



EVERSOURCE ENERGY, EASTERN MA
FIVE YEAR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR
CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS
2023-2027



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Goals and Objectives | 2 |
| 3. Identification of Incompatible Vegetation | 3 |
| 4. Integrated Vegetation Management | 6 |
| 5. Mechanical Controls | 9 |
| 6. Chemical Controls | 13 |
| 7. Definition, Identification and Treatment of Sensitive Areas | 20 |
| 8. Operational Guidelines for Applicators relative to Herbicide Use | 26 |
| 9. Alternative Land Uses | 29 |
| 10. Remedial Spill and Emergency Plan | 30 |
| 11. Identification and Qualification of Individual Developing and Submitting the Plan | 34 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Wire Zone-Border Zone Approach | 4 |
|-----------------------------------|---|

TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Herbicide Manufacturers | 31 |
| 2. State Agencies | 31 |
| 3. Emergency Services | 32 |
| 4. Local Emergency Numbers Table Format | 32 |
| 5. Herbicide Spill Check List | 33 |

APPENDICES

| |
|-----------------------------|
| 1. Electric System Maps |
| 2. List of Municipalities |
| 3. 333 CMR 11.00 |
| 4. Chapter 132B |
| 5. Sensitive Area Table |
| 6. Preface to 310 CMR 10.00 |
| 7. Wetlands Study |
| 8. Chapter 85, Section 10 |
| 9. References |

1. INTRODUCTION

Eversource Energy, Eastern MA (Eversource) hereby submits this Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) in compliance with 333 CMR 11.00, *Rights of Way Management* regulations (Appendix 3).¹

Eversource Energy, Eastern MA delivers electricity to approximately 1.1 million electric customers in 81 municipalities and has the responsibility to manage vegetation on company electric rights-of-way (ROW) and to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of electric power to its customers. Electricity is transmitted over 303 miles of electric transmission ROW, voltages 115kV, 230kV & 345kV and 92 miles of electric distribution ROW, voltages 4kV to 25kV throughout the central, eastern, and southeastern, Massachusetts area (Appendices 1 & 2).

Eversource is responsible for maintaining its ROW free from hazards and encroachments. Vegetation can interfere with electric service causing interruptions by growing into the area around the conductors, falling into the conductors or blowing together. Vegetation can inhibit access for maintenance and inspection. Vegetation that comes in contact with conductors can ignite wildfires. Downed wires can be a safety risk to workers attempting to clear vegetation or others that come upon an incident and are close enough to come in contact with electricity. The Eversource vegetation management program provides for the necessary safety, system reliability, access to facilities, regulatory compliance, and security following utility vegetation management industry best management practices.²

¹A partial list of the regulations that Eversource must comply with that relate to the activities in this document also include: Chapter 132 B, Pesticide Control Act (Appendix 4); all pertinent clauses in Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000 (Appendix 8); MESA; MGL c.131, Massachusetts Endangered Species Act and its regulations, 321 CMR 10.00, Massachusetts Endangered Species Regulations; 310 CMR 10.00, *Wetlands Protection Regulations*; 310 CMR 22.00, Drinking Water regulations; Chapter 216, *An Act Relative to the Emergency Service Response of Public Utility Companies*; *NERC Standard FAC-003-1, Commissioner Order 69*, and all applicable Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act, Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Protection regulations.

² Miller, R.H. 2012. *Best Management Practices: Integrated Vegetation Management*. Society of Arboriculture, Champaign, IL. Galen Guerrero-Murphy, Tim Follensbee II, and Jeff Disorda 2015. *Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Protection of Threatened and Endangered Species during Integrated Vegetation Management and Operations and Maintenance of Electric Transmission Lines in Vermont*. Environmental Concerns in Rights-of-Way Management, 11th International Symposium, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Eversource's program applies an Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) approach to controlling vegetation on its rights-of-way. IVM uses a combination of maintenance techniques that include mechanical, herbicide and cultural control. Herbicide maintenance application techniques are at the lowest effective labeled rate and are timed for maximum effect. The IVM based program encourages low growing plant communities that allows for the safe delivery of reliable electric service while minimizing the impact on property owners and supports a more diverse habitat for wildlife that depends upon early successional landscapes.

2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Eversource is responsible to manage the property under its electric powerlines to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of electric power to its customers. To achieve this goal, Eversource has prepared this VMP to describe its' practices and procedures for managing vegetation that is undesirable, presents a safety hazard, or is otherwise unsuitable to the intended use of the ROW.

This section serves to communicate objectives that will be accomplished through the VMP, Yearly Operational Plans (YOPs) and notification processes required by 333 CMR 11.00.

The following are objectives of Eversource's vegetation management program:

- To maintain ROW that ensures the safe and dependable delivery of electricity.
- To manage vegetation that impedes ground and aerial inspections or interferes with the ability to access the ROW and structures for maintenance or emergencies.
- To encourage stable early successional ecological communities of primarily low growing plant communities in order to allow access for maintenance and inspections and ultimately reduce the amount of herbicide over time.
- To remove or manage incompatible vegetation on the ROW, along access roads, around structures, gates, and the perimeter of electric substations.
- To control invasive and poisonous plant species.
- To ensure that all vegetation management operations are conducted in a safe, effective manner and in conformity with all federal and state laws, regulations, and permit conditions.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF INCOMPATIBLE VEGETATION

The intent set forth in Eversource’s VMP, is all vegetation that obscure the ROW corridors and grow tall enough to interfere with the safe, efficient, and legal operation of an electrical power line is considered “incompatible” with the intended use of the ROW and therefore will be removed.

The type of maintenance methods will be dictated by Eversource. The management of vegetation within the established cleared limits of the ROW may be performed in one of two ways, a two-zone management approach or a one-zone approach. The method designated is based on the transmission facilities, number of facilities (lines) within ROW, width of maintained cleared limit or easement, topography, and plant community. Each ROW shall be designated as one or two-zone maintenance by the Eversource Arborist.

1. Two-Zone Maintenance. Management of vegetation within ROW clearing limits shall be performed in accordance with the two-zone maintenance concept for designated transmission ROWs. A wire and a border zone shall be developed and maintained in accordance with these specifications (Illustration 1, Diagram 1).

Wire Zone: The wire zone shall include the area directly beneath the overhead conductors extending outward a distance from the outermost conductor(s) based on voltage:

| <u>Voltage Class</u> | <u>Wire Zone</u> |
|----------------------|------------------|
| <230kV | 25 feet |
| >=230kV | 35 feet |

Border Zone: The border zones shall include all areas from the Wire Zone limit to the edge of the maintained width of the ROW.

2. One-Zone Maintenance Management of vegetation within ROW boundaries shall be performed for ROWs designated by Eversource as one-zone. The entire maintained width of the ROW is managed as a wire zone (Illustration 1, Diagram 2).

Illustration 1: One-Zone or Two-Zone Maintenance, and Wire Zone-Border Zone Approach.

Diagram 1

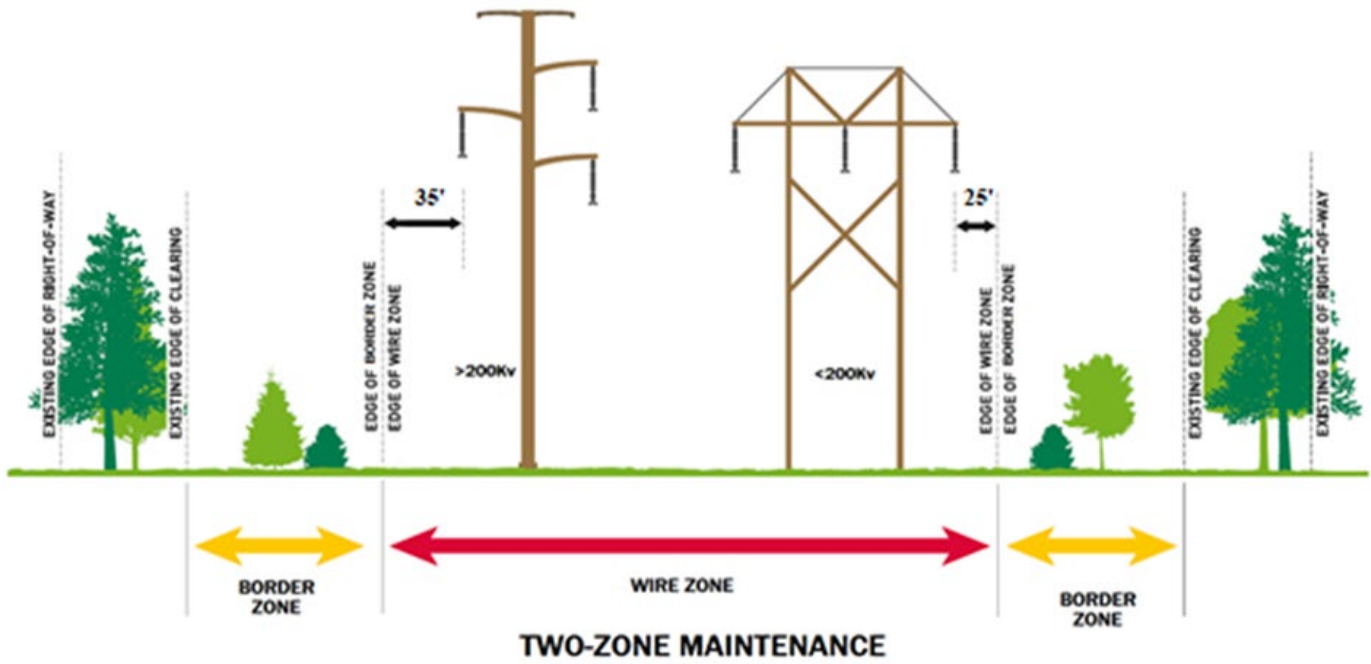
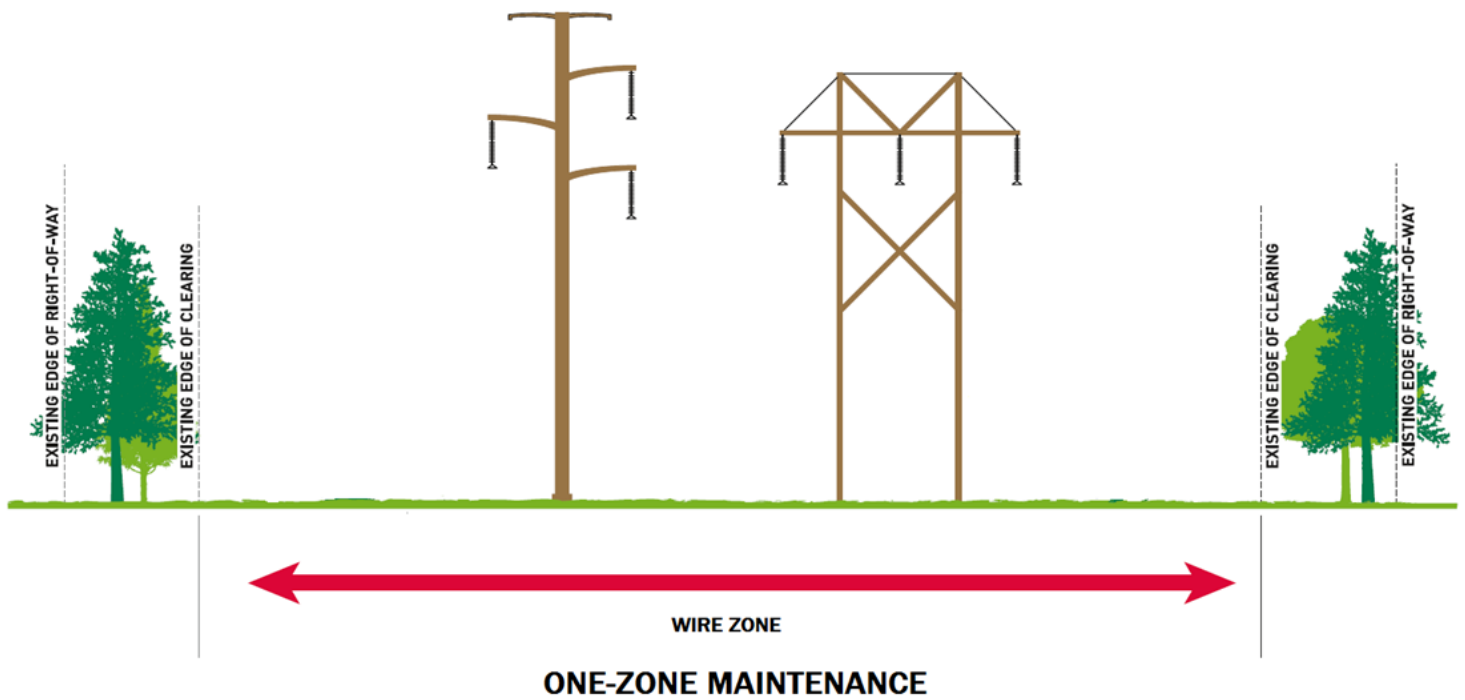


Diagram 2



Examples of incompatible tree species include, but are not limited to:

| | | |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| Alder | Cherry | Pine |
| Aspen | Hemlock | Maple |
| Beech | Hickory | Oak |
| Birch | Locust | Sassafras |

Compatible plant species are generally encouraged on the ROW. Most herbaceous growth is acceptable and encouraged. Small trees and shrubs that mature less than 25 feet in height (Border Zone) are not usually incompatible *unless* due to their location or attributes they interfere with the function of the ROW.

Some lower growing vegetation may be deemed incompatible because of their location and/or their nature. Dense woody vegetation, shrubs and vines are incompatible where they are capable of interfering with the inspection and maintenance of the poles, wires, access roads, paths, and gates, all of which need to be kept clear, especially for emergencies.

INVASIVE, POISONOUS PLANTS AND NUISANCE PLANT SPECIES

Eversource intends to selectively manage invasive, poisonous and nuisance plant species with herbicide spot treatment and mechanical methods within the ROW. These categories of plants are as defined below.

Nuisance Vegetation

Nuisance vegetation is plant species that pose a risk to the safety and health of individuals working on or traversing a ROW and it can impede a rapid response in an emergency. These species have heavy thorns, dense foliage and/or impenetrable stems. Examples include blackberries, raspberries, grapevines, greenbrier, and many invasive plant species.

Poisonous Plants

Examples of poisonous plants are poison ivy and poison oak. This poses a health hazard to Eversource personnel, contractors and the public-at-large; therefore, the company plans to use herbicides to spot treat poisonous plants at sites identified as having a risk of posing a health hazard.

Invasive Plant Species

Invasive plant species are a significant concern throughout Massachusetts in areas that include ROW corridors where they can spread rapidly. Many of these non-native plant species were planted for their showy flowers, vigorous growth, erosion control and abundant fruits that attract wildlife. According to the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group, "invasive plants" are non-native species that have spread into native or minimally managed plant systems in Massachusetts.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/invasive-plants>

These plants cause economic or environmental harm by developing self-sustaining populations and becoming dominant and/or disruptive to those systems. Eversource's program considers the management of invasive plants in specific locations.

To ensure the accurate identification of vegetation, all vegetation management contractors are required to supply personnel trained to recognize plant species typically found growing on utility sites and to recognize the difference between compatible and incompatible vegetation. This training includes how to identify early successional communities that are preferred on electric ROW.

4. INTEGRATED VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

333 CMR 11.01(1) requires that all right-of-way managers "Ensure that an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to vegetation management is utilized on all rights-of-way covered by 333 CMR 11.00.". The purpose of this VMP is to advance the consistent and safe operation of Eversource's ROW using the appropriate industry standard IVM program. Eversource's IVM program will use mechanical, chemical, and cultural control methods. Mechanical and chemical control methods are used to facilitate development of a low-growing plant community. These methods of converting to and sustaining a low growing plant community is referred to herein as "cultural control".

Eversource's IVM program takes into consideration all factors involved in the maintenance and operation of electric ROW that includes:

- Conditions existing on its ROW such as topography and hydrology.
- The most current treatment methods.
- The intent to prevent unreasonable adverse effects to the environment and the safety and health of non-target organisms.
- Cost-effectiveness of the treatment both for Eversource and their customers, including the need to deliver energy products safely and economically.
- Monitor the result of treatments to compare actual conditions to desired future conditions to improve the system.³

There is no single definition of IVM that suits every situation and every entity. According to the United State Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pesticide Programs:

“Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) is generally defined as the practice of promoting desirable, stable, low-growing plant communities - that will resist invasion by tall growing tree species-through the use of appropriate, environmentally sound, and cost-effective control methods. These methods can include a combination of chemical, biological, cultural, mechanical, and/or manual treatments. The IVM approach strives to manage vegetation and the environment by balancing the benefits of: Cost, Control, Environmental quality, Public health, and Regulatory compliance.”

[Integrated Vegetation Management Fact Sheet \(October, 2008\) \(epa.gov\)](#)

Eversource's IVM program follows a combination of mechanical (mechanical—handheld and large equipment—methods) treatment typically every four years and herbicide (chemical methods) applications the year thereafter that support the ability to convert to a low growing plant community (cultural method).

Plant life is governed by the relatively predictable process of change in composition or structure of ecological succession. Succession strives towards the mature (climax) forest but may be interrupted by natural or man-made disturbances both intentionally and accidentally. IVM programs are an intentional man-made disturbance that encourage early successional communities. This is achieved by discouraging the

³Christopher A. Nowak & Benjamin D Ballard. “A Framework for Applying Integrated Vegetation Management on Rights-of-Way.” *Journal of Arboriculture* 31(1) (January 2005): 28-37.

establishment of and when necessary, removing certain types of vegetation.

Eversource's approach reduces the amount of herbicide used by using selective herbicides/application techniques at the lowest effective label rate, timing applications for maximum effect, avoiding fixed application schedules, using mechanical control techniques where appropriate, and encouraging low growing plant communities.

Mechanical and chemical controls are the direct techniques used to target incompatible vegetation and include mowing, hand-cutting, side pruning, tree removals and herbicide applications. Utilizing these techniques allows lower growing plants the opportunity to form sustainable ecological communities. Regeneration of low growing native plants is an important part to our utility IVM program as it helps to stabilize the floor of the ROW with plants that are compatible with electrical conductors and allows access. Once achieved, early succession plant communities require less management thereby reducing future chemical use and disturbance caused by mechanical methods. There is over seventy years' worth of evidence in New England showing that this approach has, over time, significantly reduced the per- acre application rate of herbicides on utility ROW and reduced the need for intensive mechanical controls.⁵ Following this approach the company has over time, reduced the amount of herbicide used per acre. Under a mechanical program only our rights-of-way were once dominated by high stem densities of incompatible tree species.

⁵Environmental Consultants, Inc. "Study of the Impact of Vegetation Management Techniques on Wetlands for Utility Rights of Way in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." Prepared for New England Electric et.al, 1989; Environmental Consultants, Inc. "Determination of the Effectiveness of Herbicide Buffer Zones in Protecting Water Quality on New York State Powerline Rights-of-Way." Final report for the Empire State Electric Energy Research Corporation, 1991; K.H. Deubert. "Studies on the Fate of Garlon 3A and Tordon 101 Used in Selective Foliar Application in the Maintenance of Utility Rights of Way in Eastern Massachusetts." Final Report prepared for New England Electric et.al., 1985. N.H. Nickerson, G.E. Moore, and A.D. Cutter. "Study of the Environmental Fates of Herbicides in Wetland Soils on Electric Utility Rights-of-Way in Massachusetts over the Short Term." Final Report prepared for New England Electric et.al, December 1994; Matt Hickler, NHESP approved Review Biologist, Reports for TransCanada, National Grid, NSTAR Electric, and Northeast Utilities under 321 CMR 10.00 Massachusetts Endangered Species Act Regulations, 2006-2010; "Utility Transmission Forestry Herbicide Use Summary Records" for NSTAR Electric, Vermont Electric Power Company, TransCanada Hydro Northeast, Inc and National Grid USA Electric Companies (see National Grid 5 year VMP 2009-2013, p. 9); C.A. Nowak and L.P. Abrahamson, "Vegetation Management on Electric Transmission Line Rights-of-Way in New York State: The Stability Approach to Reducing Herbicide Use." Proceedings of the International Conference on Forest Vegetation Management, Auburn University, April 1993.

Since implementing an IVM based program in 2003, that included targeted use of herbicide results in the average rate per acre of applied herbicide mixes at approximately 7 gallons acre. ROW that has IVM cycles using selective herbicide applications have had incompatible woody stem densities reduced and a more diverse desirable vegetation cover, resulting in average rate per acre of applied herbicide mixes at approximately 3 gallons per acre in 2022. ROW that has had an inconsistent IVM program such as the Cape & Vineyard will likely have per acre rates of herbicide on specific ROW revert closer to the 5 to 7 gallons per acre because of increased stem density due to the interrupted IVM program of mechanical only. When the herbicide treatment cycle is consistent, there is a reduction in herbicide used over time that eventually levels out to the minimum of herbicide to be used to keep the floor of the ROW stable with plants desired. Today, many of the company's ROW have less mechanical control as there are fewer incompatible species on the ROW that require control. The mechanical control efforts are concentrated on side pruning and removing trees at the easement edges of the ROW.

5. MECHANICAL CONTROLS

Mechanical controls include hand cutting, mowing of trees and incompatible brush, side pruning and removal of mature trees. Eversource vendors comply with the ANSI A300 (part1) for Tree Care Operations- Tree, Shrub, and other Woody Plant Management – Standards Practices (Pruning). The following section lists their uses and sets some basic guidelines.

HAND CUTTING

Definition:

The use of chainsaws and brush saws to remove the stem of woody vegetation at ground level leaving the plant's root system intact.

Uses:

- remove incompatible vegetation on the floor of the ROW.
- In chemical restricted sensitive areas.
- Allows for selectivity in targeting incompatible vegetation.

Operational Practices:

- Trees are cut as close to the ground as possible so that stump height is close to the root flare.
- Cut stems are windrowed or chipped.
- Depending on the situation windrow are positioned parallel along the edge of the ROW corridor and should not exceed 2ft. in height.
- Cut woody vegetation in yards or recreational sites will be chipped and disposed of or removed to adjacent areas.
- Cut woody vegetation is not left on or across paths, roads, fence lines, stone walls or in waterways or in such a manner that would permit it to wash into these areas.
- The placement of cut woody vegetation must comply with applicable State Fire Marshall's regulations.
- Chipping is used on sites designated by Eversource when leaving brush piles is prohibited or impractical.
- No chips shall be left in wetlands.
- All cut cherry and red maple is removed from private property active pastures as it is a hazard to grazing animals.

MOWING

Definition:

The cutting, severing, of vegetation by rotary or flail mowers. These mowers, usually ranging from 3-8 feet wide, are typically mounted on a four-wheel drive rubber-tired tractors or tracked vehicles.

Uses:

- Can be the preferred mechanical technique, especially on sites where extremely tall and dense incompatible vegetation makes hand cutting inefficient and expensive.
- Where herbicides are prohibited.
- To allow access for inspections of vegetation conditions during ROW patrols.

Operational Practices:

- Mowing may be restricted by terrain conditions such as steep, rocky sites or wet soils.
- It requires the use of hand cutting methods next to obstructions such as stone walls and fence lines.
- Mowing brush can throw large chips and debris great distances from the cutting equipment and requires employing someone to prevent people and animals from coming too close to the work site.
- Measures may include matting of wetland areas, installation of silt fences and chipping and removal of all debris.
- The bounds will be accurately located, to minimize erosion and potential damage due to ruts, and to minimize impact to the environment.

SIDE PRUNING

Definition:

Side pruning of tree branches growing on or near a ROW. This management technique is usually accomplished using an aerial lift mounted on an off-road vehicle or mechanical side trimmer. Tree climbing is sometimes employed in situations where terrain prevents the passage of equipment.

Uses:

- Remove incompatible vegetation from growing into the conductors from the side.
- Maintaining the edge definition of the ROW corridor.
- To facilitate, expedite, and increases efficiency of the inspections of vegetation conditions during ROW patrols.

Operational Practices:

- All pruning activities are performed in accordance with proper arboriculture practices to insure the health and aesthetic value of the trees as well as all applicable regulations.

REMOVALS

Definition:

Removal of trees that have become a hazard to the ROW or that may have been overlooked in previous treatment cycles and allowed to encroach the ROW and the lines and conductors. In these cases, trees will be removed in such a way that they cannot strike wires, guy wires, structures, appurtenances, and adjacent properties. In most cases, these trees will be addressed using aerial lift equipment, but may require climbing where terrain dictates. Larger overhanging limbs may require rigging to safely control the fall of cut material. Trees that do not overhang or directly threaten the line may be “pieced down” by removing material from the top down in small sections that cannot strike the line or cause damage. In cases of severe encroachment on a larger scale, qualified and appropriate timber harvesting equipment and contractors may be employed to clear the ROW up to the edge of easement.

Uses:

- To keep trees from striking electric conductors, guy wires and structures.
- Maintaining the edge definition of the ROW corridor.
- To facilitate, expedite, and increases efficiency of the inspections of vegetation conditions during ROW patrols.

Operational Practices:

- All removal activities will be performed by qualified line clearance arborists.

- Measures may include matting of wetland area, installation of silt fences and chipping and removal of all debris.
- Care will be taken to accurately locate the bounds of activity, to minimize erosion and potential damage due to ruts, and to minimize impact to the environment.

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS

Eversource's mechanical controls are the method of management where the use of herbicides may be prohibited or restricted in various sensitive areas. Sensitive areas include defined distances per regulation near drinking water supplies both private and public, wetlands or water over wetlands, rivers, certified/potential vernal pools, and agricultural or inhabited areas (see section nine). Certain Priority Habitats defined by Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) call for the use of mowing instead of, or in conjunction with herbicide applications to encourage or restrict the height of various host plants.

Mechanical treatment methods are also used in the following situations: on vegetation over 15 feet in mature height; in preparation for some herbicide treatments; in individual areas deemed as sensitive; around structures; on access roads; to clear easements; and in areas of thick impenetrable vegetation. In large areas of high-density where incompatible species have exceeded maximum herbicide treatment heights, a mechanical treatment may be more practical, followed in one or two growing seasons, by an herbicide application to obtain effective control. This includes along the easement edges where trees are cleared or pruned to maintain the width of the ROW. The electric utility easements are areas of a property that were defined for use by utility companies when the property was first put on a property map.

Upon establishing the easement edge, the cleared area of the ROW is managed by the Wire Zone-Border Zone approach using the appropriate treatment methods; mechanical controls on their own are only a short-term solution to controlling vegetation on a ROW system. Mechanically cut vegetation often re-sprouts with multiples of stems from dormant buds on the root collar resulting in a stem density that is significantly greater than the original vegetation cut. An annual program that uses only mechanical treatment cycles increases dense areas of woody vegetation. This vegetation competes with and dominates the low growing vegetation Eversource wishes to encourage.

When relying on mechanical control methods alone, dense areas of incompatible vegetation can become costly and dangerous to hand-cut with power saws and are best controlled by mowing. Large mowing equipment, although an excellent IVM tool, can have a negative impact on compatible plant communities whose establishment is crucial to developing successful natural controls. Mowing can also create a potential seedbed for fast growing, pioneering incompatible species such as poplars, cherries, birches, and various invasive species. This can increase the frequency of the maintenance cycle and destroy the dominance of stable, diverse early successional plant communities. Similarly, sensitive areas, such as wetlands and residential areas can be adversely impacted when crossed by mechanical maintenance equipment.

6. CHEMICAL CONTROLS

Chemical controls are herbicide applications which include foliar, basal, and cut stump surface treatments (CST), and plant growth regulator (PGR) applications. They are a vital year-round component of an IVM program in establishing and stabilizing early successional plant communities and the development of natural controls to maintain this goal. The following sections lists their uses and sets some basic guidelines.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Eversource requires an advance person or “prep-cutting” crew to patrol the ROW before the herbicide application operation.
- Sensitive areas will be identified and appropriately measured and flagged, then verified and recorded when appropriate in cooperation with local water suppliers and conservation commissions.
- Herbicides will NOT be applied during the following adverse weather conditions:
 - ✓ When the wind velocity is such that there is a high propensity to drift off target and/or during measurable precipitation, and no person shall apply herbicides in such a manner that results in drift into any No-spray Area.
 - ✓ During periods of heavy rainfall.
 - ✓ Foliar applications of volatile herbicides when temperatures exceed 89 degrees Fahrenheit and low humidity.
 - ✓ CST or Basal application when deep snow (i.e., 6” plus or ice frozen on stem or stump) prevents adequate coverage of incompatible species to facilitate acceptable control.

- ✓ Basal applications when the stems are excessively wet from moisture.
- Herbicides are not applied:
 - ✓ To vegetation standing in surface water.
 - ✓ Within Sensitive Areas per 333 CMR 11.00,

FOLIAGE APPLICATIONS

Definitions:

The application of herbicides to fully developed leaves, stems, needles, or blades of a plant.

Low Volume Foliar:

Hand-operated pumps or motorized, backpack sprayers with herbicide concentrations per the manufacturers' label(s). The motorized backpack sprayer produces an air current that delivers the herbicide mixture from the portable spray tank to the targeted vegetation. The hand sprayer uses a column of water. In both cases, the amount of herbicide solution applied only dampens or lightly wets the targeted vegetation, instead of being applied to the point of run-off. This minimizes the amount of excess herbicide drip from incompatible species onto desirable ground cover. Low volume applications also eliminate the need to bring heavy equipment on the ROW for the transportation of significant quantities of herbicide solution.

Modified Low Volume Foliar:

Uniform, penetrating herbicide mixtures delivered to dense incompatible vegetation. This technique usually involves 200-to-500-gallon hydraulic sprayers mounted on a truck or tractor equipped with several hundred feet of hose and hand-held spray guns. The herbicide mixture can be directed to specific plants for spot treatments or broadcast for uniform coverage in dense thickets of nuisance plants such as poisonous or invasive plant species.

Uses:

- An effective control method in light and medium brush densities to kill incompatible root systems.
- Effective control of some invasive, nuisance and poisonous vegetation.
- Allows for selectivity in targeting vegetation.

General Guidelines:

- Herbicides are mixed per label instructions.
- Herbicides are applied as a uniform spray over the entire plant's foliage.
- Low pressure foliar application equipment will be adjusted to apply a spray pattern that achieves effective control at the lowest application rate.

- Application period usually extends from early June through the beginning of leaf drop in early fall.
- Anti-drift agents are added to the mix or solution in all foliage applications to reduce the potential of herbicide drift beyond targeted vegetation—drift control agents reduce the break-up of sprays into fine droplets and offer increased selectivity, leaf tissue penetration, and herbicide deposition on targeted vegetation.
- Foliar applications can be made, and are effective, in light mist conditions.
- When foliar applications are stopped by rainfall, treatment will not resume until the rain ends and water no longer creates a shield to accept herbicide application.
- No herbicide shall be applied when the wind velocity is such that there is a high propensity to drift off target and/or during measurable precipitation, and no person shall apply herbicides in such a manner that results in drift into any No-spray Area.

LOW-VOLUME STEM BASAL

Definition:

- The selective application of herbicides in an oil solution to the lower 12-15 inches of the stem using a solid cone or flat fan nozzle.

Uses:

- Year-round application technique, except during deep snow conditions that cover the target area.
- Typically employed during the non-foliage season when targeted stems are easier to identify without the interference of lush, tall grasses or ferns.

Guidelines:

- Utilizes hand-operated backpack sprayers.
- Use a basal oil made for herbicide application to penetrate the bark.
- Not an appropriate method to control high stem densities due to high herbicide rates per acre.
- Extending the herbicide treatment period beyond the foliage season.
- May be the appropriate choice for visually sensitive areas.

CUT STUMP SURFACE TREATMENT (CST)

Definition:

The application of an herbicide mixture to the cut surface of a stump immediately following or during a cutting operation using an herbicide concentration, diluted in water or a non-freezing solution.

Uses:

- Year-round applications except during deep snow conditions that prevent cutting the stumps low enough.
- Offers the opportunity to chemically treat incompatible vegetation where other methods are not possible.
- Commonly used to prevent re-sprouts when hand cutting vegetation.

Guidelines:

- Application equipment includes low-volume, backpack, hand-pump sprayers; handheld squirt bottles; paintbrushes, or sponge applicators.
- Only necessary to treat the phloem and cambium tissue, regardless of the stump diameter.
- Treatment made to cut stumps per label instructions.
- Best to avoid using it during the season of bud swell to full leaf expansion.
- Not practical in moderate to heavy stem densities.

TREE GROWTH REGULATORS (TGR)

Definition:

Tree Growth Regulators (TGRs) are plant growth regulator chemicals that manage or reduce the potential growth rate of trees.

Uses:

- Useful especially along street distribution lines where repetitive trimming is necessary to maintain adequate tree-electric conductor clearances.
- Can lengthen the time frame between trimming cycles and improve the aesthetics of street and yard trees that may otherwise require removal or severe pruning.

Guidelines:

- Applied as basal drench around the base of the tree.
- Applied as a soil injection next to the buttress root zone.

JUSTIFICATION AND RATIONALE FOR USE OF HERBICIDE

Eversource is responsible to deliver energy products to its customers in a safe and efficient manner and to control vegetation on its ROW. To meet these obligations in an ecologically sound manner, as discussed above is best accomplished by stabilizing early successional ecological communities on ROW.⁶ Eversource needs to use all treatment methods available to encourage a landscape that is both accessible and sustainable.

In our IVM program, chemical controls are an important method to achieve long term vegetation control. Herbicides control the entire plant, including the root system. Eliminating the ability of the treated plants to return may allow compatible plants to take over the space resulting in a reduction of incompatible plants to work next cycle. This is achieved by scheduling herbicide applications to sustain acceptable vegetation control at minimal application rates and results in a reduction of herbicide applied over time.⁷ This reduces environmental impacts and the amount of manpower and equipment required to manage the ROW. This is a cost savings over multiple cycles as well as reducing the potential of unintended equipment leaks or damages from equipment.

The herbicide formulations are applied selectively and by low-volume methods that dry quickly on the plant surface, this reduces the potential for off-target exposure. Additionally, anti-drift adjuvants that can be adjusted to accommodate changes in wind velocity are included in all foliage applications to further limit the likelihood of unintentional exposure to non-target organisms. Applications are not made in situations when there is a reasonable expectation that herbicides will drift from the targeted vegetation, or during measurable precipitation.

⁶Belisle, Francis. "Wildlife Use of Riparian Vegetation Buffer Zones in High Voltage Powerline Rights-of-Way in the Quebec Boreal Forest." 7th International Symposium on Environmental Concerns in Rights-of-Way Management, 1999; Confer, John L. "Management, Vegetative Structure and Shrubland Birds of Rights-of-Way," 7th International Symposium on Environmental Concerns in Rights-of-Way Management, 1999; CVPS. "Central Vermont Public Service Corporations 2006 Strategy; T&D Forestry," Rutland, VT, 2006; Niering, William A. "Roadside Use of Native Plants: Working with Succession, An Ecological Approach in Preserving Biodiversity." Roadside Use of Native Plants: http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecosystems/vegmgmt_rdsduse.asp.

⁷*Utility Transmission Forestry Herbicide Use Summary Records*; Nowak & Abrahamson.

The pesticide program of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) established a *Sensitive Area Material List* to help reduce the potential of any negative impact using herbicides in sensitive areas defined in 333 CMR 11.04. All the herbicides on this list have gone through extensive testing to be considered for registration by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Before being included on the *Sensitive Area Materials List*, they go under further scrutiny by MDAR and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP). Eversource's herbicide program has only used herbicides on the MDAR *Sensitive Area Materials List*:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/rights-of-way-sensitive-area-materials-list>
Selective herbicides applications used according to the label do not adversely affect wetland plant composition or function according to the study cited in the *DFA Decision Concerning The Wetland Impact Study Conducted Pursuant to 333 CMR 11.04(4)(c)(2)*⁸ (Appendix 7). According to the 1989 study by Environmental Consultants, Inc. quoted in the *Decision*, mechanical vegetation control techniques result in significantly greater impact on wetland composition and function.

Herbicide applications can be more selective than mechanical treatment methods. Selective herbicide applications encourage plant species diversity when used to target only incompatible vegetation. They offer selectivity and can be used to encourage certain types of plants; for example, broadleaf vegetation can be controlled with little or no impact to grasses.

A continual cycle of selective herbicide applications as part of an IVM program, therefore, promotes low-growing plant communities while reducing the density of incompatible species and reduces the herbicide use rates over time.⁹

Selective herbicide applications can be much less destructive than mowing to nesting sites and the vegetation necessary for food and cover. Minor site disturbance is associated with selective herbicide applications. This is not to say that mowing is not a significant component in an IVM program. Both control methods need to be used in

⁸ DFA is now MDAR.

⁹ John Gwozdz, Lewis Payne, Kendra Gorski, and Jim Kooser 2015. *Herbicide Use Rates over Four Treatment Cycle: Proof the IVM tool is working* Environmental Concerns in Rights-of-Way Management, 11th International Symposium, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

combination with hand cutting techniques to cover all situations. In fact, thoughtful, carefully planned, selective herbicide applications in combination with mechanical controls, where appropriate, promote wildlife habitat by encouraging plant species diversity.¹⁰

Herbicide application equipment that is well maintained incorporating the most up-to-date features and the requirement that licensed contractors apply herbicides per label instructions minimizes environmental site damage. Herbicides, particularly when applied selectively by low-volume methods, dry quickly on the plant surface, thereby significantly restricting the greatest potential for dermal exposure. The use of anti-drift adjuvants in all foliage applications that can be adjusted to accommodate changes in wind velocity further limit the likelihood of unintentional exposure to non-target organisms.

The selection of the herbicides coupled with the appropriate treatment methods is made with consideration given to the environmental sensitivity of a ROW or site within a ROW. For example, most conifers which do not re-sprout like hardwoods, are generally not treated since herbicide is not necessary for control.

The herbicides, applications and other treatment methods used on any given ROW are selected based on site sensitivity, species composition and density. Herbicides will not be used in certain areas if site sensitivity, regulations, new restrictions, or species composition or height require otherwise. Eversource chooses the most appropriate treatment methods to meet its goals, objectives, and obligations. The most responsible solution is to use all three components of IVM where appropriate.

¹⁰A brief list of examples includes W.C. Bramble and W.R. Burns. "A long-term ecological study of game food and cover on a sprayed utility right-of-way." *Bulletin No. 918*, Purdue University (1974):16; Yahner. "Wildlife Response to More than 50 years of Vegetation Maintenance on a Pennsylvania U.S., Right-of-Way": 123; James S. Marshall and L.W. Vandruff. *Impact of Selective Herbicide Right-of-Way Vegetation Treatment on Birds*. Environmental Management 30(6) (December 2002): 801-806.

7. DEFINITION, IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT OF SENSITIVE AREAS

Per 333 CMR 11.02, sensitive areas are "any areas within rights-of-way...in which public health, environmental or agricultural concerns warrant special protection to further minimize risks of unreasonable adverse effects." They include, but are not limited to, the following:

Water Supplies

- Zone I's
- Zone II's
- IWPA's (Interim Wellhead Protection Areas)
- Class A Surface Water Sources
- Tributaries to a Class A Surface Water Source
- Class B Drinking Water Intakes
- Private Wells

Surface Waters

- Wetlands
- Water Over Wetlands
- The Mean Annual High-Water Line of a River
- The Outer Boundary of a Riverfront Area
- Certified Vernal Pools

Cultural Sites

- Agricultural Areas
- Inhabited Areas

Wildlife Areas

- Certified Vernal Pool Habitat
- Priority Habitat

Sensitive areas consist of *no-spray areas* in which herbicide use is prohibited, *limited spray areas*, and areas that require sensitive area restrictions. Protecting these environmentally sensitive sites is accomplished by establishing limited spray and no-spray areas and treatment restrictions based on the sensitivity of each site and the requirement to minimize any unreasonable adverse impacts within that area (See Appendix 5).

The herbicides included in the *Herbicides Recommended for Use in Sensitive Areas List (Sensitive Area Materials List)* will be applied in limited spray areas according to the application restrictions in 333 CMR 11.04 or in the case of Priority Habitat, approval of the YOP by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife (NHESP). A current copy of the *Sensitive Areas Materials List* and MDAR approved active ingredient fact sheets are available at:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/rights-of-way-vegetation-management-vmpps-yops-and-notices>

IDENTIFICATION OF SENSITIVE AREAS

Sensitive areas can be divided into two additional categories that help identify and treat them: “*readily identifiable in the field*” and “*not readily identifiable in the field*.” Readily identifiable in the field areas will be identified, marked, and treated when appropriate, marked according to all applicable restrictions listed in 333 CMR 11.00. Not readily identifiable in the field areas will likewise be marked and treated when appropriate, but they are identified in the field using data marked on maps and collected in the YOP and notification processes.

- Sensitive areas usually identifiable in the field, include but are not limited to surface water, some private and public water supplies, wetlands, inhabited and agricultural areas.
- Sensitive areas not usually identifiable in the field, including, but are not limited to designated public surface water supplies, public ground water supplies, some private drinking supplies, the first 400 feet of water supply tributaries, certified vernal pools, and Priority Habitat of State-listed Species.

As appropriate, therefore, sensitive areas will be identified and when necessary marked in the field by Eversource staff, an experienced vegetation management treatment crew point person, individuals trained in the identification of sensitive areas that require the use of GIS (geographic information systems) and GPS equipment, and/or by a NHESP approved botanist trained in the delineation of state-listed species.

Eversource and contractor personnel assigned the task of identifying sensitive areas in the field will use the following sources and methods:

- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection water supply maps /GIS mapping layers available through MassGIS.
- MDAR records of identified private wells along the ROW.
- Correspondence, meetings, and input from municipalities within the forty-five-day YOP and twenty-one-day municipal right-of-way notification letter (including Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Public Water Supplier and Select Board/Mayor/Town Administrator) review and comment periods and the 48-hour newspaper notification (under 333 CMR 11.06 & 11.07 and Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000).
- Correspondence, meetings, and input from Eversource's abutter and/or landowner notification procedure, as applicable.
- Eversource's maps, records, and institutional knowledge.
- Any additional pertinent information that becomes available during the YOP process and throughout the five years of this VMP.
- A point person who verifies identified sensitive areas and any additional areas that may require special precautions.
- United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps.
- Information from contractor's knowledge and records.
- Information from MassGIS.
- Confidential information from NHESP.
- A copy of the YOP and VMP.
- Treatment crew(s) are required to have the following references on the job site to help identify sensitive areas:
 - ✓ Topographical maps (electronic or paper)
 - ✓ Copy of YOP
 - ✓ Any additional information that may become available.

Maps are a resource and a tool for both the public and the vegetation management crews, therefore, they contain the data needed to identify, mark, and treat sensitive areas appropriately.

Maps included in the YOP are updated every year as new data becomes available. Some sensitive areas are contained on the base USGS topographic maps such as applicable Wetland Resource Areas (Rivers, Wetlands, etc.) The most current data available through MassGIS such as public water supplies, certified vernal pools, and any data that Eversource has collected to date on items such as private wells are then added on top of the USGS data. At the time of treatment, additional sensitive areas will be

added to the maps utilized by Eversource's vegetation management contractors. Please note that to enable any viewer to see the essential information on the maps, Zone II's and other limited spray areas are not mapped in areas where Eversource only uses herbicides on the *MDAR Rights-of-Way Sensitive Area Materials List*.

The locations of the Priority Habitats of state listed species as regulated by the NHESP of the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife are only included on field maps to contractors who sign a confidentiality agreement expressly for this purpose. A map layer of Priority Habitats is available to the general public at <http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis> but it is neither specific to areas of concern for herbicide applications nor does it include data on the individual species since the exact location and details of their habitat is protected.

CONTROL STRATEGIES FOR SENSITIVE AREAS

Mandated sensitive areas will be treated following the restrictions in applicable state and federal regulations. Eversource also reserves the right to designate additional areas as areas that require special treatment considerations including, but not limited to, landowner agreements, visual or environmental impact considerations, and other considerations that arise during the treatment cycles.

Treatments in all sensitive areas will follow the operational guidelines and restrictions listed above, as well as the guidelines described in the Sensitive Area Table in Appendix 5.

Wetlands

Pursuant to 333 CMR 11.04 (4) (c) (2), based upon the results of two ROW wetland impact studies (see appendix 5), the MDAR in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Rights-of-Way Advisory Panel, made a determination that herbicides, when used at various utilities including electric lines, under the guidance of an IVM program and other conditions as set forth in the determination, have less impact on wetlands than mechanical only techniques. Therefore, in accordance with the conditions of the determination, Eversource will selectively apply herbicides to wetland sites, except within ten feet of standing and flowing water and to conifers which will be cut (Appendix 5).

Public and Private Water Supplies

Appropriate sources and references will be consulted to determine the location of public and private water supplies. Eversource's YOP maps will include all known public and private water supplies at the time of printing using the sources listed above, and the mapping information used by contract treatment crews will be updated as necessary during the treatment cycle.

To aid in the public and private water supply identification process, under 333 CMR 11.01(3)¹¹, Eversource requests that during the various federal, state, and voluntary notification processes and during the treatment cycle, that public and municipal agencies and private entities and individuals share information on new or unidentified public and private water supplies.

Identified private drinking supplies within one hundred feet of a ROW are included in our permanent records and maps, and landowners are encouraged to post signs on the edge of the ROW to help identify private water supplies (the no-spray treatment area is fifty feet from a private well).

A point person will patrol the ROW to verify sensitive areas and buffers are appropriately measured and when applicable flagged and recorded for permanent record.

Massachusetts Endangered Species Act

Eversource recognizes the importance of the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, M.G.L.C. 131 A, and its significance to ROW vegetation management. Eversource will comply with all applicable portions of this Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder. Eversource will also follow the rules and prohibitions directed at human activities which "Take" or alter their Significant Habitat (as of this printing there are no designated Significant Habitat in Massachusetts on Eversource ROW or statewide).

¹¹333 CMR 11.01(3): "[The Specific goals of 333 CMR 11.00 are to] Ensure ample opportunity for public and municipal agency input on potential impacts of herbicide application to rights-of-way in environmentally sensitive areas."

321 CMR 10.14, Massachusetts Endangered Species Act Regulations, Part II Exemptions and 333 CMR 11.04(3) (a-c) exempts utility ROW vegetation management from the permit process under the following conditions:

(12) The management of vegetation within existing utility rights-of-way provided that the management is carried out in accordance with a vegetation management plan approved in writing by the Division prior to the commencement of work for which a review fee shall be charged, the amount of which shall be determined by the commissioner of administration under the provisions of M.G.L. c.7, § 3B...

[and for roadside distribution lines]

(6) installation, repair, replacement, and maintenance of utility lines (gas, water, sewer, phone, electrical) for which all associated work is within ten feet from the edge of existing paved roads.

To comply with exemption 10.14(12), Eversource will submit this VMP and YOPs to the NHESP for review.

The NHESP has delineated areas as Priority Habitat based on the "Best Scientific Evidence Available" to protect State-listed species from a "take."

Under the approval process, details about the Priority Habitat of state-listed species that might be affected by our activities and management recommendations are shared with Eversource under strict confidentiality agreements.¹²

Using this data and best management practices, Eversource and contract personnel will follow the appropriate vegetation management treatment methods within these sensitive areas taking all practical means and measures to modify ROW vegetation management procedures to avoid damage to state-listed species and their habitat.

To identify Priority Habitats, Eversource personnel, NHESP approved review botanists and vegetation management crews must use proper identification

¹²A map layer of Priority Habitat is available to the general public at <http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis> , but it is neither specific to the areas of concern for herbicide applications nor does it have detailed data on the species of concern; the exact location and details of their habitat is kept confidential for their protection.

procedures. Contractors are, therefore, required to train their personnel to recognize the location of Priority Habitats using one of the following tools: paper maps, GPS coordinates and/or GIS systems.

8. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATORS RELATIVE TO HERBICIDE USE

Eversource relies on independent vegetation management contractors and requires that they comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. This VMP, the YOPs and information in the notification documentation are the operational guidelines for applicators relative to herbicide use. Therefore, according to the regulations, at a minimum, the contractor's application crews shall have a copy of the YOP accessible at the work site.

In addition to the guidelines contained in other sections of the VMP, this section sets forth the general operational guidelines for vegetation management.

Eversource will alter or add to these guidelines based on potential future changes or additions to state and federal regulations that apply to herbicide applications and all changes or additions will be approved by MDAR.

EVERSOURCE PERSONNEL

The following individual is responsible for monitoring, supervising, and coordinating vegetation management programs (Eversource may direct contractors to communicate with other Eversource personnel):

William Hayes, Senior Supervisor
Eversource Energy,
Transmission Vegetation Management
247 Station Drive, SW-1036
Westwood, MA 02090-9230
781-441- 3932 (office)

Eversource arborist(s) will inform the contractor which ROW will be treated, the range of treatment dates and any other specification required to complete the job.

Eversource will provide ROW maps with treatment restriction lists and written instructions outlining any special treatment considerations or instructions.

Contractors will notify the Eversource company representative(s) of any questions or complaints from the public and/or government agencies that relate to ROW vegetation management. Eversource will deal with these complaints or questions in a timely fashion.

CONTRACTOR SAFETY, CONTRACT AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

- Contractors must provide qualified, personnel who have been trained to recognize and identify compatible and incompatible vegetation and are knowledgeable in the safe and proper use of both mechanical and chemical vegetation management techniques.
- All personnel applying herbicides in Massachusetts must hold a pesticide applicator license and must work under the on-site supervision of a certified applicator, with a Category 40 certification.
- Herbicides will be handled and applied only in accordance with label instructions
- Mixing will not be done on the ROW.
- Contractors will not start work without the appropriate maps, restriction lists, landowner notifications and mixing rate instructions.
- Contractors will follow the latest revisions of all industry standards including, but not limited to all applicable safety standards under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) including 1910.269, Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution; ANSI Z133 & ANSI 300 standards, and Eversource Safety Procedures.
- All contract personnel will follow label instructions regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Applicators will immediately cease operations if adverse conditions or other circumstances warrant.
- Access to a ROW will be using established roadways whenever possible.
- All bar-ways and gates shall be immediately closed.
- Care shall be exercised to prevent the rutting or destruction of roadways, fields, or any other form of access.
- No litter of any kind will be left on the ROW or adjoining land.

CONTRACTOR DAILY TASKS

- Call the appropriate Eversource personnel
- In compliance with both regulations and Eversource policy, the contractors' foreman or senior crew member must complete daily vegetation management reports that include:

- ✓ Date, name, and address of vegetation management contractor(s).
 - ✓ Identification of site or work area.
 - ✓ List of crew members.
 - ✓ Type of equipment and hours used, both mechanical and chemical
 - ✓ Method of application and description of incompatible vegetation
 - ✓ Amount, concentration, product name of herbicide(s), adjuvants and dilutants (EPA registration numbers must be on file).
 - ✓ Weather conditions.
 - ✓ Notation of any unusual conditions or incidents, including public inquiries.
 - ✓ Recording and/or verification of sensitive areas on ROW maps.
- All required forms will be distributed to the contractors by the Eversource representative(s).
 - Eversource request that contractor(s) call if they see a hazard tree.
 - Contractors must follow the Specifications noted in the Request for Proposal.

EQUIPMENT

- Eversource will not dictate the exact equipment to be used by the contractors, instead, all equipment shall be of adequate design to produce professional quality results.
- Equipment must be maintained in good working condition, including being calibrated as appropriate.
- Care and common sense shall be exercised when moving vehicles and equipment.

LANDOWNERS/ABUTTERS

Landowners/abutters are individuals whose property is either under Eversource 's ROW easements/fee land and/or abuts the ROW.

- Landowners will be treated with courtesy and respect always.
- Permission must be obtained for ingress and egress if entering the ROW from private land.
- If a landowner demands vegetation maintenance cease, the contractor should remove the crew and equipment off the property, inform the appropriate Eversource representative as soon as possible and wait for clearance before returning to that location.
- When addressing serious complaints from a landowner, or other concerned person, notice will be sent to the appropriate authorities at MDAR.

RESULTS

- Vegetation management programs must result in 95% control of incompatible species or the contractor may be held responsible to re-treat areas that do not meet required results if these “touch-up” treatments follow all restrictions in 333 CMR 11.03(8) as listed in the *Control Strategies for Sensitive Area* table in Appendix 5.
- Vegetation management crews will exercise care to ensure low-growing compatible vegetation and other non-target organisms are not unreasonably affected by the application of herbicides.
- Unreasonable site damage or destruction during any phase of the vegetation management operation by the contractor, his agents, or employees, will be repaired by said contractor to Eversource's satisfaction. Eversource evaluates claims promptly based upon an internal investigation and the information provided. Once the investigation is complete, Eversource will contact the claimant with the results.

9. ALTERNATIVE LAND USES

Wherever practical, as determined by the Senior Arborist or Eversource management, Eversource will cooperate with landowners through whose property Eversource owns easements, to facilitate "alternative land use" practices by the landowner's that may reduce or eliminate the need for vegetation management by Eversource.

Acceptable uses may include but are not limited to an approved lawn, garden, or crops with compatible species of plants, golf courses, parking lots, approved by Eversource Energy. Any alternative land use proposed by a landowner within an electrical transmission easement must be reviewed by Eversource. Eversource will review a properly submitted proposal and consider conditional approval. The submittal should be addressed to: Supervisor, T & D Rights and Survey, Eversource Energy, Eastern MA, 247 Station Drive, Mail Stop SE210, Westwood, MA 02090. Any approval by the Company is given in the form of a written license only and with the understanding that Eversource's easement rights are in no way diminished nor does the company assume any liability.

10. REMEDIAL SPILL AND EMERGENCY PLAN

Eversource contracts with independent, professional, certified herbicide applicators that are responsible for the containment, clean up and reporting of chemical spills or accidents. The following is a guide to the information sources that, according to various regulations, must be available to the treatment crew in the event of a chemical spill or emergency.

TYPES OF CHEMICAL SPILLS THAT REQUIRE ACTION

Chemicals include, but are not limited to the following:

- Herbicides
- Bar and Chain Oil
- Motor & Hydraulic Oil
- Diesel Fuel
- Gasoline
- Title 3 Hazmat Materials

REQUIRED SPILL RESPONSE EQUIPMENT

As a minimum, the ROW crew shall have available on the job site:

- VMP and YOP with emergency contact lists
- Safety Data Sheets and product labels
- Product Fact Sheets
- Appropriate absorbent material such as “speedi dri” or “soak up”
- Shovel
- Broom
- Flagging
- Leak proof container
- Heavy-duty plastic bags

PERSONAL CONTACT

In the event of **Personal Contact** with hazardous chemicals:

- Wash affected area with plenty of soap and water
- Change clothing which has absorbed hazardous chemicals
- If necessary, contact a physician
- If necessary, contact the proper emergency services
- If necessary, follow the procedures for Major or Minor Spills as outlined below
- Avoid breathing the fumes of hazardous chemicals

TECHNICAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

A. Herbicide Information

1. Product Label
2. Product Safety Data Sheet (SDS)
3. Product Fact Sheet, if available

B. Table 1. Herbicide Manufacturers:

| MANUFACTURER | TELEPHONE NUMBER | SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Albaugh Inc. | (800) 247-8013 | |
| Bayer Environmental Science | (800) 334-7577 | |
| BASF Corporation | (800) 832-4357 | |
| Dow Agro Sciences | (800) 992-5994 | |
| E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company | (800) 441-3637 | Medical Emergencies |
| Monsanto | (314) 694-4000 | |
| Nufarm | (877) 325-1840 | Medical Emergencies |

C. Table 2. State Agencies:

| STATE AGENCY | TELEPHONE NUMBER | SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS |
|---|---|--|
| MDAR, Pesticide Bureau | (617) 626-1700 | A.S.A.P. (within 48 hours) |
| Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Emergency Response Section | DEP 24 Hour Contact: (888) 304-1133 Southeast Region: (508) 946-2700 | For emergencies involving reportable quantities of oil or hazardous materials; required info: City/town, street address, site name (if applicable), material |
| MA Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health's Environmental Toxicology Program | (617) 339-8351 | |
| Massachusetts Poison Information Centers | (800) 682-9211 | For medical emergencies involving suspected or known pesticide poisoning symptoms |

D. Table 3. Emergency Services:

| EMERGENCY SERVICE | TELEPHONE NUMBER | SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Massachusetts State Police, Central Office | (617) 566-4500 or 911 | |
| Local Fire / Police Dept. | 911 | |
| ChemTrec | (800) 424-9300 | |
| Clean Harbors | (800) OIL-TANK | |
| Pesticide Hotline | (800) 858-7378 | PST: 6:30 am – 4:30 pm, Web: www.NPIC.orst.edu |

E. Eversource 's contact in the case of a spill or accident is:

Eversource System Control:
Ops North, (617) 541-7825,
Electric Ops South, (617) 541-7858,

F. Table 4. Local Emergency Numbers:

Emergencies Services for All Municipalities: 911
(to be filled out with the appropriate towns and included in the YOPs)

| Town | Board of Health | Town/City Hall | Town | Board of Health | Town/City Hall |
|------|-----------------|----------------|------|-----------------|----------------|
| | | | | | |

CLEAN-UP PROCEDURES

Education and attention will constantly be directed at accident and spill prevention; however, the following is a guideline in the event of an unfortunate incident:

REPORTABLE SPILLS (Spills of reportable quantity of material): FOLLOW STEPS 1-11
NON-REPORTABLE SPILLS: FOLLOW STEPS 1-4, 7-11 as appropriate & contact the
EVERSOURCE representative.

Table 5: HERBICIDE SPILL CHECK LIST

| Order | ACTION | Done (✓) |
|--|---|--|
| 1 | Use all PPE as directed by product label or SDS. | |
| 2 | Cordon-off spill area to unauthorized people and traffic to reduce the spread and exposure of the spill | |
| 3 | Identify source of spill and apply corrective action, if possible, stop or limit any additional amounts of spilled product. | |
| 4 | Contain spill and confine the spread by damming or diking with soil, clay, or other absorbent materials. | |
| 5 | Report spills of "reportable quantity" to the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection and MDAR: | |
| | MDAR, Pesticide Bureau | (617) 626-1700 |
| | Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Emergency Response Section | MA DEP 24 Contact Number: (888) 304-1133 Southeast Region: (508) 946-2700 |
| 6 | If the spill cannot be contained or cleaned-up properly, or if there is a threat of contamination to any bodies of water, immediately contact any of the following applicable emergency response personnel: | |
| | local fire, police, rescue | 911 |
| | Eversource: Operations | (617) 541-7821 |
| | Eversource Transmission: William Hayes | (781) 441-3932 |
| | Eversource Distribution - Paul Sellers | (508) 957-4603 |
| | Product Manufactures | |
| | 1. BASF Corporation | (800) 832-4357 |
| | 2. Bayer Environmental Science | (800) 334-7577 |
| | 3. Dow Agro Sciences | (800) 992-5994 |
| | 4. E.I du Pont de Nemours & Company | (800) 441-3637 |
| | 5. Monsanto | (314) 694-4000 |
| | 6. Nufarm | (877) 325-1840 |
| | 7. Rainbow Treecare | (877) 272-6747 |
| | 8. Chemtrec | (800) 424-9300 |
| 9. additional emergency personnel | | |
| If there is a doubt as to who should be notified, contact State Police, Central Office | (617) 566-4500 or 911 | |
| Remain at the scene to provide information and assistance to responding emergency clean-up crews | | |
| Refer to the various sources of information relative to handling and cleanup of spilled product | | |
| 7 | If possible, complete the process of "soaking up" with absorbent materials | |
| 8 | Sweep or shovel contaminated products and soil into leak proof containers for proper disposal at approved location | |
| 9 | Spread activated charcoal over spill area to inactivate any residual herbicide | |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |

11. Identification and Qualification of Individual Developing and Submitting the Plan

Identification and qualification of the individual preparing and submitting this VMP, supervision of the IVM program and overall supervision for development and implementation of the VMP is performed by:

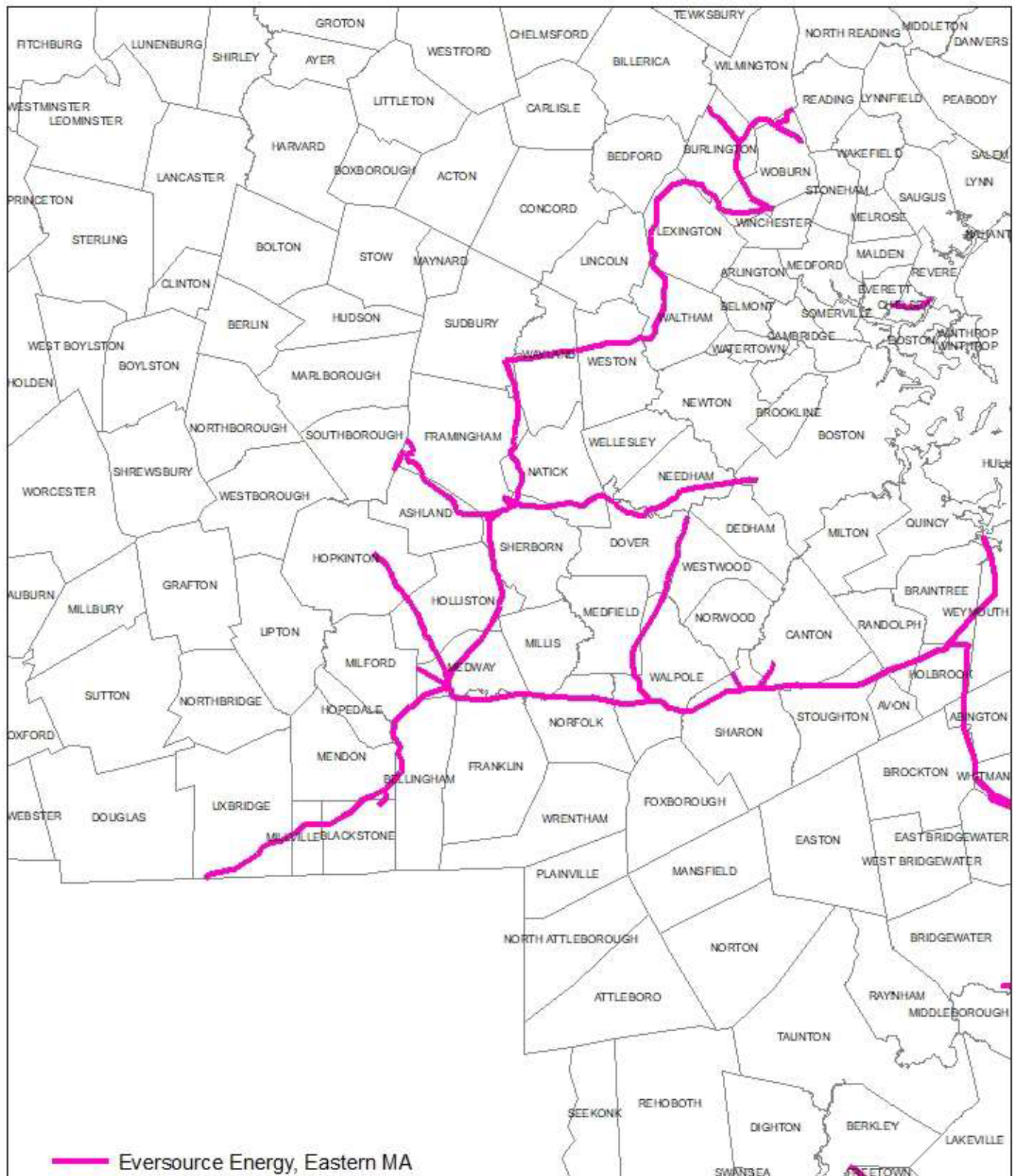
William N. Hayes Jr., Senior Supervisor
Eversource Energy
Transmission Vegetation Management
247 Station Drive, SW-1036
Westwood, MA 02090-9230
781-441- 3932 (office)

I am ultimately responsible for preparation, implementation of and compliance with this VMP and YOP's to be submitted annually. Responsible for implementing the vegetation management programs best practices on transmission, and distribution systems. I develop and evaluate methods for vegetation management to ensure transmission and distribution system reliability follows regulations and standards. Provide work scheduling, prescription of herbicides and application methods, procurement of necessary permits, municipal notifications, contractor selection, provision of technical expertise and liaison between Company right-of-way easement landowners, neighbors, local and state officials and other interested parties and field supervision of vegetation management contractors and Eversource arborists.

My qualifications extend from my education to over 30 years of work related to utility arboriculture. I have a Bachelor of Science, Majoring in Forestry Management with concentration in Arboriculture/Urban Forestry from the University of Massachusetts. Credentials include Massachusetts Certified Arborist, International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist, Massachusetts Category 40 Pesticide License, Consumers Power Co. Certified Basic Tree Trimmer. I am member of the Massachusetts Arborist Association, Massachusetts Tree Wardens & Foresters Association, Utility Arborist Association, and the International Society of Arboriculture.

APPENDIX 1:

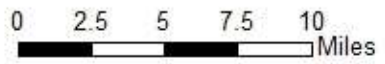
EVERSOURCE ENERGY
CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN
MASSACHUSETTS
ELECTRIC SYSTEM MAPS



Eversource Energy Eastern, MA System Map



1:400,000





Eversource Energy Eastern, MA System Map



1:400,000



APPENDIX 2:
EVERSOURCE ENERGY
CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN
MASSACHUSETTS
LIST OF MUNICIPALITIES

MUNICIPALITIES

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|
| ABINGTON | FRAMINGHAM | NORFOLK |
| ACTON | FRANKLIN | PEMBROKE |
| ACUSHNET | FREETOWN | PLYMOUTH |
| ARLINGTON | HALIFAX | PLYMPTON |
| ASHLAND | HANSON | RANDOLPH |
| AVON | HOLBROOK | ROCHESTER |
| BEDFORD | HOLLISTON | SHARON |
| BELLINGHAM | HOPKINTON | SHERBORN |
| BLACKSTONE | KINGSTON | SOMERVILLE |
| BOSTON | LEXINGTON | STOUGHTON |
| BRAINTREE | LINCOLN | SUDBURY |
| BRIDGEWATER | MARION | UXBRIDGE |
| BROCKTON | MARSHFIELD | WALPOLE |
| BROOKLINE | MATTAPOISETT | WALTHAM |
| BURLINGTON | MAYNARD | WATERTOWN |
| CAMBRIDGE | MEDFIELD | WAREHAM |
| CANTON | MEDWAY | WAYLAND |
| CARLISLE | MENDON | WESTON |
| CARVER | MIDDLEBOROUGH | WESTPORT |
| CHELSEA | MILLIS | WESTWOOD |
| DARTMOUTH | MILLVILLE | WEYMOUTH |
| DEDHAM | MILTON | WHITMAN |
| DOVER | NATICK | WILMINGTON |
| DUXBURY | NEEDHAM | WINCHESTER |
| EAST BRIDGEWATER | NEW BEDFORD | WOBURN |
| FAIRHAVEN | NEWTON | |

APPENDIX 3:
333 CMR 11.00

[HTTPS://WWW.MASS.GOV/LAW-LIBRARY/333-CMR](https://www.mass.gov/law-library/333-cmr)

APPENDIX 4:
CHAPTER 132B

[HTTPS://MALEGISLATURE.GOV/LAWS/GENERALLAWS/PARTI/TITLEXIX/CHAPTER132B](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXIX/Chapter132B)

APPENDIX 5:
SENSITIVE AREA TABLE

CONTROL STRATEGIES FOR SENSITIVE AREAS

| <i>Sensitive Area</i> | No-Spray and Limited Spray Areas (feet) | Control Method | Restriction Code |
|---|---|---|------------------|
| Public <i>Ground</i> Water Supplies | 400' | Mechanical Only | None |
| Primary Recharge Area | Designated buffer zone or 1/2 mile radius | Mechanical, Recommended Herbicides* | 24 months |
| Public <i>Surface</i> Water Supplies (Class A & Class B) | 100' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 100'-400' | Recommended Herbicides | 24 months |
| Tributary to Class A Water Source, within 400' upstream of water source | 100' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 100'-400' | Recommended Herbicides | 24 months |
| Tributary to Class A Water Source, greater than 400' upstream of water source | 10' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 10'-200' | Recommended Herbicides | 24 months |
| Class B Drinking Water Intake, within 400' upstream of intake | 100' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 100'-200' | Recommended Herbicides | 24 months |
| Private Drinking Water Supplies | 50' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 50'-100' | Recommended Herbicides | 24 months |
| Surface Waters | 10' | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 10'-100' | Recommended Herbicides | 12 months |
| Rivers | 10' from mean annual high-water line | Mechanical Only | None |
| | 10'-200' | Recommended Herbicides | 12 months |
| Wetlands | 100' (treatment in wetlands permitted up to 10' of standing water) * ⁺ | Low-pressure Foliar, CST, Basal Recommended Herbicides | 12 months |
| Inhabited Areas | 100' | Recommended Herbicides | 12 months |
| Agricultural Area (Crops, Fruits, Pastures) | 100' | Recommended Herbicides | 12 months |
| Certified Vernal Pools | 10' | Mechanical Only when water is present | None |
| Certified Vernal Pool Habitat | 10'-outer boundary of habitat | No treatment without written approval per 321 CMR 10.14(12) | |
| Priority Habitat | No treatment without written approval per 321 CMR 10.14(12) | | |

Restrictions "24 Months": A minimum of twenty-four months shall elapse between applications

"12 Months": A minimum of twelve months shall elapse between applications

*Massachusetts recommended herbicides for sensitive sites

⁺Per the *DFA Decision Concerning the Wetlands Impact Study* for utilities per 333 CMR 11.04(4)(c)(2).

APPENDIX 6:
PREFACE TO 310 CMR 10.00

[HTTPS://PIPEPORTAL.KINDERMORGAN.COM/PORTALUI/DOWNLOADDOCS/PASSKEY/ENVIRONMENTAL/APPENDIX6/450-453OFPREFACETO310CMR.PDF](https://pipeportal.kindermorgan.com/portalui/downloaddocs/passkey/environmental/appendix6/450-453ofprefaceto310cmr.pdf)

APPENDIX 7:
WETLANDS STUDY



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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WILLIAM F. WELDR
Governor

MARGARET M. WHELAN
Deputy Governor

TRUDY COX
Secretary

JOHN HANLON
Commissioner

**Decision Concerning
The Wetland Impact Study Conducted
Pursuant to 333 CMR 11.04(4)(c)(2)**

**PUBLIC UTILITY VEGETATION
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FINDING**

Background

The Rights of Way Management (ROW) Regulations (333 CMR 11:00) promulgated in 1987 prohibit the use of herbicides to control vegetation along utility right of ways on or within ten (10) feet of a wetland unless the following conditions are met:

1. Submission of a study, the design of which is subject to prior review and approval of the Departments of Food and Agriculture and Environmental Protection, evaluating impacts of proposed vegetation management programs on wetlands; and
2. A finding by the Department, after consultation with the Advisory Committee, that the proposed vegetation management program will result in less impacts to the wetland than mechanical control.
3. Notwithstanding the above, no herbicides shall be applied on or within ten feet of any standing or flowing water in a wetland.

On April 28, 1988, The Departments of Food and Agriculture and Environmental Protection approved the scope of the study. In the fall of 1989, Environmental Consultants, Inc. submitted to the Department of Food and Agriculture the study entitled, "Study of the Impacts of Vegetation Management Techniques on Wetlands for Utility Rights-of Way in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts", dated June 1989. The Department consulted with the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) Advisory panel at their November 15, 1989, December 7, 1989 and August 1, 1991 meetings.

The study provided some broad information of vegetation control along utility right of ways. The Department based its finding solely upon the narrow scope of whether the "proposed vegetation management program will result in less impacts to the wetland than mechanical control."

The following are the major evaluation points the Department considered in reaching its decision.

What are the Long-term and Short-term Impacts From Herbicide use and Mechanical Control?

Since wetlands are not a static, unchanging resource, there is some difficulty in determining the actual long-term impacts from the various vegetation control practices. The extent of wetland alterations must be the most important factor in determining impacts. With limited or selective removal of unwanted plant species in specific locations, it appears that long-term impacts are negligible. While mowing or foliar application can damage non-target species, neither control practice appears to result in adverse long-term impacts if they are carefully executed. Clear cutting, however, has a greater impact on wetlands since both wanted and nuisance species are removed.

Although there were some reservations about the sites that were chosen to determine the level of chemical residues, the study did show that there was not a buildup of background residues of herbicides applied from previous practices. However, there were some trace amounts of petroleum products - bar oil or hydraulic fluid found. The source of these petroleum products is unclear and may have been the result of public activities not related to vegetation management. Retrospective analyses for herbicide residues in previously treated wetland areas is not generally applicable since the herbicides used today are less persistent than those which were used previously. However, these analyses did indicate that the herbicides used in the past do not persist in the environment.

The study clearly demonstrated that adjacent non-controlled wetland areas did not differ significantly in composition and abundance of plant species from the controlled areas. The control practices did not appear to impact the entire wetland ecosystem, since a long-term comparison of wetland plant species composition between controlled and non-controlled sites did not differ significantly. Therefore, the long-term effects on the entire wetland ecosystem were considered negligible.

The determination of the short-term impacts to the wetland from the control practices was the most noted short-coming of the study. However, this was not part of the original scope. The VMP Advisory Panel felt, and the Department agreed, that a short-term environmental fate study would be needed.

The first study indicated that certain mechanical control practices can impact wetlands and disrupt the ecosystem to a greater extent than the judicious use of herbicides. While cutting may result in re sprouting of some unwanted vegetation in a manner unlikely to be encountered in unaltered wetland areas, unregulated mechanical vegetation control could result in the destruction of other non-target plant species.

What is the Impact to Non-target Wetland Plant Communities?

Basal and cut stump treatment with low mobility, short persistence herbicides that are judiciously applied usually do not impact adjacent plant species. Likewise careful selective mechanical cutting (versus mowing or clear cutting) also usually does not impact non-target wetland plants. The greatest potential risk to non-target wetland plants comes from mowing, clear-cutting, and high volume foliar applications. Low volume foliar applications in wetlands may also cause non-target impacts if application guidelines are not followed (e.g. no applications during high winds, or without using anti-drift agents, etc.).

Is There Enough Information on Which to Base a Finding?

As in most environmental assessments, a complete database is not available to answer all of the questions posed by the Department and the Vegetation Management Advisory Panel. Some of the questions posed were entirely valid, but were beyond the scope of the approved study.

The study did provide some clear evidence that selective mechanical and herbicide use does minimally alter wetlands by removing specific plant species. Mechanical mowing operations, however, can result in far greater short-term and potentially long-term impacts to wetlands since both wanted and un-wanted plant species are indiscriminately removed. Additionally, foliar herbicide applications may cause short-term impacts to non-target species.

The Department did not find any significant difference in wetland impacts between careful mechanical removal (selective hand cutting) of unwanted species

and, cut stump or basal treatment with herbicides.

There is no assurance that prohibiting the use of herbicides in wetlands will result in careful mechanical control. If herbicide use is prohibited in wetland areas, mechanical control in wetlands will be the only practice available to utilities. Financial pressures and other considerations may force Utilities to increase mowing and / or the use of more destructive non-chemical control practices due to a lack of alternative control techniques.

On August 29, 1991, the Department made a finding that the submitted study met the approved scope. However, although the study contained useful information, it was also determined that additional data needed to be gathered and analyzed because the study was inconclusive in a number of instances.

The Department issued a finding that a proposed vegetation program containing the specific elements listed does not pose an unreasonable adverse impact to wetlands. In addition, the Department required a study be conducted to provide important environmental fate data necessary for the long-term implementation of the rights of way program.

AUGUST 1991 FINDING

The Department of Food and Agriculture finds that a proposed vegetation program containing the following elements will not pose an unreasonable adverse impact to wetlands:

- 1. The Integrated pest Management (IPM) system, as described in the Vegetation Management Plan and Yearly Operation Plan, is utilized in wetland areas. The IPM system must, at a minimum, place emphasis on encouraging low growth plant species to discourage unwanted vegetation and, minimizing the frequency and amount of herbicide use by only controlling specific non-conifer tree species which will impact transmission line operation and access to the right of way.*
- 2. Herbicides may be applied by basal, cut stump or low volume foliar methods. Foliar applications must include the use of drift reduction agents. Foliar applications may only be conducted in situations where basal and cut stump treatments are not appropriate based on the size of the vegetation and potential for off-target drift. Foliar applications must not result*

in the off-target drift to non-target species.

3. *Herbicides are not applied to conifer species (pine, spruce, fir, cedar and hemlock).*
4. *Carriers for herbicides do not contain any of the following petroleum based products: jet fuel, kerosene or fuel oil. Carriers will be subjected to review by the Department of Food and Agriculture and DEP through 333 CMR 11.04(1)(d).*
5. *Herbicides must be recommended by the Department of Food and Agriculture and DEP through 333 CMR 11.04(1)(d).*
6. *Herbicides may only be applied by hand operated equipment containing no more than 5 gallons of diluent.*
7. *All other restrictions within sensitive areas remain in effect. In accordance with 333 CMR 11.04(1)(c), no person shall apply herbicides for the purposes of clearing or maintaining a right-of-way in such a manner that results in drift to any areas within 10 feet of standing or flowing water in a wetland or area within 400 feet of a public drinking water supply well; or area within 100 feet of any surface water used as a public water supply; or area within 50 feet of a private drinking water supply identified under 333 CMR 11.04(2)(c)(3).*
8. *Approved Vegetation Management Plans and Yearly Operation Plans must be amended as needed to reflect the conditions of this FINDING.*
9. *The Department further requires that environmental fate data be provided by the utilities that are applying herbicides to rights-of-way, which characterizes the movement of herbicides applied to wetland areas under these conditions. The Department further requires that all study protocols be reviewed by the Vegetation Advisory Panel and be approved by the Department of Food and Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Protection. Failure to submit the required information by the dates outlined in the schedule below will render this finding void.*

An approvable scope of the study developed and

submitted by January 1, 1992.

Field data submitted to DFA by October 1, 1992. Data must be consistent with the requirements of the approved scope.

Draft study report submitted to DFA by October 1, 1993.

Final Report submitted to DFA by March 1, 1994.

10. *The Department reserves the right to amend or withdraw its FINDING at anytime if it determines that the use of herbicides in wetland areas poses a greater impact than mechanical control or may pose an unreasonable adverse effect to humans or the environment.*
11. *This finding expires December 31, 1994.*

Therefore, herbicide use may be allowed to control certain vegetation along utility right of ways if the proposed vegetation program as described in the approved Vegetation Management Plan and Yearly Operational Plans contains the above elements.

On, April 27, 1992, the Departments of Food and Agriculture and Environmental Protection approved the scope of the "*Study of Fates of Herbicides in Wetlands on Electric Utility Rights of Way in the Massachusetts Over the Short Term*". The final report was submitted to the Department of Food and Agriculture December 31, 1993. The Department began reviewing the report in consultation with the VMP Advisory panel.

At the end of 1994, the Department had not completed its review. Therefore, on December 22, 1994 the Department extended the current finding for one year (to December 31, 1995) or until such time it is able to make a final determination, whichever occurs first.

Fates of Herbicides Over the Short Term Study

The objective of this study was to determine the short term environmental fate and assess the impacts of selected herbicides applied by four common Right-of-Way management techniques. Additionally, the study evaluated which of the four Right-of-Way management techniques provides the most effective control of target vegetation and which techniques produced the least impact on the non-target plant community, and consequently the least alteration of wooded wetland community.

The study investigated the environmental fate of two herbicides, which are typically used to control vegetation on ROWs, and are included in the list recommended for use in sensitive areas. These herbicides were chosen, among other reasons, for their use patterns, size of area treated, and application rates. Accord, which contains the active ingredient glyphosate, is the primary herbicide used for cut stump treatment and is also used for foliar application. Garlon 4, which contains the active ingredient triclopyr, is the primary herbicide used for basal applications. Collectively these products represent the typical herbicides used to control vegetation on ROWs.

Results

A summary of the most important findings and conclusions of the study include:

* Based upon the samples collected immediately after application, at 1 week, 1 month, 3 months and 1 year:

- The two herbicides, glyphosate and triclopyr degrade rapidly. Residues reach low quantities quickly, often less than detection limits, within a year.; and
- There is essentially no movement either laterally or vertically from the treated sites by glyphosate. Triclopyr does not move laterally, but was noted to move vertically in small amounts.

* Drift cards indicate that the herbicides are neither splashed nor carried any distance by the wind. Glyphosate drift is not a significant problem resulting in slight effects on neighboring vegetation and are not detectable in the next year's growth. Sphagnum moss next to trunks treated basally with triclopyr were killed within three months in a 15 cm diameter circle immediately around the target tree, but the dead circle did not continue to enlarge.

* Filter paper recovered immediately after application of herbicide showed that all methods of application deposit herbicide on the ground. Treated bare soil samples showed as consistent a drop in herbicide concentrations and as little vertical movement as did samples beneath target trees.

* The use of the herbicides glyphosate and triclopyr at the strengths and application rates used does not pose a risk of accumulation in organically rich soils.

* Herbicide concentrations in soil continue to decline as time advances.

* Rainfall occurring more than a week after application does not appear to spread the herbicide nor does groundwater carry any substantial fraction of what has been applied to a particular site down into the soil or horizontally.

* Based upon the results of the study, an assessment of the environmental fate, and observations of both treatment effectiveness and non-target impacts, an effective and environmentally sensitive ranking from most effective and posing least potential environmental risks to least effective and posing the most environmental risk is suggested:

1. Most effective control and exclusive effect on target:
low-volume foliar (with glyphosate).
2. Most consistent control with lethal effects on bordering vegetation:
high-volume foliar (with glyphosate)
3. Total control with rings of dead vegetation around treated trunks:
low-volume basal (with triclopyr)
4. Incomplete target control and leaving largest soil residues:
cut-stump (with glyphosate)

It is important to note that the results of the second short term study suggest that the most efficacious application techniques and which pose the lowest environmental risk were not those recommended in the interim finding.

DEPARTMENT DETERMINATION

Based upon the results of the two ROW impact studies, the general information in the literature, and after consultations with the Vegetation Management Panel, the Department finds that the following proposed vegetation management program will result in less impacts to wetlands than exclusive use of mechanical control methods. Therefore, the Department finds that any vegetation management program that incorporates the conditions under which the study was conducted as well as taking into account the results of previous studies, will result in the least impacts to wetlands.

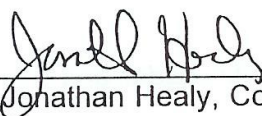
These conditions include:

1. An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system, also known as Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM), as described in the Vegetation Management Plan and Yearly Operation Plan is utilized in wetland areas. The IPM system must, at a minimum, place emphasis on encouraging low growth plant species to discourage unwanted vegetation and, minimizing the frequency and amount of herbicide use by only controlling specific non-conifer tree species which will impact transmission line operation and access to the right of way.
2. Herbicides may be applied by low volume foliar, basal, or cut stump methods. Foliar applications must include the use of appropriate drift reduction agents, and must not result in the off-target drift to non-target species. Basal and cut-stump treatments may be conducted in those situations where the size of the vegetation, potential for off-target drift, or other considerations precludes the use of low-volume foliar applications. Cut stump and basal applications shall be restricted, when practicable, to periods when static ground water levels are low or otherwise when conditions are less susceptible to potential contamination.
3. Herbicides are not applied to conifer species (pine, spruce, fir, cedar and hemlock).
4. Carriers for herbicides do not contain any of the following petroleum based products: jet fuel, kerosene or fuel oil. Carriers will be subjected to review by the Department of Food and Agriculture and DEP through 333 CMR 11.04(1)(d).

5. Only herbicides recommended by the Departments of Food and Agriculture and Environmental Protection through 333 CMR 11.04(1)(d) may be used in sensitive areas.
6. Herbicides may only be applied by hand operated equipment containing no more than 5 gallons of diluent.
7. All other restrictions within sensitive areas remain in effect. In accordance with 333 CMR 11.04(1)(c), no person shall apply herbicides for the purposes of clearing or maintaining a right-of-way in such a manner that results in drift to any areas within 10 feet of standing or flowing water in a wetland or area within 400 feet of a public drinking water supply well; or area within 100 feet of any surface water used as a public water supply; or area within 50 feet of a private drinking water supply identified under 333 CMR 11.04(2)(c)(3).
8. A minimum of twelve months must elapse between herbicide treatments. Only touch-up applications may be performed between twelve and twenty four months.
9. Approved Vegetation Management Plans and Yearly Operation Plans must be amended as needed to reflect the conditions of this determination.

.....

Therefore, herbicide use may be allowed to control certain vegetation along utility right of ways if the proposed vegetation program as described in the approved Vegetation Management Plan and Yearly Operational Plans contains the above elements.



Jonathan Healy, Commissioner

10/12/95

Date

APPENDIX 8:
CHAPTER 85, SECTION 10

[HTTPS://MALEGISLATURE.GOV/LAWS/SESSIONLAWS/ACTS/2000/CHAPTER85](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2000/Chapter85)

APPENDIX 9:
REFERENCES

REFERENCES

SENSITIVE MATERIALS LIST:

A current list of the *Sensitive Area Materials List* and individual *Fact Sheets* on these herbicides are available at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/pesticides/rights-of-way-vegetation-management.html>

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