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DETERMINATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE VALUE

PROJECT: Proposed Conservation Restriction Release in the Town of Deerfield
MUNICIPALITY: Deerfield
EEA FILE NUMBER: A97_018_076
PROJECT PROPONENT: Town of Deerfield
DATE: October 03, 2025

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A, in order to use for another purpose or otherwise dispose of land or an interest in land subject to Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (“Article 97”), a public entity must, *inter alia*, “identify replacement land or an interest in land, which is not already subject to said Article XCVII, in a comparable location and *that is of equal or greater natural resource value, as determined by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs . . .*” (emphasis added). This document provides the required determination of natural resource value as to the above-referenced proposal (“Project”).

This determination constitutes solely a determination of natural resource value pursuant to M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A(a)(ii) and does not indicate that the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs takes any position on the Project or on whether it complies with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (“EEA”) Article 97 Land Disposition Policy. This determination reflects the independent analysis of EEA for advisory purposes and does not create any right, benefit, or duty, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by any party in any judicial or administrative matter.

Project Description:

The Project proposed by the Town of Deerfield, in conjunction with MassDOT, involves the release of a portion of a Conservation Restriction held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation on land owned by Great River Hydro LLC. The proposed area to be released is 15,977 square feet (0.37 acres) (“Impacted Land”). This release is proposed to facilitate the replacement of the Stillwater Bridge. The Impacted Land, as proposed, will be used for grading, drainage, infiltration infrastructure and bridge components, and temporary construction areas. As mitigation for this disposition, the Town of Deerfield is proposing to convey a Conservation Restriction to the Department of Conservation and Recreation on 5.477 acres of land (“Replacement Land”) located in and owned by the Town of Deerfield.

The Project is described in more detail in the Alternatives Analysis and Supplemental Materials which are posted on EEA's website¹.

Information Considered:

This determination is based on a review of the Alternatives Analysis, other materials submitted, and EEA's independent analysis. EEA analysis included a site visit to view the Impacted Land and Replacement Land on January 23, 2025. EEA's analysis also included the use of GIS and EEA's Article 97 Natural Resource Site Evaluation Tool ("NRSET") to characterize the Natural Resource Value of the Impacted Land and Replacement Land. The results of the NRSET evaluation are attached herein as Exhibit A and Exhibit B.

Characterization of Impacted Land:

The Impacted Land is primarily wooded land along a sloped bank of the Deerfield River and possesses the Natural Resource Values typical of that land cover type. The NRSET evaluation identified portions of the Impacted Land as prime forest and agricultural land. Other values mapped on a portion of the land by NRSET include wetlands, groundwater protection zones, EPA Ecoregions and aquatic core habitat. The land is not currently being used for any recreational use, and the topography and overgrowth limit any access.

Characterization of Replacement Land:

The Replacement Land consist primarily of wooded land and sandy bank along the Deerfield River, with Natural Resource Values typical of those land cover types. The NRSET evaluation identifies the majority of the land as prime agricultural land and mapped portions of the parcel as wetland, aquatic core habitat, EPA Ecoregions and NHESP Natural Communities. The land is not currently used for active or passive recreation.

Determination:

The Replacement Land is of equal or greater Natural Resource Value as compared to the Impacted Land. Both the Impacted Land and Replacement Land have Natural Resource Value consistent with wooded land cover and are along the edge of the Deerfield River. Both areas share many of the same characteristics and layers mapped by NRSET. The Impacted Land is mapped with small areas (less than a half-acre) of prime forest and groundwater protection; while these characteristics are not present in the Replacement Land NRSET evaluation, there will not be a total loss of these natural services as these areas of the Impacted Land will be primarily utilized for temporary work or stormwater infrastructure. Conversely, the Replacement Land would protect approximately 4 acres of land mapped for NHESP Natural Communities and approximately 5 acres of prime farmland. The Replacement Land also directly abuts and expands a corridor of already protected land.

The Replacement Land is significantly larger than and shares a majority of the same natural characteristics of the Impacted Land. While there are a few characteristics not directly replaced by the Replacement Land, the unique services provided by the Replacement Land will result in at least equal if not greater Natural Resource Value.

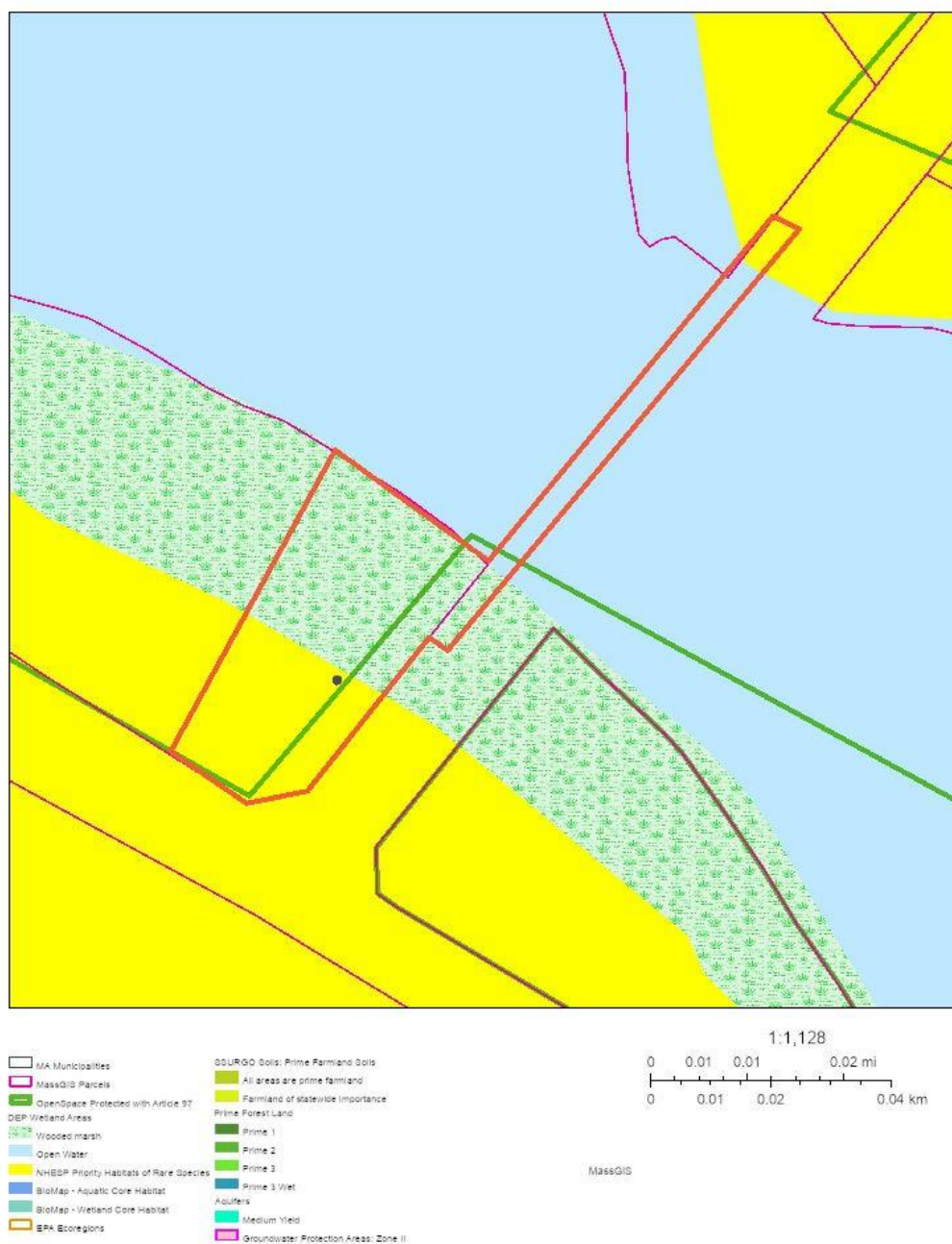
¹ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/article-97-an-act-preserving-open-space-in-the-commonwealth-mgl-c-3-ss-5a#:~:text=97\)%20establishes%20a%20right%20to,or%20easements%20subject%20to%20Art.](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/article-97-an-act-preserving-open-space-in-the-commonwealth-mgl-c-3-ss-5a#:~:text=97)%20establishes%20a%20right%20to,or%20easements%20subject%20to%20Art.)



Exhibit A: A97_18_074 Impacted Land

Area of Interest (AOI) Information *Area : 0.48 acres

Sep 26 2025 13:05:40 Eastern Daylight Time



*Area analyzed is a best estimate of impacted boundaries and not exact.

Name	Count	Area(acres)	Length(ft)
Protected OpenSpace other than Article 97 Land	0	0	N/A
OpenSpace Protected with Article 97	1	0.37	N/A
NHESP Natural Communities	0	0	N/A
BioMap - Aquatic Core Habitat	1	0.24	N/A
BioMap - Wetland Core Habitat	1	0.23	N/A
BioMap - Forest Core Habitat	0	0	N/A
BioMap - Vernal Pool Core Habitat	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Landscape Blocks	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Coastal Adaptation Areas	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Tern Foraging Habitat	0	0	N/A
Long Distance Trails with a 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
Hiking Wilderness Trails with 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
Bike Trails with 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
EPA Ecoregions	1	0.48	N/A
SSURGO Soils: Prime Farmland Soils	2	0.36	N/A
Prime Forest Land	4	0.37	N/A
Outstanding Resource Waters	0	0	N/A
Aquifers	1	0.46	N/A
Sole Source Aquifers	0	0	N/A
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	0	0	N/A
Surface Water Protection Areas: Zone B	0	0	N/A

Surface Water Protection Areas: Zone C	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Interim Wellhead PAs	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Zone I	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Zone II	1	0.36	N/A
FEMA 1% / 100 yr. flood zones	0	0	N/A
DEP Wetland Areas	2	0.31	N/A

OpenSpace Protected with Article 97

#	SITE_NAME	FEE_OWNER	Area(acres)
1	Deerfield River (USGen New England) Great River Hydro CR	Great River Hydro	0.37

BioMap - Aquatic Core Habitat

#	Aquatic Core ID	Total Acres - Aquatic Core	Sub Acres - Aquatic Core	Native Fish Biodiversity	Native Fish Richness
1	807	26,871.85	2,490.01	N	N
#	Rare Species	Anadramous	Freshwater Mussel Richness	Wild Trout	Eastern Brook Trout / Slimy Sculpin
1	Y	N	N	N	N
#	Banded Sunfish / Creek Chub Sucker	Two Story Pond		Fish Growing Conditions	Area(acres)
1	N	N		N	0.24

BioMap - Wetland Core Habitat

#	Wetland Core ID	Total Acres - Wetland Core	Sub Acres - Wetland Core	Integrity	Resilience
1	6,388	2.16	2.16	N	N
#	Rare Species	Priority Natural Community Wetland	Oxbows	Area(acres)	
1	Y	N	N	0.23	

EPA Ecoregions

#	Ecoregion	Area(acres)
1	Connecticut River Valley	0.48

SSURGO Soils: Prime Farmland Soils

#	Prime category	Area(acres)
1	All areas are prime farmland	0.09
2	Farmland of statewide importance	0.28

Prime Forest Land

#	Prime category	Area(acres)
1	Prime 3	0.01
2	Prime 2	0.07
3	Prime 1	0.09
4	Prime 3 Wet	0.20

Aquifers

#	TYPE	Area(acres)
1	Medium Yield	0.46

Groundwater Protection Areas: Zone II

#	SUPPLIER	Area(acres)
1	DEERFIELD FIRE DISTRICT	0.36

DEP Wetland Areas

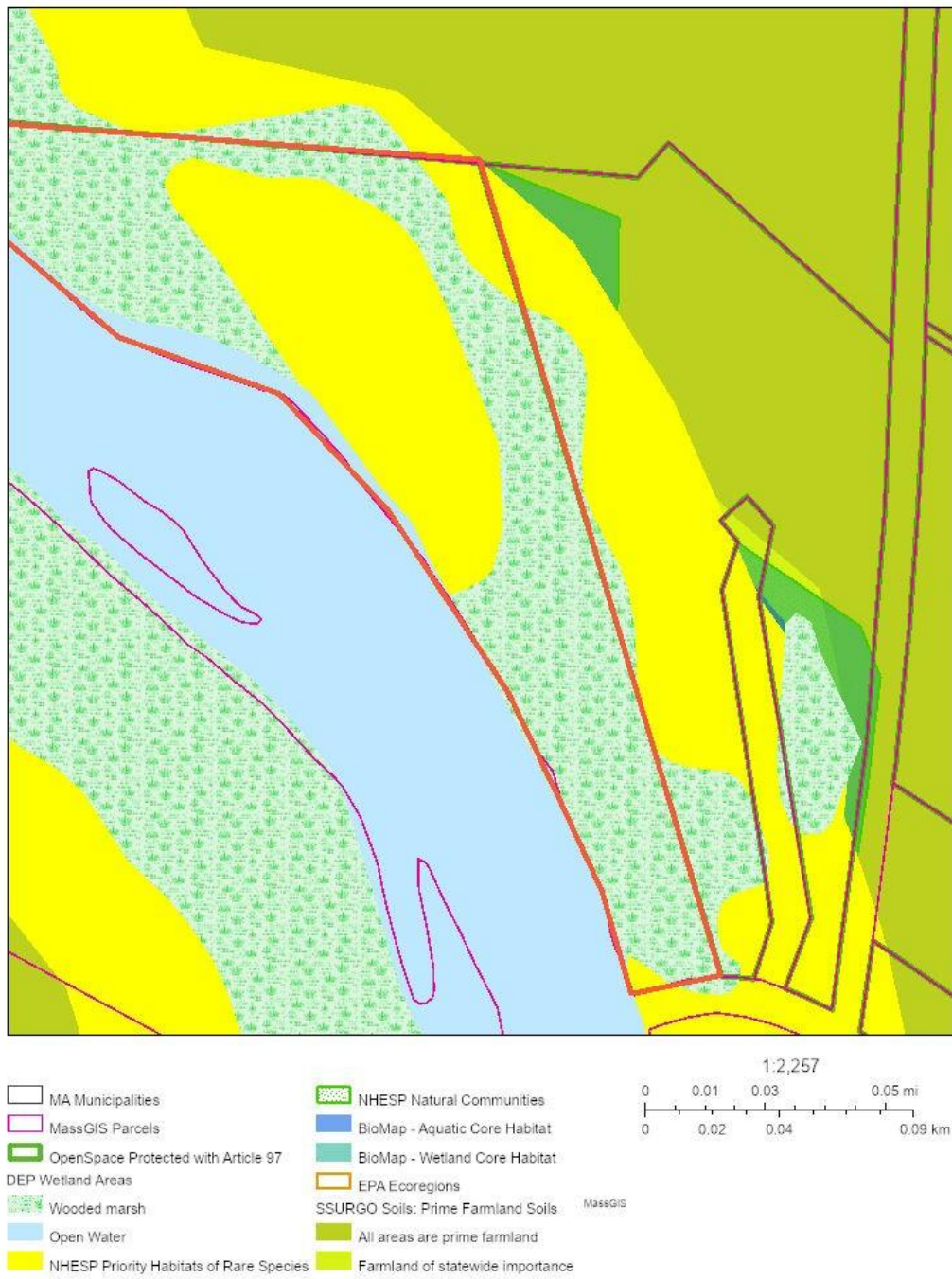
#	Wetlands type	Area(acres)
1	OPEN WATER	0.08
2	WOODED SWAMP DECIDUOUS	0.23



Exhibit B: A97_18_074 Replacement Land

Area of Interest (AOI) Information *Area : 5.51 acres

Sep 26 2025 13:16:05 Eastern Daylight Time



*Area analyzed is a best estimate of impacted boundaries and not exact.

Name	Count	Area(acres)	Length(ft)
Protected OpenSpace other than Article 97 Land	0	0	N/A
OpenSpace Protected with Article 97	2	0.04	N/A
NHESP Natural Communities	1	4.04	N/A
BioMap - Aquatic Core Habitat	1	5.37	N/A
BioMap - Wetland Core Habitat	3	5.23	N/A
BioMap - Forest Core Habitat	0	0	N/A
BioMap - Vernal Pool Core Habitat	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Landscape Blocks	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Coastal Adaptation Areas	0	0	N/A
BioMap Critical Natural Landscape - Tern Foraging Habitat	0	0	N/A
Long Distance Trails with a 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
Hiking Wilderness Trails with 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
Bike Trails with 10 meter buffer	0	0	N/A
EPA Ecoregions	1	5.51	N/A
SSURGO Soils: Prime Farmland Soils	2	5.03	N/A
Prime Forest Land	0	0	N/A
Outstanding Resource Waters	0	0	N/A
Aquifers	0	0	N/A
Sole Source Aquifers	0	0	N/A
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	0	0	N/A
Surface Water Protection Areas: Zone B	0	0	N/A

Surface Water Protection Areas: Zone C	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Interim Wellhead PAs	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Zone I	0	0	N/A
Groundwater Protection Areas: Zone II	0	0	N/A
FEMA 1% / 100 yr. flood zones	0	0	N/A
DEP Wetland Areas	2	3.55	N/A

OpenSpace Protected with Article 97

#	SITE_NAME	FEE_OWNER	Area(acres)
1	Williams M and K DLT APR	Williams Kenneth S and Milton H	0.02
2	Allen Carlos E APR	Allen Carlos E	0.02

NHESP Natural Communities

#	Community Name	Unique ID	Community Rank	Specific Occurrence	Community Description	Version	Area(acres)
1	Major-river Floodplain Forest	3,319.00	S2	This example of Major-river Floodplain Forest occurs in patches along the Deerfield River. At least one of these patches is very large, of highquality, and is free of exotic species and human disturbances.	Major-river Floodplain Forests are strongly dominated by silver maple. They occur along large rivers where soils are enriched with nutrients brought by annual floods.	2,024	4.04

BioMap - Aquatic Core Habitat

#	Aquatic Core ID	Total Acres - Aquatic Core	Sub Acres - Aquatic Core	Native Fish Biodiversity	Native Fish Richness
1	807	26,871.85	2,490.01	N	N
#	Rare Species	Anadramous	Freshwater Mussel Richness	Wild Trout	Eastern Brook Trout / Slimy Sculpin
1	Y	N	N	N	N

#	Banded Sunfish / Creek Chub Sucker	Two Story Pond	Fish Growing Conditions	Area(acres)
1	N	N	N	5.37

BioMap - Wetland Core Habitat

#	Wetland Core ID	Total Acres - Wetland Core	Sub Acres - Wetland Core	Integrity	Resilience
1	6,437	11.11	2.61	N	N
2	6,437	11.11	3.83	N	N
3	6,437	11.11	4.40	N	N
4	6,437	11.11	2.61	N	N

#	Rare Species	Priority Natural Community Wetland	Oxbows	Area(acres)
1	Y	Y	N	0.09
2	Y	N	N	1.20
3	N	Y	N	1.96
4	Y	Y	N	1.99

EPA Ecoregions

#	Ecoregion	Area(acres)
1	Connecticut River Valley	5.51

SSURGO Soils: Prime Farmland Soils

#	Prime category	Area(acres)
1	All areas are prime farmland	0.39
2	Farmland of statewide importance	4.64

DEP Wetland Areas

#	Wetlands type	Area(acres)
1	OPEN WATER	0.27
2	WOODED SWAMP DECIDUOUS	3.28