

## Meeting Notes



Stantec

### Round 2 Draft Restoration Plan and Supplemental Environment Assessment

GE/Housatonic River Natural Resource Restoration / FILE 195600014

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Date/Time: August 3, 2010 5:30 PM  
Place: Lenox Town Hall, Lenox, Massachusetts  
Next Meeting: Not Scheduled  
Attendees: Karen Pelto (MA DEP), Trustee Representative, MA SubCouncil  
Kenneth Munney (USFWS), Trustee Representative, MA SubCouncil  
Thomas Potter (MA DEP), Alternative Trustee Representative, MA SubCouncil  
Todd Chadwell (Stantec), Consultant for MA SubCouncil  
Michael Chelminski (Stantec) , Consultant for MA SubCouncil  
Public Attendees (see Attachment 1 [attendance sheet])  
Absentees: Not applicable  
Distribution: Named Attendees and Project Website

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**Item:**

**Action:**

**Meeting Item**

*The meeting formally commenced at 5:33 PM with an introduction by Todd Chadwell. The introduction included a description of the Round 2 Draft Restoration Plan/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Draft Round 2 RP/SEA) and the purpose of the meeting, which was to present the Draft RP/SEA in a public forum and solicit comments on the draft plan. It was noted that verbal comments would be accepted but that written submission of comments via letter or email would also be appreciated in order to provide accurate documentation. The public was also directed to a printed agenda and asked to sign-in with their name and affiliation. In response to erroneous prior announcements in the Berkshire Eagle, it was noted that this meeting was not addressing issues related to ongoing discussions by others (e.g., USEPA) regarding remedial actions for the "Rest of River" reach of the Housatonic River.*

*Mr. Chadwell introduced a visual slide presentation that would be used as a guide to this meeting (a printed copy of this slide presentation is attached here).*

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*Mr. Chadwell introduced Massachusetts SubCouncil representatives and consultants present.*

*5:40 PM – 6:06 PM: Mr. Chadwell provided oral commentary to the 25-slide visual slide presentation, and noted that questions should be withheld until the question-and-answer period following this presentation.*

*6:07 PM: Questions and comments received from audience. The numbering of items below is provided to clarify each question/comment and the associated response.*

**Public Question No. 1:** *Can comments address non-selected project applications or do they need to be restricted to preferred alternatives?*

**Response No. 1** *(Mr. Chadwell): Questions and comments can address non-selected project applications in addition to preferred alternatives.*

**Public Question No. 2:** *How much weight is given to Threshold Criterion No. 2 and other criteria in the selection of preferred projects given that most of the preferred projects are habitat restoration projects?*

**Response No. 2** *(Mr. Chadwell): Explained Threshold Criterion No. 2, that Threshold Criteria are used to screen completeness and appropriateness of proposals, and that Threshold Criteria and Evaluation Criteria are considered in selection of preferred projects. All project applications must meet all Threshold Criteria in order to move on to the Evaluation Stage.*

**Response No. 2** *(Kenneth Munney): Explained that project funds are to be used to restore, rehabilitate, replace, and/or acquire equivalent natural resources or services that were injured by release of PCBs or other contaminants. Furthermore, this statement is a central tenet for all NRDAR projects, non-exclusive of the Housatonic River and provides a core unifying theme for all restoration initiatives under the NRDA program.*

Stantec to post Evaluation  
Criteria scoring sheet to  
project website.

**Public Question No. 2 Follow-Up:** *How could the Round 2 project proposal for Springside Pond (Project Application No. 213) be improved for possible future submittal for funding through this project?*

**Response No. 2 Follow-Up:** (Mr. Chadwell): Explained that the Springside Pond Restoration Project (Project Application No. 213) passed the Threshold Criteria and explained that this was a screening process. Reviewers scored projects based on point values associated with the Evaluation Criteria as described in Section 3.2 of the Draft Round 2 RP/SEA. A copy of the Evaluation Criteria was shown to the questioner, is included in the original project solicitation guidelines and will be made available to the public separately for easier viewing. As described in Section 3.2 of the Draft Round 2 RP/SEA, evaluation scores are advisory to the MA SubCouncil. The proposed preferred alternatives were selected based on a combination of Review Team scores, public comment, independent analysis of the proposals, and the goals of Round 2 (e.g., implementing a suite of projects that address at least one of the two habitat restoration priority categories).

**Public Question No. 3:** Is this the same project as the remediation work in Pittsfield?

**Response No. 3** (Mr. Chadwell): This project is for restoration work and is not part of the previous remediation work in Pittsfield or possible future remediation work on the "Rest-of-River" segment of the Housatonic River.

**Response No. 3** (Kenneth Munney): Explained that project funds are to be used for NRD restoration work, are not part of the Rest-of-River work, and represent a parallel but separate process.

**Public Question No. 4:** Question initiated with a comment that land acquisition is not well-represented in the preferred projects selected in Round 1 and Round 2. Question was what happened to the land acquisition component of the Round 2 solicitation? Following with comment that land acquisition represents the best long-term use of project funds.

**Response No. 4** (Mr. Munney): Noted that a future Round 3 solicitation for projects will likely emphasize land acquisition, and that this reflects a semantic change from the Round 2 land acquisition component described in earlier documents (e.g., Round 3 will effectively be the Round 2 land acquisition component).

*Noted that the project timeline has been extended due in part to changes in the MA SubCouncil.*

**Public Question No. 4 Follow-Up:** *Comment encouraging the MA SubCouncil to focus on land acquisition.*

**Response No. 4 Follow-Up:** *(Mr. Munney): Asked that comments be submitted by letter and/or email and that the MA SubCouncil would consider these comments.*

**Public Question No. 5:** *Where does money for this project come from?*

**Response No. 5** *(Mr. Munney): Explained the NRDAR settlement process and stakeholders for the GE/Housatonic River project, which include Massachusetts, Connecticut, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Noted that the NRD settlement with GE was approximately \$15M split between the Massachusetts and Connecticut SubCouncils, and that this money has accrued some interest prior to disbursement for project work.*

**Response No. 5** *(Ms. Pelto): Explained that expenditure of funding is at the discretion of the MA SubCouncil, and not General Electric.*

**Public Question No. 6:** *Question regarding status of two land acquisition projects selected as preferred alternatives for funding Round 1 and whether this money would be reallocated if selected projects did not proceed through implementation (acquisition of land)?*

**Response No. 6** *(Ms. Pelto): Explained that money is being held for selected Round 1 land acquisition projects pending resolution of ongoing studies and/or issues specific to each site. If these issues are not resolved, then monies would be reallocated to a future funding round.*

**Public Question No. 7:** *Is the amount of funding set (e.g., \$15M distributed as \$7.5M to each state/SubCouncil)?*

**Response No. 7** *(Mr. Munney): Explained that funding is fixed based on the NRDAR settlement and that this funding is separated from funding for remediation work*

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*and funding. Furthermore, once all NRD funds are allocated to restoration projects, probably within the next few years via Round 3 funding, there will be no more money available for restoration projects throughout the watershed based on NRD funding.*

**Public Question No. 8:** *Comment that land acquisition projects should have permanent protection (e.g., Article 97).*

**Response No. 8** *(Mr. Chadwell): Responded that previous documents had indicated that land acquisition projects would be permanently protected.*

**Public Question No. 9:** *Comment suggesting that all remaining funds be dedicated to land acquisition and question whether the Round 3 process will be solely for land acquisition?*

**Response No. 9** *(Mr. Chelminski): Noted that Mr. Munney previously addressed this (see Response No. 4), that the Round 3 solicitation is expected to be for land acquisition, and referenced the previously-developed project guidance documents as references for the funding process.*

**Response No. 9** *(Mr. Munney): Noted that the MA SubCouncil would evaluate remaining funds when considering future funding rounds.*

**Public Question No. 10:** *How will the restoration be conducted within the 10 miles of the remedial area?*

**Response No.10** *(Mr. Munney): The NRD restoration projects are not necessarily restricted to the area that undergoes remediation. In fact, Restoration Rounds 1 and 2, and probably Round 3 will result in restoration projects throughout the Housatonic River watershed. EPA/GE will undertake restoration in conjunction with the areas that undergo remediation, which will be separate from the NRD restoration process and projects.*

*Stantec and the Trustees thanked people for their attendance and participation and again encouraged folks to send in comment letters before the August 23<sup>rd</sup> deadline.*

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

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The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact Stantec.

**STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.**

Michael Chelminski, P.E.

Senior Associate, Environmental Management

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Attachment: Evaluation Scoring Sheet

	Application ID _____
Reviewer ID _____	TOTAL SCORE _____

**PROJECT APPLICATION EVALUATION FORM**  
**Housatonic River NRD Fund, Round 2 – Habitat Restoration**

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

For each evaluation criterion, circle the appropriate number of points to be awarded. Subtotal the points for each category of criteria. Note the grand total score in the box above.

<b>A. RELEVANCE AND APPLICABILITY OF PROJECT</b>					
	High	Medium	Low	Score	Not Addressed
1. Natural Recovery Period	15	9	0		
2. Location of Project	15	9	0		
3. Sustainable Benefits	15	9	0		
4. Magnitude of Ecological Benefits	15	9	0		
5. Human Health and Safety	10	6	0		
6. Benefits to Multiple Restoration Categories	10	6	0		
7. Enhancement of Remediation/Response Actions	5	3	0		
<b>Subtotal (max=85)</b>					
<b>B. TECHNICAL MERIT</b>					
	High	Medium	Low	Score	Not Addressed
1. Technical/Technological Feasibility	15	9	0		
2. Technical Capacity of Applicant and Project Team	15	9	0		
3. Potential for Adverse Environmental Impacts	10	6	0		
4. Measurable Results	10	6	0		
5. Contingency Actions	10	6	0		
6. Administrative Capacity of Applicant and Project Team	5	3	0		
<b>Sub-total (max = 65)</b>					

Reviewer ID \_\_\_\_\_

Application ID \_\_\_\_\_

<b>C. PROJECT BUDGET</b>					
	High	Medium	Low	Score	Not Addressed
1. Relationship of Expected Costs to Expected Benefits	15	9	0		
2. Implementation-oriented	15	9	0		
3. Budget Justification and Understanding	15	9	0		
4. Leveraging of Additional Resources	10	6	3		
5. Coordination and Integration	5	3	0		
6. Comparative Cost-effectiveness	Preferred	Not Preferred			
<b>Sub-total (max = 60)</b>					
<b>D. SOCIOECONOMIC MERIT</b>					
	High	Medium	Low	Score	Not Addressed
1. Enhancement of Public's Relationship with Natural Resources	5	3	0		
2. Fostering Future Restoration and Stewardship	5	3	0		
3. Community Involvement	5	3	0		
4. Potential for Adverse Socioeconomic Impacts	5	3	0		
5. Complementary with Community Goals	5	3	0		
6. Public Outreach	5	3	0		
7. Diverse Partnerships	5	3	0		
<b>Sub-total (max = 35)</b>					
<b>GRAND TOTAL (max = 245)</b>					



Reviewer ID _____	Application ID _____
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**PROJECT APPLICATION EVALUATION FORM**  
**Housatonic River NRD Fund, Round 2 – Habitat Restoration**

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the space below to provide brief comments that justify your individual score for the Project Application and any subsequent score revisions. If you require additional pages, please include the Application ID, Reviewer ID and Project Name at the top of each page. Thank you.

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