SUBJECT: NHDOT Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting

DATE OF CONFERENCE: June 20, 2012

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT
Christine Perron
Alex Vogt
Michael Servetas
Peter Stammas
Marc Laurin
C.R. Willeke
Steve Liakos
Rick Faul
Dan Prehemo
Steve Babalis

NH Fish & Game
Carol Henderson

NH Natural Heritage Bureau
Melissa Coppola

EPA
Mark Kern
Nathan Margason

Federal Highway Administration
Jamie Sikora

Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.
Sean James
William Davidson

Dubois & King
Robert Durfee

HE Bergeron Engineering
Jason Ross

McFarland Johnson
Brian Colburn

NHDES Wetlands Bureau
Lori Sommer
Jocelyn Degler

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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 April Meeting Minutes

The April 18, 2012 meeting minutes were finalized.

Barnstead, 16200, X-A001(180)

Steve Babalis provided an overview of the project. This is a Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP) that consists of 1,600 linear feet of roadway improvements at the intersection of NH Route 28 and NH Route 126. This section of roadway was built in 1967 with 12’ travel lanes and 10’ shoulders. Approximately 10,000 vehicles per day (vpd) are carried on NH Route 28 and 4,000 vpd on NH Route 126. A corridor safety study conducted in 2009 identified this intersection as a priority. Currently there is a flashing yellow light and NH Route 28 is posted for 55 mph.

The proposed project would construct left and right turn lanes from NH Route 28 onto NH Route 126, and a right turn lane from NH Route 126 onto NH Route 28. The intersection has a high accident history. To accommodate the right turn lane, NH Route 28 would be widened approximately 10 feet, south of NH 126. Additional work would include reconstruction of the NH Route 126 approach at the intersection, signalizing the intersection, tree trimming, headwall repair at three culverts, and relocation of the snowmobile trail along the east side of NH Route 28. Pavement rehabilitation would include an overlay. The roadway work will not impact the delineated wetlands. All work would be contained within the limits of existing right-of-way.

The end sections on the 30” bituminous coated metal plate arch crossing NH Route 28 will be replaced with headwalls. The outlet headwall for the 36” concrete pipe under NH Route 126 will be replaced as well. The intent is to do the headwall work under a Notification of Routine Roadway Maintenance.

Carol Henderson asked for clarification on the Natural Heritage Bureau review. Jon Hebert stated that Natural Heritage Bureau records note brook floater, Blanding’s turtle, and eastern box turtle in the vicinity of the project, but no federally listed species.

Jocelyn Degler asked if any of the pipes would be lengthened. S. Babalis stated that while there would be some widening of the roadway, lengthening pipes would not be necessary. Jon Hebert added that the intent is to avoid wetland impacts except for what will be necessary to replace the headwalls.

J. Degler asked if the project was within a quarter mile of a Designated River, which would disqualify it from the Routine Roadway Maintenance Notification process. It was determined that the project is not within a quarter mile of a Designated River.

Mark Kern stated that he had no concerns with the project as proposed.

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

Winchester, 16034, X-A001(100)

The project was presented by Bill Davidson and Sean James from Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. Bill Davidson provided an overview of the project, which proposes to install/replace approximately 3,200 linear feet of sidewalks from Warwick Road (NH Route 78) down Main Street (NH Route 10 & NH Route 119) over Mirey Brook and ending at the intersection of Main Street and Elm Street. The project runs parallel to the Ashuelot River and falls within the limits of the Shoreland Protection Zone. It was determined that a
Shoreland Permit will need to be acquired from the NH Department of Environmental Services. All existing drainage will be retained and no proposed drainage is associated with the project. The preferred method of pedestrian crossing over the Mirey Brook is to add a pedestrian crossing to the existing bridge. Constructing a stand-alone pedestrian bridge is not a preferred alternative due to the potential wetland impacts associated with the work. The project was discussed at the NHDOT Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting on May 10, 2012, and a Town of Winchester Historical District review will be scheduled in the future.

Carol Henderson asked if there was a file number for the Natural Heritage Bureau review. Sean James and Bill Davidson replied that the file number was NHB12-1424. A review of the project for rare species and exemplary natural communities was conducted on June 14, 2012 by the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau. According to this review, there are no records of sensitive species in or near the project area.

C. Henderson noted that coordination with the Local River Advisory Committee would be required by DES because the project is in close proximity to the Ashuelot River, which is a Designated River.

No additional comments, questions, or concerns were raised relative to the proposed project.

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

Harrisville, 16114, non-federal

This project involves the replacement of the bridge that carries South Road over Minnewawa Brook in Harrisville, NH. DuBois & King Project Manager Bob Durfee presented the initial project review, including alternatives and proposed wetland impacts.

The bridge replacement project is in the NHDOT Municipal Bridge Aid Program, with the Study Phase nearly completed. The schedule is to proceed with Preliminary Design and permitting in late summer/fall of 2012.

The existing bridge is a narrow, two-lane (19'-8” wide), 29’ clear span structure between abutments. Town records indicate it was built in 1966. The superstructure consists of precast/prestressed concrete butted-beams. The substructure abutments are cast-in-place concrete. The bridge is on the NHDOT “Red List” and posted for 6 ton weight limit due to structural deficiencies. The road is dead ended on the south side, providing access to nineteen homes. A reservoir (Russell Reservoir) and dam are located immediately upstream of the bridge. A stone retaining wall runs from the northeast corner of the bridge to the north abutment of the dam spillway. Jurisdictional wetlands have been delineated immediately downstream of the bridge.

Town officials have indicated that some flooding and near overtopping of the bridge has occurred. A storm event in the 1970s caused floodwaters to ebb at the bridge. Town forces cut a diversion ditch around the bridge to provide more hydraulic capacity and prevent the bridge from overtopping. The low point in the road elevation is at the bridge.

The proposed bridge structure will be a new two lane, 24’ wide bridge consisting of a 3-sided precast concrete frame or precast concrete arch on concrete footings. The northeast stone retaining wall will be replaced with a new modular concrete block retaining wall. Moderate changes to the existing road profile are proposed. The elevation of the road through the bridge will be raised approximately one foot with new bridge construction. The low point in the road will remain at the bridge.
A temporary, one lane bridge, will be erected downstream during construction to provide a detour and maintain traffic through South Road. Phased construction of the bridge was studied; the maximum lane width that could be provided is 8’ – 0”. The Town fire truck is 8’-6” wide, making phased construction impractical. The Town owns a temporary bridge and will offer it to the contractor at no cost for use with the detour.

A hydraulic and hydrologic investigation has been performed. Results indicate the current bridge and a proposed 30’ long replacement bridge can both pass the NHDOT required Q50 flood event for a bridge with 1.4 feet of freeboard, and can also pass the NHDES Dam Bureau required Q100 flood event for a dam with 0.7 feet of freeboard. A bridge span of 37’ will pass the Q100 event with 1.0’ freeboard, and a 40’ span will pass the maximum spillway capacity of the dam with 1.0 feet of freeboard at the bridge. The Town has approved replacing the existing bridge with a new 40’ span to satisfy the dam maximum spillway capacity.

Replacement of the bridge, and construction and removal of the temporary bridge, will all have impact to wetlands. A Standard Dredge and Fill Permit will be required by NHDES.

A bridge design that would satisfy the NHDES Stream Crossing Rules (Env-Wt 900) was studied. The bridge is considered a Tier 3 stream crossing. Bankfull width was determined to be 39’. A 47’ long clear span bridge would be required to span the 1.2 x bankfull width. The longer bridge would add significant cost to the project.

Approval of an alternative design (Env Wt 904.09) for a 40’ max clear span bridge will be requested as part of the NHDES permit application. Dubois & King believes that it is not practicable to meet the NHDES Stream Crossing requirements due to the significant cost increase of a longer bridge, and because the proposed 40’ bridge span passes the Q100 flood event with sufficient freeboard. No one in attendance raised objections to pursuing an alternative design.

Lori Sommer asked if the project would have wetland impacts. B. Durfee answered yes, impacts would be temporary, and would be the result of constructing the temporary road detour.

Jocelyn Degler inquired as to the area of wetland impacts. B. Durfee estimated approximately 1,000 S.F. or less. Exact quantity and limits of wetland impacts have not been determined or finalized. Impacts would be addressed in the NHDES Dredge and Fill permit application.

J. Degler inquired as to the area of impact at the southwest quadrant of the bridge, asking if there is a channel located there. B. Durfee answered yes; there is a ditch or small stream that outlets into the Minnewawa Brook at this location. Estimated length of ditch/stream impact is 150 feet.

Melissa Coppola asked if an NHB review had been completed. B. Durfee said no, stating that this will be done during the preliminary design phase. M. Coppola urged that the NHB review be done early to identify any potential concerns. B. Durfee committed to having an NHB review completed as the first task during preliminary design. M. Coppola stated she had done a quick check and there were no issues with vegetation, but she did not check wildlife.

Carol Henderson concurred with the recommendation to have the NHB review done early to identify any potential concerns.

Steve Liakos inquired as to what bridge length is necessary to satisfy NHDES stream crossing rules. B. Durfee said that the bankfull width had been calculated at 39’ and the 1.2 times bankfull width rule would make the bridge length 47’.
S. Liakos indicated that the NHDOT would agree to the 40’ bridge span to satisfy the dam spillway capacity.

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

**Stark, 20224, X-A001(157)**

Jason Ross of H.E. Bergeron Engineers presented the project on behalf of the Town of Stark. The project goal is to rehabilitate the Stark Covered Bridge for a 10-ton live load. The project is being funded with a grant from the FHWA National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program, the NHDOT Municipal Bridge Aid program, and a Town bridge capital reserve fund. Bidding of the project is expected in the winter/spring of 2013 with construction beginning in the summer of 2013. J. Ross provided a written project summary, photos of the bridge, and a plan and profile view of the project to those present then proceeded with the following overview of the project.

The historic covered bridge was constructed in the mid-1800s as a two-span Paddleford truss. The bridge was rehabilitated and timber arches were added in the 1890s after the middle pier washed away. In 1949, a new concrete pier was constructed. Steel beams were added under the roadway and the arches were removed in 1954. The bridge is now in need of another complete rehabilitation.

The approximate dimensions of the bridge are 138 feet long, with a portal extension of 6 feet at each end, for an overall length of 150 feet. The bridge has an 18-foot wide roadway with two external sidewalks, for a total width of 29 feet. The trusses are approximately 14 feet tall. Clear height from floor to tie beams is approximately 12'-5”.

In preparing this study, HEB analyzed several different options for rehabilitating the trusses, deck, substructure, and roof, as well as scour mitigations, electrical upgrades, and fire suppression systems. After careful consideration of all the options, the results were narrowed down to the following alternatives:

**Alternative 1:** Remove existing roofing and purlins; reinforce existing rafters; install solid plank roof sheathing; install new cedar shake roofing; remove existing roadway and sidewalk decking; replace two steel stringers and recoat two steel stringers; rehabilitate the existing concrete pier and concrete bridge seats; rehabilitate and reconfigure the trusses into a two span configuration; install transverse timber deck and sidewalk beams; install longitudinal timber decking with 14’ clear roadway; install new vertical ship-lapped siding; install partially grouted rip-rap around the pier and in front of the abutments; apply No-Char treatment to all exposed timbers; install dry hydrants and sprinkler system; and perform electrical and lighting upgrades.

**Alternative 2:** Remove existing roofing and purlins; reinforce existing rafters; install solid plank roof sheathing; install new cedar shake roofing; remove existing roadway and sidewalk decking; remove the existing steel stringers; rehabilitate the existing concrete pier and concrete bridge seats; rehabilitate and reconfigure the trusses into a two span configuration; install two-span laminated timber arches with steel hanger rods and new timber needle beams; install transverse timber deck and sidewalk beams; install longitudinal timber decking with 14’ clear roadway; install partially grouted rip-rap around the pier and in front of the abutments; apply No-Char treatment to all exposed timbers; install dry hydrants and sprinkler system; and perform electrical and lighting upgrades.

**Alternative 3:** Remove existing roofing and purlins; reinforce existing rafters; install solid plank roof sheathing; install new cedar shake roofing; remove existing roadway and sidewalk decking; remove the existing steel stringers and concrete pier; rehabilitate the existing concrete bridge seats; rehabilitate the
trusses in the current single span configuration; install single span laminated timber arches with steel hanger rods and new timber needle beams; install transverse timber deck and sidewalk beams; install longitudinal timber decking with 14’ clear roadway; install partially grouted rip-rap around the pier and in front of the abutments; apply No-Char treatment to all exposed timbers; install dry hydrants and sprinkler system; and perform electrical and lighting upgrades.

J. Ross noted that Alternative 3 would remove the pier from the river, thereby improving the waterway opening and potentially lowering the 50 year flood elevation. At this time, this alternative is the preferred alternative.

HEB has been consulting with the Selectmen on bridge rehabilitation options and will be submitting an engineering study in the near future. A Public Input Session was held on 2/29/12. There was a good turnout and a lot of positive feedback about the project. A second Public Input session will be scheduled soon. HEB met with representatives from the Covered Bridge Society (Tim Andrews & David Wright) to discuss the rehab options. HEB is also consulting with Rich Casella from Historical Documentation Company to prepare a Historic Structures Report.

The project has been presented at the NHDOT Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting on February 9, 2012 and June 7, 2012. HEB will attend at least one more meeting sometime in the future. Since the bridge has been rehabilitated several times in the past, HEB is hoping that the committee will determine that this project will have “No Adverse Effect” on any historical resources. If this is the case, HEB will complete a Programmatic CE NEPA document.

J. Ross noted that the Upper Ammonoosuc River is not a NH Designated River.

The online Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) DataCheck Tool has indicated that there are “Potential Impacts” in the vicinity of the area impacted by this project (NHB11-1738). HEB is waiting to receive the final report with details of the potential impacts. Melissa Coppola said that she quickly reviewed the site prior to the meeting and determined that the only plants of concern were located in the Devil’s Slide area; she has not yet looked at wildlife species of concern. A detailed review of the NHB records will be performed after she receives the $25 fee.

A temporary right-of-way may be required during construction, but there will be no need to acquire any additional land or obtain any permanent easements. There will be no 4(f) or 6(f) property use.

A Standard Dredge and Fill Permit will be required from NHDES to install the riprap and potentially to remove the pier. There will be approximately 1,200 to 1,500 sq. ft. of riprap. Any temporary shoring will likely be supported by the existing steel beams and would not have any impact to wetlands. Temporary wetland impacts are estimated to be less than 2,000 sq. ft. Temporary cofferdams will be used to ensure that the project will have no more than a negligible impact on water quality.

Carol Henderson asked if DOT or the Town needs to approve the proposed alternative. Jason Ross said that approval is required from both parties.

C. Henderson said that she is concerned about the timing of the project in regard to fish spawning. J. Ross said that it is too early to know the exact dates of construction. Bidding is expected to be in the winter/spring of 2013 with construction starting in the summer. Construction is expected to last approximately 9 months.

C. Henderson asked which alternative is the least expensive. J. Ross said that Alternative 3 is the least expensive.
C. Henderson said that NH Fish & Game would prefer Alternative 3, which would remove the pier from the river and revert the river to a more free-flowing condition.

Christine Perron suggested that HEB return to another meeting prior to permitting to discuss construction methods and timing of the project. This should also be prior to submitting NEPA documentation. Steve Liakos indicated that the type of cofferdam that is used will be determined by the contractor.

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

**Lisbon, Bridge 078/086, no project number**

Christine Perron provided an overview of the project. A project number has not yet been assigned. Bridge 078/086 carries US Route 302 over Pearl Lake Brook in Lisbon. When the bridge was constructed in 1927, the span was 8’-6” above the streambed. Since that time there has been substantial aggradation under the bridge and downstream, resulting in an opening of only 18” today. Due to this reduced capacity, relatively insignificant rain events now cause the stream to overtop the roadway and flood adjacent properties. The bridge is located at a point in the channel where the slope changes from steep to flat, and is within the mapped 100-year flood hazard area of Pearl Lake Brook and the Ammonoosuc River. The watershed above the bridge is 8.2 sq. mi. The estimated bankfull width at the bridge is 35’. The distance between abutments is 14’-4”.

Potential issues upstream and downstream have been researched. There is substantial knotweed downstream of the bridge. Permits were issued in 2007-2008 for logging upstream. A gravel pit is located approximately ½ mile upstream. Pearl Lake Dam, located 2.2 miles upstream, was removed Summer 2008. A permit was issued in 2000 for dredging 50 LF at outlet of Hanno Pond. A railroad bridge is 1600’ downstream and does not seem to be hindering flow.

Jim McMahon, an engineer in District 1 who was not able to attend the meeting, completed a profile and cross sections of the stream. District 1 is considering dredging Pearl Lake Brook from just upstream of the bridge to a few hundred feet downstream. Vanes were also considered upstream of the bridge to catch some of the sediment before it is deposited under the bridge. It is understood that dredging would not provide a permanent solution. Other alternatives have been considered conceptually, including raising the road and installing a larger structure, and relocating the road and bridge. Both of these alternatives would require the acquisition of at least two houses and would cost substantially more than dredging.

The purpose of presenting this issue was to get feedback from the resource agencies on the most appropriate course of action.

Jocelyn Degler asked if dredging would be limited to the existing right-of-way. C. Perron said that, as currently proposed, dredging would extend well beyond the right-of-way and landowner agreements would need to be obtained.

Lori Sommer asked if the brook had ever been channelized. C. Perron said that Gino Infascelli had said that a portion of the channel above the bridge appeared to be channelized.

Carol Henderson indicated that it seemed appropriate to consider purchasing the houses that are located in the floodplain to put in a larger crossing as a long-term solution. She asked if FEMA funding could be utilized for property acquisition. C. Perron replied that she didn’t think FEMA funding was available unless a major flood event occurred at the location. C. Henderson felt that dredging would be a short-term solution and the stream may need to be dredged every five years, which could get costly.
Mark Kern suggested that the Department should get a better handle on what was going on in the stream before a solution was decided upon. C. Perron said that John Magee had offered to talk to Tom Ballestero about the site. If he was unable to provide feedback, she would explore other options.

It was agreed that more information was needed to decide the appropriate course of action and the project should be discussed at a future meeting before a permit application is submitted to DES for dredging the stream.

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

**Portsmouth, 13455B, X-A000(995) and Portsmouth, 13455C, X-A000(996)**

Brian Colburn of McFarland-Johnson reviewed this project’s second and third construction contracts (13455B & 13455C), which involve the replacement of the Middle Road, Islington Street, and Maplewood Avenue bridges over the US Route 1 Bypass. The existing bridges are on the State’s Red List and need to be replaced. The existing four-span structures will be replaced with two-span structures.

It was noted that there are no natural resource impacts as part of the Maplewood Avenue bridge replacement project (Contract 13455C).

The impacts to existing natural resources as part of the Middle Road and Islington Street bridge replacements will consist of wetland impacts to existing roadside wetlands along the US Route 1 Bypass under both bridges. To construct the new center pier, the US Route 1 Bypass must be temporarily widened, which requires the filling of the existing roadside wetlands. At the completion of the project, the temporary widening will be removed and roadside ditches will be constructed. The impacts consist of 5,996 square feet of permanent impact and 1,421 square feet of temporary impact. The projects will result in 0.07 acres of additional impervious area due to the widening of the shoulders on Middle Road and Islington Street.

Under the existing condition, stormwater in the area is collected in the roadside wetlands along the US Route 1 Bypass and does not receive any formal treatment. Under the proposed condition, the stormwater will continue to be collected in roadside ditches that will be constructed along the US Route 1 Bypass and will not receive any formal stormwater treatment.

Mark Kern stated that he had no concerns with wetland impacts from the 13455B Contract being authorized under the NH Programmatic General Permit.

The discussion then turned to mitigation options for the 13455A Contract. This project will remove the existing Lafayette Road bridge over the US Route 1 Bypass and construct a signalized intersection where US Route 1 / Lafayette Road and the US Route 1 Bypass intersect. One of the concerns raised was that there was going to be more drainage added to the salt marsh without treatment. B. Colburn clarified that the proposed project will not be adding any additional drainage flow to the salt marsh. As part of the proposed project a gravel wetland will be constructed, which will detain stormwater and will reduce the flow into the saltwater marsh. The increase in the outlet pipe size from one 24-inch pipe to two 30-inch pipes will eliminate the ponding of water on the roadway that currently happens during heavy rainfall events.

A question was raised regarding existing treatment of the stormwater. B. Colburn noted that there is currently no treatment of stormwater into the salt marsh. Under the proposed project, approximately 1.4 acres of impervious area will be treated in the gravel wetland. Also, the proposed outlet into the salt marsh will be constructed as a scour pool with the stone grouted in place to facilitate maintenance.
There was a discussion on mitigation options for the project that ranged from Phragmites control to constructing a new ditch at the edge of the salt marsh to convey stormwater from the proposed outlet to another existing stormwater outfall. Marc Laurin, Lori Sommer, and Melissa Copolla would perform a site visit to determine the viability and potential impacts of constructing a new ditch in the salt marsh. After this site visit is completed, mitigation options for this project will be further evaluated.

*This project was previously reviewed on the following dates: 5/16/2007, 5/18/2011, 11/16/2011*

**Salem-Manchester, 10418H, A000(712), Exit 3 Park & Ride**

Peter Stamnas gave an overview of the three options previously discussed with the agencies in February 2010. Currently the parking for the park-and-ride is at Wall Street and is shared with the new CVS parking. Previous discussions directed DOT to focus on the loop ramp at Exit 3 and that the wetland impacts would be prosecuted under different permits from the overall I-93 widening permits. The proposed park-and-ride was briefly described. The full build would be 500 spaces with room for a bus terminal in the future. Pervious pavement would be provided within the parking areas to address pollutant loading. To accommodate potential bus traffic, the entrance, travel and exit lanes would need to be impervious pavement. Re-delineation of the wetlands within the loop ramp reduced the impacts to 1.6 acres. The Department proposes to fill in the entire footprint of the full build and initially pave and operate 140 spaces. The remaining area would be constructed to sub-grade, loamed, and seeded. This would allow the Department to expand the park-and-ride as needed with a limited amount of work required to put in drainage and pavement. The Department is proposing that excess fill from the last Exit 3 roadway contract (13933H) be used to fill in the area. Actual construction of the parking area would begin at the end of 2015 as a separate project after the northbound ramps are relocated. There may be a little time lag between the placement of the fill and the park-and-ride construction. The wetlands permit application will be submitted within the year in order to receive the permit before the 13933H roadway contract is advertised in 2013.

Lori Sommer stated and it was agreed by P. Stamnas that mitigation would be an in-lieu fee payment to the ARM Fund. Jocelyn Degler raised questions about chloride loading and how this could be permitted. Mark Kern thought that the issue could be worked out. He encouraged that the area be filled in now since the wetlands are of low value and it would be in the best long-term environmental interest of the region. J. Degler commented on the ultimate fill footprint being speculative and contrary to the chloride issue. M. Kern reiterated that the grassed areas would not contribute to the chloride loading until developed and it made more sense to place all the fill initially, but it was up to DES to make the call. Carol Henderson asked if the need for the park-and-ride was discussed in the I-93 EIS. P. Stamnas stated that it was and that the Department will be bringing this concept to the Town and Public informational meetings for feedback. P. Stamnas commented that disposal of 60,000 yards of excess fill from the 13933H roadway project is a factor and should be a consideration in this proposal. J. Degler stated that she would need to talk with Phil Trowbridge and Ted Diers to see if the Department’s proposal is appropriate.

*This project was previously reviewed on the following dates: 2/17/2010; 7/21/2010*