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Project of the Month: Columbia Construction completes the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife field headquarters

October 21, 2014 - Construction Design & Engineering

Fulfilling years of planning for the Commonwealth's clean energy future is the new Division of Fisheries and Wildlife field headquarters, the state's first publically owned office building designed for zero net energy performance. The three-story, 45,000 s/f building serves as the field headquarters for the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife and also the main location for the Office of Fishing and Boating Access, two divisions of the Mass. Department of Fish & Game (DFG). The building was designed to demonstrate practical sustainable design and renewable energy systems as well as to support DFG's many educational initiatives, regulatory processes, and public services. Built by Columbia Construction Co., this solar-powered building was designed by an integrated design team led by Architerra, with Van Zelm Engineers, Solar Design Associates, Souza True, Towers Golde, and Green International. The new facility reflects the Commonwealth's commitment to stewardship and leadership in conservation and management of the environment. The high performance building, targeting LEED Platinum, is designed to achieve zero net energy through exceptional energy conservation provided by real-time energy performance tracking, structural insulated panels, triple-glazed windows, mechanically assisted natural ventilation, light emitting diode (LED) lighting, together with renewable energy provided by rooftop solar photovoltaics. The high performance mechanical system includes a direct outside air system, closed-loop ground source heat pump, energy recovery ventilator (ERV), and radiant panels. The building is oriented to optimize production from the rooftop photovoltaic array while minimizing heating and cooling energy use. LEED modeling results forecast that the building may reduce actual energy cost by 50%.

Commissioner Mary Griffin of the Department of Fish and Game said, "This building will serve as education and office space to better serve the public, and reflects the values and commitment of governor Patrick, secretary Bartlett, the Department and the Division of Capital Asset Management to our environmental and clean energy future."

"This building is a testament to Massachusetts leadership in innovation," said commissioner Carole Cornelison, DCAMM. "As the state's first net zero building, this provides an opportunity for the Commonwealth to show others how to design and maintain an environmentally friendly building."

The building will be open to the public year-round and is geared towards becoming a venue for environmental education. It will house over 120 MassWildlife biologists and environmental reviewers, and be shared by the information office and education program staff as well. It will also provide office space for the Department of Fish and Game and its Office of Fishing and Boating Access staff who maintain over 275 fishing and boating public access facilities statewide. Flexible by design, program areas include offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, a library, GIS laboratory, and a wet lab for research.

