

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management (DWSP) is responsible for providing high quality source drinking water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) for distribution to 2.5 million people in 51 Commonwealth communities. The 412 billion gallon/39.4 mi<sup>2</sup> Quabbin Reservoir and the 65 billion gallon/6.5 mi<sup>2</sup> Wachusett Reservoir are the heart of this watershed system, along with water seasonally diverted from the Ware River. The Sudbury Reservoir system serves as an emergency reserve. DWSP owns over 100,000 acres of land within the 466 mi<sup>2</sup> total watershed area. DWSP is continually planning to maintain the superior water quality in its reservoirs.

There are three critical components to the DWSP planning process for each watershed. **The Public Access Plan** describes the management policies that allow people to recreate on DWSP lands while still protecting water quality. **The Land Management Plan** is a thorough description of the watershed's physical features, the natural resources on DWSP property, and the variety of techniques used by the agency to enhance water quality, including land protection and forest and wildlife management. **The Watershed Protection Plan** takes information from the Public Access Plan and Land Management Plan and integrates water monitoring findings and other studies to create an action plan that is the basis for DWSP's annual Work Plan and budget. The Watershed Protection Plan acts as an "umbrella," encompassing all efforts by DWSP that affect both public and private watershed lands in the quest to provide high quality drinking water that requires minimal treatment.

Additional studies and reports utilized in the Watershed Protection Plan include annual **Water Quality Reports** and basin specific **Environmental Quality Assessments** that identify water quality trends, link problems to sources of contamination, and develop prioritized goals for corrective actions as well as **Emergency Action Plans** which detail the necessary steps and chain of command required in case of a catastrophe associated with the reservoirs. **The Land Acquisition Panel** analyzes and guides DWSP's purchase of properties that are critical to long-term water quality protection. **Terrestrial Invasive Species, Aquatic Invasive Species, Gull Habitat, Stormwater Management, Agriculture, and Hazardous Materials Emergency Response** are some of the topics that have come under special study.

Information from all of these plans and reports is integrated into the **Annual Work Plan**, which is submitted for approval by the five person board of trustees of the Water Supply Protection Trust. The Trust was established by the legislature in 2004 as a mechanism for MWRA to fund DWSP.

Public outreach is an important element of DWSP's watershed protection efforts. Each plan seeks input from a variety of perspectives—such as legislatively mandated watershed advisory groups, visitors, abutters, and user interest groups—through public meetings, the press, and the DCR website. DWSP supports an ongoing discourse with the public on water supply protection strategies through individual contact by DWSP Watershed Rangers and interpretive staff, implementation of the Watershed Protection Act, municipal technical assistance, fact sheets, and the bi-annual newsletter *Downstream*.

This comprehensive approach to watershed planning has made it possible for MWRA to maintain a waiver from federal filtration requirements and make the Office of Watershed Management a national model. While consultants are utilized when necessary for specific expertise, the vast majority of these plans and outreach material are developed by DWSP staff. The table on the reverse side provides a summary of the status of DWSP's plans, including the current version, term, and history. Recent plans, fact sheets, newsletters, and other information about the Office of Watershed Management are available on-line at

[www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed).

# Planning for the Protection of the DCR/MWRA Water Supply System

---

## Division of Water Supply Protection

## Office of Watershed Management

March 2014

---

dcr  
Massachusetts



**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection  
Office of Watershed Management Planning Summary**

*All plans produced by DWSP staff unless noted otherwise*

Type of Plan	Latest Publication	Term	Next Planned Revision	Previous Versions (Consultant)
<b>Watershed Protection Plans</b>				
Quabbin Reservoir/Ware River	2013	5 years	2018	1991 (Rizzo); 2000; 2008
Wachusett Reservoir	2013	5 years	2018	1991 (Rizzo); 1998 (CDM); 2003; 2008
Sudbury Reservoir System	2013	As Needed	2018	1997 (CEI); 2008
<b>Land Management Plans</b>				
Quabbin Reservoir	2007	10 years	2014	1961, 1972, 1986, 1995
Ware River	2003	10 years	2014	1986
Wachusett Reservoir	2001	10 years	2014	
Sudbury Reservoir System	2005	10 years	2014	
<b>Public Access Plans</b>				
Quabbin Reservoir	2006	5-10 years	2016	1988, 1998
Ware River	2010	5-10 years	2019	1988, 2000
Wachusett Reservoir	2011	5-10 years	2021	1996; 2003
Sudbury Reservoir System	2010	5-10 years	2020	1994, 2002
<b>Annual Plans and Reports</b>				
DWSP Fiscal Year Work Plan				Annually since 2005
Quabbin and Wachusett Water Quality Reports				Annually since 1987
Land Acquisition				A list of properties is periodically developed for approval by the MWRA.
Emergency Action Plans				1993–1995 (GZA and GEI); 2006–Present by MWRA
Environmental Quality Assessments (Replaced Sanitary Surveys in 2000)		5 years	1 sub-basin/year	Sanitary Surveys: 1988–2000. EQAs: 2000-present
<b>Special Studies</b>				
Terrestrial Invasive Species	2011			
Aquatic Invasive Species	2010			
Gull Habitat	2007-2010			
Stormwater Management	1999			(CDM)
Agriculture	1998			(CEI)
Highways/Railways Hazardous Material Release Control	1998			(Rizzo)
Hazardous Materials Emergency Response	1997			(CEI)

\* Cutting plans are developed annually to guide specific forestry activities.

**OFFICE OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT**

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Water Supply Protection  
251 Causeway St., Boston, MA 02114  
617-626-1250

[www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed)

