



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# NEWS

## *New England Field Office*

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### **The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces 30-Day Review Period for an Environmental Assessment – Eel River Headwaters Restoration Project in Plymouth, Massachusetts**

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's New England Field Office Supervisor, Thomas R. Chapman has announced that the 30-day public comment period for the Environmental Assessment (EA) with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Eel River Headwaters Restoration Project begins today and closes on October 5, 2009.

Chapman said that "Staff at the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service have consulted with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Town of Plymouth, and the public to examine options for an restoring the ecological health of the upper Eel River immediately upstream and downstream of Long Pond Road in Plymouth. We have been working collaboratively with many project partners to look at options for the former commercial cranberry bogs that are now owned by the town." An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to evaluate the impacts of the project on the human environment, including natural and cultural resources, and provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the project.

The purpose of the Project is to: improve the overall ecological conditions in the upper Eel River; improve fish passage; promote a healthy coldwater fishery; improve water quality; re-establish rare wetland communities; and provide the public with passive recreational and educational opportunities. The future

use of the Project area is as preserved land (Eel River Headwaters Preserve), to be managed by the Town of Plymouth for passive recreational use, conservation, and educational purposes.

The EA analyzes the impacts of four alternatives on the human environment including a No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action, and two additional action alternatives. The Proposed Action involves configuration of the Sawmill Dam; culvert replacement and wetland and vegetation restoration within the former commercial cranberry bogs. Under Alternative 2, the Sawmill Dam would be reconfigured and the former commercial cranberry bogs would not be restored. Under Alternative 3, the cranberry bogs would be restored and the dam would be left undisturbed. Under the No Action, both the dam and the cranberry bogs would remain in their current condition.

Copies for review are available at the Plymouth Town Library and can be accessed online at: <http://www.fws.gov/newengland>. Comments can be sent to the Supervisor, New England Field Office, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 70 Commercial Street, Concord, New Hampshire 03301. Telephone: (603) 223-2541, Fax: (603) 223-2541 or email at [eric\\_derleth@fws.gov](mailto:eric_derleth@fws.gov).

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