- Conduct compost tea soil amendment studies.

\$133,308



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 1*

---

- Expensive project but applicant's previous endeavors warrant expenditure.
- Desire for greater dissemination of knowledge and benefits to others in Housatonic River watershed.
- Increasing length of existing river walk or width of buffer zone would be beneficial.



## *Recreational Use*

---

- Proposal No. 5 – *Lee River Walk*, The Lee Land Trust
- Provide recreational and educational pathway along riverbank in Lee.

\$62,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 5*

---

- Project would provide valuable socioeconomic benefits.
- Proposal is lacking in detail.
- Potential for diverse partnerships not addressed.
- Concern about property owners support of project.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 6 – *Proposal for a Beaded Necklace Housatonic River Greenway*, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

- Provide master planning, feasibility study, conceptual design, and development of a detailed implementation plan for a combined bikeway/greenway.

\$665,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 6*

---

- No guarantee that projects “on the ground” will be developed, funded and implemented .
- Project budget is high for a planning study.
- Possibly 4 years before work is performed.
- Application was well prepared.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 8 – *Proposal to Provide Enhanced Public Access to the Housatonic River in Massachusetts*, ESS Group, Inc.

- Evaluate 37 potential river access sites on the Housatonic River and construct 6-8 new access sites.

\$460,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 8*

---

- Proposed project may be beyond needs for additional access.
- Project should be scaled back.
- Significant public outreach regarding site selection.
- Housatonic Valley Association's role in project unclear.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 16 – *Old Mill Trail*, Housatonic Valley  
Association

- Construct low-impact pedestrian trail adjacent to river  
between Dalton and Hinsdale.

\$244,047



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 16*

---

- Project budget appeared high.
- Need assurances that trails and bridges will be maintained.
- Potential for adverse environmental impact through increased human use.
- Concern for crossing of Rt. 8.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 20 – *The Rehabilitation of Forest Roads and Trails in the Housatonic River Watershed*,  
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and  
Recreation

- Selectively close, abandon, and reconstruct specific roads and trails to improve regional aquatic biological resources.

\$2,000,000



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 20*

---

- Concept is good, but proposal is lacking in detail – especially in budget.
- Project is expensive.
- Concern about lack of partnerships, outreach, and long-term maintenance plan.
- Project does not provide opportunities for community involvement.
- Need for project evident, but recommended that applicant re-submit in Round 2 after enhancing proposal.



## *Recreational Use*

---

Proposal No. 21 – *Hazard and Debris Removal from the Housatonic River (Project Idea)*, Gloria Wesley

- Remove hazards and debris in river from Fred Garner Park to Woods Pond for one year.
- Organize “Housatonic River Cleanup Sessions”.



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 21*

---

- Benefits associated with woody debris, but other proposals for river access are dependent upon clear passage.
- Additional community involvement would be beneficial.
- Proposals for debris removal should include stakeholder input, debris removal management plan, and trash management goals.



## *Environmental Education and Outreach*

---

Proposal No. 3 – *Housatonic Environmental Literacy Program (HELP) for the River*, Massachusetts Audubon Society

- Provide a comprehensive river education experience to all students in the Housatonic watershed.
- Offer a free summer canoe program.

\$874,842



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 3*

---

- Concern regarding sustainability after completion of funding.
- Consensus that proposal inadequately addressed Natural Recovery Period criterion.
- Would have scored higher if other sources of funding identified.



## *Environmental Education and Outreach*

---

### Proposal No. 4 – *Housatonic River Museum*, City of Pittsfield

- Develop a museum for exploring the natural science of the Housatonic River watershed and examining the historical and ongoing relationship between humankind and the river.

\$298,100



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 4*

---

- Linkage between museum implementation and resource recovery was poorly developed.
- Tangible “on the ground” restoration results would be difficult to quantify.
- Concern about probability of acquiring the additional \$2 million to complete the museum.



## *Environmental Education and Outreach*

---

### Proposal No. 12 – *The River Institute*, Housatonic River Initiative

- provide an on-going forum for higher education research, training, public and secondary education, and information dissemination relating to natural resource protection and awareness.

\$217,880



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 12*

---

- No consensus on whether additional environmental testing needed beyond that already performed by DEP and EPA.
- High socioeconomic and educational value.
- Natural Recovery Period criterion poorly addressed.



## *Environmental Education and Outreach*

---

Proposal No. 13 – *Berkshire Conservation Agent Program*,  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

- Provide technical assistance, training, and education to municipal Conservation Commissions.

\$248,555



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 13*

---

- Concerns about sustainability of project after completion of funding.
- Concerns that majority of work to be accomplished by one person.
- Consensus that program would be beneficial to communities that chose to adopt it.
- Concern that proposal may be viewed as a no-bid four-year contract.



## *Environmental Education and Outreach*

---

Proposal No. 14 – *Less Toxic Landscapes: A Healthier Housatonic River*, Center for Ecological Technology

- Utilize workshops, trainings, media, retail displays and social marketing techniques to address the water pollution caused by outdoor pesticide use.

\$216,540



## *Evaluation Summary: Proposal No. 14*

---

- Concern whether best methodology for reaching chemical applicators.
- Acceptance by public is critical, but not guaranteed.
- Concern that chemical input to river would not be directly measured.
- Potential isolated pockets of acceptance, but community level acceptance questioned.

## *Ranking by Category - Aquatic Biological Resources and Habitat*

Proposal	Title	Score
18	Rare Species Recovery on the Housatonic River	205
11	Housatonic Watershed Fisheries Assessment	204
7	West Branch of the Housatonic Revitalization Project	196
9	Proposal to Perform Aquatic Habitat Restoration of the Housatonic River	174

## *Ranking by Category - Wildlife Resources and Habitat*

Proposal	Title	Score
2	Rising Pond Land Acquisition	263
19	Housatonic River Floodplain Forest Restoration Project	246
15	Clapp Park to Wild Acres Greenway Project	237
10	Proposal to Perform Bartholomew's Cobble Restoration	203

## *Ranking by Category - Recreational Use*

Proposal	Title	Score
1	Great Barrington Housatonic River Walk	258
16	Old Mill Trail	227
8	Proposal to Provide Enhanced Public Access to the Housatonic River in Massachusetts	208
20	The Rehabilitation of Forest Roads and Trails in the Housatonic River Watershed	173
6	Proposal for a Beaded Necklace Housatonic River Greenway	163
5	Lee River Walk	157
21	Hazard and Debris Removal from the Housatonic River (Project Idea)	143

## *Ranking by Category – Environmental Education and Outreach*

Proposal	Title	Score
3	Housatonic Environmental Literacy Program (HELP) for the River	239
13	Berkshire Conservation Agent Program	229
14	Less Toxic Landscapes: A Healthier Housatonic River	223
4	Housatonic River Museum	207
12	The River Institute	193




## *Public Comment Period*

---

Public Comment on Results of Review Team's  
Evaluation of Proposals and Ideas accepted until  
October 13, 2006.

Review Team Evaluation Comments  
c/o Woodlot Alternatives, Inc.  
30 Park Drive  
Topsham, ME 04086  
[tchadwell@woodlotalt.com](mailto:tchadwell@woodlotalt.com)

(Subject line: Review Team Evaluation Comments)



## Project Schedule – subject to change

---

- Sept 21: Results of Review Team Evaluation
- Oct 6: Public Comments Due on Applications
- Oct: MA SubCouncil Determines Preliminary List of Proposed Alternatives
- Nov: Public Meeting – Preliminary Selection of Proposed Alternatives
  - Public Comment
- Dec: MA SubCouncil Determines Proposed Alternatives
- Jan: NEPA Evaluation
- Jan: MA SubCouncil Determines Preliminary Preferred Alternatives
- Feb: Release of DRAFT Restoration Plan (30-day review period)
- Mar: Public Meeting – DRAFT Restoration Plan Comments
- Mar: Release of FINAL Restoration Plan
- Apr: Public Meeting – Implementation of Restoration Plan
- May: Begin Funding Disbursement for Restoration Projects