

Early Coordination with the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife



Proposed projects or activities within Priority Habitat of Rare Species – including shared use trails and paths – require prior review by the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) to evaluate potential impacts to state-listed species under the MA Endangered Species Act Regulations (MESA; 321 CMR 10.00). In spite of their many benefits, shared use trails / paths have the potential to impact state-listed species and their habitats.

MassWildlife provides early, pre-filing consultations to proactively identify and address potential impacts to state-listed species. MassWildlife may require habitat assessments, rare species surveys and additional information to help it evaluate potential impacts and provide applicants with guidance on project design and permitting. Because MassWildlife's review can sometimes affect project design, we strongly recommend submitting conceptual alignments and project plans prior to significant engineering or planning (pre-25% design). In our experience, early coordination ensures a more efficient review process, proper scoping of project proposals/consultants, collaboration on context-sensitive designs, and avoids potentially costly delays.

IN ORDER TO ENGAGE IN THE PRE-FILING CONSULTATION, PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- USGS topographic locus map (and a shapefile, if available) showing the location of the project area and alignment alternatives.
- Project summary / description, including a description of project goals, existing and proposed conditions, and basic engineering objectives (e.g., 12ft paved bike path with 2 foot graded shoulders within a 30ft managed corridor, etc.)
- Proposed project alignment and conceptual plans overlaid onto aerial images (note: this should be conceptual, planning phase level information)
- Any other available information regarding the proposed project, such as:
 - Photos representative of current conditions, areas of concern or significant work
 - Identified features of interest or investigation (e.g., culverts, bridges, slope stabilization, work in water, official and non-official trail connections, and/or areas of significant clearing)
 - Anticipated project schedule

Please contact MassWildlife for a pre-filing consultation even if you do not have all of the information requested above. We are always willing to engage in early coordination.

TO REQUEST A PRE-FILING CONSULTATION

Email is the preferred method. Depending on project location, please contact the appropriate Endangered Species Review Assistant:

Eastern MA: Emily Holt, 508-389-6385, emily.holt@mass.gov

Western MA: Melany Cheeseman, 508-389-6357, melany.cheeseman@mass.gov

The Division will get back to you within 2 weeks to discuss your project, and if necessary, may request an in-person meeting or site visit. **If you have any questions, please contact David Paulson, Senior Endangered Species Review Biologist at 508-389-6366 or david.paulson@mass.gov.**