

# City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire

# Wetland Conditional Use Permit Application Checklist

This wetland conditional use permit application checklist is a tool designed to assist the applicant in the planning process and for preparing the application for Conservation Commission and Planning Board review. The checklist is required to be uploaded as part of your wetland conditional use permit application to ensure a full and complete application is submitted to the Planning and Sustainability Department and to the online portal. A pre-application conference with a member of the Planning and Sustainability Department is encouraged as additional project information may be required depending on the size and scope of the project. The applicant is cautioned that this checklist is only a guide and is not intended to be a complete list of all wetland conditional use permit requirements. Please refer to Article 10 of the City of Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance for full details.

**Applicant Responsibilities:** Applicable fees are due upon application submittal to the Planning Board (no fees are required for Conservation Commission submission). The application will be reviewed by Planning and Sustainability Department staff to determine completeness. Incomplete applications which do not provide required information for the evaluation of the proposed site development shall not be provided review by the Conservation Commission or Planning Board.

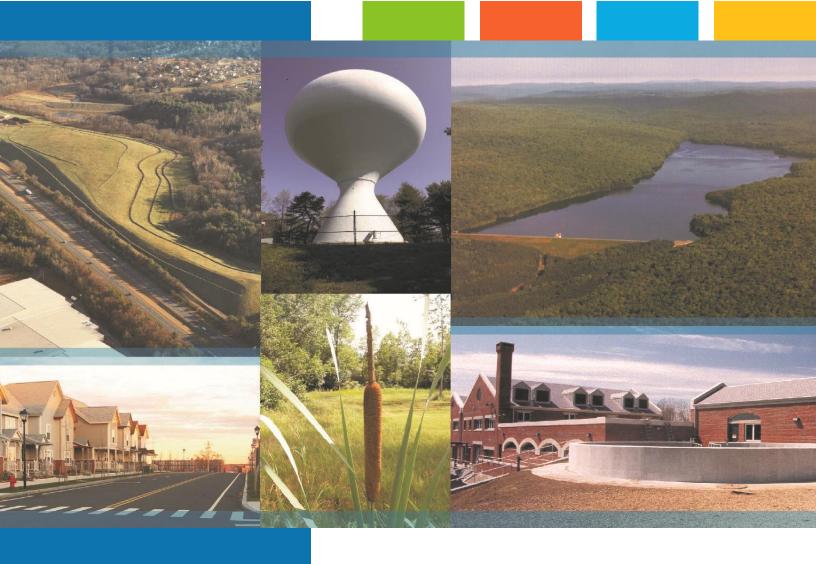
Name of Applicant: Eversource Energy	Date Submitted: <u>03/25/2025</u>
Application # (in City's online permitting):LU-25-50	
Site Address: 400 Spaulding Turnpike	238 Lot: 2

V	Required Items for Submittal	Item Location (e.g. Page or Plan Sheet/Note #)
<b>'</b>	Complete <u>application</u> form submitted via the City's web-based permitting program	Section 2.1, Page 2-1
<b>'</b>	All application documents, plans, supporting documentation, this checklist and other materials uploaded to the application form in OpenGov in digital <b>Portable Document Format (PDF)</b> . One hard copy of all plans and materials shall be submitted to the Planning and Sustainability Department by the published deadline.	online 03/25/2025; hard copy 04/17/2025; Section 4, Page 4-1

V	Required Items for Submittal	Item Location (e.g. Page/line or Plan Sheet/Note #)
<b>'</b>	Basic property and wetland resource information. (10.1017.21)	Section 2.1, Page 2-1
<b>'</b>	Additional information required for projects proposing greater than 250 square feet of permanent or temporary impacts. (10.1017.22)	Section 2.2, Page 2-1; Section 4.1.1, Page 4-2; Appendix B
<b>'</b>	Demonstrate impacts as they relate to the criteria for approval set forth in Section 10.1017.50 (or Section 10.1017.60 in the case of utility installation in a right-of-way).  (10.1017.23)	online 03/25/2025; hard copy 04/17/2025; Section 4, Page 4-1
<b>'</b>	Balance impervious surface impacts with removal and/or wetland buffer enhancement plan. (10.1017.24)	Section 4.1.2, Page 4-2

$\square$	Required Items for Submittal	Item Location (e.g. Page/line or Plan Sheet/Note #)
•	Wetland buffer enhancement plan. (10.1017.25)	Section 4.1.2, Page 4-2
	Living shoreline strategy provided for tidal wetland and/or tidal buffer impacts. (10.1017.26)	N/A
<b>V</b>	Stormwater management must be in accordance with Best Management Practices including but not limited to:  1. New Hampshire Stormwater Manual, NHDES, current version.  2. Best Management Practices to Control Non-point Source Pollution:  A Guide for Citizens and City Officials, NHDES, January 2004.  (10.1018.10)	Section 4.2.1, 4.3.2, Page 4-2; project plans, Appendix A
	Vegetated Buffer Strip slope of greater than or equal to 10%. (10.1018.22)	N/A
	Removal or cutting of vegetation, use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. (10.1018.23/10.1018.24/10.1018.25)	N/A
	All new pavement within a wetland buffer shall be porous pavement. (10.1018.31)	N/A
	An application that proposes porous pavement in a wetland buffer shall include a pavement maintenance plan.  (10.1018.32)	N/A
	Permanent wetland boundary markers shall be shown on the plan submitted with an application for a conditional use permit and shall be installed during project construction.  (10.1018.40)	N/A
Ø	Requested Items for Submittal	Item Location (e.g. Page or Plan Sheet/Note #)
•	A narrative/letter addressed to the Conservation Commission Chair (if recommended to Planning Board then an additional narrative addressed to the Planning Board Chair at that time) describing the project and any proposed wetland and/or wetland buffer impacts. Please visit the <a href="WCUP">WCUP instruction page</a> for further application instructions.	online 03/25/2025; hard copy 04/17/2025
<b>'</b>	If New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Standard Dredge and Fill Permit is required for this work, please provide this permit application at the same time as your submission for a Wetland Conditional Use Permit.	NHDES Utility SPN 2022-03496, received 10/06/2023

Applicant's Signature: Stefam M. Tutreauct Date: 05/02/2025



E194 and U181 Structure Replacement Project Echo Avenue, Portsmouth, New Hampshire

# CITY OF PORTSMOUTH AFTER-THE-FACT CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Eversource Energy 13 Legends Drive Hooksett, New Hampshire

March 2025

Tighe&Bond





E5034-200 March 19, 2025

Samantha Collins, Chair City of Portsmouth Conservation Commission 1 Junkins Avenue Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801

Re: **Eversource E194 and U181 Structure Replacement Project After-the-Fact Wetland Conditional Use Permit Echo Avenue, Portsmouth, NH** 

Dear Ms. Collins:

On behalf of Eversource Energy dba Public Service Company of New Hampshire (Eversource), Tighe & Bond is submitting the following after-the-fact Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the above referenced project.

This work was completed under an existing CUP which was granted on June 22, 2023 (LU-23-60). Eversource Energy replaced forty-five (45) wooden utility structures with steel structures on the E194 and U181 Lines in Portsmouth and Newington, due to their overall age and condition. As part of the approved access to Structures 19 and 19 (E194 and U181), the CUP permitted 6,286 square feet (SF) of impacts to the adjacent wetland and 1,644 SF of impacts to the wetland buffer.

Following City approval and the issuance of the CUP, Eversource obtained landowner authorization from the Portsmouth Ford auto dealership to access the right-of-way (ROW) directly from Echo Avenue. As such, construction deviated from what was permitted by the CUP in this area, and both structures were accessed by a more direct route with no wetland impacts. This re-route eliminated direct wetland impacts; however, impacts within the wetland buffer increased from the permitted 1,644 SF to an as-built total of 3,685 SF.

Enclosed is a project description and supporting documents for a request to permit after-thefact wetland buffer impacts associated with the constructed access to Structures 19, including project mapping, the Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment Report that was included in the original 2023 CUP application, representative site photographs, and an application fee check in the amount of \$1,300.

We trust the enclosed information addresses the requirements for the CUP application and site plan approval. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me at (603) 231-9918 or at STetreault@tighebond.com.

Respectfully,

**TIGHE & BOND, INC.** 

Stefanie M. Tetreault Project Manager

**Enclosures** 

Copy: Planning Board, City of Portsmouth

Ashley Friend, Licensing and Permitting, Eversource Energy

4.3

## Filing Fee Check (File Copy)

### **Section 1 Project Description**

Section 2	Existing Conditions	
2.1	Project Site	2-1
2.2	Jurisdictional Wetland Resource Areas	2-1
	2.2.1 Wetlands	2-1
	2.2.2 100-foot Buffer Zone	2-1
Section 3	Completed Activities	
3.1	Structure Replacement and Maintenance	3-1
3.2	Access	3-1
3.3	Work Pad Construction	3-1
3.4	Construction Sequence	3-2
3.5	Protective Measures	3-2
Section 4	Regulatory Compliance	
4.1	City of Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance - Article 10	4-1
	4.1.1 Wetland Functions and Values Assessment	4-2
	4.1.2 Wetland Buffer Impervious Surface Impacts	4-2
4.2	State Permits	4-2
	4.2.1 Alteration of Terrain	

4.2.2 Utility Statutory Permit-by-Notification......4-2

 Table of Contents

Tighe&Bond

#### **Appendices**

- A Project Mapping
- B 2023 Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment Report
- C Site Photographs



# FILE COPY

"OO9036" ":-----

FILE COPY

# **Check Details**

Check issued: 01/30/2025 Check number: 9036 From: Tighe & Bond, Inc.

**Amount:** \$1,300.00

AP@tighebond.com.

Payable to: City of Portsmouth

**Delivered to:** jdegler@tighebond.com **Documents:** Yes - see Remittance below

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Message from sender:} & \textbf{Hi, attached is your Tighe \& Bond electronic check. Any questions please email} \\ \end{tabular}$ 

**Notes** 

# Activity

ACTIVITY TYPE	TIME	DATE
Tracy Houle issued check 9036	08:13 AM EST	01/31/2025
Check 9036 printed by Jeremy Degler	16:44 PM EDT	03/13/2025
Check 9036 file copy printed by Jeremy Degler	16:45 PM EDT	03/13/2025

# Section 1 Project Description

From October 2023 through June 2024, Eversource Energy replaced forty-five (45) wooden utility structures with steel structures on the E194 and U181 Transmission Lines in Portsmouth and Newington, due to their overall age and condition. Forty-two (42) of these structures were located within Portsmouth. These included Structures 13-16, 19, 37-41, 43-45, 48-54, 65.5 and 66 on the U181 Line, and Structures 12-14, 19, 41-53, 65.5, and 66 on the E194 Line. Additionally, static wire work was conducted at STRs 65-67 on the U181 and STRs 65-67 on the E194. The proposed structure replacements were required to maintain the safety and reliability of the existing transmission system.

This work was completed under an existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) which was granted on June 22, 2023 (LU-23-60). As part of the approved access to Structures 19 and 19 (E194 and U181), the CUP permitted 6,286 square feet (SF) of impacts to the adjacent wetland and 1,644 SF of impacts to the wetland buffer.

Following City approval and the issuance of the CUP, Eversource obtained landowner authorization from the Portsmouth Ford auto dealership to access the right-of-way (ROW) directly from Echo Avenue. As such, construction deviated from what was permitted by the CUP in this area, and both structures were accessed by a more direct route with no wetland impacts. This re-route resulted in a total elimination of the direct wetland impacts; however, impacts within the wetland buffer increased from the permitted 1,644 SF to an as-built total of 3,685 SF.

The following narrative describes existing conditions and the completed activities within jurisdictional areas. Project Mapping is provided in Appendix A, the Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment Report that was in the original 2023 CUP application is included in Appendix B, and representative photographs of the project area are found in Appendix C.

# Section 2 Existing Conditions

## 2.1 Project Site

The E194 and U181 transmission lines originate at the Newington Substation off Gosling Road in Newington and run southwest of the Piscataqua River. The lines then extend southeast, parallel with Route 4 before turning southwest again, parallel with Interstate 95. The lines continue southwest through Great Bog in Portsmouth before turning west and terminating at the Ocean Road Substation in Greenland. The topography is generally flat throughout the right-of-way (ROW) with slight depressions and hills located in the less developed reaches. The areas surrounding the ROW are mostly commercial, industrial, and residential, with some large portions of forested and wetland areas closer to the Greenland town line.

The proposed limit of work covered by this after-the-fact CUP is the constructed access route to Structures 19 and 19 (E194 and U181). This work area is located northeast of Echo Avenue, directly across from the Portsmouth Ford automotive dealership. Based on review of aerial imagery, access from Echo Avenue in this location has historically been used for routine ROW maintenance and vehicle storage from Portsmouth Ford. Representative site photographs are provided in Appendix C.

#### 2.2 Jurisdictional Wetland Resource Areas

There are multiple wetland resource areas within this portion of the E194 and U181 ROW corridor. Jurisdictional wetland resource areas within the project area were identified and delineated on December 21, 2022, and January 4, 9, and 17, 2023 by Tighe & Bond wetland scientists, including a New Hampshire Certified Wetland Scientist. Refer to the Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment Report that was included in the original 2023 CUP application provided in Appendix B for a detailed description of these areas.

#### 2.2.1 Wetlands

Wetlands within the project area are characterized as a mixture of palustrine scrub-shrub (PSS) and palustrine emergent (PEM) systems. These wetlands are situated within disturbed areas in the ROW, surrounded by development. The original CUP permitted 6,286 SF of impacts to the adjacent southern wetland. The as-built conditions eliminated all direct impacts to wetlands.

#### 2.2.2 100-foot Buffer Zone

The 100-foot Buffer Zone within the project area consists of the existing maintained ROW and impervious area (e.g., parking lots and roadways), with some upland areas in and adjacent to the ROW. The original CUP permitted 1,644 SF of impacts to the adjacent southern wetland buffer. The as-built conditions resulted in a net increase of impacts to the wetland buffer, up to 3,685 SF.

# **Section 3 Completed Activities**

## 3.1 Structure Replacement and Maintenance

The structure replacements consisted of drilling holes up to four feet in diameter and the installation of a steel caisson into each hole approximately 15 to 20 feet (10% of structure height plus 2 feet) below the ground surface. The new poles were placed into the caissons and backfilled with clean, suitable materials. Spoils generated from the drilling operations were placed in appropriate upland areas at least 100 feet away from wetland areas and then stabilized.

Once the new poles were installed, old poles were then removed by cutting them below the ground surface. The old poles, cross-arms, wires, and accessory equipment were removed and disposed off-site. The pole butts associated with the existing poles were only removed if they impacted the structural integrity of the new poles.

#### 3.2 Access

Access road improvements and development were needed to provide reliable access for the proposed work. As part of the approved access to Structures 19, the CUP permitted 6,286 SF of impacts to the adjacent southern wetland and 1,644 SF of impacts to the wetland buffer.

Following City approval and the issuance of the CUP, Eversource obtained landowner authorization from the Portsmouth Ford auto dealership to access the ROW directly from Echo Avenue. As such, Structures 19 were accessed by a more direct route. This route resulted in a total elimination of the direct wetland impacts; however, impacts within the wetland buffer increased from the permitted 1,644 SF to an as-built total of 3,685 SF.

Where permanent access through the buffer to Structures 19 is requested under this CUP, the existing boulder barricade will be replaced with a steel gate. This will prevent further encroachment within the buffer and limit use to future maintenance and emergency repairs within the ROW at Structures 19.

#### 3.3 Work Pad Construction

The proposed project included the construction of 100-foot by 100-foot gravel work pads to provide level and stable surfaces needed to facilitate the structure installations. Work pads in upland areas were constructed using crushed stone, top-dressed with 1.5- to 3-inch diameter clean stone. 68 SF of wetland impact was permitted to construct suitable work pads at Structures 19, though during construction, wetland impacts were avoided altogether. Areas of soil disturbance around the work pads were stabilized with seed and straw mulch.

## 3.4 Construction Sequence

The work began in October of 2023 and was completed in June 2024. The following is a description of the general construction sequence. The actual sequence and schedule was determined by the selected contractor(s).

- Install sediment and erosion controls
- Upgrade access roads and build work pads, install construction mats where needed
- Conduct structure replacements
- Remove construction mats and stabilize/restore disturbed areas
- Stabilize exposed soils within the ROW
- Remove erosion and sedimentation controls following stabilization

Pending review and approval of the proposed activities, Eversource will replace the existing boulder barricade with a steel gate. Appropriate construction-period best management practices will be implemented to minimize potential impacts to the nearby wetland resource areas.

#### 3.5 Protective Measures

Work was performed utilizing the latest *Best Management Practices Manual for Utility Maintenance in and Adjacent to Wetlands and Waterbodies in New Hampshire* (NH DNCR 2019) to limit impacts to the environment. Perimeter protective measures consisting of silt fence, straw wattles, and/or straw bales were installed around the structure to minimize potential impacts to the nearby wetland resource areas. Water bars were also installed in areas of road improvements and in areas with steep slopes as identified by the contractor. Areas of disturbed soil were mulched with hay or straw following the completion of work. No equipment or material was stored within wetland resource areas. Erosion controls were implemented during construction, as noted on the project plans in Appendix A, to minimize any potential impacts during construction.

# Section 4 Regulatory Compliance

### 4.1 City of Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance - Article 10

Work was completed in compliance with the requirements set forth in the City of Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance (Article 10, Environmental Protection Standards). The work complied with the criteria set forth in Article 10, Section 1017.60, Public and Private Utilities within Rights-of-Way in Wetlands and Wetland Buffers, discussed below.

(1) The proposed construction is in the public interest;

The construction was in the public interest, as these structure replacements are necessary to continue reliable transmission of public utilities.

(2) Design, construction, and maintenance methods will utilize best management practices to minimize any detrimental impact of such use upon the wetland and will include restoration of the site as nearly as possible to its original grade, condition, and vegetated state;

Eversource utilized Best Management Practices, as described in Section 3.5, during construction to mitigate impacts to wetland resource areas. Following construction, disturbed areas were restored to previously existing conditions, where feasible. Where access was constructed to Structures 19 through the buffer, Eversource proposes to retain this impact area after-the-fact, for future maintenance and emergency repairs, as shown on the attached Site Plans in Appendix A.

(3) No alternative feasible route exists which does not cross or alter a wetland or have less detrimental impact on a wetland; and

The work was designed in consideration of environmental impacts. The replacement activities were limited to the existing maintained ROW and limits of work were established to allow only for work necessary to complete the structure replacements. Access to the structures was primarily by utilizing existing access routes in previously disturbed areas to replace the existing infrastructure. Work associated with the replacement of Structures 19 resulted in no direct wetland impacts. The after-the-fact impact proposed by this CUP application was necessary to achieve a direct route to the replacement structures once landowner authorization was obtained, and resulted in 2,041 SF of additional impact to the buffer, beyond what was originally approved. Overall, the as-built condition resulted in the least overall impact on the wetland, as shown on the attached Site Plans in Appendix A.

(4) Alterations of natural vegetation of managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.

There was no proposed alteration of woodland vegetation, as all work was within the maintained extent of the ROW. As noted above, the limits of work were established to allow work only necessary to complete the structure replacements; where access was constructed to Structures 19 through the buffer, Eversource proposes to retain this impact area after-the-fact, for future maintenance and emergency repairs, as shown on the attached Site Plan in Appendix A.

#### 4.1.1 Wetland Functions and Values Assessment

Pursuant to Article 10, Section 1017.22 of the City of Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance, a project that proposes the temporary or permanent alteration of greater than 1,000 square feet of wetland and greater than 250 square feet of wetland buffer requires a function and values assessment and wetland buffer description. A copy of the Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment Report, including those for the Echo Avenue Wetlands, that was included in the original 2023 CUP application provided in Appendix B.

#### 4.1.2 Wetland Buffer Impervious Surface Impacts

Impacts resulting from the construction of gravel access paths to work pads will not increase impervious surfaces within wetland buffers. A wetland buffer enhancement plan is not feasible due to the nature of the proposed work and the need to retain viable access for future maintenance within the ROW. Vegetation within the ROW is routinely maintained and access will be necessary for future utility maintenance.

#### 4.2 State Permits

#### 4.2.1 Alteration of Terrain

The overall project exceeded 100,000 square feet of earth moving activities and as such required an Alteration of Terrain (AoT) permit from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) AoT Bureau. This permit was obtained on July 29, 2023 (AoT-2427).

#### 4.2.2 Utility Statutory Permit-by-Notification

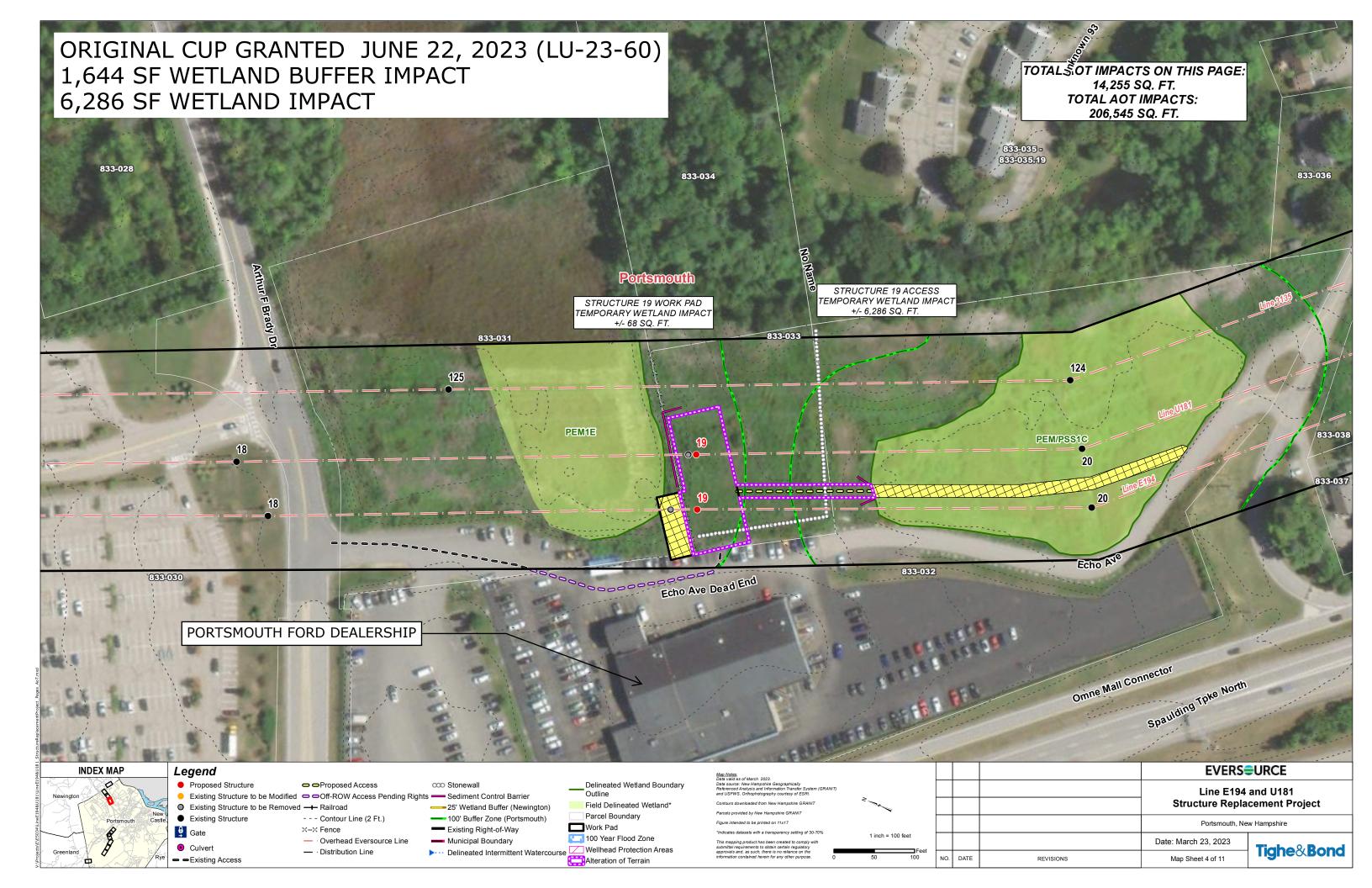
This project included direct impacts to wetlands and waters of the state, and thus required authorization under NH RSA § 482-A. Utility Statutory Permit-by-Notification applications were filed in September 2023 for each municipality where work was completed (NHDES file numbers 2022-03511 and 2022-03496).

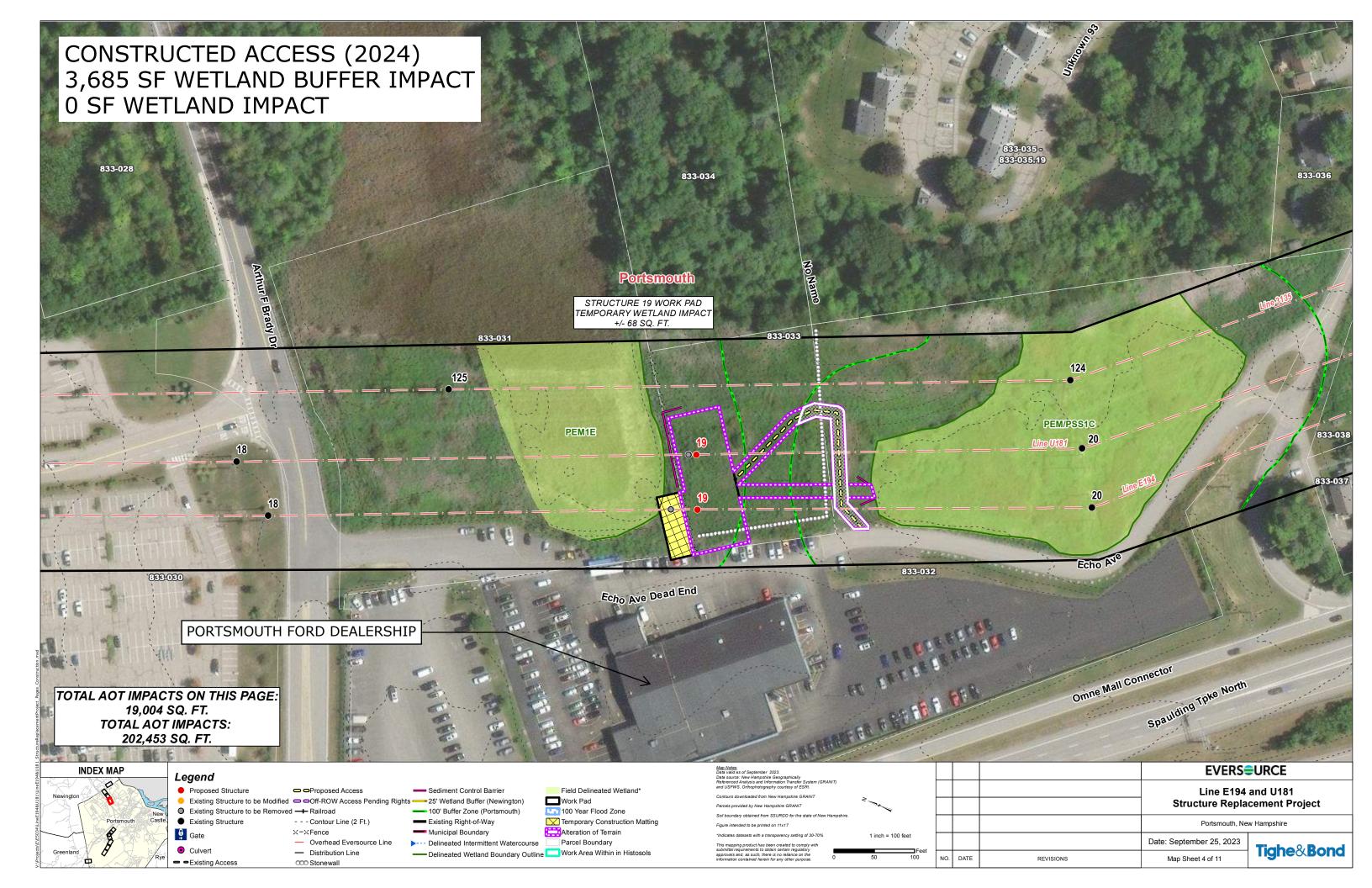
#### 4.3 Federal Permits

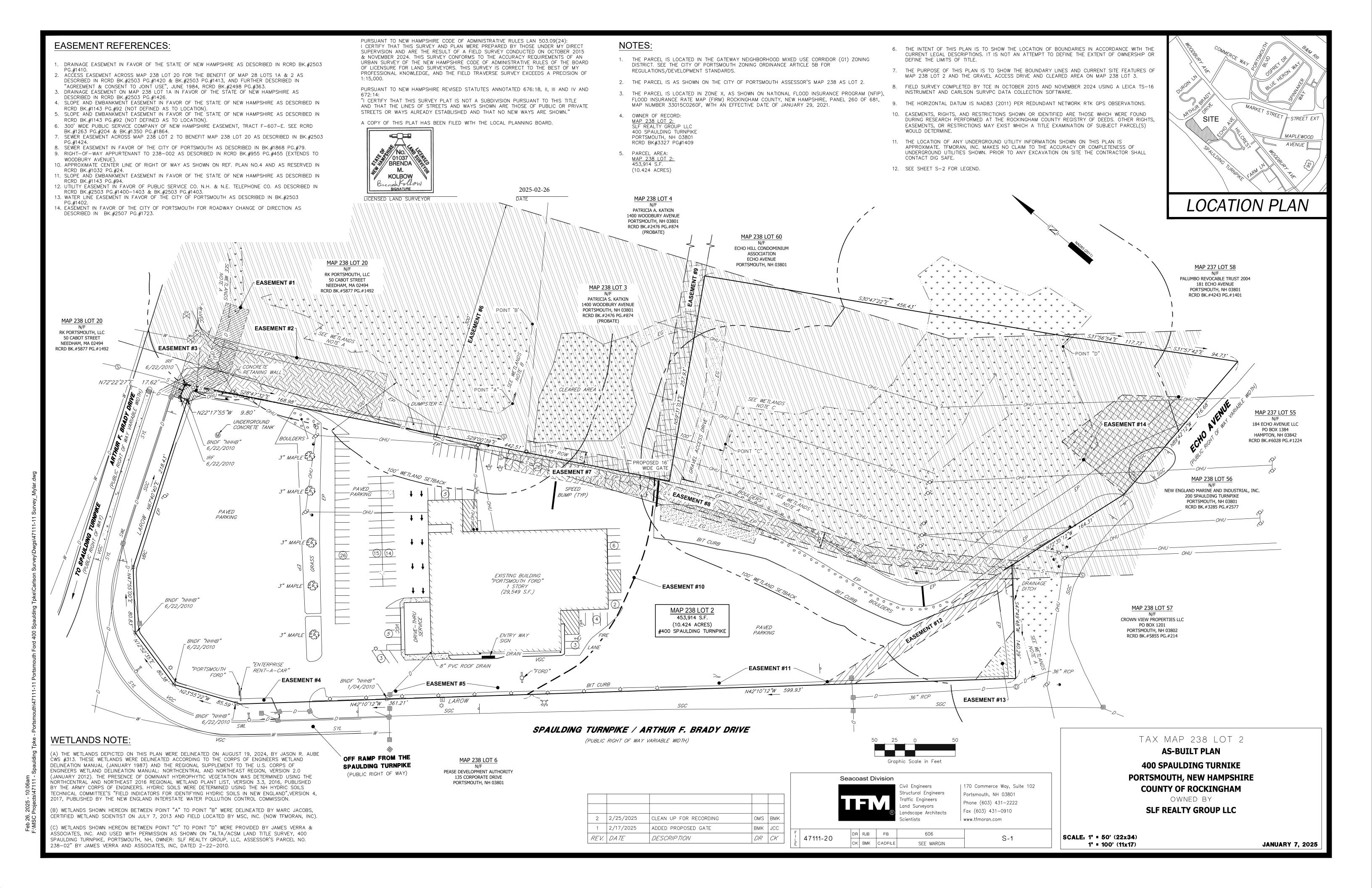
#### 4.3.1 EPA 2022 Construction General Permit

The total of work completed exceeded one acre of earth moving activities and required a Construction General Permit (CGP) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). A Notice of Intent (NOI) and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) was completed in September 2023, at least 14 days prior to the start of construction. The project was monitored by a SWPPP inspector throughout the duration of construction.

**APPENDIX A** 







PURSUANT TO NEW HAMPSHIRE CODE OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES LAN 503.09(24): I CERTIFY THAT THIS SURVEY AND PLAN WERE PREPARED BY THOSE UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND ARE THE RESULT OF A FIELD SURVEY CONDUCTED ON OCTOBER 2015 & NOVEMBER 2024. THIS SURVEY CONFORMS TO THE ACCURACY REQUIREMENTS OF AN URBAN SURVEY OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CODE OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES OF THE BOARD OF LICENSURE FOR LAND SURVEYORS. THIS SURVEY IS CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, AND THE FIELD TRAVERSE SURVEY EXCEEDS A PRECISION OF

PURSUANT TO NEW HAMPSHIRE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED 676:18, II, III AND IV AND "I CERTIFY THAT THIS SURVEY PLAT IS NOT A SUBDIVISION PURSUANT TO THIS TITLE AND THAT THE LINES OF STREETS AND WAYS SHOWN ARE THOSE OF PUBLIC OR PRIVATE STREETS OR WAYS ALREADY ESTABLISHED AND THAT NO NEW WAYS ARE SHOWN." A COPY OF THIS PLAT HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE LOCAL PLANNING BOARD.



LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR

2025-02-26

LEGEND: MAP 137 LOT 11 ASSESSORS MAP/ LOT NUMBER BK. PG. BIT BOOK/PAGE BITUMÍNOUS CURB BOUND FOUND EDGE OF GRAVEL BNDF EDGE OF PAVEMENT IRON ROD FOUND LAROW LIMITED ACCESS RIGHT OF WAY PSNH PUBLIC SERVICE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE N/F NHHB NOW OR FORMERLY NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAY BOUND PVC TYP. RCP POLYVINYL CHLORIDE TYPICAL REINFORCED CONCRETE PIPE RCRD ROCKINGHAM COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS SQUARE FEET SLOPED GRANITE CURB SINGLE WHITE LINE SINGLE YELLOW LINE VERTICAL BITUMINOUS CURB VERTICAL GRANITE CURB IRON PIPE/ROD FOUND BOUND FOUND BOLLARD BOULDER GUY POLE LIGHT POLE UTILITY POLE ELECTRIC BOX LIGHT POLE WITH ARM DRAIN MANHOLE CATCH BASIN FLAG POLE DECIDUOUS TREE MANHOLE SEWER MANHOLE HANDICAP PARKING GAS VALVE HYDRANT WATER SHUT OFF WATER GATE VALVE SIGN -----OHU ----- OVERHEAD UTILITIES ----- CHAINLINK FENCE BOUNDARY LINE ------- GAS LINE ----- WETLAND SETBACK CONCRETE GRAVEL + + + + + CLEARED AREA + + + + Ψ Ψ Ψ WETLANDS \* \* \* EASEMENT #1 EASEMENT #2 EASEMENT #3

EASEMENT #9

EASEMENT #12

EASEMENT #6

EASEMENT #7

EASEMENT #8

EASEMENT #13

EASEMENT #14

CLEAN UP FOR RECORDING 2 2/25/2025 OMS BMK BMK JCC 1 2/17/2025 NO REVISIONS THIS SHEET REV. DATE DESCRIPTION DR CK



| 170 Commerce Way, Suite 102 Structural Engineers Portsmouth, NH 03801 Phone (603) 431-2222 Fax (603) 431-0910 andscape Architects www.tfmoran.com

606 47111-20 CK BMK CADFILE SEE MARGIN

TAX MAP 238 LOT 2 **AS-BUILT PLAN - LEGEND 400 SPAULDING TURNIKE** PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE **COUNTY OF ROCKINGHAM** OWNED BY

1. SEE SHEET S-1 FOR AS-BUILT PLAN, NOTES AND LOCATION PLAN.

**SLF REALTY GROUP LLC** 

SCALE: 1' = 50' (22x34) 1' = 100' (11x17)

NOTE:

**JANUARY 7, 2025** 

**APPENDIX B** 

# E194 & U181 Structure Replacement Project Wetland Resource Area Description and Assessment

**To:** Katy Wilkins, Project Manager, Tighe & Bond, Inc.

**FROM:** Julia Novotny, Environmental Scientist, Tighe & Bond, Inc.

Jeremy Degler, Project Environmental Scientist, CWS, PWS, CWB,

Tighe & Bond, Inc.

**DATE:** March 22, 2023

On December 21, 2022 and January 4, 9, and 17, 2023, Tighe & Bond wetland scientists conducted a wetland resource area investigation within and adjacent to the location of the E194 and U181 transmission line right-of-way (ROW) in support of a structure replacement project proposed by Eversource Energy (Eversource). This memorandum presents a summary of the wetland resource areas investigated at the Project Site and a functions and values assessment for these resource areas.

## **Project Location**

The project area consists of the existing maintained transmission line ROW that contains the E194 and U181 Lines. This ROW is comprised of a mixture of impervious area, maintained upland, and wetland. The surrounding landscape areas are comprised of impervious surfaces (e.g., roadways and parking lots), industrial, commercial, and residential areas, in addition to forest and wetlands. The ROW runs from the Newington Substation off Gosling Road to the Ocean Road Substation on the Greenland/Portsmouth border.

## **Methodology of Wetland Resource Investigations**

The wetland delineation was conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual*, Technical Report Y-87-1 (January 1987), the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region* (January 2012). Locations of wetland boundaries were surveyed using a global positioning system (GPS) unit with sub-meter accuracy.

# **Summary of Jurisdictional Wetland Resource Areas**

The following sections discuss the wetland resource areas identified in the project area and summarize their characteristics.

#### **Vegetated Wetlands**

Multiple wetlands were identified within the E194 and U181 ROW, adjacent to the limits of work. Wetlands identified within the ROW were classified as having the characteristics of both palustrine emergent system with persistent vegetation, and a palustrine scrub-shrub system with broad-leaved deciduous vegetation (PEM1/PSS1).

Common vegetation observed included common reed (*Phragmites australis;* FACW), cattail (*Typha sp.; OBL*), purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria;* OBL), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis;* FACW), curly dock (*Rumex crispus;* FAC), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata;* FACW), willow (*Salix spp.*), glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus;* FAC), red maple (*Acer rubrum;* FAC), common rush (*Juncus effusus;* OBL), reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea;* FACW), white meadowsweet (*Spirea alba;* FACW), red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea;* FACW), speckled

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM Tighe&Bond

alder (*Alnus incana*; FACW), tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*; OBL), brambles (*Rubus spp.*), and goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)

Two streams were identified in association with the delineated wetlands: an unnamed tributary to the Piscataqua River (Newington) and an unnamed tributary to Pickering Brook in Great Bog (Portsmouth). Many of the wetlands within the project area are disturbed from previous ROW work and surrounding development including from commercial, industrial, and residential areas.

#### 100-foot Buffer Zone (Locally Regulated)

The 100-foot Buffer Zone associated with the wetlands identified in the project area consists of a mixture of impervious area (e.g., paved parking lots, roadways), residential, industrial, and commercial areas, as well as forested areas, and maintained ROW. The percentage of Buffer Zone that is developed, including impervious paved areas, is approximately 40 percent. Non-impervious 100-foot Buffer Zone is mainly comprised of maintained shrubby vegetation within the existing ROW and mixed deciduous and coniferous forest on the ROW boundaries.

#### **Functions and Values Assessment**

#### **Gosling Road and Durgin Lane Wetlands**

Wetlands off Gosling Road and Durgin Lane are surrounded by residential and commercial development. They are classified as palustrine emergent and scrub-shrub systems, mostly dominated by common reed, purple loosestrife, and cattail. These wetlands are situated in depressions and flat, low lying areas and are densely vegetated with pockets of standing water. Flood storage, sediment and toxicant retention, and nutrient retention/removal are likely functions of these wetlands. Due to the location of these wetlands in highly developed areas and the dominance of invasive species, they do not provide good aesthetic qualities and are unlikely to provide good wildlife habitat.

#### **Echo Avenue Wetlands**

Echo Avenue wetlands are characterized as palustrine emergent and palustrine scrub-shrub systems. These wetlands are located directly adjacent to commercial and residential development. They are also located approximately 330 feet northeast of Route 4. These wetlands are densely vegetated and some portions are situated in depressions. Functions associated with these areas include flood storage and sediment and toxicant retention. Due to the location of these wetlands in a developed area and the dominance of invasive species, they do not provide good aesthetic qualities and are unlikely to provide good wildlife habitat.

#### **Borthwick Avenue Wetlands**

The wetlands adjacent to Borthwick Avenue are situated in highly disturbed areas. These wetlands are mainly palustrine emergent systems dominated by common reed and cattail. These wetlands are designated as Prime Wetlands pursuant to NH RSA § 482-A:15.

Dense emergent vegetation and organic soils in these wetlands allow for sediment and toxicant retention. Given the proximity of these wetlands to surrounding development and impervious surfaces and their position on the landscape they are likely important in providing flood storage. These wetlands provide little aesthetic qualities as they are dominated by invasive species that obstruct clear views and are surrounded by impervious area and commercial development.

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM Tighe&Bond

#### **Great Bog Wetlands**

The wetlands associated with Great Bog are predominantly palustrine emergent and palustrine scrub-shrub systems. These wetlands are associated with Pickering Brook, which flows northeast to southwest through Great Bog. These wetlands are designated as Prime Wetlands.

Due to the dense vegetation in this wetland and the presence of deep water and organic soils, it likely provides sediment and toxicant retention, as well as nutrient retention and transformation. Additionally, the large size of this wetland complex and its position on the landscape allows for flood storage. Great Bog has historic known occurrences of rare, threatened, and endangered plant species, and has aesthetic qualities and recreational opportunities via adjacent trails. This area likely provides good wildlife habitat as Great Bog is large and relatively unfragmented. The aesthetic quality is partially compromised by the dominance of invasive common reed and purple loosestrife, and the proximity of Great Bog to major roads and highways.

**APPENDIX C** 

## **Photographic Log**



Client: Eversource Energy Job Number: 14-5034-200

E194 & U181 Structure Replacement Project

Site: Portsmouth and Newington, NH

Photograph No.: 1 Date: 1/9/2023 Direction Taken: Northwest

**Description:** Overview of the originally permitted access to Structures 19 on the E194 and U181 Lines (indicated by the arrows). This would have resulted in 6,286 SF of impacts to the pictured wetland.



Photograph No.: 2 Date: 3/18/2024 Direction Taken: Northeast

**Description:** Overview of the as-built gravel access to Structures 19 on the E194 and U181 Lines (red arrow). No direct wetland impacts occurred during construction; rather, 3,685 SF of buffer impacts are requested to be retained under this after-the-fact CUP. A steel gate will be installed to replace the existing boulders.



Photographic Log 1

www.tighebond.com