

Environmental Stewardship

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Common Environmental Issues

- Fish, wildlife and habitat protection
- Bird and bat avoidance
- Water quality protection
- Pier and abutment work - in water and along bed and banks
- In-water work period restrictions
- Paint, waste and debris management
- Vegetation management
- Archaeology Sites
- Repairs to historic structures

Addressing Environmental Issues in the Field

- Proper planning prior to field work
 - Should be several months in advance for activities below Ordinary High Water Line (OHWL)
- Consult an Environmental Specialist (REC)
- Use Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality and habitat protection
- Project permits- (if needed)
 - Were they issued yet?
 - What do they cover?
 - What are the conditions?
 - Do I understand them?

The Blue Book

ODOT's Routine Road Maintenance Water Quality and Habitat Guide

- Started in 1999. The 2014 version is the 4th iteration. Updated every 5 years.
- An avenue for ODOT to gain protections against ESA take prohibition through performance of routine highway maintenance activities.
- Only covers non-federal actions (funding source, permits, land ownership).
- Covers ODOT Maintenance employees, their contractors and municipal partners (as long as ODOT staff are involved) when the BMPs are followed.

Which parts of the Blue Book applies to local agencies?

All.....and none!

- While implementation of the Blue Book BMPs are good practice and sound environmental stewardship, Endangered Species Act protections provided are not extended to outside agencies by simply using these BMPs.
- ODOT navigated a multi-year negotiation and approval process to secure this ESA section 4(f) exemption from take.
- A handful of other agencies have followed suit.

Blue Book BMPs

Drift Removal

- In-water work period, unless imminent danger to structure (ask REC if unsure)
- Priorities for removal
 1. Turn and float
 2. Remove to adjacent riparian area
 3. Cut and float
- Stabilize removed material above OHWL, haul away if no other options
- Repair damaged riparian areas, discuss long-term access options or embedded drift with REC

Drift Removal



Drift Removal



Drift Removal



“Drift” Removal



Blue Book BMPs

Bridge Cleaning

- Washing should occur during higher flow periods
- Remove debris to minimize material entering waterway
- Containment/disposal measures for paint, treated wood, feces
- Temporarily block drains where feasible
- Avoid conflicts with nesting birds, roosting bats
- Mimic natural stream conditions, don't inadvertently create a fish passage barrier
- Repair fish passage aids (weirs, baffles)

Blue Book BMPs

Water Withdrawals and Use

- Use non-chlorinated water when feasible
- Review Regional Water Withdrawal Authorizations (local watermaster)
- De-chlorinate municipal sourced water by leaving open overnight or using non-toxic dechlorinating agent
- Screen pump intakes in streams (Appendix D)

Blue Book BMPs

Bridge Repair

- Coordinate with the REC!
- Check Archy list (or have REC check), stop work if artifacts discovered during excavation (including old cans or old “garbage”)
- Repair stream channel disturbance to mimic natural conditions
- Repair fish passage aids
- Consider bio-engineered solutions to scour protection, where feasible

Blue Book BMPs

Bridge Repair (Cont.)

- Incorporate fish passage solutions/enhancements, where feasible
- Remove and dispose of materials properly, including ESC measures
- Keep “green” concrete out of the water
- Provide suitable located concrete clean-out
- Use cofferdams for in-water structural repairs
- Contain chips/sawdust from treated wood cuts
- Review treated wood guidelines (Appendix H)

Blue Book BMPs

Bridge Repair (Cont.)

- Avoid disturbing nesting birds (call REC in emergency)
- Avoid disturbing bats (Call REC for guidance)
- Install floating absorbent boom when cutting treated pile
- Coordinate with REC on noise reduction measures for pile driving contracts (can provide bubble curtain specifications)
- Use a non-toxic and foam to test and seal voids before filling with grout/concrete
- Contact the REC for an “accidents”

Blue Book BMPs

Vegetation

- Cut brush within 20 feet of, and under, structure for access and repair
- Do not grub, unless noxious weeds
- Leave cuttings on-site where feasible
- Replant two seedlings within nearby riparian zone for every tree greater than 12-inch dbh removed
- Coordinate with REC and/or Forester on species, location, etc.
- Review the MBTA Directive

Questions/Discussion