Beginning on April 20, 2020 (tentative date, due to COVID-19 situation) and lasting approximately 2 weeks, the Cape Cod & Southeast MA Rabies Task Force and the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services) will be conducting Oral Rabies Vaccination (ORV) in your area in an effort to vaccinate wild raccoons to prevent the reintroduction of raccoon-variant rabies to Cape Cod, and reducing rabies cases in areas north of the Cape Cod Canal. While this will be our 26th year conducting this program in Massachusetts, **this is the first year we will be distributing ORV baits by helicopter in over a decade.**

The rotary wing (helicopter) ORV operations will be based out of Plymouth Municipal Airport. The helicopter distribution will occur primarily in the immediate vicinity of and around: Plymouth, Kingston, Carver, Middleboro, Rochester, Lakeville, Marion, Wareham, and Bourne, MA (Figure 1). The remainder of the ORV zone will be baited by hand out of vehicles and by stationary bait stations.

![Image of rotary wing ORV area](image)

**Figure 1. Spring 2020 proposed rotary wing ORV area**

The Cape Cod and Southeast MA Rabies Task Force and USDA will be utilizing a federally-owned helicopter to distribute baits. The helicopter is a red and black Hughes 500, similar to the one shown in the photo above. The helicopter will be flying approximately 300 feet above ground level while distributing baits and you may receive inquiries from the public in regards to low-flying aircraft.

If there are any questions regarding any of the ORV operations please contact Wildlife Biologist and Cape Cod Rabies Program Coordinator Brian Bjorklund at 413-537-9394.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Bjorklund  
Wildlife Biologist & Cape Cod Rabies Program Coordinator  
USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services

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