

July 2022



Hi Folks,

I hope your summer is going well. Here at DER we are excited to see some projects crossing the finish line and looking forward to an exciting year ahead. Three of the culvert replacement projects DER supported last year were finishing up construction as of a few weeks ago. We look forward to seeing more do the same this year. We expect to see the culvert replacement training site in Ashfield go to construction later this summer and hope to organize a municipal training event around that. Keep an eye out for more information on that soon.

We have also recently welcomed a new team member, Holden Sparacino, who will be managing the Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance (CRMA) grant program. Many of you will get to know him soon if you haven't already. On a related note, the CRMA grant awards for this fiscal year (July 2022 - June 2023) were recently announced and work will begin on those projects very soon.

Please see below for more details on all of these items.

Take care

Brian Kelder
Stream Crossing Specialist

DER Announces Culvert Grant Awards



The Baker-Polito Administration [announced awards](#) totaling \$4.6 million to strengthen community preparedness for large storms, improve climate-ready infrastructure, protect fisheries, wildlife, and river habitats to support the Division's ecological restoration work throughout Massachusetts. This included \$1.8 million to 13 municipalities through DER's [Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grants Program](#) to improve river health and municipal roads through culvert replacement projects in communities across the Commonwealth. These awards include 2 additional culvert replacements going to construction with the rest in earlier phases of planning, design and permitting.

DER's Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program helps municipalities replace undersized and deteriorating culverts with crossings that meet improved design standards for fish and wildlife passage, river health, and storm resiliency.

Culvert Upgrades Under Construction

As the fiscal year came to a close in June, three culvert upgrades that were partially funded by DER were at or near the end of construction. These projects in Leyden, Windsor and Topsfield each replaced undersized, aging culverts with structures that are designed to meet the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards. These new crossings will allow the free movement of fish and wildlife while providing long-lasting, low maintenance structures that are more resilient to the hazards of climate change.



Pictured above from left to right: (1) Coates Road, Leyden - New abutments in place while the old culvert is being used for water control. The bridge in the background is a temporary bridge to allow access for homeowners. (2) River Road, Windsor - Pictured one of three recent culvert replacements along River Road. DER provided CRMA funding to support two of the replacements. (3) Pond Street, Topsfield - Completed replacement structure. Among other benefits, this open bottom culvert will improve access to the upstream natural pond that was a historically important spawning area for River Herring.

DER Welcomes New CRMA Grants Manager



We are happy to share that Holden Sparacino recently joined our Stream Continuity team as our Ecological Restoration Grants Manager. He will be managing the CRMA grant program going forward.

Prior to joining DER, Holden managed grant programs supporting Vermont's Conservation Districts to identify, design, and implement a variety of water quality projects. He also has background in research, grant writing, and coordinating community-based water quality monitoring groups through previous positions. He is excited to join DER's Stream Continuity program and use his experience towards the successful ecological restoration of stream crossings throughout the Commonwealth.

DER anticipates adding several new staff members to our team in the coming months. If you or someone you know is qualified and interested in working with us, keep an eye on our [DER is Hiring! webpage](#).

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