# WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION
# FOR THE PROPOSED
# BARTLETT STREET DRIVEWAY EXTENSION
# IN NEW BEDFORD, MA

**PREPARED BY**
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is proposed to extend a driveway northerly from the current terminus of Bartlett Street (which is approximately 275 feet north of Bristol Street) in New Bedford, MA. The extension requires a crossing of an intermittent stream. This crossing requires a wildlife habitat evaluation. This report has been prepared in response to that requirement.

## 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The un-named intermittent stream originates just south of Forbes Street, east of Route 140 and west of Acushnet Avenue. From there, it flows southeasterly 8,000 linear feet to the Acushnet River. One hundred years ago, it was surrounded by several hundred acres of woodland and fields and ran relatively unimpeded, save for a culvert under Acushnet Avenue and a culvert under Middle Road. Since that time, most of the surrounding area has been built up with commercial and residential development, several man made ponds have been constructed in its path and numerous roads have crossed the stream with culverts, the largest of which are 36 inch diameter circular pipes. In the immediate area of the proposed drive, the stream is approximately seven feet wide with a longitudinal slope of approximately .67 percent (s= 0.0066).

There is an approximately one acre man made pond immediately downgradient of the proposed crossing and a wet meadow immediately upgradient of the proposed crossing. It is anticipated that the area is populated with a small number of fox, squirrels, raccoon, field mice, moles, voles, opossum, chipmunks, rabbits and other small mammals as well as numerous birds and insects. Since the stream has been determined to be intermittent, fish are not expected to be present.

## 3.0 PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

It is proposed to construct a 20 foot wide paved drive from the current terminus of Bartlett Street northerly 300 feet. The drive will be permanently dead ended so there will never be any through traffic. The drive will be constructed at an elevation approximately one foot above the existing ground on either side so as not to create a barrier to the migration of wildlife.

The stream will be crossed with a 10 foot wide by 3 foot high bottomless culvert which will not disturb the stream bottom area. The openness ratio will be .938 which exceeds the minimum recommended .80 by seventeen percent. The span's 10 foot width is more than the 9.6 foot recommended minimum.

## 4.0 HABITAT EVALUATION

A review of plans of record, regulatory criteria and a field assessment of the locus, as well as the upgradient and downgradient areas, was conducted in order to evaluate the existing and projected wildlife habitat values of the area. It was determined that there were:

1. No nearby areas delineated by the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program.
2. No sphagnum hummocks or shallow pools of standing water.
3. No trees with large cavities.
4. No projected disturbance to beaver or mink dens.
5. No disturbance within 100 feet of beaver or mink dens.
6. No bald eagle, osprey or great blue heron nesting trees.
7. No freshwater mussel beds.
8. No impact to open water areas for winter habitat.
9. No turtle nesting areas.
10. No vertical sandy bank for swallow and kingfisher nesting.
11. No stream bed riffle zones, springs, plunge pools or deep holes or medium to large flat rock substrates.

Appendix A presents the completed Simplified Wildlife Habitat Evaluation form from the "Massachusetts Wildlife Habitat Protection Guidance for Inland Wetlands" issued by DEP Bureau of Resource Protection dated March 2006. One of the two boxes that were checked is "wetlands and waterbodies known to contain open water in winter with the capacity to serve as waterfowl winter habitat". The one acre man made pond which is immediately downgradient of the proposed crossing does freeze over in mid-winter, but is available as open water in December and portions of March and thereafter. The proposed crossing will have no impact on any aspect of waterfowl winter habitat. The only other box checked in Appendix A is "gravel stream bottoms for trout and salmon nesting substrate". Now that the downgradient Acushnet Sawmill dam has been removed, it is hoped that trout and salmon may again migrate to upstream areas. The proposed bottomless culvert will not disturb the bottom and therefore will not impact any possible nesting substrate.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

None of the habitat features listed in Appendix A will be impacted; therefore, the proposed driveway is not projected to have any negative impact on the existing wildlife.

Project Location (from NOI): Bartlett Street, New Bedford
Person Completing Form: Richard J. Rheaume Date: August 30, 2018

## APPENDIX A
### Simplified Wildlife Habitat Evaluation

IMPORTANT HABITAT FEATURES: Direct alterations to the following important habitat features in resource areas may be permitted only if they will have no adverse effect (Refer to Section V)

- ☐ habitat for state-listed animal species (receipt of a positive opinion or permit from MNHESP shall be presumed to be correct. Do not refer to Section V).

- ☐ sphagnum hummocks and pools suitable to serve as nesting habitat for four-toed salamanders
- ☐ trees with large cavities (≥18" tree diameter at cavity entrance)
- ☐ existing beaver, mink or otter dens
- ☐ Areas within 100 feet of existing beaver, mink or otter dens (if significant disturbance)
- ☐ existing nest trees for birds that traditionally reuse nests (bald eagle, osprey, great blue heron)
- ☐ land containing freshwater mussel beds
- ☑ wetlands and waterbodies known to contain open water in winter with the capacity to serve as waterfowl winter habitat
- ☐ turtle nesting areas
- ☐ vertical sandy banks (bank swallows, rough-winged swallows or kingfishers)

The following habitat characteristics when not commonly encountered in the surrounding area:

- ☐ stream bed riffle zones (e.g. in eastern MA)
- ☐ springs
- ☑ gravel stream bottoms (trout and salmon nesting substrate)
- ☐ plunge pools (deep holes) in rivers or streams
- ☐ medium to large, flat rock substrates in streams

ACTIVITIES: **When any one of the following activities are proposed within resource areas, applicants should complete a Detailed Wildlife Habitat Evaluation (Refer to Appendix B).**

- ☐ activities located in mapped "Habitat of Potential Regional or Statewide Importance"
- ☐ activities affecting certified or documented vernal pool habitat, including habitat within 100' of a certified or documented vernal pool when within a resource area
- ☐ activities in bank, land under water, bordering land subject to flooding (presumed significant) where alterations are more than twice the size of thresholds.
- ☐ activities affecting vegetated wetlands >5000 sq. ft. occurring in resource areas other than Bordering Vegetated Wetland
- ☐ activities affecting the sole connector between habitats >50 acres in size
- ☐ Installation of structures that prevent animal movement
- ☐ Activities for the purpose of bank stabilization using hard structure solutions that significantly affect ability of stream channel to shift and meander, or disrupt continuity in cover that would inhibit animal passage.
- ☐ dredging (greater than 5,000 sf)