



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

December 19, 2002

Pat Moriarty
Northeast Utilities Service Company
99 Millers Falls Road
Northfield, MA 01360

RE: Connecticut River Stabilization Project, Durkee Upstream and Durkee Downstream Parcels,
Northfield, MHC #RC.26540. EOE A #8162

Dear Mr. Moriarty:

Staff of the Massachusetts Historical Commission have reviewed the modified preliminary management summary for the intensive archaeological survey of the Durkee Upstream and Durkee Downstream parcels in Northfield, prepared by University of Massachusetts Archaeological Services and received at this office December 6, 2002. The following comments address the revised construction plans as presented in the management summary, their potential effects on archaeological resources, and the recommendations in the management summary.

MHC has previously commented on completion memoranda summarizing the results of the intensive archaeological surveys that were conducted for the two parcels. The two Durkee parcels both contained archaeological deposits associated with the Native American settlement of the Connecticut River valley. The Durkee downstream parcel contained a dense deposit of stone flakes, a cache of nineteen large stone bifaces, or unfinished stone tools, pottery, and two ground stone tools. In addition to the cache of bifaces, several concentrations of stone flakes of specific material, one of rhyolite and another of chert, were identified. The high density and wide variety of artifacts, as well as the presence of intact clusters of similar artifacts indicates that the archaeological site within the Durkee Downstream parcel has the potential to contain additional artifacts and features that may provide significant information on the Native American history of the Northfield area. MHC concurred with the recommendation in the completion memorandum that the site be avoided. If avoidance of the site was not possible, MHC requested that an archaeological site examination be conducted for the site.

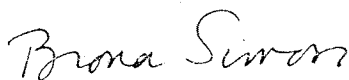
The Durkee Upstream parcel contained a discontinuous, very low-density deposit of stone flakes. No stone tools, ceramics, other artifacts, or archaeological features were encountered at the site. Because of its extremely limited range and low density of archaeological materials, the portion of the Durkee's Landing Ravine Site within the project area was not likely to produce additional information if it were subject to additional archaeological testing. Therefore, MHC concurred with the recommendation in the completion memorandum that no further archaeological investigation was warranted for the Durkee Upstream parcel.

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MHC understands that the proposed treatment of the Durkee downstream parcel has been revised with the goal of avoiding the archaeological site. The location of the proposed temporary equipment access ramp has been relocated so that it will be entirely within an eroded gully that has a low archaeological sensitivity. MHC concurs that implementation of the six formal recommendations listed in the management summary will avoid impacts to the archaeological site at the parcel and no further archaeological investigation will be warranted for the Durkee downstream parcel.

These comments are offered to assist in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR 800), Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 9, Sections 26-27C (950 CMR 71), and MEPA. If you have any questions concerning this review, please feel free to contact Eric Johnson at this office.

Sincerely,



Brona Simon
State Archaeologist
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission

xc: Michael J. Marcus, New England Environmental, Inc.
Crystal Gardner, USACOE-NED-Regulatory
Kate Atwood, USACOE-NED
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Secretary Bob Durand, EOE, Attention Arthur Pugsley, MEPA Office
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Northfield Historical Commission