



## **MassDEP's Wetland Circuit Rider Program** **2013 Accomplishments in Review** **January to December**



*"...DEP Circuit Riders travel through numerous cities and towns and offer essential support to municipalities in Massachusetts through daily assistance. Equally important and impressive are the wonderful workshop opportunities that they administer. I have been to several DEP Circuit Rider workshops and they rival some of the best educational experiences I have encountered..."*

*Erin Jacques, former Greenfield Conservation Agent*

**In 2013** MassDEP's Wetland Circuit Riders trained volunteers and oversaw the assessment of **over 600** stream crossing assessments for the **River and Stream Continuity Project (RSCP)** in the sub-watersheds of the **Ipswich, Chicopee and Buzzards Bay**.

In addition to RSCP and providing regional wetlands permitting support, Wetland Circuit Riders also offer quality outreach and training to local conservation commissions, other local officials, wetland permit applicants and their consultants, environmental groups, watershed associations and state and federal agency staff that is the hallmark of the program. This year they focused on a number of topics tailored to the needs of each region including:



1. Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) basics.
2. WPA Trail Development, Maintenance and Management.
3. Providing instruction for the MA. Assn. of Conservation Commissions (MACC) for their **Fundamentals for Conservation Commissions Certificate series for units 3 and 6**.
4. Farming and Wetland Resources Areas
5. Stormwater Management Strategies for Protecting Vulnerable Wetlands
6. eDEP hands-on demonstrations, trainings, and related work.

Circuit Riders provided regional wetlands staff with permitting review assistance and serve as MassDEP representatives for task forces, regional networks related to wetlands outreach/training. Some groups and organizations that they have worked with in this past year include: Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, Congress of Lakes and Ponds, Westfield River Watershed Assn, Charles River Watershed Assn., Ipswich River Watershed Assn, Mass Assn. of Conservation Commissions, Mass Assn of Municipal Conservation Professionals, Assn. of Massachusetts Wetlands Scientists, Mass. Dept of Transportation, Mass Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mass. Marine Fisheries, Federal Emergency Management Act, Mass Emergency Management Act, Mass Congress of Lakes and Ponds, U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Services, Mass Environmental Policy Act, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, University of Massachusetts Amherst and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Accomplishments by the Numbers**

#### **11,180 Responses to e-mails, phone calls and to walk-in requests on wetland related questions**

Circuit Riders answer a wide variety of questions ranging from the simple to the complex on technical, procedural, or regulatory implementation of the Wetlands Protection Act.

#### **142 Conservation Commission Meetings and Site visits**

By invitation Circuit Riders attend regularly scheduled Commission meetings to provide them with regulatory, technical, and procedural assistance. Commissions receive tailored assistance ranging from presentations on specific topics of interest to informal Q & A sessions. They also provide technical assistance at field sites upon request.

#### **30 Regulatory, Policy, Technical Workshops and Network Meetings**

The Circuit Riders conducted wetlands related workshops throughout the state in the past year, many of which go beyond the fundamentals of the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) regulations.

#### **9 eDEP Hands-on Demonstrations, Trainings, and related work.**

#### **1,922 Regional Wetland Permitting and Related Activities**

Circuit riders support the work of the regional wetland permit activities where needed and due to their extensive work with conservation commissions, they are able to provide the perspective of the commissions that they serve.

#### **13 Task Force Meetings and Conferences Representing MassDEP**

#### **30 Organizations and Agencies Coordinated With**

### **For Information and How to Reach Us**

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/watersheds/massdeps-wetlands-circuit-rider-program.html>

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