

**To:** John Hession, BSC Group, Inc. **Date:** October 19, 2020  
**From:** Gillian Davies and Susan McArthur, BSC Group, Inc. **Proj. No.** 23407.00  
**Re:** Wetland Delineation, Thorndike Place, Arlington, MA

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## INTRODUCTION

On January 15 and on October 15 2020, BSC Group, Inc. (BSC) conducted a field delineation of wetland resource areas regulated under the *Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA)* and associated *regulations (310 CMR 10.00 et al)* and the *Town of Arlington Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Article 8) (Bylaw)* and associated *regulations (Sections 1 through 34)* dated June 4, 2015, at the Thorndike Place/Mugar Property located off of Dorothy and Parker Roads. This primarily forested property is located between Route 2, a single-family residential neighborhood, and a local park. Site topography is relatively flat. Trash piles and debris, as well as a homeless encampment occur on the property.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE AREA MAPPING

BSC reviewed existing mapping of environmental resources for the project site. The majority of the property is located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain and part of the site appears to be located within the floodway associated with the Little River (a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) may be needed), as indicated on the attached Environmental Resources Map. NRCS soils maps (Web Soil Survey) indicate that Udorthents, wet substratum, Urban land, wet substratum, and Swansea muck occur on the site. According to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and the MassGIS data layer for the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas, no areas of Estimated or Priority Habitat for Rare Wildlife or Certified or Potential Vernal Pools exist on the project site. BSC also reviewed the USGS topographic map.

## WETLAND RESOURCE AREA FIELD DELINEATION

In addition to reviewing relevant resource area mapping for the project site, BSC conducted an initial wetland field delineation on January 15, 2020. This wetland delineation was conducted in accordance with the MA *WPA regulations*, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection handbook on *Delineating Bordering Vegetated Wetlands Under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act* (March 1995), the *Bylaw regulations*, the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region (Version 2.0)* (January 2012), and the *Field Indicators for Identifying Hydric Soils in New England* (May, 2018). BSC evaluated onsite vegetation to determine areas where 50% or more of the vegetation qualify as wetland species according to the above-mentioned regulatory documents and according to wetland indicator status as described in the *State of Massachusetts 2016 Wetland Plant List* ([http://wetland-plants.usace.army.mil/nwpl\\_static/data/DOC/lists\\_2016/States/pdf/MA\\_2016v1.pdf](http://wetland-plants.usace.army.mil/nwpl_static/data/DOC/lists_2016/States/pdf/MA_2016v1.pdf)). In accordance with the above-mentioned soils guidance documents, BSC examined soils to determine where hydric soils occur, by auguring or digging a soil pit to evaluate the top 20 inches of soil for soil texture, color, horizon thickness and depth, and presence/absence of redoximorphic features. BSC also observed the site for evidence of wetland hydrology. Due to winter conditions (lack of growing season hydrology, lack of full suite of vegetation) a decision was made to re-evaluate the wetlands at the site during the growing season. Following the same methodology, the wetland delineation was re-evaluated on October 15, 2020 and a few of the wetland flags were readjusted to accommodate growing season conditions. Wetland flags C-10, C-15 through C-17, C-17A, were moved upgradient to include a pocket of spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), and green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*). In addition, wetland flag D-10 was removed and the wetland line was revised to connect D-9 to D-11 based on the presence of cinnamon fern and hydric soils. Wetland data sheets were also prepared (attached).

BSC marked the boundaries of four Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) areas (Series A, B, C and D) with sequentially numbered pink surveyor's tape. Additionally, BSC reviewed conditions at two potential Isolated Vegetated Wetlands (IVW) (H and I Series) that had been identified and flagged during a previous delineation on the site. Two

other IVWs (F and G Series) had also been identified during the previous wetland delineation. BSC did not observe a predominance of wetland vegetation in the previously identified IVW areas on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The data plots performed on October 15, 2020 confirm this finding (attached). One isolated area just west of the previously flagged isolated Wetland I on the north side of the property did demonstrate hydric soils (0 – 14” 10YR 2/2, then 14 – 20 10YR 4/3 with high chroma redox and loamy sand texture), but was vegetated with predominantly upland species (multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), and garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolate*)).

Overall, BVW boundaries flagged on January 15, 2020 and readjusted on October 15, 2020 are similar to the boundaries flagged when wetlands were delineated previously in 2009. In some areas, the 2009 delineation extends upgradient of the BSC delineation, and in some areas the BSC delineation extends upgradient of the 2009 delineation. As the BSC delineation is the most recent, and wetland conditions can shift over time, BSC is of the opinion that this most recent delineation most accurately reflects conditions as they exist in the present .

BVW Series A and D are predominantly forested areas. BVW Series B is primarily forested with an area of herbaceous cover (predominantly common reed [*Phragmites australis*]), and BVW Series C is largely herbaceous common reed, with some forested area. Throughout the site, wetlands include the following tree species: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), American elm (*Ulmus Americana*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), ash (*Fraxinus sp.*), American Sycamore (*Plantanus occidentalis*), and black willow (*Salix nigra*). Shrub and sapling species include silky dogwood (*Swida amomum*), and box elder saplings. Herbaceous species include common reed, cinnamon fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), and goldenrod (*Solidago sp.*), and vines include poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), bittersweet (*Celastrus sp.*), greenbriar (*Smilax sp.*) and wild grape (*Vitis sp.*). In upland locations, tree species include red oak (*Quercus rubra*), white pine, cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), box elder, and red maple. Shrubs and saplings include white pine, barberry (*Berberis sp.*), brambles (*Rubus sp.*), and multiflora rose. Herbaceous species include upland grasses and goldenrod (*Solidago sp.*), and vines include bittersweet, wild grape, and greenbriar, and poison ivy.

## REGULATORY REVIEW

The project site contains state and locally regulated BVW and associated 100-foot buffer zones. BSC notes that the local *Bylaw regulations* identify the 100-foot buffer zone as a regulated resource area, the Adjacent Upland Resource Area (AURA). Further, the *Bylaw regulations* establish a 25-foot “No-Disturbance Zone” where no activities or work is permitted. The *Bylaw regulations* also establish a 75-foot “Restricted Zone” where impacts should be avoided and reasonable alternatives pursued.

The Bylaw regulations define Land Subject to Flooding (LSTF), as noted in *Bylaw Section 4.B. Definition number 35* and *Section 23*. Section 23 specifies that, “Compensatory flood storage shall be at a 2:1 ratio, minimum, for each unit volume of flood storage lost at each elevation.

## SUMMARY

BSC has conducted a wetland delineation at the Thorndike Place/Mugar Property that is similar in extent to the previous delineation conducted in 2009. BSC notes that the site is largely within floodplain or floodway.

**cc:** Marleigh Sullivan, BSC Group, Inc.  
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