

# Eastern Box Turtle Monitoring

## East Sandwich, Massachusetts

The Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene c. carolina*) is a Massachusetts Species of Special Concern as designated by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). Protection of this species and its habitat is regulated under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131A) or MESA, which prohibits the “Take” of any State-listed species. A “Take” includes a broad range of actions that could result in the interference of a species’ biological activities.

Housing Assistance Corporation, a non-profit organization, contracted The Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) to assist them in implementing their Conservation and Management Permit regarding a cluster development on a 15-acre site in East Sandwich, Massachusetts. One component of the Conservation and Management Permit was the preservation of approximately 70% of the land as open space to be permanently protected under a Conservation Restriction.

Services included finalizing the Wildlife Management Plan with NHESP and field monitoring specifically related to the identified habitat of the Eastern Box Turtle during all phases of construction, including pre-construction surveys to relocate any potential individuals within the limit of work. HW obtained a Scientific Collection Permit from NHESP for these purposes. Pre-qualified HW wildlife biologists remained on-call throughout the construction phase in the event that a box turtle was discovered during construction activities in accordance with the Conservation and Management Permit. HW also prepared a fact sheet for contractors alerting them to the sensitivity of the project with respect to the protection of this species. All observations were reported to NHESP at the conclusion of each phase of construction.

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