dcr
Massachusetts

Resource Management Plan
Templeton State Forest

Adopted by the DCR Stewardship Council Month, 2025

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Conservation and Resource Stewardship
Office of Cultural Resources

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Purpose

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are foundational documents that identify a park, forest, or reservation's defining natural, cultural, and recreational resources and identify potential threats and opportunities to guide DCR's continued stewardship of the property and to inform future decisions about the property in a way that celebrates and preserves its identity.

RMPs are prepared for "all reservations, parks, and forests under the management of the department" (M.G.L. c. 21, § 2F). These plans "shall include guidelines for the operation and land stewardship of the aforementioned reservations, parks and forests, shall provide for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources and shall ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management." DCR finalizes RMPs following a public process and adoption by the DCR Stewardship Council. The contents of this RMP represent the best available information at the time of adoption by the Stewardship Council.

Mission and Core Principles

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, parkways, and over 100 National Register listed properties. The agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well-being of all.

DCR strives to be an exemplary leader in conservation and recreation. DCR's staff is passionate, dedicated, and continuously employs best practices, expertise, and a sense of place in carrying out the mission. The following core principles ground the agency in its work. For the benefit and well-being of all—people and the environment—DCR pledges to:

- Provide access to a diversity of outdoor recreational experiences and unique landscapes that is equitable, inclusive, and welcoming.
- Conserve lands, water, and forests by integrating science, research, and technical expertise into the management of our natural resources.
- Advance climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts by implementing sustainable practices and advancing resiliency across our infrastructure, assets, and resources.
- Support healthy communities by providing places for people to connect with nature and each other.
- Inspire generations of stewards by recognizing and honoring our legacy through partnerships, public engagement, and education.

Stewardship

DCR honors Indigenous peoples for their care, throughout many generations, of the land that DCR now stewards on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth. DCR embraces this legacy of stewardship, fostering a sense of shared responsibility by all people for protection of the waters, lands and living things for the enjoyment and appreciation of all.

To learn more about the DCR, its facilities, and programs please visit us at www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@mass.gov.

Templeton State Forest

1. Property Overview

Characteristic	Value
Date Established	1908 & 1924
Location	Templeton
Ecoregion	Worcester Plateau
Watershed	Millers
DCR Region	Central
DCR District	Central Highlands
DCR Complex	Otter River
Management Forestry District	Mid-State
Fire Control District	North Worcester
Size (acres)	718.1
Boundary Length (miles)	10.6
Elevation - Minimum (feet)	858.6
Elevation - Maximum (feet)	1,211.3
Environmental Justice (acres)	0.0
Estimated Annual Attendance (2023)	Unknown
Interpretive Programs (# programs, 2023)	0
Interpretive Programs (# attendees, 2023)	0

2. Landscape Designations

Designation	Acres
Parkland	0.0
Reserve	0.0
Woodland	638.6
No Designation	79.5

3. Regulatory Designations

Designation	Acres
None Identified	N/A

4. Long-Term Agreements

Agreement	Expiration Year
None Identified	N/A

5. Concessions

Concession Type
None

6. Partners & Friends

Group(s)
Coldbrook Snowmobile Club

7. Features of Interest

Feature
Glacial kames (distinctive sand and gravel mounds)
Trails

8. Natural Resources

Resource	Value
Tree Canopy (acres)	689.8
Rivers and Streams (miles)	0.9
Open Water (acres)	0.1
Wetlands (acres)	110.1
Certified Vernal Pools (#)	0
Potential Vernal Pools (#)	5
State-Listed Species (# Regulatory)	0
State-Listed Species (# Non-Regulatory)	0
Federally Listed Species (#)	0
Aquatic Invasive Plants (# known species)	0
Terrestrial Invasive Plants (# known species)	4

9. Forest Management (Since 2012)

Management Objective	Acres
Maintain and enhance species and structural diversity	169.0

10. History of Wildfires and Conditions Influencing Future Wildfires

Wildfire Attribute	Value or Characteristic
Number of wildfires on property; 2019–2023	0
Acres burned by wildfires on property; 2019–2023	0.0
Number of wildfires in Fire Control District; 2019–2023	294
Acres burned by wildfires in Fire Control District; 2019–2023	1,169.6
Type of Wildland-Urban Interface	Intermix
Predicted rate of spread, based on Fire Behavior Fuel Model 13	Moderate

11. Natural Hazards

Hazard Type	Acres
Flood (1.0%-chance)	3.2
Flood (0.2%-chance)	52.3
Hurricane Inundation (Cat. 1)	N/A
Hurricane Inundation (Cat. 4)	N/A

12. Climate Change (By 2070)

Type of Change	Amount of Change
Increase in annual days over 90° F	>30
Change in annual maximum daily rainfall (inches)	>10
Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model area of inundation (acres)	N/A

13. Cultural Resources

Resource Type	#
Archaeological	0
Historic - Total MACRIS Listed	0
Historic - National Register Listed	0
Historic - National Historic Landmark	0

14. Recreation Resources

Resource	#
Trail Networks	2

15. Recreation Activities

Activity
Hiking/walking
Horseback riding
Snowmobiling

16. Roads and Trails

Metric	Value
Roads - Unpaved (miles)	0.0
Roads - Paved (miles)	0.0
Forest Roads - Unpaved (miles)	3.7
Forest Roads - Paved (miles)	0.0
Trails - Unpaved (miles)	4.1
Trails - Paved (miles)	0.0
Trails - Unauthorized (miles)	3.0
Trail Density (miles/acre)	0.015
Area of Impact (acres)	439.6

17. Parking

Parking Resources	#
Lots	1
Parking Spaces - Total	8
Parking Spaces - Accessible (HP)	0
Parking Spaces - Other	8

INTRODUCTION

Templeton State Forest (Templeton or the Forest) is composed of three noncontiguous land tracts in the Town of Templeton (the Town), approximately 24 miles northwest of Worcester. The Town's population of 8,149 (as of the 2020 U.S. Census) is dispersed in a mixture of urban-industrial and rural neighborhoods in the community. Portions of the Forest connect to Hubbardston State Forest (see associated RMP) in the rural community of Hubbardston. Route 2 passes through the Town, directly adjacent to one Forest tract. All the adjoining communities host DCR parks or forests, with the aforementioned Hubbardston State Forest being the closest.

The Forest's three tracts (described south to north, see Land Stewardship Zoning Map on page 22) are:

- **Main Tract.** This 230-acre area is contiguous with Hubbardston State Forest, to the south, and has frontage on Hubbardston Road at the Templeton-Hubbardston town line. A small trail network on this forested property connects to trails in Hubbardston State Forest and accesses wetlands on the edge of Cook Pond. Private residential and undeveloped (i.e., forested) parcels abut other parts of the Main Tract.
- **Cross Road Tract.** A 105-acre area fronting the intersection of Hubbardston and Cross roads, approximately 1,000 feet northeast of the Main Tract. There are no trails on this tract, which is abutted by private residential and undeveloped parcels.
- **Trout Brook Tract.** Also known as the Hadley Aiken Lot, this 360-acre parcel is abutted to the northwest by the Norcross Hill Wildlife Management Area (WMA; formerly part of the Department of Developmental Services Templeton Developmental Center; i.e., Templeton Farm Colony, closed 2014). To the east is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Birch Hill Flood Control Project. DCR leases the USACE land and subleases the portion adjacent to the Forest to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife). Also bounding the Trout Brook Tract are the privately owned Crow Hill Moto motocross track and Route 2.

The Forest is on land shaped by generations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous inhabitants. Past and present Indigenous residents embody fluid, relational connections to the places and spaces now known as Templeton State Forest. Groups and individuals, including Indigenous peoples known as the Abanaki, Pennacook and Wabanaki (Dawnland Confederacy), are recorded in available documentation (Native Land Digital 2023) as having relationships to this place over seasons and generations. Following Indigenous peoples' dispossession, the Massachusetts General Court (MGC) in 1730 made land grants in the area to war veterans and granted incorporation to Templeton in 1762. By the early 20th century, the town's declining rural population and historical agriculture and land use had created the cut-over and economically unproductive lands that were targeted by the Commonwealth's early 20th-century forestry programs. Most forest acquisitions in Templeton occurred through two campaigns under these initiatives. In 1908–1910, the Commonwealth purchased approximately 217 acres on Hubbardston Road (now part of the Main Tract) as reforestation lots under Chapter 478, Acts of 1908 (MGC 1908). The 1908 reforestation program authorized limited land purchases for reforestation, water quality protection, and demonstration of scientific forestry, with a 10-year option for reacquisition by the previous landowner. Reforestation lots that were not reacquired by the previous landowner, such as the lots within the Main Tract, were incorporated into the state forest system by the MGC under Chapter 126, Acts of 1931 (MGC 1931). Subsequent larger land purchases, totaling over 433 acres, added to the Main Tract and

established two new Forest blocks: the Cross Road Tract and the Trout Brook Tract. These purchases, spanning the years 1924–1932, occurred under Chapter 604, Acts of 1920, a 15-year, $3-million, state forest expansion for "producing timber and protecting the water supply of the Commonwealth" (MGC 1920). Thus, the Commissioner of Conservation's fiscal year 1924 report listed Templeton as a "new" state forest (Department of Conservation 1925: 5–6). The most recent purchase in the Forest was 12.3 acres in 2020. A small (approximately 3-acre) portion of the Trout Brook Tract was purchased by the USACE for the Birch Hill Dam Flood Control Project, which was completed in 1942. The Trout Brook Tract was subject to reforestation plantings (probably by Civilian Conservation Camp laborers stationed at Otter River State Forest) and the Forest has been subject to several forest management operations (for example, see Vautour and DiNardo 2014). Since 1997, the Forest has been managed under the Department of Environmental Management's (DEM) Guidelines for Operations and Land Stewardship (i.e., GOALS Plan): State Forests & Parks in the Northeastern Connecticut Valley Region (DEM 1997).

The Forest has an undulating topography of kames (distinctive sand and gravel mounds deposited by glaciers; located on the Trout Brook Tract) and rocky hills interspersed by wetlands associated with Templeton and Trout Brooks. The forest cover of oak-pine and hemlock is nearly continuous across the parcels, excepting where DCR-managed silviculture recently occurred on the Trout Brook Tract. Cook Pond and Templeton Brook are the named waters within the Forest. Stone walls, cellar holes, and an old road evidence historical-period land-uses. Otherwise, the Forest is undeveloped (i.e., no recreational development or visitor amenities) except for the trails and forest roads that crisscross the two larger tracts.

PARK IDENTITY

Templeton State Forest conserves valuable open space in the Town for recreation, wildlife habitat, forestry, and water resource protection. The Forest's identity is derived from its location within the Worcester Plateau ecoregion and its connectivity to other conserved lands that combine to form large swaths of open space and habitat across multiple communities. All future activities and improvements in the Forest should focus on continued natural resources protection, managed forestry, and passive recreation in a manner consistent with the Woodlands Landscape Designation.

DEFINING RESOURCES AND VALUES

Resources and values that define the forest are related to the geographic and historical characteristics of Templeton. They include:

- Sustainable management of the Forest's softwood plantations and oak-pine and hemlock forest stands.
- Contributions to landscape-scale protected open spaces. In conjunction with the USACE, MassWildlife, and other DCR lands, the Trout Brook Tract provides a valuable connecting link in a nearly 3,000-acre continuous tract of open space and wildlife habitat across Templeton, Phillipston, Winchendon, and Royalston.
- The kames of the Trout Brook Tract, whose distinct plateaued landforms are features of geologic and scenic interest.

- A historical road and cellar hole complex on the Trout Brook Tract (recorded in the DCR Cultural Resources Inventory, but not in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (i.e., MACRIS).
- The trails network (Trout Brook Tract and Main Tract) that affords opportunities for passive recreation and snowmobiling. The Main Tract, in combination with DCR and other conserved lands in Hubbardston, provides miles of connected trails and forest roads.

STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Statements of Significance describe the importance or distinctiveness of a place and its resources (National Park Service 1998). These statements reflect current scholarly inquiry and interpretation and go beyond a simple listing of resources to include contextual information that makes the facts more meaningful. When developing significance statements, the following criteria are considered:

- The property's significance at the time of its establishment.
- How the property, or society's understanding of the property, has changed since its acquisition that makes it significant or unique within the state park system today.
- The property's role in recreation and its importance to the community it supports, particularly regarding activities that are unique to that property.

For park planning, these statements focus management actions on the preservation and enjoyment of those attributes that most directly contribute to the importance of the place. For interpretive planning, they comprise the information upon which the interpretive themes and overall program are built.

The following Statements of Significance have been identified for Templeton State Forest. The sequence of these statements does not reflect their level of significance.

- Beyond the original intents of timber harvesting, pest control, and fire control, DCR forest management objectives have evolved to include more ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration and storage, diverse wildlife habitats, forest resiliency, safety, and water quality.
- The state forests were partly created to lessen the Commonwealth's dependency on out of state lumber and to support industry in Massachusetts. Early forest management strategies were driven by productivity and economics. As the science and societal stewardship values evolved, increased consideration was given to the environmental impacts of a site-specific forest management project. In some cases, other objectives, such as improving wildlife habitat or maintaining forest resilience might be the primary reason for a particular project.

UNIFYING THEME

The Unifying Theme is a statement that ties a property's stories together and shapes the overall interpretive message that DCR wants to share with visitors in their experience at the property. The theme provides an overarching conclusion for visitors to contemplate (Ham 2013) and answers the question "so what?" The theme guides all interpretation for the park, both personal (i.e., formal and informal interactions with visitors) and non-personal (e.g., exhibits, signage, brochures).

The Unifying Theme for Templeton State Forest is:

Managing our State Forests for diversity and resilience leads to a healthier environment.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Templeton State Forest provides a variety of visitor experiences, including the following:

- **Virtual Experience.** Potential visitors will find little information about Templeton on DCR's web site. The "Find a Park" tool (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-a-park) identifies the Forest's location and lists Hiking/Walking as activities that visitors may enjoy here. There is no additional information to help potential visitors plan a trip. The Otter River State Forest web page does not list Templeton as being one of its "related parks."
- **Entering the Forest.** The Forest has two primary entry points: one each on the Main Tract and the Trout Brook Tract. Neither entry point has a Main Identification Sign. The Main Tract is accessed via a dirt driveway or forest road from Hubbardston Road. This driveway is identified by a small, non-standard kiosk with signage indicating that the property is a state forest. Visitors may drive a short distance into the Forest and park in a dirt parking lot and trailhead posted with Internal Navigation Signs (see cover photo). The Main Tract may also be accessed via a trail leading from Hubbardston State Forest. There is no direct access to the Trout Brook Tract. This tract's legal and primary access is via a private forest road at 917 Patriots Road in Templeton. This is a deeded access point that is not used by the general public. The general public may access the Trout Brook Tract via an unmarked and ungated forest road for MassWildlife's Norcross Hill WMA, located on King Phillips Trail (Rt. 202). Visitors arriving by vehicle may park on the shoulder of Rt. 202 and walk or ride the forest road approximately 0.6 miles on MassWildlife land to the Forest, which is marked with standard DCR blue boundary markers. Secondary entries to the Trout Brook Tract consist of an unmarked, private forest road at Patriots Road (Rt. 2A, where it intersects with the Route 2 right-of-way) and via West Road, a private forest road that connects the Ware River Rail Trail with the Forest.
- **Trail-based Passive Recreation.** Visitors seeking recreational opportunities may access a modest trail network that provides opportunities for year-round passive recreation, wildlife viewing, photography, and informal picnicking.
- **Trail-based Motorized Recreation.** The Trout Brook Tract provides an important link in the central Massachusetts snowmobile trail network. A forest road that extends from Patriots Road to West Road is part of a sanctioned trail (no. 71) within the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) trail network. This trail is used as a connection for snowmobilers on the Ware River Rail Trail, which is interrupted where it intersects with Rt. 2 near the Forest. Although the Forest is not on or directly adjacent to the rail trail, SAM has used it in conjunction with other private and public properties to create a connection between the two noncontiguous rail trail segments (SAM 2021).

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following information identifies potential threats to the park's natural and cultural resources and identifies opportunities to enhance their protection and stewardship. Although recreation is not considered a resource under statute (M.G.L. c. 21, § 2F), it is included below because recreation is an important part of the park-going experience, helps define a park's values, and is a key part of assessing the consistency of activities taking place in the Commonwealth's forests, parks, and reservations.

Threats and opportunities identified below are used to inform the development of management recommendations. Potential recommendations must meet prioritization criteria to be included in the Priority Recommendations table (Table 19, page 26).

Natural Resources

Threats

- There is very heavy unauthorized off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in the Forest at the Trout Brook Tract, possibly the heaviest in the Central Highlands District. Trail cutting and erosion caused by OHVs may threaten water resources, natural communities, and species in Templeton. Possible contributing factors to this threat include:
  - the adjacent Crow Hill Moto track (see encroachment discussion below);
  - the close proximity of the Ware River Rail Trail (used for unauthorized OHV travel) and USACE lands; and
  - the incorporation of forest roads into the sanctioned snowmobile trail network, which may create the impression that OHVs are permitted in the Forest and/or lead snowmobilers to return on OHVs during other seasons.
- Private owners of parcels adjacent to the Trout Brook Tract are potentially encroaching on DCR property by cutting trails into the Forest, thus threatening sensitive natural communities or species in the Forest.
- Forest visitors have created several unsanctioned trails, some of which lead onto adjacent private property. Construction of trails without authorization or applicable regulatory review may threaten species habitat, natural communities, and/or ecosystem functions.
- Portions of the state forest boundary cannot be determined and marked without obtaining surveys.
- There are two permitted auto recycling facilities adjacent to and upslope of Forest land, one next to the Main Tract and the other next to the Cross Road Tract. Run-off from these facilities may flow onto DCR land.
- Route 2 is a significant barrier to wildlife entering or leaving the Trout Brook Tract.
- Eastern hemlocks in the Forest are threatened by the presence of hemlock woolly adelgid and elongate hemlock scale, both of which are invasive insects that feed on and weaken their host trees.
- The following four species of invasive plants have been identified at Templeton State Forest: burningbush, glossy buckthorn, Japanese honeysuckle, and Oriental bittersweet. A full invasive plant species survey of the Forest has not been completed and additional invasive species may be present. Invasive species may negatively impact both the ecological integrity and biodiversity of the Forest.
- There is minimal information on the presence or distribution of invasive plants in Templeton State Forest. Such information is needed to determine if any sensitive resources are being impacted by invasive plants.

Opportunities

- The Forest's Main Tract and Cross Road Tract are partially within the DCR Priority Watershed "selected Millers River Basin Lakes." DCR construction projects within Priority Watersheds maximize Stormwater Control Measures, potentially beyond those necessary to meet regulatory criteria (VHB

2022). By maximizing treatment, DCR addresses existing impairments in the receiving waters and contributes to improving water quality in the Priority Watershed. Designers of future projects at Templeton should review the latest Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) 303d list to understand other impairments of the receiving water and to fine tune stormwater treatment to address these pollutants, in accordance with the DCR Stormwater Design Handbook (VHB 2022).

- The Forest is located within the Quabbin to Cardigan Initiative's (Q2C) project area. This initiative is a public-private collaborative effort to conserve the Monadnock Highlands of north-central Massachusetts and western New Hampshire. The Forest's location within the project area offers opportunities to participate in organizational partnerships, grants, and land acquisitions in support of DCR's and Q2C's mutual conservation and recreation goals (Q2C 2023).
- As shown in the Commonwealth's Open Space Layer, the easterly boundary line of the Trout Brook Tract does not match data in Management Forestry and Town assessor data. There is an opportunity to enhance management of agency resources by reviewing this legal boundary and making corrections as needed to conform these two data sets.
- Approximately 79.5 acres of the Forest has no Landscape Designation (DCR 2012). Assigning Landscape Designations to these portions of the Forest could help with management of associated natural resources and ensure management consistent with DCR properties statewide.
- The kames of the Trout Brook Tract may support significant pine barrens restoration opportunities, and all three Forest tracts may present opportunities to undertake restoration of fire-influenced Priority Natural Community types. Such restoration work could be coordinated with similar efforts by MassWildlife and the USACE at the Birch Hill Flood Control Project and Norcross Hill WMA (Leddick 2024).
- There may be opportunities to curb unauthorized OHV use through increased law enforcement and ranger patrols, improving relationships with Crow Hill Moto, and the creation of a Ware River Rail Trail connection bridge or underpass across Rt. 2 (an underpass could also provide a wildlife corridor).
- Some of the five potential vernal pools may "support rich communities of vertebrates and invertebrates" (MassWildlife 2009) and serve as important habitat components for other wildlife. Surveying and certifying these pools (DCR (n.d.) and MassWildlife (2009)), as appropriate, may help better protect these animals.

Cultural Resources

Threats

- Natural processes including erosion and flooding along Trout Brook may threaten archaeological resources.
- Unauthorized OHV use, along with passive recreation activities may threaten archaeological resources.
- Construction and use of the previously mentioned unauthorized trails may disturb areas of the Forest that have potential archaeological resources.
- Potential encroachment into the Trout Brook Tract by adjacent private owners may threaten cultural resources in the Forest.

- Portions of the Forest fall within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 0.2%-chance-year flood zone, with a very small area within the 1.0%-chance flood zone along the Trout Brook. However, because a comprehensive archaeological survey has not been completed for the Forest, it is unknown if flooding threatens any significant archaeological resources. (These data are derived from the FEMA's paper Flood Insurance Rate Maps, or FIRMS, dating to 1979. Because of their age, FIRMS may only be used to portray zones of uncertainty and possible risks associated with flooding, not the absolute delineation of flood boundaries (Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS) 1997).)

Opportunities

- A cultural resources reconnaissance survey, undertaken in cooperation with municipal, tribal, and local partners, would identify and assist with management of significant cultural resources in the Forest.
- There is an historical-archaeological site complex consisting of an old road, cellar hole, stone wall, and possible dam on the Trout Brook Tract. Historical research and archaeological survey of these resources could help to protect them and provide information on the pre-Forest land uses of the property.
- Up to five Civilian Conservation Corps water holes may exist on the property (Gillman 2011: n.p.). Location of these resources could help to interpret the history of forestry at this property.
- Approximately 79.5 acres of the Forest has no Landscape Designation (DCR 2012). Assigning Landscape Designations to these portions of the Forest could help with management of associated cultural resources and ensure management consistent with DCR properties statewide.

Recreation

Threats

- There is limited official information available on the Forest. DCR's web page does not include information on the Forest, making it difficult for potential visitors to become aware of the property and its recreational resources.
- There is no official trail map, making it challenging to navigate the Forest's trail network.
- The Forest has no identified accessible trails.
- Heavy unauthorized OHV use of the Trout Brook Tract is eroding forest roads and trails and OHV users have vandalized DCR gates in order to gain access to the Forest.
- Potential encroachment into the Trout Brook Tract by adjacent private owners may threaten recreational opportunities in the Forest.
- The interior forest road on the Trout Brook Tract is being flooded in two locations. Near West Road, a beaver dam and undersized culverts, which are located on adjacent private property at that road, are backing water up into the Forest. In another location, just behind 917 Patriots Road, this forest road floods due to a clogged culvert.
- The Canesto Hill Trail in Hubbardston State Forest should terminate at the Forest boundary. However, it is shown in DCR trails data as crossing onto private land in Templeton, then connecting to the Red Oak Trail in Templeton State Forest. This has led trail users to inadvertently cross onto

private property. Some mountain bikers are conducting unauthorized trail work on this private land, leading to negative interactions with the property owner.

- Portions of the Forest fall within the FEMA 0.2%-chance-year flood zone, with a very small area within the 1.0%-chance flood zone along the Trout Brook. There may be approximately 1,000 feet of trail and 2,000 feet of forest road within the flood zones that could be exposed to flooding. (These data are derived from the FEMA's paper FIRMS dating to 1979. Because of their age, FIRMS may only be used to portray zones of uncertainty and possible risks associated with flooding, not the absolute delineation of flood boundaries (MassGIS 1997).)
- The public may access the Trout Brook Tract using a forest road in the Norcross Hill WMA. This road is located in a 1.0%-chance flood zone and occasionally floods, limiting public access during those periods.

Opportunities

- Adding a Templeton State Forest web page to DCR's web site would allow potential visitors to become aware of the Forest, its resources, and associated recreation opportunities.
- Increasing DCR and Massachusetts Environmental Police presence at the Forest and communications with abutters, especially on weekends, could help reduce unauthorized OHV use.
- As any future trail improvements are planned, there is an opportunity to identify possibilities for accessible trails at the Forest.
- Partnering with MassWildlife to build a gate at the King Phillips Trail forest road could help to reduce unauthorized OHV use in the Forest.
- There is an opportunity to enhance public access to the Trout Brook Tract by partnering with MassWildlife on identification and orientation signage, as appropriate, at the Norcross Hill WMA forest road entrance on King Phillips Trail.
- Partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to create a direct connection across Route 2 between segments of the Ware River Rail Trail could limit impacts to the Forest from OHVs.
- There is an opportunity to prevent erosion and increase the quality of trails by applying trail maintenance Best Practices (DCR 2019a) BMPs, adding standard trail signs and confidence blazes, and increasing staffing for this work.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change impacts nearly every aspect of DCR's properties, from ecosystem health, to infrastructure, to recreation. (See DCR 2024 for an overview of these impacts.) The Department is actively working to mitigate and adapt to current and future impacts through such actions as forest management; decarbonizing DCR's buildings, vehicles, and power equipment; protecting wetlands; and using nature-based solutions to minimize stormwater impacts. Information on these, and other, efforts is incorporated into RMPs as available and appropriate.

Any discussion of climate change requires a shared understanding of terminology. Because of this, this RMP section adopts commonly accepted terms to the greatest extent possible. In general, climate-related technical terms used in this RMP are as defined in the Sixth Assessment Report of the

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2021). Exceptions to this are the terms Adaptation, Risk, and Sensitivity, which are used as defined in DCR's Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA; Weston and Sampson 2022).

DCR manages its forests to provide a range of ecosystem services such as recreation, clean water, wood commodities, and wildlife habitat (DCR 2020). For ecosystems under its management, DCR carefully considers both their vulnerability to climate change and their ability to mitigate the effects of climate change by storing carbon in ecosystems and harvested wood products. Several approaches are used to monitor DCR forests and to design forest management strategies to adapt to climate change and provide ecosystem services. (See Swanston et al. (2016) for information on adaptation strategies and approaches associated with DCR's forest management.) Established in 1957, DCR's Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) system uses a network of more than 2,000 permanent plots on which repeated measurements are taken on an ongoing basis. The CFI measures the status, size, and health of over 100,000 trees; other vegetation; down woody material; and the forest floor. (See DCR 2022 for additional information on the CFI system.) This information helps DCR understand at a strategic scale the current character, condition, and trends of forest ecosystems under its care. DCR also uses operational inventory to help plan specific treatments and evaluate their outcomes. Using these different scales of information, remotely sensed data, and local and regional external expertise, DCR plans projects that help its stands, forests, and other lands adapt to climate change and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. The conservation and science-based management of forest lands are an essential element to ensuring crucial carbon storage and advancing climate change resilience (Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) 2024). For additional information on the relationship between DCR's forest management practices and climate change, please see pages 77–85 in Massachusetts Forest Action Plan 2020 (DCR 2020) and Managing Our Forests…For Carbon Benefits (DCR 2023).

The Department is actively assessing and addressing the vulnerability of its properties and facilities to the impacts of climate change. In 2022, DCR conducted a CCVA (Weston and Sampson 2022). Findings from this CCVA are being used by DCR to enhance park operations and maintenance, inform resilient investment, and provide a framework for hazard mitigation and climate adaptation for natural resources, cultural resources, recreational activities, buildings, facilities, and other infrastructure. Property-specific climate change information from the CCVA is included in the Climate Change (by 2070) table (Table 12) at the beginning of this RMP. An overview of the impacts of climate change on DCR facilities and operations is presented in the DCR Climate Impacts Story Map (DCR 2024).

Climate Exposure and Impacts

A summary of the ways in which the Commonwealth's natural, cultural, and recreational resources may be impacted by climate change is provided below. During the preparation of RMPs some resources may be identified as having particularly high exposure and/or sensitivity to the anticipated hazards or consequences of climate change. When this occurs, these resources and the projected impacts to them are described. In some instances, the potential impacts of climate change on a given resource are not well understood. When this occurs, only exposure is discussed.

Natural Resources—General Impacts

Climate change affects temperature, precipitation, and atmospheric and ocean chemistry, which in turn directly and indirectly affect the natural environment, including the plants, animals, and natural communities of DCR's forests, parks, and reservations.

Climate is known to influence the presence, absence, distribution, reproductive success, and survival of both native and non-native plants (Finch et al. 2021). Native northern and boreal species, including balsam fir, red spruce, and black spruce may fare worse under future conditions, but other species may benefit from the projected changes in climate (Janowiak et al. 2018). Some non-native invasive species will be affected by climate change while others will remain unaffected, and some non-invasive non-native species are likely to become invasive (Finch et al. 2021). In general, elevated temperature and CO2 enrichment associated with climate change increases the performance of non-native plants more strongly than the performance of native plants (Liu et al. 2017). Climate change may result in the presence of new non-native invasive plants on a property, and changes to the distribution and/or abundance of invasives already present on a property.

Exposure to a changing climate affects wildlife in a variety of ways. For animals that live in or near aquatic environments, "changes in habitat and hydrological regimes are expected to shift their abundance and distribution" (Isaak et al. 2018: 89). Impacts to terrestrial animals are expected to be highly variable (Halofsky et al. 2018) but may be considered to fall into the following four categories: 1. habitat loss and fragmentation; 2. physiological sensitivities (i.e., innate characteristics that influence the ability to cope with changing temperature and precipitation conditions); 3. alterations in the timing of species' life cycles; and 4. indirect effects (e.g., disruption of ecological relationships) (Friggens et al. 2018). Although all Northeast wildlife are exposed to hazards associated with climate change, some groups, "including montane birds, salamanders, cold-adapted fish, and freshwater mussels, could be particularly affected by changing temperatures, precipitation, sea and lake level, and ocean processes" (MassWildlife 2015: 357). In addition, it is the position of the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) that state-listed species and Priority Natural Communities are likely to be highly sensitive to climate change and that all state-listed species will be negatively affected by hydrologic changes, changes in water, soil, and air temperature, and changes in forest composition.

Natural Resources—Property-Specific Exposure and Impacts

The entire length of Templeton Brook within the Forest has been identified as a Coldwater Fish Resource by MassWildlife. Such streams provide important habitat for coldwater species, which are typically more sensitive than other species to alterations in stream flow, water quality, and temperature (MassGIS 2021).

Climate change may cause some vernal pools to dry earlier in the season than they have historically, potentially interfering with amphibian life cycles and negatively impacting associated wildlife (Cartwright et al. 2022). Similar impacts may occur at the Forest's potential vernal pools that function as vernal pools.

Multiple salamander species (i.e., eastern newt, four-toed salamander, and spotted salamander) have been reported in the Forest. Populations of these amphibians may be threatened by the impacts of climate change.

Responses of Massachusetts' invasive plants (i.e., those categorized as Invasive by the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) (n.d.)) to a changing climate are largely unknown. However, sufficient information exists to project the likely future trend of Oriental bittersweet. "Available data suggest that bittersweet is likely to benefit from the warming and increased precipitation that are predicted for the Northeast" (Rustad et al. 2012), resulting in expansion throughout New England. Areas where the forest canopy or forest floor has been disturbed are particularly susceptible (McNab and Loftis 2002). Because of this, it is anticipated that Oriental bittersweet will continue to expand within Templeton State Forest in response to climate change.

Cultural Resources—General Impacts

Climate change may negatively affect cultural resources, their preservation, and maintenance (EEA 2022a; International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group 2019; Rockman et al. 2016: 3, 18; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Center 2007). In Massachusetts, cultural resources may be exposed to the following natural phenomena that are correlated with adverse impacts: higher annual average temperature (especially in winter), increased numbers of freeze-thaw cycles, increased precipitation intensity, higher relative humidity, higher wind speeds, an increase in severe storm events, increased numbers and severity of wildfires, more severe seasonal droughts, increase in number and severity of inland flood events, increased coastal flooding and erosion, increased probability of landslides, changes in groundwater levels, shifts in native and invasive species distribution, performance, and phenology; and changes in oceanic and atmospheric chemistry (Rockman at al. 2016; Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2023: 5.1-31–5.1-61).

The phenomena listed above may produce a variety of adverse impacts to Massachusetts' cultural resources. Sensitivity and potential impacts vary based on resource category (i.e., archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, ethnographic landscapes and sites, and buildings and structures). Resource-specific factors such as location, design, materials, condition, etc. will also influence sensitivity and consequent impacts. All categories of cultural resources may be subject to complete or partial destruction through wildfire, inland flooding, sea level rise, storm surge, or landslides. Additionally, these resource categories may be subject to other types of impacts, as follows. Archaeological sites may have site stratigraphy disrupted by changes in hydrography, may suffer accelerated decomposition of artifacts and features, and may be impacted inadvertently during disaster response. Cultural landscapes may lose plantings due to a variety of stressors (e.g., drought or flood, pests, soil salinity), may be infiltrated by invasives, may be eroded by surface runoff, may experience more rapid deterioration of hardscaping and site furnishings, and may be damaged by high wind or heavy snow events. Ethnographic landscapes, traditional cultural places, and associated communities (including Indigenous peoples) may suffer both tangible and intangible impacts such as loss or diminishment of natural species used for food, ceremony, or medicine; alterations in timing of hunts, etc.; increased difficulty of vulnerable subgroups (e.g., the elderly) to perform outdoor tasks; and a loss of cultural knowledge associated with resources and practices. Buildings and structures may be damaged or destroyed by high wind or heavy snow events, suffer accelerated deterioration through a variety of mechanisms (e.g., elevated humidity, chemical reactions, destructive pests and organisms), may be destabilized by hydrological changes, or be damaged by inadequate gutters or drainage systems (ICOMOS Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group 2019: 73–89; Rockman et al. 2016: 20–24). (See Rockman et al. 2016: 19–24 for a detailed assessment of the potential impacts of climate change on cultural resources.)

Cultural Resources—Property-Specific Exposure and Impacts

No cultural resources with known elevated exposure or sensitivity to potential consequences of climate change were identified at this property.

Recreation—General Impacts

Outdoor recreation and park visitation are dependent on weather and climate and will be affected by a warming climate (Wilkins and Horne 2024). Higher temperatures positively affect participation in most outdoor activities, except snow-based activities (Wilkins and Horne 2024). "Winter is warming substantially faster than other seasons, and winter warming is especially pronounced in the...Northeastern United States" (Wilkins and Horne 2024: 15). Exposure to this climate change phenomenon is projected to significantly reduce the length of winter recreation seasons for downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling, decreasing recreational opportunities and causing substantial economic impacts (Wobus et al. 2017). Whitewater rafting, primitive area use, and hunting are also projected to be negatively impacted by exposure changing weather patterns associated with climate change (Askew and Bowker 2018). Although "coldwater fishing habitat is expected to decline under a warming climate, which will likely result in fewer fishing days," overall fishing participation in the Northeast is projected to rise "due to the more favorable temperatures" (Wilkins and Horne 2024: 11). Horseback riding on trails, boating, swimming, and visiting interpretive sites are also expected to see higher participation in the Northeast under climate change (Askew and Bowker 2018). Temperature preferences of campers indicate that the "number of ideal days" for camping will also increase (Wilkins and Horne 2024: 13). Participation in biking is also projected to increase, especially in the winter and shoulder months (Wilkins and Horne 2024: 13). Climate change may also impact outdoor recreation through increased impacts to recreation infrastructure (e.g., flooding impacts), and increased exposure to disease vectors (e.g., mosquitoes and ticks), longer pollen seasons, and heat-related illnesses (O'Toole et al. 2019).

Recreation—Property-Specific Exposure and Impacts

Recreation activities at the Forest likely to be negatively impacted by exposure to weather changes resulting from climate change include hunting and snow-dependent sports (i.e., snowmobiling). Other recreation activities, such as horseback riding, may see increased participation due to the anticipated increase in temperature (i.e., more than 30 additional days with temperatures over 90° F; Table 12).

Recreation infrastructure with exposure to increased precipitation and flooding associated with climate change include approximately 1,000 feet of trail and 2,000 feet of forest road within the most recent 1.0%-chance flood zone along the Trout Brook (MassGIS 1997). (Precipitation changes due to climate change (see EEA 2022b and Weston and Sampson 2022) are not factored into FEMA flood plain modeling. Climate change may result in additional exposure to and impacts from flooding for cultural resources in the future. A FEMA-contracted report (AECOM 2013) finds that: "For the riverine environment, the typical 1% annual chance floodplain area nationally is projected to grow by about 45%, with very large regional variations ... approximately 70% of the 45% (or 31.5%) growth in the 1% annual chance floodplain is due solely to climate change" (AECOM 2013: ES6–ES7). Site-specific projections for future floodplain areas were not available at the time this RMP was prepared.)

APPLIED LAND STEWARDSHIP ZONING

DCR assesses the appropriate uses and stewardship of its properties at two spatial scales: the landscape level and the property level.

Landscape Designation

In 2012, DCR engaged in a comprehensive system-wide assessment of lands managed by its Division of State Parks and Recreation, designating them as Reserve, Woodland, or Parkland. (See Landscape Designations for DCR Parks & Forests: Selection Criteria and Management Guidelines (DCR 2012) for details.) Multiple Landscape Designations may apply to individual properties with diverse resources and levels of development. All of Templeton State Forest was designated Woodland. Identification of Land Stewardship Zones within Templeton was performed in the context of the Woodland Landscape Designation.

The following Land Stewardship Zoning is recommended to guide management and any future development. (See Figure 1. Land Stewardship Zoning Map, page 22, and the Land Stewardship Zoning layer on DCR's Stewardship Map: https://dcrsgis-mass-eoeea.hub.arcgis.com/.)

Zone 1

Zone 1 areas have highly sensitive ecological and/or cultural resources that require additional management approaches and practices to protect and preserve these special features and their values (DCR 2012). The following areas of Templeton have been designated Zone 1.

- No areas within the Forest have been designated Zone 1.

Zone 2

Zone 2 areas provide for a balance between resource stewardship and recreational opportunities that can be appropriately sustained. They include stable yet important cultural and natural resources. These areas provide a buffer for sensitive resources, recharge areas for surface and groundwaters, and large areas where existing public recreation activities can be managed at sustainable levels (DCR 2012). The following areas of Templeton have been designated Zone 2.

- All areas of the Forest, excepting a small trailhead area reserved for Zone 3.

Zone 3

Zone 3 areas include altered landscapes in active use and areas suitable for future administrative, maintenance, and recreation areas (DCR 2012). The following areas of Templeton are currently developed, appropriate for potential future development, or intensively used for recreation. They have been designated Zone 3.

- The existing driveway and parking area for the Cook Pond Trail trailhead off Hubbardston Road.

Significant Feature Overlay

Significant Feature Overlays provide precise management guidance in order to maintain or preserve recognized resources features regardless of the zone in which they occur. The following Significant Feature Overlays were developed for Templeton.

- No Significant Feature Overlays were developed for Templeton State Forest.

DCR Stewardship Map Tool

This RMP should be viewed in conjunction with DCR's Stewardship Map, a GIS-based tool that allows users to view a property's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The Stewardship Map tool is dynamic, and information continues to be updated after adoption of an RMP. Guidance for using the tool, as well as Best Management Practices (BMPs) for resource stewardship, are located on the Stewardship Map site: https://dcrsgis-mass-eoeea.hub.arcgis.com/.

Consistency Review

Resource Management Plans "shall ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management" (M.G.L. c. 21, § 2F). For planning purposes, an activity is considered consistent with resource protection if it has no significant, long-term, adverse impact on resources. To this end, a series of indicators were developed to evaluate the impacts of recreation and forest management on natural and cultural resources.

Many activities with the potential to negatively affect resources are already subject to agency and/or regulatory review (e.g., forest management activities, projects within Priority Habitat). For these activities, compliance with state regulations, regulatory authority guidance, DCR policies and processes, and BMPs is considered an indicator of consistency between park use and resource protection. New indicators were generated for activities not subject to agency or regulatory review, and are based on available data, information readily identifiable via aerial imagery or site visits, assessments by DCR subject matter experts, or the property manager's knowledge of park conditions and use. (See Table 18, page 23.)

Indicators are applied during the RMP planning process in order to ensure a standardized assessment of consistency across all properties in the DCR system. Inconsistencies identified via the application of indicators are used to inform the development of management recommendations.

The status of indicators (Yes, No, Unknown, and N/A) were accurate at the time this RMP was prepared and were used for planning purposes. However, they represent a snapshot in time and may not reflect future conditions. In addition, the status of indicators will change as recommendations get implemented.

Management Recommendations

Sixteen priority management recommendations were developed for this property. They are presented in Table 19, page 26. All recommendations are of equal importance.

Priority management recommendations derive from Threats, Opportunities, and Consistency Assessment information presented in this RMP. For a recommendation to be considered a priority and listed in the table, it must meet one or more of the criteria listed below. Maintenance and management needs not meeting one or more of these criteria are not included in the table but are identified in the Threats and Opportunities sections.

The following types of recommendations are considered priority:

- Natural resource stewardship and restoration activities consistent with park identity and intended to improve ecological function and connectivity.

- Cultural resource management activities consistent with park identity and intended to prevent the loss of integrity of significant cultural resources.
- Improvements consistent with park identity that are needed to support intended park activities.
- Actions required for regulatory compliance or compliance with legal agreements.
- Activities that prevent or ameliorate threats to the health and safety of park visitors and employees.
- Activities that address inconsistencies among recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management, as identified through use of the Consistency Assessment checklist.

Progress toward implementing priority recommendations is tracked through the use of DCR's Capital Asset Management Information System (CAMIS). The property manager should enter each recommendation listed in Table 19 (page 26) into CAMIS as a separate work order, noting "*RMP" in the description field. Non-traditional work orders (e.g., volunteer trail work, posting of Department of Public Health (DPH) Fish Consumption Advisory posters, certification of vernal pools) should be closed out by the property manager, once the recommendation has been implemented.

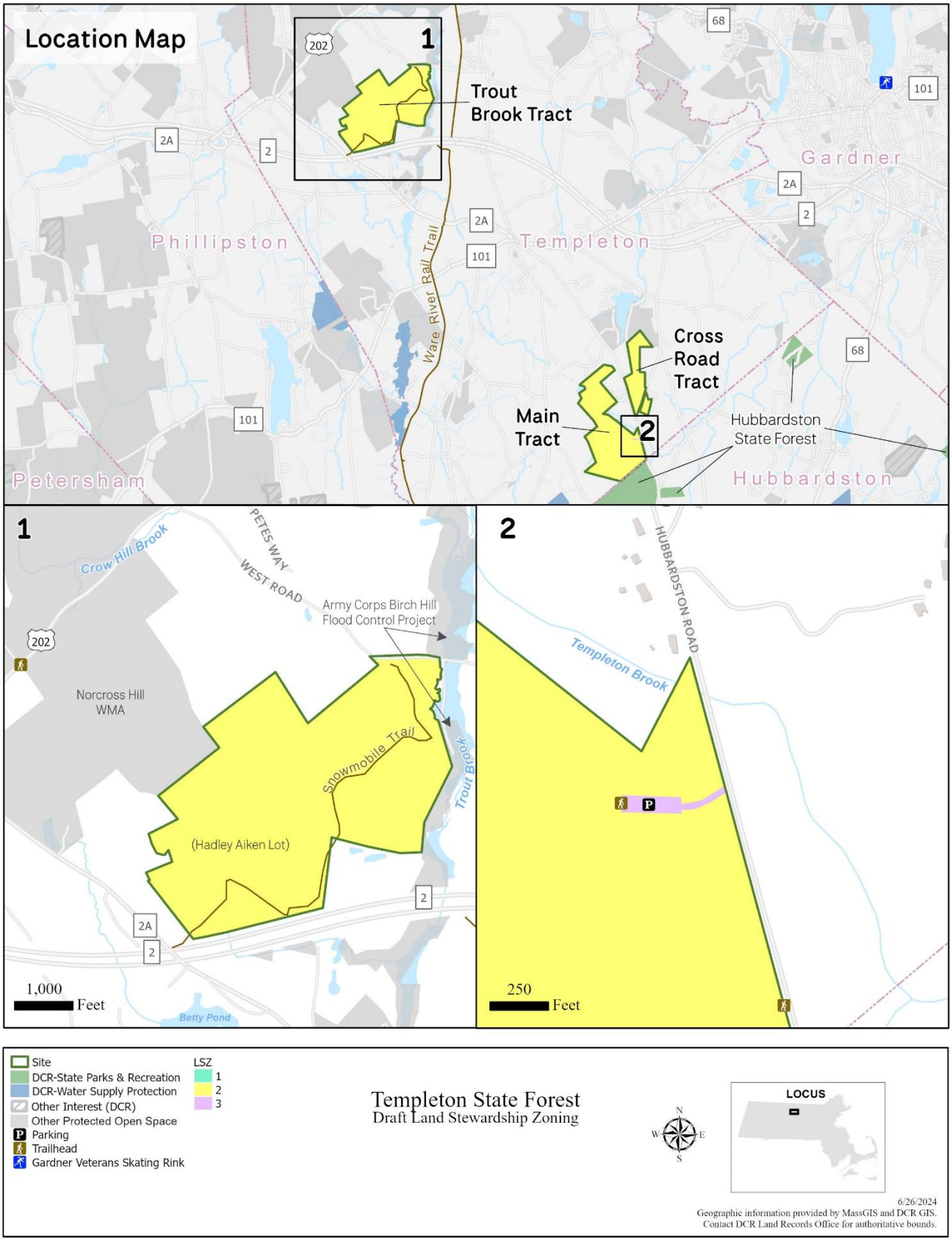

Figure 1. Land Stewardship Zoning Map.

Table 18. Consistency Assessment. This assessment represents a snapshot in time and may not reflect future conditions.

Category	Metric	Status
Landscape Designation	1. All development and uses of the park since 2012, or currently planned for the park, are consistent with its Landscape Designation(s).	Yes
Natural Resources	1. All projects (normal maintenance activities, special projects, volunteer projects) conducted within Priority Habitat were reviewed and approved through DCR's internal review process and by NHESP for potential impacts to rare species and their habitats.	N/A
Natural Resources	2. All projects conducted within areas subject to state and/or federal wetlands or waterways regulations were reviewed and approved through DCR's internal review process; reviewed and approved through the appropriate, local, state, and/or federal review process; and were carried out in accordance with the terms of a valid permit.	Yes
Natural Resources	3. Sensitive resource areas, such as steep slopes, riverbanks, streambanks, pond and lakeshores, wetlands, and dunes are free of desire paths and other user-created trails.	No
Natural Resources	4. Aquatic areas adjacent to beaches, boat ramps and launches, roads, and hiking trails are free of eroded sediments.	N/A
Natural Resources	5. The extent of exposed soil in campground and/or picnic sites is stable or decreasing.	N/A
Natural Resources	6. The extent of native vegetation in campground and/or picnic sites is stable or increasing. (As assessed by property manager.)	N/A
Natural Resources	7. Area of trail impacts in Reserves is less than 50% of total area. (See Naughton (2021) for information on primary area of trail impacts.)	N/A
Natural Resources	8. Congregations of breeding, migratory, or wintering wildlife are protected from disturbance by temporary (e.g., seasonal) restrictions on recreational access.	Yes
Natural Resources	9. Geocaches, letterboxes, orienteering control locations, and other discovery destinations are located outside sensitive natural resource areas and their locations have been reviewed and approved by park personnel. (As assessed by property manager.)	N/A
Natural Resources	10. Zone I wellhead protection areas are free of vehicle parking, chemical storage, or concentrated recreation.	N/A

Category	Metric	Status
Natural Resources	11. All boat ramps and launches have cleaning stations and/or educational signs and materials on preventing the spread of aquatic invasive organisms. (As assessed by property manager.)	N/A
Natural Resources	12. For each barrier beach there is a current, approved Barrier Beach Management Plan and all beach-related activities are conducted in accordance with this plan.	N/A
Cultural Resources	1. All maintenance activities and projects with the potential to cause sub-surface disturbance are being reviewed by the DCR archaeologist for potential impacts to archaeological resources.	No
Cultural Resources	2. All maintenance activities and projects affecting historic properties (buildings, structures, and landscapes over 50-years-old) are being reviewed by the Office of Cultural Resources to avoid adverse impacts.	N/A
Cultural Resources	3. Historic buildings, structures, and landscapes are being used, maintained, and repaired in a manner that preserves their cultural integrity and conveys their historic significance to park visitors.	N/A
Cultural Resources	4. Recreational activities such as hiking, biking, and boating are not eroding cultural properties such as archaeological sites or historic landscapes through creation of desire lines, rutting in the landscape, damage to historic built features, or excessive scouring (erosion) of coastal and shoreline areas.	No
Cultural Resources	5. Geocaches, letterboxes, and other discovery destinations are located away from sensitive cultural resources, and their locations have been reviewed and approved by park personnel.	N/A
Cultural Resources	6. Historic buildings, structures, landscapes, archaeological sites, and concentrations of historic resources are located outside of areas predicted to be subject to flooding, storm surge, or sea-level rise.	Yes
Recreation	1. Types of recreation, levels of recreational use, and types and extent of recreation infrastructure are consistent with the park's identity statement.	No

Category	Metric	Status
Recreation	2. Trail density is consistent with the park's Landscape Designation(s). (See Trails Guidelines and Best Practices Manual (DCR 2019a) for density thresholds.)	Yes
Recreation	3. All authorized trail construction was performed in accordance with an approved Trail Proposal Form.	Yes
Recreation	4. Over 90% of the park's official trails network is classified as being in Fair or better condition.	No
Recreation	5. Recurring use by OHVs is restricted to authorized trails. (As assessed by property manager.)	No
Recreation	6. There is a high level of compliance with dog leash regulations and policies. (As assessed by property manager.)	No
Recreation	7. Athletic fields are free of recreation-caused impacts (e.g., bare spots) to turf. (As assessed by property manager.)	N/A
Recreation	8. Water-based recreation is consistent with "Uses Attained" designation as identified by MassDEP in its most current integrated list of waters (e.g., MassDEP 2023); DPH fish consumption advisories; and/or water quality testing at waterfront areas.	N/A
Recreation	9. Recreation facilities are located outside of areas subject to flooding, storm surge, or sea-level rise.	No
Sustainable Forest Management	1. Forestry activities are consistent with Landscape Designation and associated forestry guidelines.	Yes
Sustainable Forest Management	2. Forestry activities are consistent with current Forest Resource Management Plan.	N/A
Sustainable Forest Management	3. Tree cutting is performed in accordance with an approved cutting plan, if required under the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Practices Act (M.G.L. c. 132, §§ 40–46).	Yes

Table 19. Priority Recommendations for Templeton State Forest. All recommendations are of equal importance. When multiple agency parties are responsible for implementing a recommendation, the lead party, or parties, are identified parenthetically in the Implementation column. Property managers should enter these recommendations as work orders in CAMIS to ensure their tracking and implementation.

Category	Recommendation	Implementation
Natural Resources	Apply Landscape Designations to those portions of the Forest currently lacking such designations.	Management Forestry (Lead), GIS Program
Natural Resources	Document and resolve potential encroachment in accordance with Agency-wide Guidance and Best Management Practices (DCR 2019b).	Contractor, Management Forestry (Lead), Office of the General Counsel, Park Operations
Natural Resources	Update the Open Space Layer using legal and boundary information on file with Management Forestry.	GIS Program, Management Forestry (Lead),
Natural Resources	Survey, document, and submit documentation to certify potential vernal pools, in accordance with DCR (n.d.) and MassWildlife (2009), as warranted.	Office of Natural Resources (Lead), Volunteers
Cultural Resources	Clear vegetation from the identified cellar hole in accordance with DCR BMPs.	Office of Cultural Resources, Park Operations (Lead), Volunteers
Cultural Resources	In cooperation with tribal, municipal, and regional conservation partners, conduct an archaeological reconnaissance survey (950 CMR 70) and sensitivity assessment to identify archaeological resources and archaeologically sensitive areas in the Forest. Include an assessment of the identified cellar hole site complex on the Trout Brook Tract. Complete appropriate Massachusetts Historical Commission archaeological site forms for identified archaeological resources.	Consultant, Office of Cultural Resources (Lead), Partner
Recreation	Establish a DCR web page for Templeton State Forest.	Interpretive Services, Regional Staff (Lead), Park Operations, Web Content Creator

Category	Recommendation	Implementation
Recreation	Create a Forest trail map.	GIS Program, Interpretive Services, Trails and Greenways Section (Lead)
Recreation	On the Main Tract, establish the parking area off Hubbardston Road as a forest gateway by installing a standard DCR Main Identification Sign, kiosk with a Welcome Wayside, and rules and regulations sign. Include language and graphics or maps on the Welcome Wayside that explains opportunities to connect with the adjacent Hubbardston State Forest.	Interpretive Services (Lead), Park Operations, Trails and Greenways Section
Recreation	Partner with MassWildlife to erect a gate and to install identification and orientation signage at the forest road off King Phillips Trail.	Office of the General Counsel, Park Operations (Lead), Trails and Greenways Section
Recreation	Evaluate and implement options as appropriate to remediate flooding on the Trout Brook Tract's forest road that is being caused by beaver dams on adjacent non-DCR property: • Control beaver and water levels through cooperation with neighboring landowner; or • Add fills and culvert.	Management Forestry, Park Operations, Trails and Greenways Section (Lead)
Recreation	Remediate flooding on the Trout Brook Tract's forest road that is being caused by a clogged culvert by replacing the culvert.	Management Forestry, Park Operations, Trails and Greenways Section (Lead)
Recreation	Implement measures to curb unauthorized off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, such as adding gates and other physical barriers, and erecting signage prohibiting OHV use.	Park Operations
Recreation	Increase the presence of Environmental Police Officers, DCR Rangers, and/or Forest operations staff, as appropriate and available, in areas with high unauthorized off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, including the adjacent Ware River Rail Trail.	Bureau of Ranger Services (Co-Lead), Regional Staff (Co-Lead), Park Operations

Category	Recommendation	Implementation
Recreation	Engage in education and collaboration initiatives, as appropriate and available, with EEA's Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Committee and the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) to curb unauthorized wheeled OHV use of authorized snowmobile trails.	Bureau of Ranger Services (Co-Lead), EEA Off-Highway Vehicle Coordinator (Co-Lead), Regional Staff (Co-Lead), Partners, Trails & Greenways Section (Co-Lead)
Recreation	Resolve trail-related threats and opportunities identified in this RMP, in accordance with Trails Guidelines and Best Practices (DCR 2019a, or update), through the following actions: Maintain authorized trails, as identified in the DCR Trail Data Layer provided to the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program in 2021, and in accordance with the Recreational Trail Maintenance and Biodiversity Conservation 2021 update. Evaluate trail segments for discontinuation or active closure, including those that are: unauthorized, unsafe, connecting to privately-owned property, located in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, or otherwise inconsistent with DCR Trails Guidelines and Best Practices. Provide an updated trail data layer to the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Establish new trails, as warranted, following regulatory review. Provide an updated trail data layer to the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.	Management Forestry, Office of Natural Resources, Park Operations (Co-Lead), Partners, Trails and Greenways Section (Co-Lead)

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