

Quinapoxet Dam Removal Ecological Restoration Project West Boylston, Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), in coordination with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Division of Ecological Restoration and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, is excited to announce a new ecological restoration project located along the regional important Quinapoxet River in West Boylston, Massachusetts. Restoring natural fish passage, wildlife connectivity and recreational opportunities while protecting water quality within the Quinapoxet River has been a goal for MWRA, its partners and local organizations and stakeholders. MWRA has retained Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (MMI)/SLR, a leader in river restoration, to prepare design plans and prepare regulatory permits for the removal of the Quinapoxet Dam.



Quinapoxet Dam

This dam was constructed in 1905 to support the Wachusett Reservoir construction project and has become obsolete with the various upgrades MWRA has made to its water transfer systems. It is a 250-foot-long and 18-foot-high earthen embankment and stone masonry structure. Centrally located on the structure is a 135-foot-long and 9-foot-high stone masonry and concrete arched spillway. Removal of this dam is expected to have minor short-term impacts to the surrounding area but significant long-term ecological benefits. The dam inhibits native species of fish from accessing miles of their natural habitat. The removal of the dam will restore passage to important fishery species such as the landlocked Atlantic salmon and native brook trout. In addition to the removal of the dam, several islands of sediment downstream of the dam will be relocated to create a new vegetated embankment that will help separate the natural river channel from the Quabbin Reservoir Shaft 1 power station release.

The project will require regulatory permitting through federal, state, and local regulatory agencies. The project team will be developing permit applications and supporting documents soon. The team looks forward to presenting this ecological restoration project to the community and receiving input during the permitting process. For more information regarding this project, please visit MWRA's website or email John Gregoire from MWRA at John.Gregoire@mwra.com or Kathryn Parent from DCR at Kathryn.Parent@mass.gov.