

BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: NHDOT Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting

DATE OF CONFERENCE: December 21, 2016

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT

Matt Urban
Sarah Large
Randy Talon
Mark Kirouac
Caleb Dobbins
Mark Hemmerlein
Anthony Weatherbee
Steve Johnson
Leah Savage

Kirk Mudgett
Sally Gunn

EPA

Mark Kern

NHDES

Gino Infascelli
Lori Sommer

NH Fish & Game

Carol Henderson
Jim Oehler

**NH Natural Heritage
Bureau**

Amy Lamb

**Consultants/Public
Participants**

(When viewing these minutes online, click on an attendee to send an e-mail)

PRESENTATIONS/ PROJECTS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:

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(When viewing these minutes online, click on a project to zoom to the minutes for that project)

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Finalization of June 15th and October 19th 2016 Meeting Minutes

The June 15th and October 19th meeting minutes were finalized.

Off Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) Connector Trails in NHDOT Right Of Way (ROW)
Caleb Dobbins gave an overview of the OHRV’s and relevant RSAs.

The purpose of this presentation was to request input from the Natural Resource Agencies pertaining to NHDOT’s development of a policy for permitting OHRV Connector Trails in NHDOT ROW. The input requested pertains only to environmental issues associated with the proposed permitting activity. Administrative issues are not subject to this request and will be managed by NHDOT separately.

Reviewed state RSA’s applicable to permitting of OHRV trails. A summary of the RSA’s reviewed follows:

<u>RSA</u>	<u>Applicability</u>
215-A:9.V	Policy governing any OHRV trail connector of trail crossing with class I, II, and III highway rights of way shall be as determined by the commissioner of the department of transportation.
215-A:42	Provides general conditions for ATV or trail bike trails established on state-owned property.
215-A:43	Provides the 2-step (i.e., Fine and Coarse filters) evaluation process to be utilized by the department of resources and economic development (DRED) for any new ATV or trail bike trail.
236:56.II(d)	Exempts trail connectors in Coos and Grafton counties from the provisions of RSAs 215-A:42 and 215-A:43.

NHDOT has developed a draft “Environmental Checklist” for connector trail applicants (i.e., DRED and local club) to complete and submit with applications for new connector trails in NHDOT ROW. The Environmental Checklist includes a number of environmental evaluations to be performed to verify compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The draft Environmental Checklist, copies of the above-referenced RSAs, and a copy of the PowerPoint presentation were provided to representatives of the Natural Resource Agencies.

The presentation included a number of pictures of unpermitted OHRV connector trails currently located within NHDOT ROW.

A summary of questions and answers follows:

Question: Are the coarse and fine filters in RSA 215-A:43 for environmental issues?

Answer: Yes. There are additional criteria that are related to environmental issues.

Question: Are there no exemplary communities on NHDOT parcels.

Answer: Yes, but exemplary communities do not compose greater than 90% any of NHDOT parcels.

Question: Are the only items exempted in RSA 235:56 the fine and coarse filters in RSA 215-A:43 and not the related environmental RSAs?

Answer: Yes, related environmental RSAs are not exempted.

Question: Is the Environmental Checklist on-line?

Answer: Yes, the final version will be on NHDOT Bureau of Highway Maintenance internet webpage.

Question: Is the NHDOT declaratory ruling just for OHRV crossings?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What is the specification for gravel beyond the paved approach apron for OHRV crossings?

Answer: The gravel specification is Item 304.3 from the NHDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction

NHDOT requests Natural Resource Agency feedback by January 27, 2017. Information requested include: any issues and concerns pertaining to permitting of OHRV connector trails, and agency contact name, telephone number, and email information.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Rochester 21832

This project involves replacement of a 5ft x 7ft x 82” metal plate arch pipe which carries an unnamed brook under NH Route 11 in Rochester. A number of options were reviewed including; a fully compatible stream crossing 22’ span bridge, box culverts, and twin 72” pipes. Skewing the pipes/boxes was also considered. After reviewing the cover requirements, wetland impacts, flood history, and the concerns regarding the increased hydraulic capacity if a fully compliant structure was constructed and the implication on the downstream historical stone arch structure the Department is proposing an in kind replacement. This preferred alternative, with a slight southerly shift, is more cost effective, keeps the inverts at the same elevations and would aid in construction as the current structure could function as a clean water by-pass. Mark Kern asked if the project team had considered replacing the arch with a concrete box in the same orientation and location as the present pipe. Leah Savage explained that the cost of the box and the cover constraints at this location eliminated this option from the alternatives. Lori Sommer asked how much cover was needed. L. Savage responded that a foot of header for the box or the thickness of the concrete header would be needed which there is not that much clearance with the road at this site. Kirk

Mudgett added that they could embed the box into the stream, but that would have added impacts to the channel. L. Sommer as well as others asked about including a wildlife passage shelf inside the pipe. Matt Urban asked if they planned to back fill the old existing pipe? He suggested that if it wasn't filled it could be used for critter passage but also mentioned there could be opening to length ratio concerns. M. Urban also added that having another pipe next to the replacement could cause flooding issues down stream as it would be increasing the hydraulic capacity at this location. Mark Hemmerlein added that the stream does not run very often. Gino Infacelli added that the no name stream appeared to be barely perennial. He also provided a suitability chart. The Department agreed to look into include a small animal crossing shelf inside the pipe with appropriated platforms on the ends. Carol Henderson stated that some sort of shelf would be preferable and she liked the idea of the box culvert. Sally Gunn asked how a critter shelf would affect hydrology, the structures integrity, and the probability of it catching debris. G. Infascelli stated that it would be minimal. M. Urban added that a critter shelf would likely be installed above the ohw line. Amy Lamb noted there were wood turtles within the area and that an NHB search needs to be done. C. Henderson noted that this project was within the Designated Cocheco River system. S. Gunn reiterated that the Department will review the wildlife shelf within an in kind replacement and proceed to permitting the project.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Easton 139/148 (Non-Federal)

Tony Weatherbee provided an overview of the project. The project involves the rehabilitation of the bridge that carries Route 116 over Ham Branch (139/148). Bridge Maintenance plans to replace the deck and widen the substructure. The existing structure is a concrete rigid bridge that has a span of 25'-0" and a width of 24'-0". The proposed work consists of the following: place sandbag cofferdams and temporary scaffolding, replace the deck, face the concrete abutments, construct wingwalls, and place riprap. Bridge Maintenance proposes to remove the "flying" wing on the upstream side and construct a new one and address the falling apart rip rap there.

Matt Urban asked if the extension of the deck would be on the existing wings? Tony responded yes, and that the new wing on the upstream side will extend out into the current rip rap. Tony then explained that they will need to construct a U-back wingwall on the other upstream side wing due to the road extension.

Tony added that the concrete rail will need to be brought to a historical resources meeting at a later time.

Tony then moved onto the downstream side of the structure. He explained there was no existing rip rap on this side however there is some erosion along one of the banks that Bridge Maintenance would like to armor.

Tony and Steve Johnson explained that one of the reasons for choosing to widen the bridge was so that they can do phase construction because closing the road would create an extensive detour. Steve also mentioned that widening the road in through this location is good so that plows have the full width they need.

Tony explained that they will not need as large of a U wall for the downstream side wing. M. Urban stated that we would need to mitigate for the channel extension but hoped to not need to mitigate for any bank impacts for the extension where existing wings exist. He also added that we will need to mitigate for new rip rap (the downstream armoring side), but not for any existing rip rap (upstream side). Lori seemed to agree with Matt. Carol Henderson asked about the size of the rip rap that they would use. Tony responded that they are still assessing what size they would need to use. L. Sommer mentioned that the Hambranch River might be designated now. Tony said that we would check on that.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Westmoreland 113/163 (Non-Federal)

Tony Weatherbee provided an overview of the project. The project involves the rehabilitation of the bridge that carries Route 12 over Aldrich Brook (113/163). The existing structure is a concrete box bridge that has a span of 10'-0" and a length of 216'-6" with concrete invert. The box height is 12'-0". Proposed work consists of the following: place sandbag cofferdams and repair the degraded concrete invert. Bridge Maintenance plans to dewater the structure with a pipe or do half of the work at a time.

Carol Henderson asked if they will be pouring the new invert without raising the elevation. Tony answered yes, that they will match the current elevation. Steve Johnson added that it might be half an inch above the current elevation due to the needed amount to assure the concrete is not compromised again. C. Henderson was asking because she was curious about the overall amount of water through the structure. In the pictures there appeared to be not much water. C. Henderson was a little concerned about the water depth through the structure. Matt Urban asked if creating more of a bench style to the structure would help with water volume in the structure. Tony responded that their current proposed plan will not change the hydraulics of the structure, but that shelves/bench that Matt proposed would. C. Henderson asked if they were going to replace the entire invert/ if there was rebar showing through the concrete throughout the entire structure. Tony responded that there were only sections with poor concrete. S. Johnson made it sound as though they were replacing the entire invert.

Amy Lamb asked if the work (moving the materials to the structure) would be done by hand. She advised that there are lots of rare plant hits in this area so if Bridge Maintenance planned to use machinery a field survey for the plants would need to be done. S. Johnson responded that they would likely use a crane to move the concrete to the structure so that they didn't have to move machinery down the slopes and in the wetlands. Tony asked A. Lamb if she would be able to help with the survey if we needed to do it. He mentioned that she had once in the past and that it was helpful. A. Lamb said yes that she would. Matt Urban mentioned that the slopes were super saturated and the wetland on the downstream side slope was completely covered with horsetails. Gino Infascelli mentioned that he thought there was a large back water upstream cause by one of the state's large storm events.

M. Urban asked Bridge Maintenance if they had any intent to fix/ add any stone to the scour behind the downstream wings. Tony expressed that their main concern was the invert of the bridge and that they hadn't considered the scour behind the wings. S. Johnson said that they can look into it; however expressed that access may be difficult. Lori Sommer and G. Infascelli reiterated that building an access road would be very difficult.

At the conclusion of the meeting C. Henderson stated that they should go with the original plan and that there was no need for a critter shelf. She then asked when they thought they would work on this. S. Johnson said they planned to do the work in the winter, but not this winter.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Westmoreland 159/125 (Non-Federal)

Tony Weatherbee provided an overview of the project. The project involves the rehabilitation of the bridge that carries Route 12 over Mill Brook (159/125). The existing structure is a concrete arch bridge that has a span of 21'-0" and a length through the structure of 73'-0". Proposed work consists of the following: place sandbag cofferdams and temporary scaffolding, repair the arch in kind and place riprap. Tony addressed the degraded concrete of the structure and stated that they plan to install toewalls and riprap within the structure. Steve Johnson stated that they will be putting a facing on the concrete. In regards to the riprap, Tony explained that they will place the riprap within the structure from the abutment out 5-6 ft and place it level with the stream bed. He also explained that they will leave a channel through the center of the structure with no riprap. Matt Urban stated that it sounded like there would be no mitigation with this project? Lori Sommer concurred.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Hampton Falls #40503 (Non-Federal)

Tony Weatherbee provided an overview of the project. The project involves the rehabilitation of the bridge that carries Route 84 over Hampton Falls River (187/053). The existing structure is a stone masonry arch bridge that has a span of 11'-0" and a width of 23'-9". Proposed work consists of the following: place sandbag cofferdams and temporary scaffolding, chink in stones throughout the arch and the downstream wingwalls. Matt Urban stated that we will have to go through a cultural resources review. Tony express that there are NHB hits in the area. Carol Henderson agreed, and said that there were lots of plants in the area.

C. Henderson asked was the purpose of the dam was. Gino Infascelli said that it was maybe for Dodge Ponds.

Tony stated that they proposed to put back loose stones that have fallen out of the structure. C. Henderson asked if they were planning any work within the structure? Tony answered that they do not plan to do work within the structure and that they only have temporary impacts listed for access

for the crews. Someone asked how they would reattached the fallen stones. Matt Urban answered that they might use injection epoxy glue.

Amy Lamb asked that Tony check the NHB number that is associated with this project. She said that the one on the AIR form matches with a project much closer to salt marsh/ not this project location. Tony expressed that they will also probably need to submit a new one anyways because he thought the NHB for this project is almost expired.

G. Infascelli expressed that there are Designated Prime Wetlands in the area and that a delineation will need to be done.

Lori Sommer stated that no mitigation is needed.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.