
Environmental Review Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 22, 2025 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Roger Bolton (Chair), Mark Smith, Ed Holub, and Malcolm Fick (Ex-officio, non-voting)

Others Present: Melissa Provencher (BRPC), and Tom Matuszko (BRPC)

I. Call to Order & Open Meeting Law Statement

ERC Chairman Bolton called the meeting to order at 4:03pm and read the Open Meeting Law Statement.

II. Roll Call of Environmental Review Committee Members Attending the Meeting

Committee Members Present: Roger Bolton (Chair), Mark Smith, Ed Holub, and Malcolm Fick.

III. Vote to Approve Minutes of the Environmental Review Committee Meeting of January 21, 2025

E. Holub made a motion to approve the minutes of January 21, 2025. The motion was seconded by M. Smith. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Smith: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

V. Discussion of the Single Environmental Impact Report for Mount Williams Reservoir Dam and Notch Reservoir Dam Improvements Projects, North Adams

Chairman Bolton asked M. Provencher to summarize the project. M. Provencher explained that the proponent previously filed an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF) with a request for a Single Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) rather than conducting a two-step process of a Draft and Final EIR. BRPC submitted comments on the EENF and supported the request for an SEIR. The Secretary granted their request for a SEIR.

The project consists of dam improvements for the primary drinking water source for the city of North Adams. As the primary drinking water source, a do nothing alternative is not a feasible option. The Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety has established standards as to how this type of work is conducted and engineered. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has determined that there is no adverse impact. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has confirmed that the damselfly will not be impacted by the project as it is not found within the work area. So those are interesting and positive points. The proponents are still working with NHESP regarding impacts to protected grasses.

BRPC's comments on the EENF have been adequately addressed within the SEIR. However, it is worth reiterating that there is a very long duration for this project and additional community engagement should be conducted throughout the design stage and construction. Since this is a public drinking water supply the City will need to establish mechanisms to keep the public informed and to have continued engagement within impacted Environmental Justice neighborhoods. The SEIR did acknowledge the need for future community engagement. While it's not a weakness within the SEIR, it is worth restating the importance of continuing community engagement and that BRPC should be consulted and may be a resource in this process.

M. Smith inquired about the wetland replication plan and whether monitoring was a part of the plan. M. Provencher confirmed that monitoring for 3-5 years is a requirement under the plan.

M. Smith made a motion to submit the EIR Report to MEPA. E. Holub seconded the motion.

ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Smith: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

M. Smith moved to adjourn. E. Holub seconded the motion. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Smith: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

Materials distributed electronically:

- ERC Agenda 5/22/25
- ERC Minutes 1/21/25
- May 22, 2025 Environmental Review Report for the Single Environmental Impact Report for Mount Williams Reservoir Dam and Notch Reservoir Dam Improvements Projects, North Adams