

FY 2019/2020 Oak Salvage

Gypsy Moth Related Oak Salvage

A combination of stresses from a multi-year drought repeated gypsy moth defoliation events, and outbreaks of native boring beetles has resulted in widespread oak mortality throughout the Quabbin and Ware River forests. The degree of damage varies from place to place, but there are unfortunately some significant areas with near complete mortality. While a large amount of the dead oak will remain in place to add to wildlife habitat and forest structural diversity, DWSP intends to temporarily shift its forest management focus to harvesting in areas of significant oak mortality. These areas would have otherwise been harvested through normal practices many years from now.

This map identifies approximate areas of special concern for oak salvage. Beginning in 2018 (for fiscal year 2019) these areas have been identified through a combination of satellite imagery analysis ([performed by Pasquarella, Bradley, & Woodcock, 2017](#)), and flown and field surveys by DWSP foresters. The locations mapped here do not represent all areas with concentrated oak mortality, but those areas with the best access and operability for the amount of oak present for salvage. With these criteria, DWSP is salvaging the dying oak for the least cost and impact. Ultimately, the full extent of these mapped areas will not be salvaged due to restrictions on operations (terrain, extreme slope, streams, etc.) and limited time before tree decay. It should also be understood that within each of these mapped areas salvage work will reflect the level of mortality; there will likely be scattered removals, similar to a thinning operation, mixed with pockets of near complete removals similar to our typical regeneration patch cutting operations. Some pockets of high mortality and low species diversity may have widely scattered residual trees. DWSP will also salvage affected interior roadside trees to maintain access and address public safety concerns.

This map shows areas identified for fiscal year 2019 which have been: identified but as yet untreated (red), contain at least one lot sold to be salvage but so far unharvested (blue), contain at least one lot which has been partially harvested (yellow), and have had the full all potential salvage harvests completed (green). Areas identified as potential areas of extensive oak mortality for fiscal year 2020 are in purple. Click on any polygon for further information.

All of [DWSP's standard management policies](#) apply to these salvage operations. The DCR Commissioner will need to approve any salvage work that will create openings >5 acres, as is the case for other DWSP silvicultural operations. There will be an accelerated proposal and sale schedule of these areas. Each of the locations mapped here has been reviewed by DWSP Natural Resources and Environmental Quality staff and, is here, undergoing public review prior to sale

