

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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NOTICE: PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Pursuant to the Rights-of-Way Management Regulations (333 CMR 11.00) in order to apply pesticides to control vegetation to maintain Rights-of Ways, the Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) must approve a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) and a Yearly Operational Plan (YOP). The VMP is intended to justify the need to control vegetation, identify target vegetation, describe the intended methods of control, describe methods for identifying sensitive areas, describe operational guidelines for applicators, outline a program of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) designed to reduce the use of herbicides, and describe alternative land use activities.

The following municipalities are advised that MA Rail Association proposes to utilize herbicides to treat their Rights-of-Way throughout Massachusetts:

AMTRAK

Attleborough, Dedham, Mansfield, Westwood, Boston, Foxborough, Sharon, Canton, Longmeadow, Springfield

GRAFTON & UPTON RAILROAD

Grafton, Hopedale, Milford, Upton

HOUSATONIC RAILROAD COMPANY

Great Barrington, Lenox, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Lee, Pittsfield

MASSACHUSETTS CENTRAL RAILROAD

Barre, Hardwick, New Braintree, Palmer, Ware

MASSACHUSETTS COASTAL RAILROAD

Attleborough, Fall River, Norton, Taunton, Barnstable, Falmouth, Mansfield, Walpole, Foxborough, Medfield, Rochester, Wareham, Bourne, Framingham, Middleborough, Sandwich, Westport, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Sherborn, Yarmouth, Millis, Seekonk, Westwood

NEW ENGLAND CENTRAL RAILROAD

Amherst, Erving, Monson, Northfield, Sunderland, Belchertown, Leverett, Montague, Palmer

PIONEER VALLEY RAILROAD

Holyoke, West Springfield, Westfield

PROVIDENCE AND WORCESTER RAILROAD

Auburn, Grafton, Millville, Seekonk, Worcester, Blackstone, Holden, Northbridge, Sutton, Dudley, Hubbardston, Oxford, Uxbridge, Gardner, Millbury, Princeton, Webster

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED:

In accordance with 333 CMR 11.05 MDAR will conduct regional hearings to receive public comment on the proposed Vegetation Management Plan for the MA Rail Association Vegetation Management Plan.

To provide all interested parties an opportunity to comment on the proposed VMP, a public hearing will be held via ZOOM Conference at the address below:

Topic: MA Rail Association Public Hearing
Time: Mar 6, 2026 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82774810600?pwd=flg96jG3YGh0LT5h52bWZ2fOfVZSjw.1>

Meeting ID: 827 7481 0600
Passcode: 088941

Join instructions

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/82774810600?pwd=flg96jG3YGh0LT5h52bWZ2fOfVZSjw.1>

Available for Public Review Prior to Hearings:

Section 11.05 (3)(d) of the Row Management Regulations provide: “At least 21 days prior to the end of the public comment period, the applicant shall send a copy of the proposed VMP to the chief elected official, the Board of Health, and the Conservation Commission in affected communities upon their request.” Such request should be made to:

Thomas W. Lewis
TEC Associates
40 Mechanic Street
South Portland, ME 04106
tom@tecassoc.com

The proposed VMP is posted at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/pesticides/vegetation-management-and-yearly-operation-plans.html> for reviewing. It is also available for review at the Reference Desk of the following public libraries:

Framingham Public Library, 49 Lexington Street, Framingham, MA 01702
Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01608
Springfield Central Library, 220 State Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01103

Written Comments Requested

The public hearing listed above will give interested parties the opportunity to present data, views or arguments, orally or in writing concerning the proposed VMP. Persons giving testimony are also requested to provide written comments. Written comments in advance of the hearing dates are welcome. MDAR will accept written testimony concerning the MA Rail Association VMP until the close of business (5pm), March 9, 2026.

Commentary should be sent to:

Rights-of -Way Program
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
225 Turnpike Road, 3rd Floor,
Southborough, MA 01772

Comments must be received by close of business (5pm): March 9, 2026