



EFSB Rulemaking

EFSB 25-10-A

Proposed EFSB Regulation: 980 CMR 15.00

**CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS FOR
APPLYING SITE SUITABILITY REPORT CRITERIA
(CIA/SSR)**

Public Comment Hearings

1:00 pm and 6:00 pm, February 2, 2026

Energy Facilities Siting Board & Department of Public Utilities, Office of Environmental Justice and Equity, and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

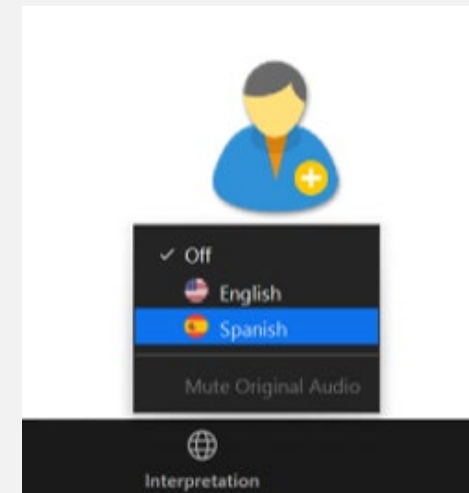
Interpretation Logistics

➔ Language Interpretation is being offered in: Español, Português, Kreyòl ayisyen, Tiếng Việt, 普通话, and American Sign Language (ASL).

- To participate in English, click the “Interpretation” icon and select English.
- Para entrar no canal em português, clique no ícone “Interpretation” e selecione “Portuguese”.
- Si alguien desea interpretación en español, haga clic en “Interpretation” y seleccione “Spanish”.
- Pou rantre nan chanèl kreyòl ayisyen an, klike sou ikòn “Interpretation” an epi chwazi “Haitian Creole”.
- 要以普通话参加会议，请单击口语图标并选择 “Chinese”。
- Để vào kênh bằng tiếng Việt, hãy nhấp vào biểu tượng “Interpretation” và chọn “Vietnamese”.

➔ Please speak slowly.

➔ All attendees must select a language channel, even if viewing the presentation in English.





Agenda (Afternoon)

- 1:00: Opening Remarks
- 1:20: Presentation/Overview of Proposed CIA/SSR Regulation
- 2:05: Break
- 2:20: Opportunity for Comment
- 3:50: Closing Remarks



Agenda (Evening)

- 6:00: Opening Remarks
- 6:20: Presentation/Overview of Proposed Regulation CIA/SSR Regulation
- 7:05: Break
- 7:20: Opportunity for Comment
- Closing Remarks



Goals of Presentation

- Describe and illustrate the major CIA and Site Suitability steps for energy facilities siting in the proposed regulation
- Describe CIA/SSR reporting
- Solicit comments from stakeholders regarding proposed CIA/SSR regulation



Cumulative Impact Analysis

- Cumulative Impact is the combined effects of past and present private, industrial, commercial, state, or municipal projects, operations, development, and other economic activities, in addition to the effects of the proposed Project on: (1) the environment; (2) public health; and (3) reasonably foreseeable effects of climate change.
- Burdened Area is a Census Block Group, which is subject to an existing unfair or inequitable environmental burden or related health consequence.
- CIA guidance developed by Office of Environmental Justice and Equity (“OEJE”).
- Determine whether the Facility Boundaries, plus a Specific Geographical Area (buffer) radial distance, overlaps with Burdened Areas.
- Applicant required to evaluate whether project would likely cause any Disproportionate Adverse Effects in Burdened Areas and propose remedial actions for such Effects.
- Applicant shares results of analysis with stakeholders during pre-filing engagement activities.



CIA Process

1. Identify the Specific Geographical Area (“SGA”) of the Project
2. Determine whether the SGA overlaps any BAs
3. For each SGA overlapping a BA, identify Indicator values and any Elevated Indicators of the BA
4. Identify Project Impacts, including Disproportionate Adverse Effects, in the BA related to Elevated Indicators
5. Propose remedial actions for any Disproportionate Adverse Effects

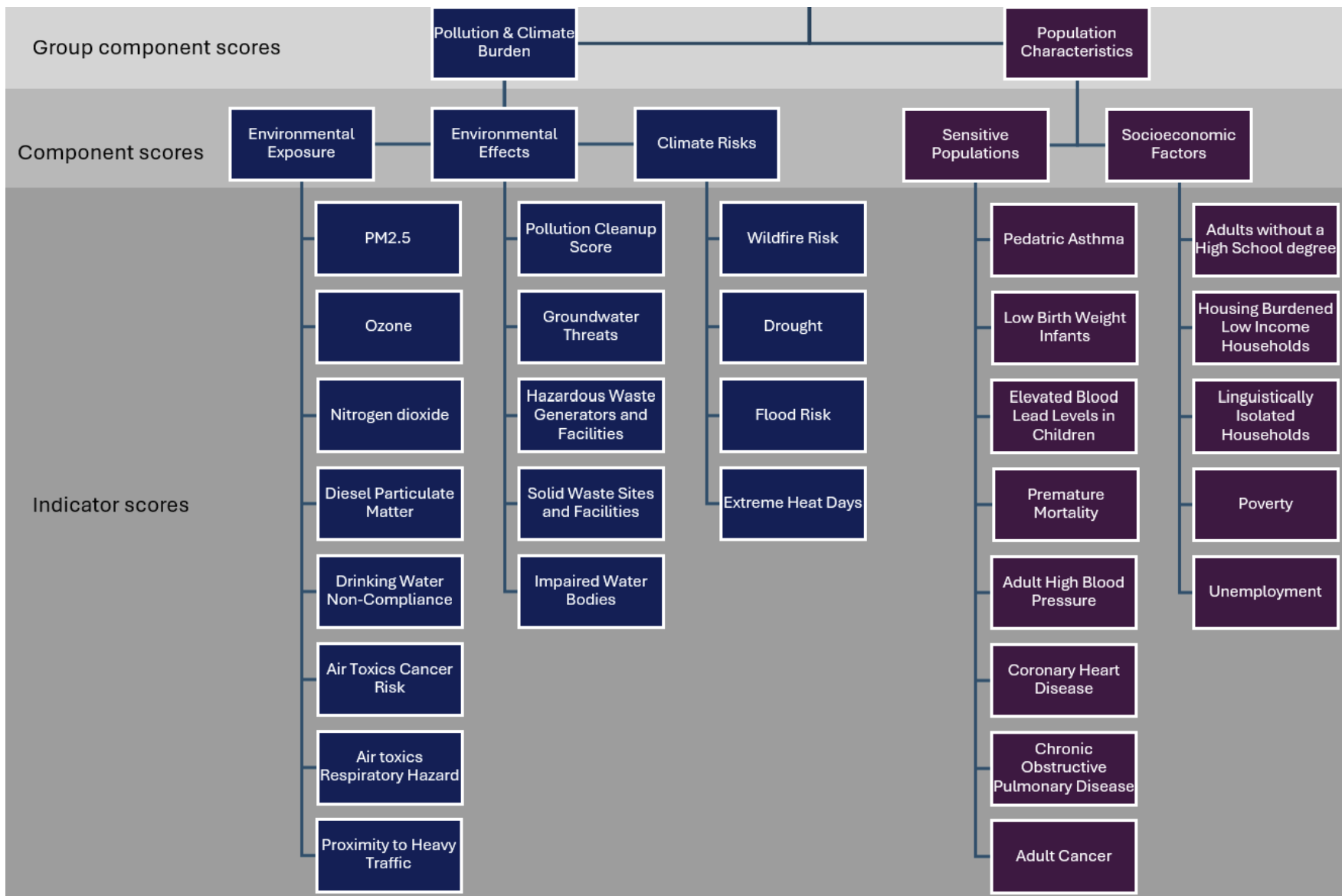


MassEnviroScreen: How MES Supports CIA/SSR Implementation

- Under the 2024 Climate Act, a CIA report must identify areas subject to unfair or inequitable environmental burdens or related health consequences.
- The **MassEnviroScreen (MES)** is designed to ensure communities across Massachusetts are evaluated on a uniform basis and to provide a consistent starting point for CIA reports.
- The tool aggregates **30 indicators** across five components - environmental exposures, environmental effects, climate risks, sensitive populations, and socioeconomic factors – to produce a single composite score for each census block group.
- The MES composite score is a percentile score ranked against scores for all other census block groups in the state.
- Communities are designated as **Burdened Areas** when they meet one or both of the following criteria:
 - I. cumulative burden percentile score (i.e., MassEnviroScore) of 75 or greater, OR
 - II. annual median household income of 65 percent or less of the statewide annual median household income.



Draft MassEnviroScreen Indicators





Specific Geographical Areas – Radial Distances from the Facility Boundary

Facility Type (or component of a Facility)	Radial Distance from Facility Boundary
Transmission and Distribution Line (part of an LCTDIF or SCTDIF)	1/4 Mile
Clean Energy Storage Facility (LCECF or SCECF)	1 Mile
Substation (Part of an LCTDIF or SCTDIF)	1/2 Mile
Ground-Mounted Photovoltaics (LCEGF or SCEGF)	1/2 Mile
Onshore Wind Facility or Anaerobic Digester (LCEGF or SCEGF)	1 Mile
Liquefied Natural Gas Facility (§ 69J)	1 Mile (no Air permit) 2 Miles (non-Major Air Permit)
Gas Pipeline (§ 69J)	1/2 Mile
Fossil Generating Facility (§ 69J ^{1/4})	2 Miles (non-Major Air Permit) 5 Miles (Major Air Permit)
Gas Compressor Station (§ 69J, as part of a Gas Pipeline)	1 Mile (no Air permit) 2 Miles (non-Major Air Permit) 5 Miles (Major Air Permit)



CIA Report Contents

- CIA Report Template developed to facilitate reporting
- Noticed Site or Route to be assessed
- Map(s) showing SGA(s) with any overlapping Burdened Area(s)*
- Project Impacts related to Elevated Indicators and whether Project materially exacerbates existing conditions
- Disproportionate Adverse Effects
- Proposed Remedial Actions to address Disproportionate Adverse Effects

**If the SGA does not overlap with any BAs, the Applicant ends the CIA Report here. Depending on the Project type, Site Suitability Report may be required.*



Board Review of CIA and Site Suitability Reports

- The Board assesses whether the CIA Report meets regulatory criteria pursuant to 980 CMR 15.11 (per below).
- The Board shall:
 - Assess the adequacy of the CIA Report and Site Suitability Report, including whether the Applicant, if required to, presented a comprehensive analysis of whether its Project Impacts will result in a Disproportionate Adverse Effect, and make findings based on that review.
 - Make findings as to whether the Applicant has given due consideration to the Cumulative Impact of the Project, and whether the Applicant has adequately undertaken actions to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any Disproportionate Adverse Effects from the Project.
 - Consider whether an Applicant has made reasonable efforts to consider and develop a Community Benefit Plan or Community Benefit Agreement.



Other CIA Considerations

- **Natural (and other) Resources Considerations**
 - CIA addresses climate resiliency, environmental, and public health considerations with a focus on the human environment, whereas Site Suitability focuses on natural resource issues such as carbon sequestration in soils, biodiversity, and agriculture.
 - CIA and Site Suitability are only two of many tools used by the Board to comprehensively evaluate a Project Application: nothing in 980 CMR 15.00 limits the Board's consideration of the full range of Project Impacts - e.g., ecological, historical and archaeological resources, tree canopy cover, constructability, etc. and geographical areas outside the Burdened Areas.
- **Normal Project Operations vs Emergency Conditions**
 - CIA focuses on a Project's normal operations; however, the EFSB established a Radial Distance of 1 mile for the SGA for a battery energy storage system ("BESS") to give some consideration to atypical safety incidents.
 - Emergency considerations are addressed through the Board's review of a Project's Emergency Response Plan and related emergency preparedness information.



Site Suitability Report (SSR)

- Guidance for SSR developed by EEA
- Site Suitability Mapping Tool: Makes use of publicly available datasets/tools to evaluate sites based on the following criteria: carbon storage/sequestration, biodiversity, agricultural resources, and social & environmental burdens
- Applicants estimate scores during pre-filing and share with stakeholders to allow time for changes to project design or possible use of alternative sites
- Results considered in review/adjudication of Consolidated Permits



Site Suitability Report Criteria

- **Climate Change Resilience:** exposure of sites to (1) riverine flooding; and (2) coastal flooding from sea level rise and storm surge
- **Carbon Storage and Sequestration:** the estimated level of current ecosystem carbon stocks and projections of future carbon sequestration over 50 years that would be lost within a project's Site Footprint
- **Biodiversity:** assesses avoidance of negative impacts on land and waters with high habitat and biodiversity conservation value, which are identified primarily from [BioMap](#), the Commonwealth's biodiversity conservation mapping initiative. Suitability will be scored based on Site Footprint overlaps with:
 - Specific BioMap elements or components (e.g. Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape)
 - [Priority Habitats](#) designated by the [MassWildlife Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program](#) (NHSEP); and
 - [Index of Ecological Integrity](#) values from the [UMass Conservation Assessment Prioritization System \(CAPS\)](#).



Site Suitability Report Criteria (Continued)

- **Agricultural Resources:** assessed in terms of avoiding and minimizing negative impacts on areas with soils that are particularly well-suited for agricultural production, particularly when those areas are active farmland. Suitability will be scored based on Site Footprint overlaps with:
 - National Resource Conservation Service's [Prime Farmland Soils categories for Massachusetts](#).
 - The most recent year of land cover data from the U.S. Geological Survey's [Annual National Land Cover Database \(NLCD\)](#).
- **Social and Environmental Burdens:** assessed by examining an Applicable Facility's Site Footprint and its intersection with the scores established for each census block group in the [MassEnviroScreen tool](#)
- **Social and Environmental Benefit Criteria Score Modifiers:** The Applicant's Criteria-Specific Suitability Scores may be modified by the Board when the Applicant agrees to provide certain social or environmental benefits as described in the Site Suitability Guidance. Score modification may only occur upon the mutual written agreement between the Applicant and the Local Government



Site Suitability Report Implementation in Board Application Reviews

- Applicants use the Site Suitability Mapping Tool to derive the anticipated Criteria-Specific Suitability Scores for a proposed CEIF.
- The Applicant files Site Suitability Report (“SSR”) with its EF SB Consolidated Permit Application.
- Applicant or Key Stakeholder may request a score revision by the Director if Criteria-Specific Site Suitability Scores are based on materially erroneous, incomplete, or otherwise faulty data.
- The Board shall consider the SSR in its route and site scoring analysis, if applicable; Criteria-Specific Suitability Scores are used to inform the Board’s decisions on avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of Project Impacts, and its overall decision on whether to grant a Consolidated Permit.



Complementary Roles of CIA and Site Suitability

- CIA and Site Suitability generally complement rather than duplicate each other with respect to existing conditions and Project Impacts.
- CIA and Site Suitability are mutually supportive:
 - Both use Indicators and data to quantify environmental and other conditions in a proposed project location and provide a scored result.
 - Both systems use scoring to identify actions to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts.
 - Both use MassEnviroScreen, to varying degrees.



Complementary Roles of CIA and Site Suitability (Cont'd)

- CIA and Site Suitability expand the understanding of overall Project Impacts
 - CIA focuses on “Burdened Areas” while Site Suitability focuses on the entire Project Site Footprint.
 - CIA focuses on: (1) environmental impacts (such as air, water and waste pollutants, and multiple climate change effects); (2) public health consequences; (3) socioeconomic conditions; and (4) a Project’s incremental effects that may “materially exacerbate” Elevated Indicators.
 - Site Suitability focuses on the Project vis-à-vis: (1) development potential (e.g., use of brownfields vs. protected open space); (2) certain measures of climate change resilience (RMAT riverine and coastal flooding); (3) carbon storage; (4), biodiversity; (5) agricultural resources; (6) social and environmental burdens; and (7) social and environmental benefits.
- Both Site Suitability analysis and CIA consider mitigation requirements and adequacy. EFSB also considers ecological factors in site/route scoring outside of CIA, and Site Suitability analyzes these factors in its scoring.



Cases That Require a CIA Report or Site Suitability Scoring (Clean Energy)

Energy Facility Type (either Consolidated Permit or Consolidated State Permit)	CIA Report Required?	CIA Remedial Action Required?	Criteria-Specific Site Suitability Scoring Required?
Clean Transmission and Distribution (§§ 69T, 69U)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a “Disproportionate Adverse Effect”	No, except in a newly established public ROW*
Clean Energy Generation (§§ 69T, 69V)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a “Disproportionate Adverse Effect”	Yes, with limited exceptions*
Clean Energy Storage (§§ 69T, 69V)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a “Disproportionate Adverse Effect”	Yes, with limited exceptions*

* Certain projects are exempt from the Criteria-Specific Site Suitability Scoring requirements of 225 CMR 29.07(1).



Cases That Require a CIA or Site Suitability Scoring (Fossil Fuel)

Energy Facility Type (not "Clean")	CIA Report Required?	CIA Remedial Action Required?	Criteria-Specific Site Suitability Scoring Required?
Transmission Facility (§ 69J)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a Disproportionate Adverse Effect	No
Generating Facility (§ 69J¼)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a Disproportionate Adverse Effect	No
Gas Pipeline or LNG Storage Facility (§ 69J)	Yes	Yes, if Project results in a Disproportionate Adverse Effect	No



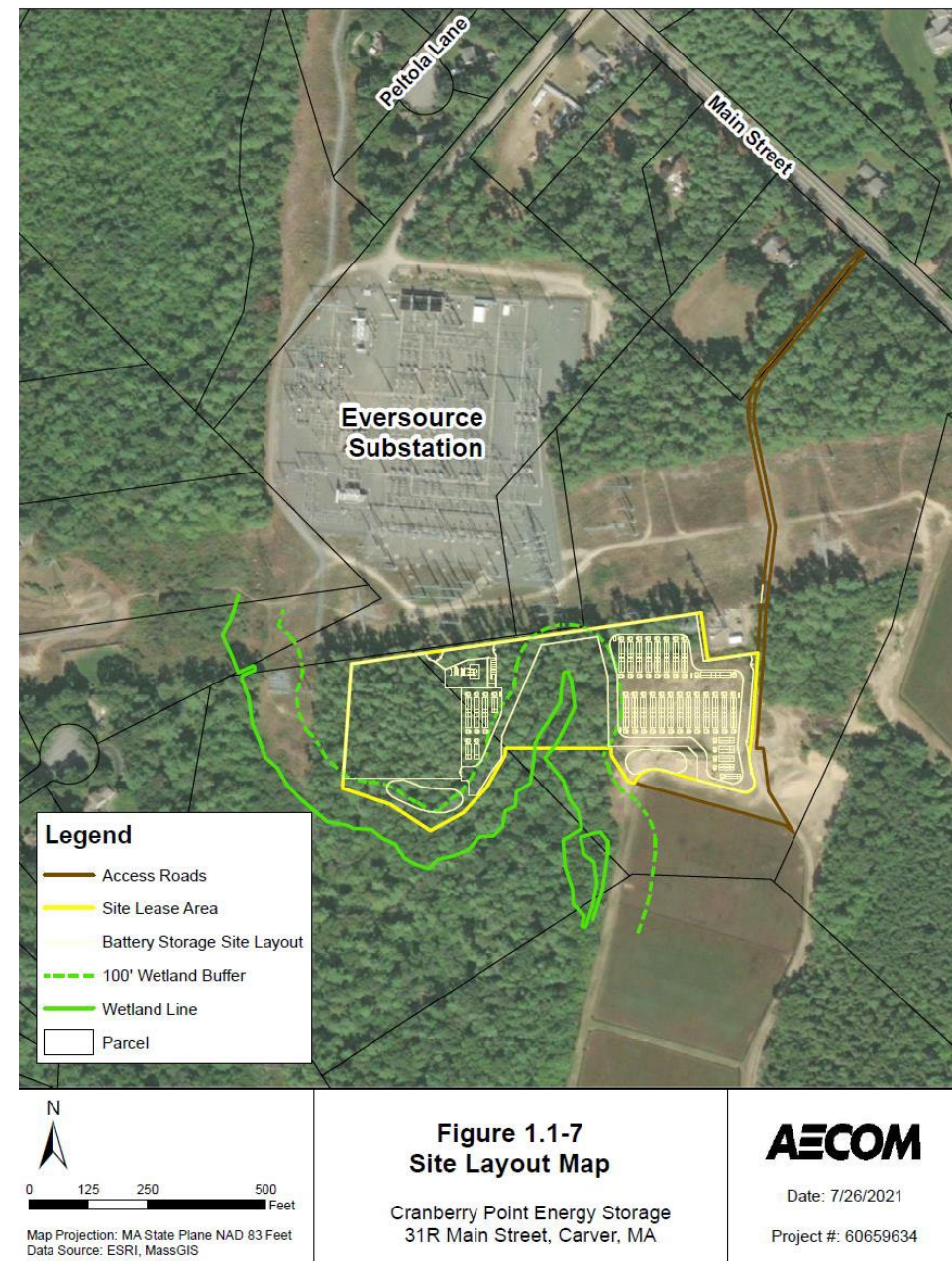
CIA/SSR Case Study

Cranberry Point



CIA/SSR Case Study: Cranberry Point

- Cranberry Point Energy Storage, LLC proposed a new **150 MW/300 MWh** BESS with substation and other related structures in an agricultural area.
- The Project interconnects to an existing substation.
- This Project was previously approved and built and is used here to illustrate CIA and SSR implementation.





Would Proposed CIA/SSR Regulation Require a CIA for this Project? Or an SSR? Or both?

- Cumulative Impact Analysis: **Yes**, since it is a Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility (“CEIF”) per 980 CMR 15.01(2).
- Site Suitability Report: **Yes**, since it is a Large CEIF per 980 CMR 15.10(1).
- Therefore, a CIA and an SSR would be initiated for this project, if the project application was submitted after July 1, 2026. The CIA and SSR would use following tools:
 - MassEnviroScreen (“MES”);
 - Site Suitability Mapping Tool; and
 - CIA Template.

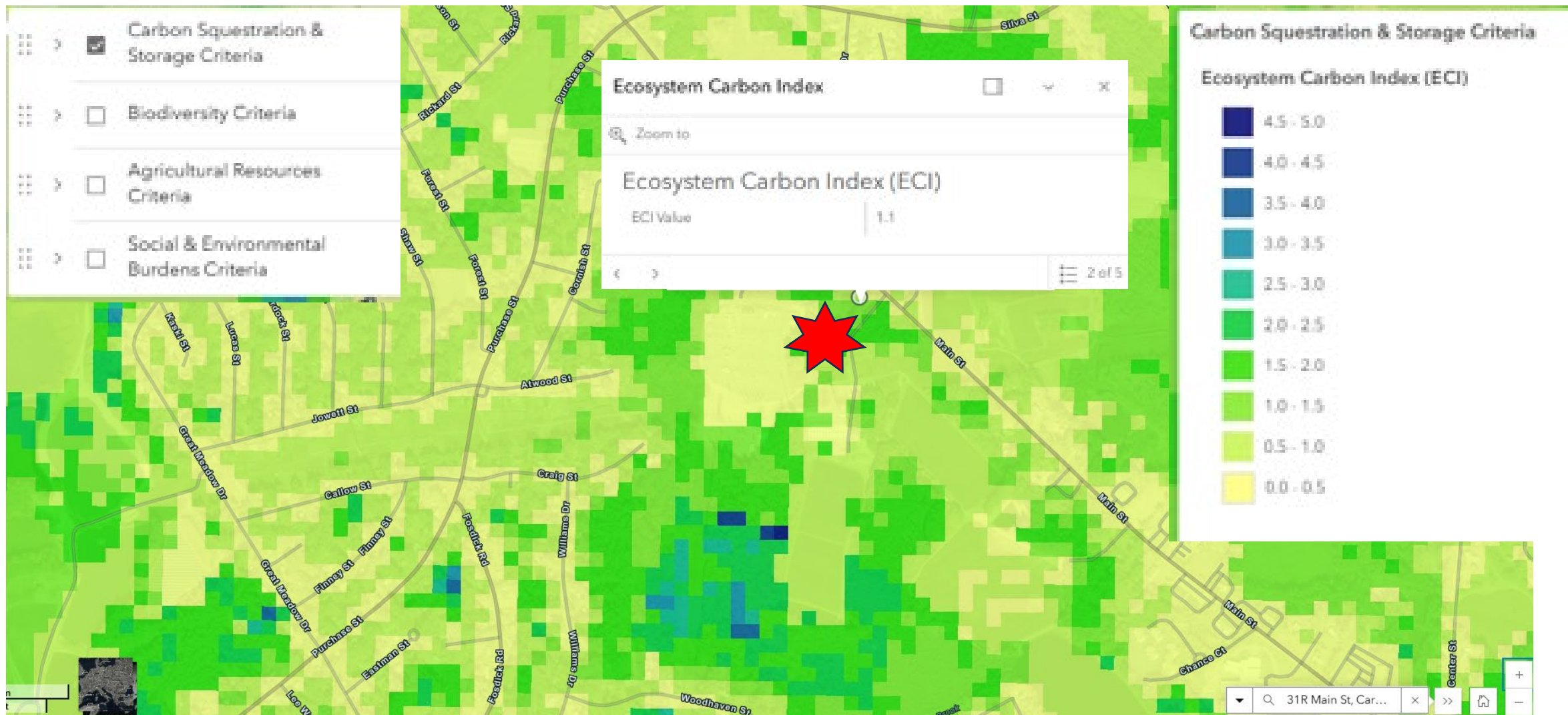


Cranberry Point Project: Site Suitability Assessment

Site Suitability Criteria	Score	Interpretation/Comments
Climate Change Resilience	0.0	RMAT Model Assessed an exposure rating of “Not Exposed” for both Extreme Precipitation/Riverine Flooding and Sea Level Rise/Storm Surge. RMAT assessed “High Exposure Rating” for Site based on the following climate parameters: extreme precipitation (urban flooding) and extreme heat.
Carbon Sequestration & Storage	1.1	Value obtained from Site Suitability Mapping Tool (“SSMT”). Undeveloped Area with 229-326 Mg CO ₂ e/acre in surrounding area. Annual Nat’l Land Cover Database (“NLCD”) Land Cover <u>2024</u> : Undeveloped and Developed.



Cranberry Point Project Site: Carbon Sequestration & Storage (ECI)



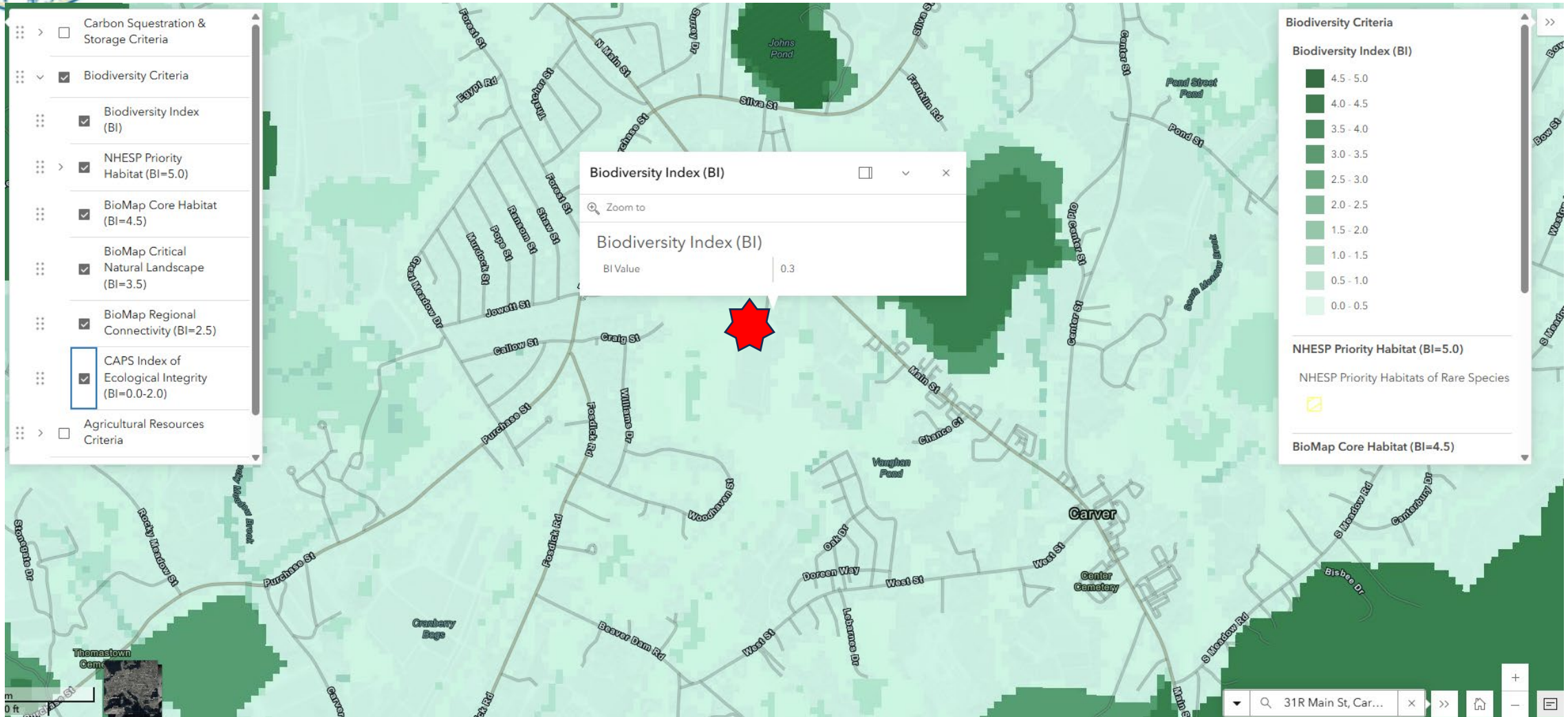


CP Site Suitability Assessment – Con't

Site Suitability Criteria	Score	Interpretation/Comments
Biodiversity	0.3	BI value retrieved from SSMT – top 25% of 30m x 30m grid cells in Project Footprint. CAPS Index of Ecological Integrity retrieved from SSMT. Not Present at site: NHESP Priority Habitat. BioMap Core Habitat, BioMap Critical Natural Landscape, Biomap Regional Connectivity.



CP Project: Biodiversity



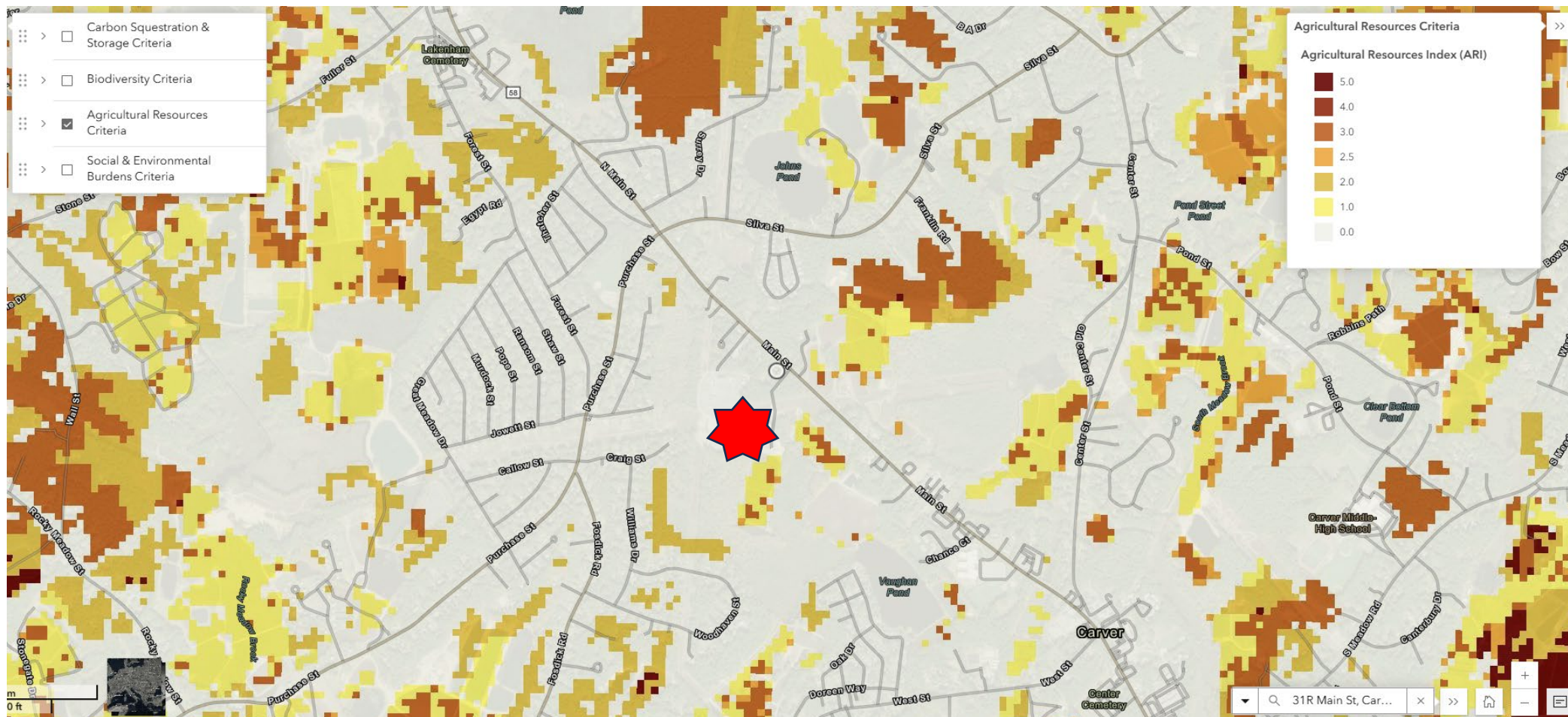


CP Site Suitability Assessment – Con't

Site Suitability Criteria	Score	Interpretation/Comments
Agricultural Resources	0.1	Land cover is a mix of developed and undeveloped, with a small overlap of Farmland of Unique Importance.
Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria	0.0	Based on MES Score of 7.55 (well below criterion BA score of 75 th percentile).
Site Suitability Score Modifiers	N/A	<u>Development Potential</u> : No Modifier since Project site located in developed areas. <u>Protected Spaces</u> : No protected spaces at site. <u>Social and Environmental Benefits</u> : Site not a Burdened Area and no benefit agreement between Applicant and host town.



Cranberry Point Project: Agricultural Resources





Site Suitability Score – Final Results

Site Suitability Criteria	Score
Climate Change Resilience	0.0
Ecosystem Carbon Index	1.1
Biodiversity Index	0.3
Agricultural Resources Index	0.1
Social and Environmental Burdens	0.0
Site Suitability Modifiers	N/A



Possible Considerations of Site Suitability Scores

Criteria Score Range	Suitability (for specific criteria)	Interpretation (for specific criteria)
Less than or equal to 1.0	Highly suitable, minimal impact	No minimization or mitigation measures required
Greater than 1.0 and less than or equal to 2.5	Moderately suitable, low impact	Limited minimization and/or mitigation measures may be required
Greater than 2.5 and less than or equal to 4.0	Not very suitable, moderate impacts	Moderate minimization and/or mitigation measures may be required
Greater than 4.0	Unsuitable, high impact	Significant minimization and/or mitigation measures may be required



Cranberry Point Project: Site Suitability Findings

- Most criteria had Site Suitability Scores < 1.0 , indicating the site is highly suitable and results in minimal Project impact.
- Ecosystem Carbon Index (Site Suitability Score 1.1) indicates that the site is moderately suitable for those criteria with low Project impact, and limited minimization and/or mitigation measures may be required.

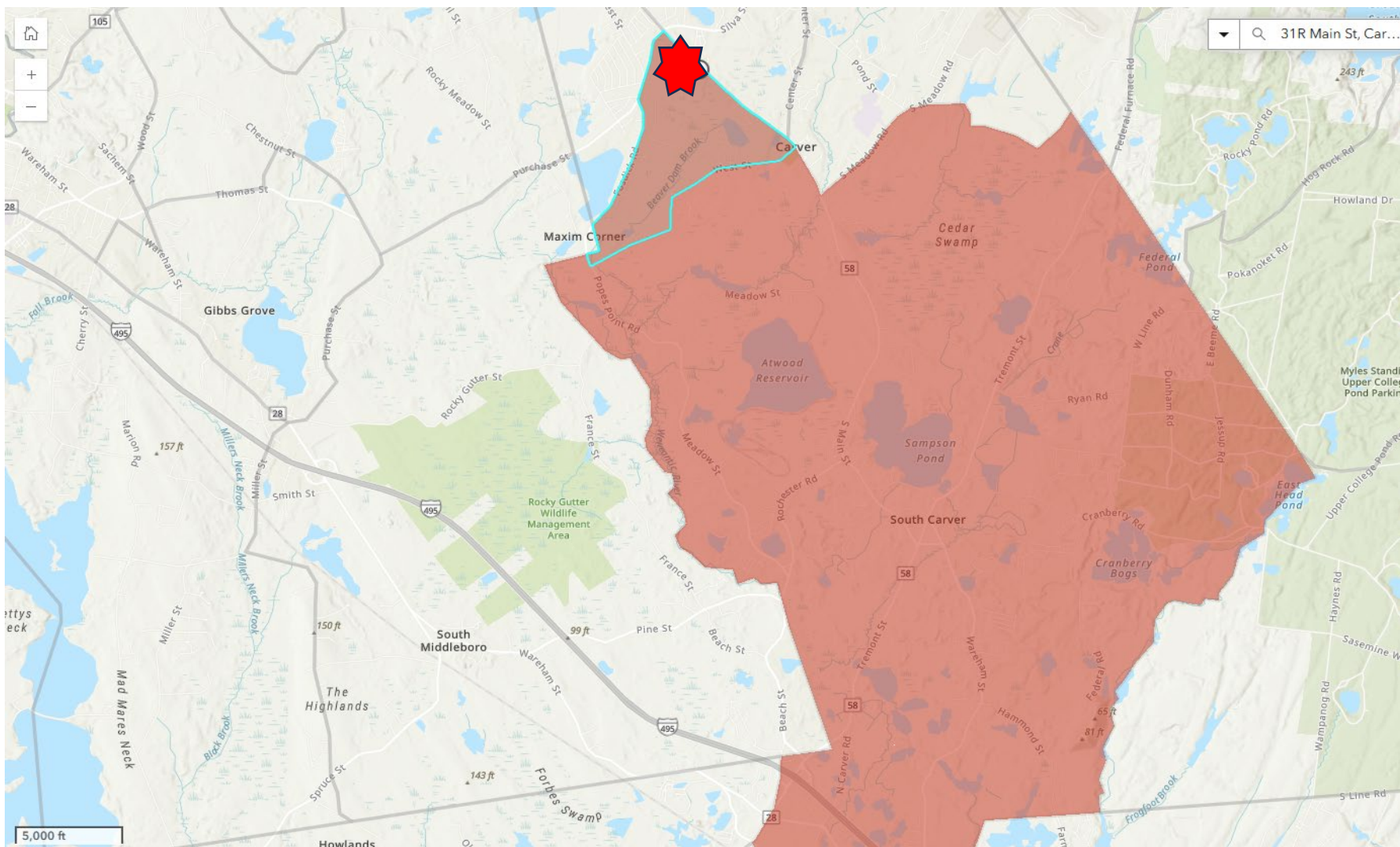


Possible Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Options the Board may Consider

- **Ecosystem Carbon Index:**
 - Avoidance: Move southern edge of site north about 50 yards.
 - Minimization: Minimize paved ground cover in southern portion of site
 - Mitigation: Compose southern ground cover of materials that continue to promote carbon sequestration.
- **These are only illustrative examples. DOER Guidance provides additional examples of potential minimization and mitigation measures.**



CIA Analysis: MES Burdened Areas Map of Cranberry Point



Location is a Burdened Area (“BA”) based on the income criterion.



CP Project CIA: Elevated Indicators in BA in BA (i.e., >50th percentile)

Indicator	Percentile
Ozone	87
Age Adjusted Premature Mortality Rate	67
Cancer Crude Prevalence	50
COPD	85
Coronary Heart Disease	69
Low Birth Weight	73
Adults without a High School Diploma	58
Households below Poverty Level	73
No adult speaks English Well	58
Low-income households that are housing burdened	54
Percent of State Median Household Income	62



Summary of Elevated Indicators showing Disproportionate Adverse Effects

Elevated Indicator	Project Impact (During Construction) in Burdened Area	Disproportionate Adverse Effect? (Yes/No)	Rationale to Support Impact Determination
Ozone	Ozone may be indirectly produced from VOC and NOx emissions at and near the site during construction-related traffic and heavy machinery operations, especially during sunny, summer days.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project site is approximately 400 feet away from the closest residential property. Heavy traffic and machinery emissions during construction can result in an exacerbation of ground ozone concentrations in the area of construction, especially during warm, sunny weather.
COPD	Emissions and dust during construction impacts may impact respiratory functions to COPD-affected residents in the burdened CBG. These impacts are temporary and localized to the period and area of construction	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy traffic and equipment emissions and airborne dust may occur during construction activities, impacting respiratory functioning for proximal residents afflicted with COPD in the burdened CBG, especially, downwind of the construction site.



Potential Remedial Actions to Address Disproportionate Adverse Effects for Construction Phase

Elevated Indicator(s)	Proposed Impact Avoidance	Proposed Impact Minimization ¹	Proposed Impact Mitigation ²	How Proposed Remedial Actions Address Disproportionate Adverse Effects
Ozone	Use of Electrical equipment and vehicles during construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with MassDEP's Diesel Retrofit Program during construction. Contractor will use ultra-low sulfur diesel in off-road engines. Vehicle idling will be minimized in accordance with Massachusetts' anti-idling law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use modern construction equipment with best available technology and efficiency for the control of GHG. Properly tune and operate construction equipment; and only use on an as-needed basis to minimize the combustion emissions from diesel and gasoline engines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remedial actions reduce vehicle and heavy machinery emissions, which result in reduction of secondary pollutants such as ozone. During construction, emissions are reduced through use of low sulfur fuels, well-tuned equipment, reduction in idling times, and adherence to MassDEP's Diesel Retrofit Program. In the longer term, the facility's operations will reduce power generating facility emissions in the area.



Potential Remedial Actions to Address Disproportionate Adverse Effects for Construction Phase

Elevated Indicator(s)	Proposed Impact Avoidance	Proposed Impact Minimization ¹	Proposed Impact Mitigation	How Proposed Remedial Actions Address Disproportionate Adverse Effects
<p>COPD</p>	<p>Use of Electrical equipment and vehicles during construction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetting exposed soils and stockpiles Mechanical street sweeping Re-establish vegetation Contractors to use ultra-low sulfur diesel (“ULSD”) in off-road diesel vehicles. Exhaust emission controls Vehicle idling will be minimized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use modern construction equipment with best available technology and efficiency for the control of greenhouse gas emissions. Construction equipment will be properly tuned and operated on an as-needed basis Replace 10% of the trees greater than 10 inches in caliper with maple or oak trees. Monetary compensation to the Town of Carver for purchasing and planting up to 50 trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COPD irritants (dust and emissions) to area residents are reduced in both the short term (<u>i.e.</u>, during construction) through both dust control and emission control. In the longer term, emissions (respiratory irritants) are reduced from power generating facilities through the functioning of the facility.



Public Comment Hearing

The meeting will resume shortly



Important Dates for CIA/SSR Regulation

Milestone	Dates
Cumulative Impact Analysis Webinar	November 6, 2025
Siting Board Meeting on Opening Rulemaking for 980 CMR 15.00 CIA/SSR Regulation	December 15, 2025
Siting Board Filed Proposed CIA/SSR Regulation with the Secretary of State	December 19, 2025
Public Comment Hearings	Monday, February 2, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Final Deadline for Written Comments on 980 CMR 15.00 CIA/SSR Regulation	February 13, 2026, at 5:00 pm



Guidelines for Public Comments

- We will allow comments from public officials first, before taking comments from those who preregistered
- Please limit your comments to approximately 3 minutes.
- We will alternate between in-person and virtual commenters.
- We will aim to respond to as many comments as possible, depending on the topic and the time available.



Submitting Written Comments

- Regarding EFSB 25-10-A, send to dpu.efiling@mass.gov and sitingboard.filing@mass.gov
- **Final written comment deadline: February 13, 2026, at 5:00 pm**
- Comments should be sent as an attachment and email should include docket # (EFSB 25-10-A), name of person/entity submitting filing, and brief description of document. Email should also include contact info (name, title, telephone #) in case of questions.
- Comments will be publicly accessible and posted to the DPU's File Room.



Contact

- Email for questions about comment hearings or regulations:
sitingboard.filing@mass.gov
- EF SB 25-10 webpage for EF SB regulations package:
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/efsb-25-10-proposed-rulemaking>



Thank you for joining us! Today's public comment hearing on the EFSB CIA/SSR regulations package has concluded.

For more information, visit: <https://www.mass.gov/energypermitting>