

# DCR-BOFF Forest Management Proposal

**Project Name:** Myles Standish State Forest  
Restoration and Fuels Reduction Buffer  
**Property Name:** Myles Standish State Forest  
**Acres:** 32  
**Forestry District:** Southeast  
**Forester:** Gregory

**Date Proposed:** October 10, 2025  
**Town(s):** Plymouth  
**Landscape Designation:** Reserve  
**Rec Complex/District:** Myles Standish / Cape Cod  
**FOTL/F&P Supervisor:** Jackie Sousa / Steve Niemi

## GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

| Acres | Overstory Forest Type | Understory Forest Type                                                     | Stand Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 32    | Overstory: Pitch pine | Understory: Mainly of black huckleberry, lowbush blueberry, and scrub oak. | Mainly of sapling and pole-sized pitch pines with scattered pitch pine sawlogs. White pine are mostly scattered sawlogs. Highly scattered pole-sized oak trees are present. Stocking is variable ranging from dense pitch pine sapling and poles to more open areas of scrub oak with scattered trees. |

### **Project Summary, Goals and Objectives:**

The project is a 200-foot-wide strip to the west of East Line Road. Portions of the project area were burned in wildfires in 1964 and in 1975.

## MASSACHUSETTS FOREST ACTION PLAN GOALS

The goals listed below are sourced from *DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation) Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry. 2020. MASSACHUSETTS STATE FOREST ACTION PLAN 2020*

- **Increase resistance and resilience of trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change**
- **Manage forest ecosystem health and biodiversity**
- **Support the role and use of prescribed fire in the landscape**

## CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

*The strategies and approaches listed below are sourced from the Response to the Report of the Climate Change Committee, 2024 and the Report of the Climate Forestry Committee: Recommendations for Climate-Oriented Forest Management Guidelines, 2024.*

- **1: Sustain fundamental ecological functions.**
- **2: Reduce the impact of biological stressors.**
- **3: Reduce the risk and long-term impacts of severe disturbances.**
- **4: Maintain or create refugia.**

## CLIMATE ADAPTATION

| Action Type | Identified Issue                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Action Description                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resilience  | Project area is intermixed with pitch pine-scrub oak fuels. A wildfire has the potential to overwhelm the area rather quickly. Climate change presents new challenges for managing wildland fires in fire-adapted ecosystems. Warmer annual | Silvicultural treatments will reduce high fuel hazards to increase public safety, provide safe access for firefighters and fire apparatus, and will promote and enhance diverse regeneration of native species. |

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|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|  | and seasonal temperatures, increases in drought and heat-induced tree mortality, decreases in relative humidity, and increases in fire season length are all affecting how we manage and plan for fire. |  |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

### Adaptive Management Strategies:

- Sustain fundamental ecological functions
- Reduce the risk and long-term impacts of severe disturbances
- Maintain and enhance species and structural diversity
- Increase ecosystem redundancy across the landscape

### CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of State Parks and Recreation has determined that the decision to implement this project is consistent with EEA climate goals and guidelines and agency land management objectives.

| Activities proposed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Carbon and climate change considerations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Establishing and/or maintaining fuel/fire breaks.</b><br/> Example:<br/> a. Fuel breaks are relatively open areas where some trees are removed and flammable understory vegetation is mowed/mulched, in order to reduce fire intensity and allow prescribed fire management to proceed safely and provide a defensible space to manage fire.<br/> Fire breaks are generally natural or constructed barriers to the movement of fire, such as low growing periodically mowed or managed vegetation, open water, existing paved areas, or bare soil.</p> | <p>Climate models predict <b>drought and wildfire potential</b> increasing in the region due to climate change, and the agency is adopting strategies to both <b>reduce the risk of catastrophic fire spread</b> and <b>maintain fire-adapted habitats</b>. Fuel breaks and fire breaks are essential tools for both prescribed burning and wildfire control.<br/> <b>Fuel breaks</b> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>vegetated areas,</b></li> <li>• maintained at lower structure and density,</li> <li>• designed to <b>slow the spread of fire,</b></li> <li>• designed to <b>control prescribed fire</b> or wildfire,</li> <li>• opportunities to encourage open woodland, shrubland, or grassland natural communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fire breaks</b> may be natural or constructed <b>barriers to the movement of fire</b>, with some examples being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• open water,</li> <li>• paved roads,</li> <li>• graveled woods roads,</li> <li>• trails,</li> <li>• and periodically mowed paths (“fire lines”).</li> </ul> <p>The fuel and/or fire breaks proposed in this project were designed as <b>part of agency planning efforts</b> for fire control and management for this area within a <b>framework of reducing climate vulnerability</b>.</p> |

### SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

| Acres | Soil Type                | Drainage Characteristic    |
|-------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 25    | Carver loamy coarse sand | Excessively drained        |
| 6.5   | Carver coarse sand       | Excessively drained        |
| 0.5   | Merrimac fine sandy loam | Somewhat excessive drained |

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**Average Slope Percent:** Variable  
**General Aspect:** Varied

**Terrain Consistency:** Variable  
**Terrain Position:** Multiple

**Description of Soils and Topographic Features:** The project area is comprised of rolling terrain with two bends in the fuel break. The soils are derived from glacial outwash.

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### **WETLAND FEATURES**

|                               | <b>Present</b> | <b>Crossing</b> | <b>Work within Filter/Buffer</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Wetlands:</b>              | No             | N/A             | N/A                              |
| <b>Regulated Streams:</b>     | No             | N/A             | N/A                              |
| <b>Non-Regulated Streams:</b> | No             | N/A             | N/A                              |
| <b>Vernal Pools:</b>          | No             | N/A             | N/A                              |
| <b>Seeps:</b>                 | No             | N/A             | N/A                              |

**Description of Wetland Features:** No wetland features are in project area.

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### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

|                                  | <b>Present</b> | <b>At Risk</b> | <b>Work Within Buffer</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Stone Walls:</b>              | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |
| <b>Foundation / Cellar Hole:</b> | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |
| <b>Well:</b>                     | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |
| <b>Structures:</b>               | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |
| <b>Cemetery:</b>                 | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |
| <b>Other: N/A</b>                | No             | N/A            | N/A                       |

**Description of Cultural Resources:** No known cultural resources within the project area. The project will have an archeological review and evaluation by DCR's archeologist. Any recommendations will be incorporated into the final scope of work.

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### **NATURAL HERITAGE / WILDLIFE-HABITAT MANAGEMENT / OTHER RESOURCES**

**Natural Heritage Polygon:** Yes

**Natural Heritage Restrictions:** Possible

**Restrictions on Harvest Description:** Will adjust management to NHESP recommendations

**Wildlife Specific Management:** Yes

**Targeted Species:** State-listed moths and butterflies and beetles.

**Goals:** To sustain disturbance-dependent natural communities.

**Additional Habitat Management:** Yes

**Habitat Type:** An open vegetation structure consisting of scrub oak shrublands and heathlands.

**Goals:** To sustain disturbance-dependent natural communities.

**State Forest Action Plan:** Yes

**ACEC:** No

**BIO Map2:** Yes

**State Wildlife Action Plan:** Yes

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**Public Water Supply:** Yes

**Current Resource Management Plan:** No

**Additional Detail:** A portion of the project area is within an interim wellhead protection area and approved wellhead protection areas zone II. The Myles Standish State Forest Resource Management Plan is from 2022.

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### **FOREST HEALTH / INVASIVE SPECIES**

**Forest Health Concern:** Possible

**Species Affected:** Pitch pine

**Management Considerations:** Project area may be impacted by Southern Pine Beetle prior to treatment.

**Plant Invasive Species Present:** Possible

**Species Present:** See considerations below.

**Management Considerations:** Project will be checked for invasive plants and will be revised if necessary.

**Insect Invasive Species Present:** Possible

**Species Present:** See considerations below.

**Management Considerations:** Forest Health trapping program may result in invasive insect(s) being present. Will revise project if necessary.

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### **INFRASTRUCTURE / RECREATION/ AESTHETICS**

**Access Road:** East Line Road

**Condition:** Fair. East Line Road has several dips with some able to form large puddles. Some soft sandy areas as well.

**Ownership:** DCR

**Road Repair/Upgrade:** No

**Landing Repair/Upgrade:** No

**Existing Landing:** Yes

**Project Access and Landing Site:** East Line Road is compatible for access. A landing exists at the north end of the project, which was used in 2015 to remove dead red pine.

**Existing Skid Trail Network:** No

**Pre-Harvest Repair/Upgrade:** No

**Skid Trail Network Description:** If needed, new skid trails will be laid out per BMP standards.

**Shared Infrastructure:** No

**Road/Trail Names:** N/A

**Management Considerations:** N/A

#### **Infrastructure Present**

| Infrastructure      | Present  | Condition        |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| Official Trail      | No       | N/A              |
| Illegal Trail       | Possible | To be determined |
| Existing Trail Head | No       | N/A              |
| Recreation Facility | No       | N/A              |

**Recreation and Aesthetic Concerns/Opportunities:** Several forest roads intersect with East Line Road within the project area. These roads will be closed during mechanical operations.

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### **SILVICULTURE**

| Acres | Silviculture Type | Silviculture Description                                       |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 32    | Other             | The primary goal is to reduce the fuel load thereby increasing |

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|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | public safety, and to provide safe access for firefighters and fire apparatus in the event of a wildfire. The secondary goal is to restore and maintain native pitch pine and scrub oak natural communities with a focus on individual, larger diameter, full-crowned pitch pine trees in the overstory with an understory of scrub oak and other native shrubs. |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**General Comments on Silviculture Proposed:** Reducing the canopy cover will result in an open habitat benefiting a variety of rare, declining, and common species. Overstory tree density will be reduced/thinned by mowing/ mulching in place using a forestry mulching head. A few dozen larger white pines may have to be removed from the project area to reduce mulched material depth. The largest diameter, most full-crowned pitch pines will be retained. Project is funded through a US Forest Service Wildfire Risk Reduction grant.

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### **PERMIT REQUIREMENTS / OPPORTUNITIES**

| <b>Restrictions</b>                    | <b>Description</b>                                                       |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Seasonal Restrictions: Possible</b> | A Natural Heritage time of year restriction is possible.                 |
| <b>Equipment Restrictions: Yes</b>     | Equipment will be restricted to its ability to mow/mulch trees in place. |
| <b>Recreation Restrictions: Yes</b>    | Roads and trails will be closed during mechanical operations.            |
| <b>Green Docket: Possible</b>          |                                                                          |
| <b>In-kind Services: No</b>            |                                                                          |

**Potential Local Economic Benefits:** Benefits for the visiting public include improved hunting opportunities, improved birding, and wildlife viewing.

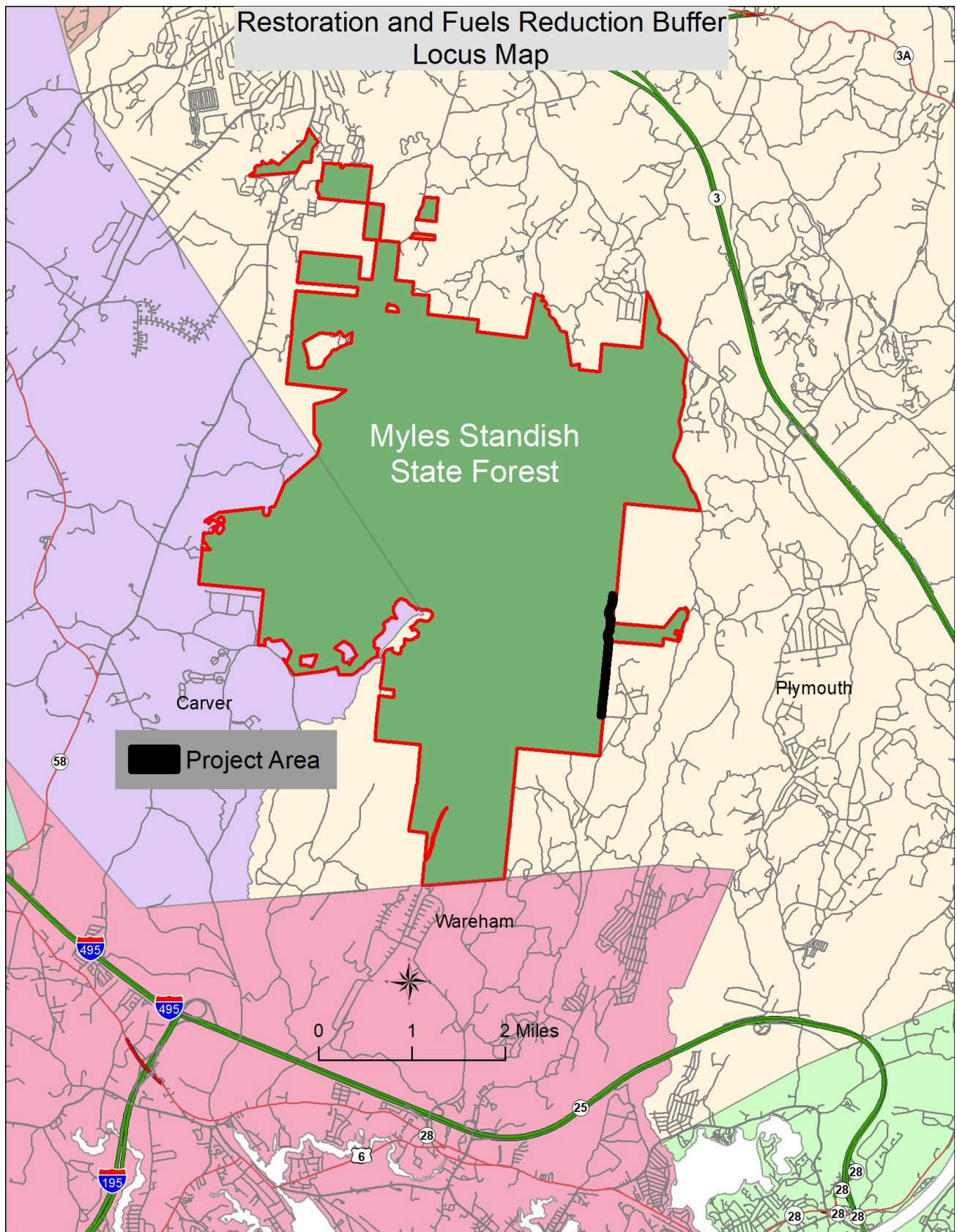
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#### **Attachments:**

**Locus Map**

**Project Map**

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