



September 13, 2021

Maria McFarland
Board Administrator
West Tisbury Conservation Commission
1059 State Road
West Tisbury, MA 02575

concomm@westtisbury-ma.gov
VIA EMAIL ONLY
508-696-6404

**RE: Buffer Zone Restoration
Required by Enforcement Order
21 New Lane
West Tisbury**

Dear Ms. McFarland and Members of the Commission:

As discussed at the public meeting held by the West Tisbury Conservation Commission (WTCC) on August 24, 2021, Oxbow Associates, inc. (OA, specifically S. Smyers) represented the Owners (Doanes) and explained the existing conditions and provided a professional opinion on the general concept of the restoration. Subsequent to the meeting, the Commission issued an Enforcement Order and this report provides the details associated with a proposed restoration and monitoring plan.

Resource Area Characteristics

OA (S. Smyers) conducted a site inspection, wetland delineation, and impact assessment on July 14, 2021 and delineated the Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW: 310 CMR 10.55) using blue plastic flags OA A-1 through OA A-4 based on vegetation, indicators of surface water, soil profile characteristics, and topography. There is an abrupt slope along the eastern shore Tia's Cove of Tisbury Great Pond.

OA conducted the wetland delineation in accordance with standard methodology for delineating vegetated wetlands under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA: MGL Ch. 131, §40) and the West Tisbury Bylaw and Regulations. OA examined soil profiles as well as both herbaceous and woody vegetation within and adjacent to the cut area (2,365 square feet). Vegetation along the edge of the wetland and the adjacent buffer zone includes white oak (*Quercus alba*), black oak (*Q. velutina*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), beech (*Fagus americana*), cherry (*Prunus* sp.), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*), azalea (*Rhododendron* sp.), greenbrier (*Smilax* sp.), poison ivy (*Toxicodndron* sp.), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pennsylvanica*), and red top (*Agrostis alba*).

According to the US Natural Resources Conservation Service, soils throughout the area are mapped as Carver, a stony, well-drained sandy till. According to the most current Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program 2021 MassGIS data layers, the site is within Priority Habitat for Rare Wildlife and the NHESP has been notified.

Impact Assessment

OA examined the area where woody vegetation was mowed to stubble is approximately and noticed some subtle indications of land use history. For example, the Pennsylvania sedge stops abruptly along portions of the eastern edge of the area OA delineated with flags and GPS points (2,365 square feet). Pennsylvania sedge is a native groundcover that persists in fields and openings in forests. However, the impact area demarcated by OA extends beyond this historic landscape use indicator (the old clearing has different groundcover vegetation).

There are five trees within the cleared area that remain (two white oaks, two black oaks, one beech). Although some unauthorized tree trimming occurred on some of these trees, they appear healthy. Another two trees (white oak, red oak) are along the southwestern edge of the cleared area. OA was not able to review cut vegetation except for one red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) that had been cut and tossed into the woods. However, based on our evaluation of stem characteristics and sprouted leaves, OA believes the vegetation cleared was similar to what is found in the adjacent, uncut areas: cherry (4-, 2-, and 1.5-inch stumps), oak (2- and 3-inch), red cedar (2-inch), highbush blueberry, arrowwood, sweet pepperbush, azalea, greenbrier, and poison ivy.

Proposed Restoration

The owner proposes to restore all portions of cut area to prevent it from being taken over by poison ivy and greenbrier and restore its ecological function. First, the work area will be isolated and demarcated with an erosion control filter mitt along the wetland edge (approximately 25 feet long where it is closest to the water) and an orange construction fence along the upland edge.

If approved in time, the poison ivy can be treated with a triclopyr-based herbicide in late 2021 (by a licensed herbicide applicator). Next this area will be planted with 6 trees (1-inch diameter/6-8 feet high including 3 cherries, 2 oaks, and 1 beech) and 32 shrubs of native stock to be at least 18 to 24 inches in height and/or in at least one-gallon containers. The trees and shrubs shall be spaced out by a qualified wetland scientist. Trees will be spaced out around existing trees to minimize crowding but provide space for growth. Shrubs will be planted in clumps of 1-3, 4-7 feet on-center, but avoid resprouting native species.

Depending on availability, we may use fewer specimens (but approved by the Conservation Administrator) if we can purchase shrubs in three-gallon containers (24-34 inches high). Species will include a mix of sweet pepperbush, arrowwood, highbush blueberry, and an azalea. All specimens will be native, non-cultivar, and inspected by a qualified wetland scientist prior to installation. Approximately 1-2 gallons of clean topsoil will be added to the hole of each shrub and after planting, all specimens shall be watered. Any patches of disturbed soil within the Restoration Area will be seeded with a native seed mix such as New England Wetland Plants' *Conservation & Wildlife Seed Mix* (or similar native mix depending upon availability) to be applied at the suggested rate for the product. Any substitution of native specimens will be submitted to the WTCC for approval. OA does not believe an erosion will be likely to result from the restoration work because all work will be done by hand with shovels and rakes.

Monitoring

After the work is complete, OA will provide a summary report to the WCC within 10 business days. Monitoring reports will be provided for two growing season (one report per season by October 31) and will include the condition of the planted specimens, dominant groundcover species, invasive or nuisance species, and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Smyers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Scott Smyers
Senior Scientist, Vice President
MS PWS

cc: The Doanes
MA Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program