



Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Water Resources - Wetlands

**WPA Form 1- Request for Determination of Applicability**

Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act M.G.L. c. 131, §40

Municipality

**A. General Information**

**Important:**  
When filling out  
forms on the  
computer, use only  
the tab key to move  
your cursor - do not  
use the return key.



1. Applicant:

Robert

Brisebois

First Name

Last Name

5 Carpenter Street

Address

Amesbury

MA

01913

City/Town

State

Zip Code

207.251.9226

briseboisb@gmail.com

Phone Number

Email Address

2. Property Owner (if different from Applicant):

City of Amesbury

Last Name

First Name

1 Market Street

Address

Amesbury

MA

01913

City/Town

State

Zip Code

971.300.8110

armingtona@amesburyma.gov

Phone Number

Email Address (if known)

3. Representative (if any)

First Name

Last Name

Company Name

Address

City/Town

State

Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address (if known)

**B. Project Description**

1. a. Project Location (use maps and plans to identify the location of the area subject to this request):

Deer Island

Amesbury

Street Address

City/Town

42.83454

70.90622

Latitude (Decimal Degrees Format with 5 digits after decimal

Longitude (Decimal Degrees Format with 5 digits

e.g. XX.XXXXX)

after decimal e.g. XX.XXXXX)

101

9

Assessors' Map Number

Assessors' Lot/Parcel Number

b. Area Description (use additional paper, if necessary):

See Attached

c. Plan and/or Map Reference(s): (use additional paper if necessary)

Deer Island Parking Lot Improvement and Ecological Restoration Project

May 27, 2026

Title

Date

Title

Date

[How to find Latitude  
and Longitude](#)

[and how to convert  
to decimal degrees](#)



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Municipality \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Determinations

1. I request the \_\_\_\_\_ make the following determination(s). Check any that apply:  
Conservation Commission

- ☐ a. whether the **area** depicted on plan(s) and/or map(s) referenced above is an area subject to jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act.
- ☐ b. whether the **boundaries** of resource area(s) depicted on plan(s) and/or map(s) referenced above are accurately delineated.
- ☐ c. whether the **Activities** depicted on plan(s) referenced above is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act and its regulations.
- ☐ d. whether the area and/or Activities depicted on plan(s) referenced above is subject to the jurisdiction of any **municipal wetlands' ordinance or bylaw** of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Municipality

- ☒ e. whether the following **scope of alternatives** is adequate for Activities in the Riverfront Area as depicted on referenced plan(s).
- \_\_\_\_\_

### D. Signatures and Submittal Requirements

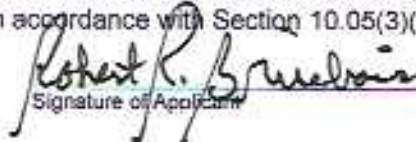
I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the foregoing Request for Determination of Applicability and accompanying plans, documents, and supporting data are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I further certify that the property owner, if different from the applicant, and the appropriate DEP Regional Office were sent a complete copy of this Request (including all appropriate documentation) simultaneously with the submittal of this Request to the Conservation Commission.

Failure by the applicant to send copies in a timely manner may result in dismissal of the Request for Determination of Applicability.

Signatures:

I also understand that notification of this Request will be placed in a local newspaper at my expense in accordance with Section 10.05(3)(b)(1) of the Wetlands Protection Act regulations.

  
Signature of Applicant

May 27, 2026

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Representative (if any)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Description of Deer Island

## Location & Access

- Located in the **Merrimack River** on the border of **Amesbury** and **Newburyport**, Deer Island is a 4.7-acre parcel that is a protected public space.
- **Connectivity:** It is connected to Amesbury via the **Derek S. Hines Memorial Bridge** and to Newburyport via the historic **Chain Bridge**.
- **Parking:** A mid-sized parking lot of 12 spaces is available just off the road for visitors.

## Key Features

- **Natural Landscape:** The island features forested areas, rocky outcroppings, and a small east-facing beach.
- **Public Access:** Approximately half of the island (the eastern portion) is **city-owned conservation land** purchased by the City of Amesbury in 1984.
- **Trails:** A short, easy **loop trail** (roughly 0.25 to 0.5 miles) circumnavigates the forested eastern half, offering multiple river viewing points and access to fishing spots.
- **Private Property:** The western side of the island is home to private residences.

## Activities & Wildlife

- **Birding:** It is a prime location for spotting **Bald Eagles**, especially in winter, as well as other wildlife such as hawks and migratory waterfowl.
- **Recreation:** Common activities include **fishing**, photography, painting, and dog walking (leashes required).
- **Safety Warning:** Visitors are warned of **exceptionally strong currents** in the narrows around the island; swimming is dangerous and not recommended.

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

TO: Amesbury Conservation Commission

FROM: Bob Brisebois, Amesbury Outdoors and Deer Island Planning Group

DATE: May 27, 2026

SUBJECT: Deer Island Parking Lot Improvement and Ecological Restoration Project

## 1. Executive Summary

This proposal outlines necessary infrastructure repairs, accessibility improvements, and ecological restoration at the Deer Island parking lot area. The goal of this project is to stabilize eroded areas, enhance visitor safety, improve access to educational signage, and remove aggressive invasive plant species. All proposed work will be conducted with minimal impact on the surrounding resource areas.

## 2. Statement of Need

Deer Island is a heavily utilized public resource in Amesbury. Over time, environmental weathering and high foot traffic have degraded the parking lot infrastructure and allowed invasive species to compromise the native ecosystem. Addressing these issues now will prevent further shoreline erosion, protect public safety, and ensure compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act by promoting a healthier riparian buffer.

## 3. Scope of Work

### A. Shoreline and Parking Lot Stabilization

- Issue: Severe erosion on the northeast section of the parking lot due to stormwater runoff and river activity.
- Proposed Solution: Install localized riprap or bio-engineered coir logs along the degraded edge to dissipate energy from runoff. Backfill the eroded section with crushed stone and compact the surface to match the existing parking lot grade. Implement temporary erosion control blankets until the upper slope is stabilized.

### B. Guardrail Replacement

- Issue: The existing guardrails are degraded, structurally compromised, and visually unappealing.
- Proposed Solution: Remove and properly dispose of the old guardrails. Install new, durable timber-frame or steel-backed timber guardrails along the parking perimeter to ensure vehicular and pedestrian safety while maintaining a natural aesthetic suitable for the conservation area.

#### 4. Environmental Impact and Mitigation Measures

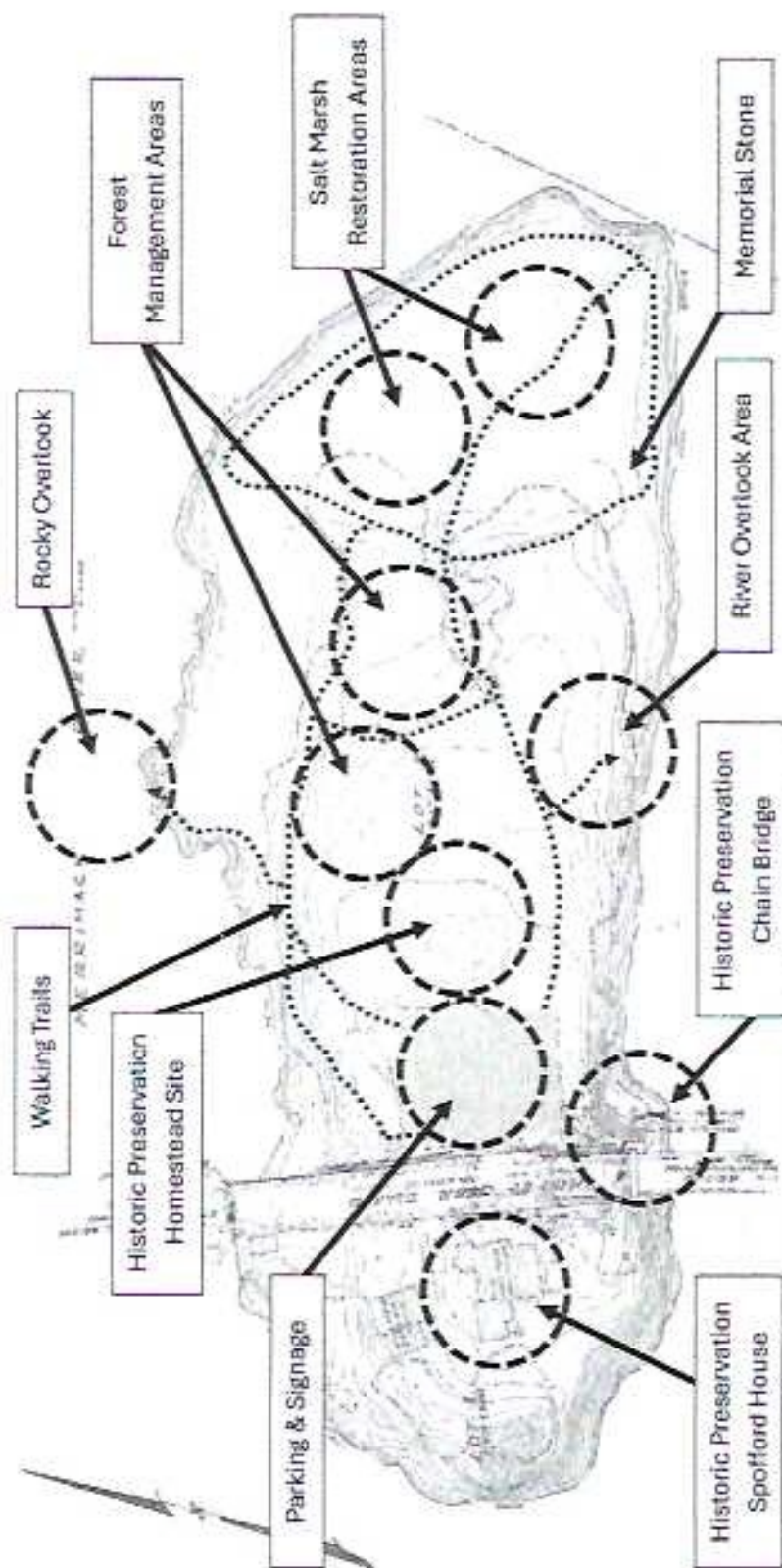
To protect the sensitive habitat of Deer Island, the project will adhere to the following strict environmental controls:

- Sedimentation Control: Silt fences and straw wattles will be installed downslope of all work areas before any earth-moving activities.
- Equipment Use: Heavy machinery will be restricted to the existing gravel parking lot surface to prevent soil compaction in the vegetated buffer zones.
- Timing: Work will be scheduled during dry weather windows to minimize muddy runoff and soil disturbance.

#### 5. Next Steps

We request a hearing with the Amesbury Conservation Commission to review this proposal, determine the appropriate filing pathway (e.g., Notice of Intent or Request for Determination of Applicability), and refine the project timeline based on commission feedback.

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## PROGRAMMING IDEAS

### DEER ISLAND CONSERVATION AREA

#### AMESBURY, MA

10-31-25

