

Environmental Justice Screening Form

Project Name	Burke's Pond Emergency Dam Removal
Date of MEPA Filing	December 31, 2025
Proponent Name	Town of Pepperell Department of Public Works (Applicant) & Brian McPhail (Owner)
Contact Information (e.g., consultant)	Jamie McCarthy, Environmental Scientist Horsley Witten Group, Inc. 90 Route 6A, Sandwich, MA 02563 508-833-6600 jmccarthy@horsleywitten.com
Public website for project or other physical location where project materials can be obtained (if available)	• https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/MEPA-eMonitor/home • https://town.pepperell.ma.us/767/Sucker-Brook-Continuity-Restoration-Proj
Municipality and Zip Code for Project (if known)	Pepperell, MA
Project Type* (list all that apply)	• Ecological Restoration • Recreation • Dam Removal
Is the project site within a mapped 100-year FEMA flood plain? Y/N/unknown	Yes
Estimated GHG emissions of conditioned spaces (click here for GHG Estimation tool)	N/A

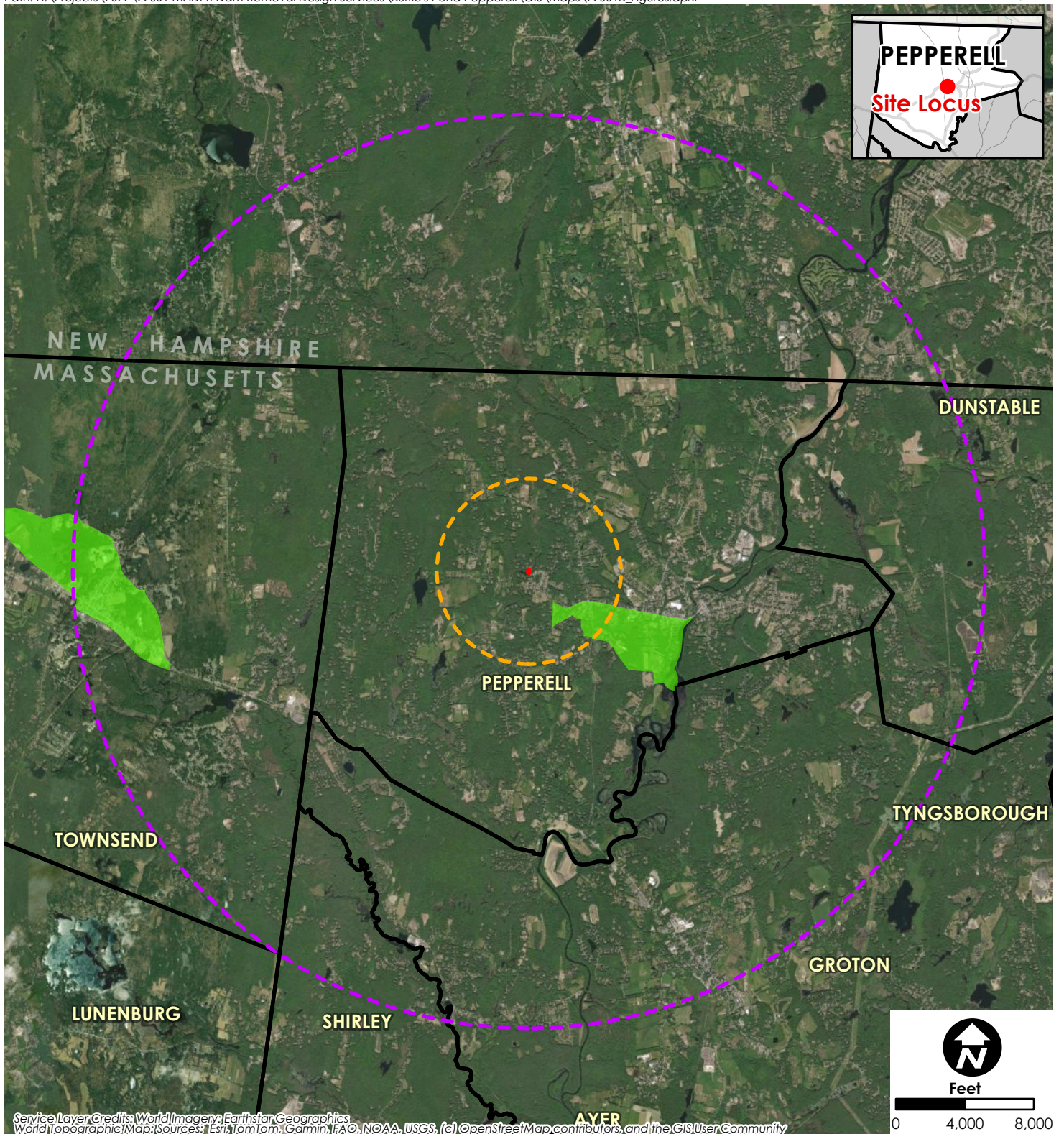
Project Description

1. Provide a brief project description, including overall size of the project site and square footage of proposed buildings and structures if known. The primary project goals and objectives include: 1) Removal of the threat to public health and safety and environmental resources due to the potential for uncontrolled failure and downstream flooding, which carries risk of damaging an existing downstream roadway with gas, water, and sewer utilities; 2) Restoring aquatic connectivity and habitat along Sucker Brook; and 3) Restoring water quality and stream processes in the Burke's Pond Dam impoundment. By removing the approximately 100 square foot (sf) dam structure, the project has restored approximately 950 sf of stream bed. Additionally, approximately 60 linear feet of Bank were restored following removal of the obsolete structure.
2. List anticipated MEPA review thresholds (301 CMR 11.03) (if known) 11.03(3)4. Structural alteration of an existing dam that causes an expansion of 20% or any decrease in impoundment capacity

3. List all anticipated state, local and federal permits needed for the project (if known) • The Central Regional Office of the MassDEP conditioned the Emergency Certificate on December 22, 2025, indicating that the following state and local permits are required: ○ 401 Water Quality Certificate from MassDEP ○ Restoration Order of Conditions from the Pepperell Conservation Commission • <i>The Chapter 91 Waterways Regulation Program confirmed that the proposed Project is not within a jurisdictional area pursuant to Chapter 91 and the regulations on December 31, 2025.</i> • <i>The United States Army Corps of Engineers issued a determination on December 22, 2025, indicating that no permit is required.</i>
4. Identify EJ populations and characteristics (Minority, Income, English Isolation) within 5 miles of project site (can attach map identifying 5-mile radius from EJ Maps Viewer in lieu of narrative) • 1-mile: Block Group 2, Census Tract 3271.03, criteria: income • 5-miles: Block Group 3, Census Tract 3011.01, criteria: income Refer to attached map.
5. Identify any municipality or census tract meeting the definition of “vulnerable health EJ criteria” in the DPH EJ Tool located in whole or in part within a 1 mile radius of the project site N/A – No Vulnerable Health EJ Criteria met in Pepperell.
6. Identify potential short-term and long-term environmental and public health impacts that may affect EJ Populations and any anticipated mitigation As an ecological restoration project whose implementation will negate imminent threat of damage to persons or property, no permanent adverse effects are anticipated with the project; therefore, the work to abate the emergency and restore the area will not lead to any permanent adverse or disproportionate effects on the nearby EJ community. Preliminary project design included a feasibility study with a detailed hydrologic and hydraulic analysis that confirmed floodplain levels downstream of the dam would not be negatively impacted by the Project, as well as a due diligence review and sediment analysis that confirmed sediment currently located within the impoundment is relatively free of contaminants, and of higher quality than sediment downstream of the Burke’s Pond Dam.
7. Identify project benefits, including “Environmental Benefits” as defined in 301 CMR 11.02, that may improve environmental conditions or public health of the EJ population Sucker Brook is a certified Coldwater Fishery Resource and restoring connectivity along the stream at Burke’s Pond would confer significant habitat benefits. In recent years, cold water species such as brook trout have declined in population in eastern Massachusetts. Temperature monitoring along Sucker Brook and the Nissitissit River indicates that the Nissitissit Watershed reaches a maximum 30-day average stream temperature of 18.35°C. This stream temperature is close to the upper limit of the ideal range for growth and activity (between 12-19°C). Additional monitoring indicates that stream temperatures in sections of Sucker Brook exceed the ideal range for brook trout, specifically in the vicinity of impoundments along the stream. Removal of the dam has improved recreational opportunities and enabled fish passage along Sucker Brook via restoration of free-flowing conditions to the impounded section of the stream along Burke’s Pond. It has also reduced thermal pollution in the stream, which was previously caused by the relatively static impoundment of the water surface.

8. Describe how the community can request a meeting to discuss the project, and how the community can request oral language interpretation services at the meeting . Specify how to request other accommodations, including meetings after business hours and at locations near public transportation.

To request a virtual or in-person meeting to discuss the project, please email Jamie McCarthy at jmccarthy@horsleywitten.com and describe any meeting accommodations needed, including language interpretation, location, and preferred times. Jamie McCarthy will respond to the request via email to coordinate a meeting.



Date: 1/9/2026

Data Sources: Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), ESRI

This map is for informational purposes and may not be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.

- Project Boundary
- 1-Mile Buffer from Site
- 5-Mile Buffer from Site

- Municipalities
- Environmental Justice Populations 2020
- Income