



## MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

Charlestown Navy Yard  
100 First Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 02129

Telephone: (617) 242-6000  
Facsimile: (617) 241-6070

April 30, 2001

Dear Reviewer:

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and the City of Cambridge are pleased to submit this Notice of Project Change (NPC) for the Alewife Brook CSO Control Project (EOEA # 10335) for public review and comment. MWRA has requested an extended 30-day public review period for this NPC. This review period will begin on May 9, 2001. During this period, written comments should be submitted to:

Bob Durand, Secretary  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Attention: MEPA Office  
EOEA #10335  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114

For reasons outlined below, the MWRA recently completed a re-evaluation of the original CSO control plan for Alewife Brook. This NPC describes the proposed revised recommended plan. While the level of CSO control for the revised plan is comparable to the original plan and the plan remains essentially one of targeted sewer separation, certain elements of the original plan, including areas slated for separation, have been modified, resulting in a change in expected impacts and mitigation measures. Notably, sewer separation associated with the CAM004 outfall will require construction of a new stormwater outfall to convey flows to a new wetland detention basin proposed within the Alewife Reservation. This component was not in the original recommended plan and introduces an additional aspect to the scope of work that is substantially different from the typical pipe installation work in streets associated with the sewer separation activities.

The original recommended plan for Alewife Brook CSO control consisted of sewer separation projects in targeted areas of Cambridge. In compliance with the federal court schedule, design began in January 1997. During the course of field investigations to support design efforts, the City of Cambridge identified several unforeseen conditions in the sanitary and drainage systems. In light of these changed conditions, the estimates of annual CSO volume and activation frequency increased significantly and the projected costs of the project increased nearly six-fold, from \$12 million to approximately \$74 million. It was clear that a re-evaluation of CSO control alternatives was necessary to ensure that the proper technology was selected to provide an appropriate, cost-effective level of CSO control for Alewife Brook.

In accordance with federal and state CSO policies, MWRA conducted assessments of feasible CSO control alternatives using the updated system information. The re-evaluation concluded that targeted sewer separation remained the most cost-effective control technology and that higher levels of CSO control would not yield significant water quality benefits despite a significantly higher cost.

In parallel with the MWRA's assessment of CSO control alternatives, the City of Cambridge conducted a detailed evaluation of alternatives for the stormwater management issues associated with the CAM004 sewer separation. This evaluation included assessing alternatives for alignment of the proposed new stormwater outfall and siting options and other considerations for stormwater retention/detention to attenuate the flows to the Little River/Alewife Brook. These evaluations concluded that the proposed new stormwater outfall and wetland detention basin were the optimal alternative for conveyance, attenuation and treatment of the separate stormwater.

This NPC describes the regulatory framework for CSO control in Alewife Brook, presents the re-evaluation of CSO control alternatives and the reasons for selecting the revised recommended plan. It also identifies the environmental and community impacts associated with the revised plan, notably those related to the new stormwater outfall and wetland detention basin, and discusses mitigation measures. In order to be responsive to public concerns about the project, MWRA and the City of Cambridge conducted an extensive public participation plan during the preparation of this NPC, which is also described in the document.

MWRA and the City of Cambridge will conduct a public workshop during the comment period. **The workshop will be held on Thursday, May 24, 2001 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Tobin School, 197 Vassal Lane, Cambridge.**

Once you have had an opportunity to review this document and attend the public workshop, we encourage you to submit written comments to the above-referenced address within the 30-day review period. MWRA and the City of Cambridge appreciate your interest in the CSO control plan and your review of this document. We look forward to your comments and your continued participation.

Stephanie Moura - MWRA  
Project Manager, CSO