



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# NEWS

## *New England Field Office*

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### **The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces a 30-Day Comment Period for an Environmental Assessment with a Finding of No Significant Impact – Manhan River Dam Fish Passage Project in Easthampton, 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 proposed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Manhan River Dam Fish Passage Project begins today and closes on February 6, 2010.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) originally was prepared and distributed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) on April 24, 2002. Comments on the draft EA were received, but a final EA was never issued for the project. After independent evaluation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that the ACOE's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document complies with the Service's NEPA requirements, and, therefore, is adopting the document (with minor revisions and updates) and recirculating it for public review. This EA has been prepared to evaluate the impacts of the project on the human environment, including natural and cultural resources, and to provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the project.

The purpose of the Project is to restore access to 11 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for migratory fish species in the mainstem and North Branch of the Manhan River, as well as to enhance passage for riverine fishes. 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 constructing a Denil fish ladder and downstream bypass pipe to facilitate fish movement past the Manhan River Dam. Under Alternative 2, a fish lift and downstream bypass pipe would be constructed at the dam. Under Alternative 3, the Manhan River Dam would be removed. Under the No Action, the dam would remain in its current condition.

Copies of the EA and FONSI are available for review at the Emily Williston Memorial Library, Easthampton, MA or 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 [melissa\\_grader@fws.gov](mailto:melissa_grader@fws.gov).

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