

Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game

Division of
Ecological
Restoration

Invested in Nature and Community



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**Working with engineering,
surveying, and other firms to
restore rivers and wetlands in
Massachusetts**



Mission: Restore and protect rivers, wetlands, and watersheds for the benefit of people and the environment.



Today's Presentation

1. Background on the MA Division of Ecological Restoration
2. Restoration project types + engineering services
3. Procurement mechanisms
 - DER's Master Agreement
 - Via DER partners
4. Upcoming Master Agreement RFQ; Priority Projects RFR
5. Other thoughts



**Division of
Ecological
Restoration (DER)**

Division of Fisheries
and Wildlife

Division of Marine
Fisheries

Office of Fishing and
Boating Access

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs		
Department of Agricultural Resources	Department of Conservation and Recreation	Department of Energy Resources
Department of Fish and Game	Department of Public Utilities	Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Coastal Zone Management	Environmental Police	Environmental Policy Office

Mission: restore and protect rivers, wetlands, and watersheds for the benefit of people and the environment

- Division of the Department of Fish and Game
- Non-regulatory
- Science-based
- Works in partnership with local, state, federal agencies and NGOs
 - Manages river and wetland restoration projects
 - Builds the capacity of others to lead river and wetland restoration
 - Shares restoration knowledge



DER's river and wetland restoration work includes

- Dam removal
- Culvert upgrades to meet MA Stream Crossing Standards
- Coastal wetland restoration (tidal restriction removal)
- Restoration of former cranberry bogs to wetlands
- Freshwater wetland restoration
- Getting into golf course rewilding





DER 15 Year Accomplishments

- 65+ dams removed
- 60 river and wetland restoration projects currently in planning
- ~10 per year constructed
- >300 river miles opened
- >3000 acres of coastal and inland wetlands restored
- Grew from 15 – 30 people



DER's work includes

- Directly managing restoration projects through our Priority Project Program
- Overseeing contracts with engineering firms to advance Priority Projects
- Awarding grants to partners to advance Priority Projects
- Awarding culvert replacement grants to municipalities
- Supporting regional restoration partnerships led by watershed and other regional organizations
- Developing trainings and tools

DER's funding

Operational Budget

- DER has two line items in the Commonwealth's operational budget
- Determined by the legislature annually via budget process
 - Salaries, travel, equipment, training, grants \$5.5 million
 - Culvert TA \$2.8 million

Grants

- DER staff and partners apply for many federal and other grants to cover the full cost of restoration projects. Our leverage rate is ~1:5 – 1:12 depending on the year.

Capital Budget

- DER has four line items in the Commonwealth's capital budget
- Determined by Executive Office of Administration & Finance annually
- Used for restoration project engineering, permitting, construction, monitoring, grants to partners related to restoration
- FY24 \$8.25 million

One-time Funds

- American Rescue Plan Act funds:
 - \$35 million in 2022
 - \$6 million in 2023

DER works with engineering firms on



- Restoration planning
- Rapid engineering surveys / concept plans
- Feasibility studies
- Engineering assessments
- Field data collection
- Hydraulic / hydrologic modeling
- Engineering and design
- Permitting
- Bid document prep
- Construction observation
- Restoration monitoring

Example: DER's Dam Removal Program

Dam Removal Reconnaissance

- Basic feasibility studies for dam owners who are interested in exploring dam removal as an option
- Produces conceptual level design, sediment management recommendation, and cost estimate for removal
- Projects are selected through a competitive RFR
- DER hires the engineering firms through a competitive RFR and oversees the projects

Dam Removal DER Priority Projects

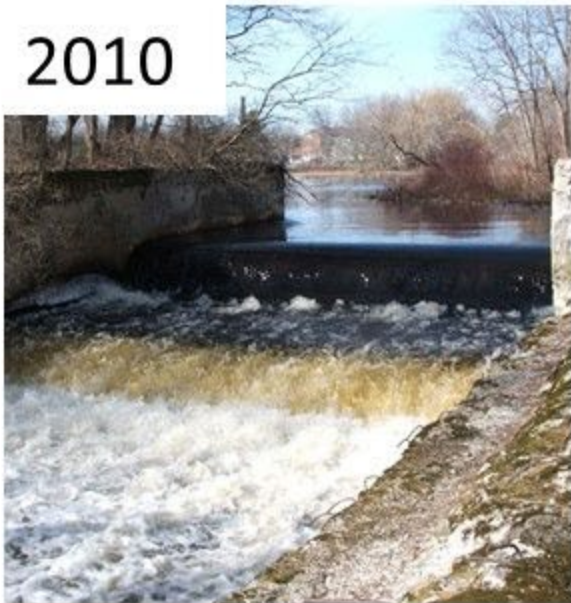
- A DER project manager is assigned to assist a dam owner with the planning, permitting, and removal of their dam
- Priority projects are eligible for technical and financial assistance from DER
- Projects also receive engineering services from pre-qualified firms
- Projects are selected through a competitive RFR
- Portfolio of 22 projects currently
- Projects take 5+ years

Example: Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Program

- DER awards ~\$2.8 million per year to municipalities for culvert replacements to meet stream crossing standards
- Projects have significant ecological and resilience benefits
- Each grant comes with technical assistance from DER staff
- We recommend they hire engineers with
 - Knowledge about river processes
 - Experience meeting Stream Crossing Standards
 - Capacity to perform geotechnical borings
 - Experience with hydrologic and hydraulic modeling
 - MassDOT prequalification and/or MassDOT Chapter 85 review experience, as applicable



2010



2012



2012



2023



DER's Master Agreement for Ecological Restoration Firms

- DER's Master Agreement supports planning through implementation of river / wetland restoration projects, tool and training development, watershed assessment and modeling, other technical restoration work
- Current Master Agreement ends 6/30
- DER will issue RFQ this spring for Master Agreement to start in July, 2025
- Other agencies, towns, can use
- Firms apply under one of two categories:
 - mandatory services: everything needed to assess, design, permit, oversee construction of river and wetland restoration projects
 - Specialized services: archaeological services, advanced tidal H&H modeling, DOT prequals, etc.



Example: 2019 RFR

Category 1: Aquatic Habitat Restoration

Mandatory

- Project Management & Planning
- Restoration Planning
- Civil Engineering
- Structural Engineering & Assessment
- Hydrologic / Hydraulic Studies
- Feasibility studies
- Etc.

Optional

- Database design
- Pre-qualified by DOT under bridge design
- Botanical surveys
- Marine and underwater surveys
- Ownership and deed determination
- Etc.



Example: 2019 RFR

Category 2: Specialized Services

- Coastal resource assessment, modeling, engineering, design
- Restoration monitoring
- Community planning
- Lab analytical services
- Historical and archaeological services
- Complex hydrologic and hydraulic modeling



DER Priority Project Program

- DER will be issuing an RFR for new Priority Projects, including dam removal, cranberry bog restoration, coastal wetland restoration, other areas
- Opportunity to participate in projects from feasibility through construction
- Projects may be owned by towns, NGOs, agencies
- Projects must demonstrate significant ecological and community benefit
- Selected projects assigned a project manager
- Eligible for technical services from pre-qualified engineers on DER's MA
- Eligible for grants from DER when available





How to get involved:

- CommBuys.com
- DER's website
- Sign up for DER's DER Notices newsletter
- Email me: Beth.Lambert@mass.gov