

## Housatonic River Natural Resource Damages Fund

Round 3, SubRound 2 Restoration Project Proposals for  
Land Acquisition to Conserve Habitat

Doc. No. BWSC-NRD-2015-03

### EVALUATION SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Jug End Fen Conservation Area – Smith Parcel (Proposal No. 305)

**Consensus-Based Score:** 223

Review Team Members: United States Fish and Wildlife Service (2), Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (2), Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (1), Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (1), and Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (1).

#### Summary of Criteria Discussed:

- **Criterion A1 (Natural Recovery Period):** Multiple reviewers expressed that protection of land in perpetuity provides restoration benefits in advance of the natural recovery period because protection in perpetuity is not otherwise guaranteed and because land acquisition is a relatively “quick” action whereas other restoration actions can take a long time. One reviewer expressed that much of this parcel didn’t seem to have high probability / risk of development. One reviewer also noted that this criterion isn’t a strong fit for land protection projects. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion A3 (Sustainable Benefits):** Reviewers discussed that beaver-related management may require some periodic maintenance or management investment. Other reviewers felt that long-term self-sustaining benefits would be provided even without human maintenance or management. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion A4 (Magnitude of Ecological Benefits):** One reviewer expressed that they felt the proposed project would provide only a moderate level of ecological benefits due to the size of the parcel. Other reviewers expressed that the land seems to have a low probability of development and thus may provide long-term conservation benefit even without additional protections. Other reviewers expressed the opinion that the project would provide a high level of ecological benefit based on proximity to sensitive habitat. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion A7 (Enhancement of Remediation / Response Actions):** Reviewers discussed that the “enhancement of remediation/response actions” refers to USEPA actions addressing PCB clean-up, and agreed that this project does not appear to have a direct nexus with or enhance remediation/response actions.
- **Criterion B4 (Measurable Results):** Some reviewers expressed that specific, measurable results might be limited for this proposed project due to a perceived low risk that the land would be developed. Other reviewers felt that the project included numerous measurable aspects (e.g., acreage, brook frontage) and that these provided the potential for quantifiable results. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion B5 (Contingency Actions):** One reviewer expressed that the proposal did not appear to include a contingency plan for accessing additional funding or support if such a need were identified. Other reviewers noted that due diligence that would subsequently be conducted for selected proposals includes an appraisal and that this would assist in confirming project viability relative to existing resources. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of

the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.

- **Criterion C1 (Relationship of Expected Costs to Expected Benefits):** Reviewers agreed that the project's qualitative cost-benefit relationship demonstrates net benefits, but felt that the net benefits were not high due to the cost of the proposed project.
- **Criterion C3 (Budget Justification and Understanding):** Two reviewers expressed that the budget did not appear strongly justified, while others felt that the budget was detailed and justified. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion D1 (Enhancement of Public's Relationship with Natural Resources):** The reviewers discussed that the proposal generally addressed public access, but some reviewers felt that this parcel would not significantly enhance the public's ability to use, enjoy, or benefit from the watershed and that a "high" score wasn't warranted. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion D2 (Fostering Future Restoration and Stewardship):** Most reviewers felt the project would support ongoing environmental stewardship and provide a foundation of future restoration activities. Other reviewers agreed, but felt this effect might be "limited". Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion D3 (Community Involvement):** The reviewers discussed that "involvement" differs from "access", and the reviewers noted that community involvement was not specifically addressed in the proposal.
- **Criterion D5 (Complementary with Community Goals):** The reviewers discussed and generally agreed that the project has the potential to complement aspects of community goals, needs, and/or recommendations in existing plans that incorporated public input in their development (e.g., State Wildlife Action Plan), but the reviewers noted that related specifics were not addressed in the proposal.
- **Criterion D6 (Public Outreach):** Reviewers discussed that the proposed project did not appear to include a public outreach component and appeared to provide only minimal opportunity for the public to learn the details of the project. Unanimity among individual scores was not achieved in the course of the discussion, but all reviewers expressed consensus that the final individual scores yielded an acceptable average score for the criterion.
- **Criterion D7 (Diverse Partnerships):** The reviewers discussed that the proposal identified one partner, but did not appear to include "considerable diversity of partners contributing directly to the project" or "represent a broad range of community resources".

# Evaluation Scoring Summary

Project Name: **Jug End Fen Conservation Area - Smith Parcel**

Project Score: **223**

CATEGORY & CRITERIA	EVALUATION SCORES							
	GR1	GR2	GR3	GR4	GR5	GR6	GR7	Average
<b>A. RELEVANCE AND APPLICABILITY OF PROJECT</b>								
1. Natural Recovery Period	9	15	15	9	15	9	15	12
2. Location of Project	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
3. Sustainable Benefits	9	9	15	15	15	9	15	12
4. Magnitude of Ecological Benefits	9	15	9	15	15	9	15	12
5. Human Health and Safety	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
6. Benefits to Multiple Restoration Categories	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
7. Enhancement of Remediation/Response Actions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal (max=85)</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>B. TECHNICAL MERIT</b>								
1. Technical/Technological Feasibility	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
2. Technical Capacity of Applicant and Project Team	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
3. Potential for Adverse Environmental Impacts	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
4. Measurable Results	6	10	10	10	10	6	10	9
5. Contingency Actions	6	10	10	10	10	10	10	9
6. Administrative Capacity of Applicant and Project Team	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Subtotal (max=65)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>C. PROJECT BUDGET</b>								
1. Relationship of Expected Costs to Expected Benefits	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
2. Implementation-Oriented	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
3. Budget Justification and Understanding	9	15	15	15	9	15	15	13
4. Leveraging of Additional Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Coordination and Integration	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Subtotal (max=60)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>D. SOCIOECONOMIC MERIT</b>								
1. Enhancement of Public's Relationship w/ Natural Resources	9	15	9	15	9	15	15	12
2. Fostering Future Restoration and Stewardship	9	15	9	9	15	15	15	12
3. Community Involvement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. Potential for Adverse Socioeconomic Impacts	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
5. Complementary with Community Goals	10	6	6	6	6	6	6	7
6. Public Outreach	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	1
7. Diverse Partnerships	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Subtotal (max=75)</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total Score (max=285)</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>223</b>