

**Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management  
*Forest Management Project Summary***

**Project Title: Whitehall/Pine Plains Barrens**

DWSP Harvest Permit Number: 4413

DWSP Proposal ID: WR-23-7-1

DCR Forest Cutting Plan File Number: 257.743174.25

***Site Information***

Watershed: Ware River Watershed

Town(s): Rutland, Oakham

Acres: 123.4

Nearest Road: Whitehall Rd, Pine Plains Rd

Natural Heritage Atlas overlap?: Yes

Public Drinking Water Supply Watershed?: Yes

Forest Types: white pine, mixed oak, white pine/oak

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)?: No

Soils: 254B - Merrimac fine sandy loam - Excessively well drained, 927C - Montauk-Scituate-Canton association - Moderately well drained, in the eastern corner of the proposal 253D - Hinckley loamy sand - Excessively well drained, north of Muddy Pond 253E - Hinckley loamy sand - Excessively well drained, in the northwest corner of the proposal.

Wetland Resources: The proposal borders on Muddy Pond. An unnamed stream runs southerly through the middle of the proposal and drains to Muddy Pond. There are 4 verified vernal pools within the proposal area. No work will occur in wetlands and no crossings are required for access.

Vernal Pools: Yes, four vernal pools.

***Harvest Information***

Harvest Start Date: TBD

Harvest End Date: Before 2/5/27

Number of Wetland Crossings: None

Number of Stream Crossings: None

***Best Management Practices Applied***

Stream Crossings: There are no stream crossings.

Filter Strips: There is harvesting in all five filter strips.

Wetland Crossings: There are no wetland crossings.

Harvesting in Wetlands: There is no harvesting in wetlands.

***DWSP Forester supervising this harvest***

Name: Russ Wilmot

Forester License number: 426

Phone number: 857 262 3809

Email: Russell.Wilmot@mass.gov

## **Narrative**

### ***General Description/Forest Composition/History:***

The 1938 aerial photos show this area was mostly young forest at that time. The red pine section adjacent to Whitehall Road had already been planted. There were some small open fields totaling approximately 6 acres in the eastern tip of the lot between Whitehall Road and Pine Plains Road in what is now a mixed oak/white pine oak stand. The lot is generally flat, particularly to the north and east. There is some rolling terrain and slopes up to 30% to the south adjacent to the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) and Muddy Pond. The section of this lot located east of the unnamed brook that bisects the lot was previously proposed as WR-17-07-1 but was never implemented.

White pine/oak - This stand is located west of the un-named brook and wetlands that bisect the lot, along Pine Plains Road. Lot #181 was a 20 acre thinning in the eastern part of the stand along the un-named brook that bisects the lot. It was completed in 1991. Lot 4367 consisted of four regeneration openings, including two in this stand. A 4.6 acre and a 1.6 acre opening adjacent to Pine Plains Road were completed in 2008 as part of that harvest. They have regenerated well to sapling sized white pine, mixed oaks, red maple, black cherry, and pitch pine. The stand is fully stocked, averaging approximately 145 square feet of basal area per acre. Sawlog size white pine of average quality dominate the overstory. Red, white, and black oak is consistently present through most of this stand, averaging approximately 30 square feet of basal area per acre. The oak component generally increases to the south and west as the stand transitions to the mixed oak stand along the MCRT. Oak quality is generally average to poor, with some good quality dominant stems present. The oaks were affected by the Spongy Moth outbreak in 2018/2019. Some scattered mortality is present. Pitch pine is also consistently present throughout the stand, averaging approximately 15 square feet of basal area per acre. Pitch pine is generally a larger component of the stand to the east. Low quality red maple is also present in the overstory. Regeneration is consistently present throughout the stand. Regeneration consists of red maple, white pine, mixed oak, black birch and eastern hemlock saplings. Mid story red maple and eastern hemlock poles are present in some areas as well. Low bush blueberry is present throughout the stand.

Mixed Oak - There are two separate stands that are dominated by oak on this lot. The first is approximately 24 acres and is located in the eastern edge of the lot between Whitehall Rd and Pine Plains Rd. This stand transitions from white pine/oak adjacent to the red pine stand to more oak/hardwood dominated uphill towards Pine Plains Rd. It is overstocked with approximately 120 ft<sup>2</sup> BA/acre, with approximately 40 ft<sup>2</sup> BA/ acre of acceptable growing stock. This stand is generally younger than the other oak stand. The dominant stems are small sawlogs. The white pine quality is low to fair. Oak quality is fair to good. Low quality red maple and black cherry are also present. Regeneration present is white pine, red maple, and oak. Spongy Moth mortality is present but scattered. The second oak stand is located in the southwestern portion of the lot adjacent to the MCRT and Muddy Pond, and is approximately 30 acres in size. This stand is stocked, averaging approximately 90 square feet of basal area per acre. Large sawlog sized red, white and black oak stems of generally good quality dominate the stand. Spongy Moth mortality is light and scattered. Sawlog sized white pine is also present, particularly to the north and east of the stand, and adjacent to Muddy Pond. White pine quality is mixed with some oversized low quality stems present adjacent to Muddy Pond and better quality stems scattered throughout the stand. Red maple, black cherry, aspen, and eastern

hemlock are also present in the overstory. Regeneration is consistently present throughout the stand. Regeneration consists of red maple, white pine, mixed oak, black, cherry, black birch and eastern hemlock saplings. Low bush blueberry is present throughout the stand.

Red pine - This is a planted red pine stand that has been harvested in at least twice. Most of the residual red pine stems have died. The overstory red pine that is still alive is mature and good quality. This stand was part of harvest lot #175, a shelterwood cut that removed 60 - 70 ft<sup>2</sup> basal area/acre of mostly low value red and white pine, and was completed in 6/92. The stand was revisited in 1998 as part of harvest lot #264, a seed tree cut, that removed approximately 60 ft<sup>2</sup> basal area/acre of sawlog red and white pine, leaving approximately 20 -30 ft<sup>2</sup> basal are/acre of mostly good quality healthy saw log size red pine. The stand now is two aged, with approximately 10 ft<sup>2</sup> basal are/acre of overstory good quality red pine. The sub canopy consists of low quality white pine, hemlock, and advanced regeneration hardwoods. Pitch pine is present in the area. Approximately 40 ft<sup>2</sup> BA/acre of the white pine is 5 - 12 inches dbh.

Highbush and low bush blueberry, juniper, raspberry, blackberry, and hawthorn are present. This site is considered suitable for conversion to pitch pine/white oak barren.

Glossy buckthorn and invasive honeysuckle are present, particularly in the eastern portion of the lot along Pine Plains Road and Whitehall Road. Almost all of which will not be within the project area.

The soils are well drained.

### ***Site Selection***

The primary goal of the watershed forest management program is to create and maintain a forest that provides high quality drinking water to current users and future generations. A healthy and resilient forest is comprised of diverse native tree and shrub species and multiple age classes of trees.

This area was designated as a barrens focus area in DWSP's 2017 Land Management Plan. The silvicultural objective of this proposal is to expand the pitch pine/oak barrens area that is east of Whitehall Road.

### ***Silvicultural Objectives***

This type of community is relatively open with scattered overstory pitch pine and oaks. In the white pine/oak and mixed oak stands, where the desired overstory trees are abundant, an average of approximately 10-30 square feet of basal area per acre of overstory trees will be retained. All pitch pine will be retained where feasible, and large crowned healthy white oaks will be favored. Some large-crowned healthy red and black oaks will also be retained, particularly where white oak and pitch pine are not available. All other trees over five feet tall will be removed. There are plenty of desirable overstory trees to retain throughout most of the proposal area, except in the red pine stand. In that stand, healthy large-crowned sub-canopy oaks, particularly white oaks will be retained where feasible. All other trees greater than five feet tall will be removed. It is DWSP's intention to use a combination of mechanical mowing and prescribed fire in the future to keep this area relatively open post-harvest and restore in to functioning barrens habitat.

The openings created by lot 4367 have regenerated well to a mix of tree and shrub species. These areas may need to be mowed in order to make them available to prescribed fire.

***Cultural Resources***

Stonewalls are present, particularly in the eastern portion of the lot adjacent to Whitehall Road and Pine Plains Road. Stone walls will be protected as much as possible. A possible cellar hole exists west of the access road from Whitehall Road and will be protected. A historic horse racetrack is located in the northwest portion of the lot. It is visible on Lidar but hard to distinguish on the ground, but efforts will be made to identify, avoid, and minimize impacts to the extent possible. Past harvesting has occurred in that area.

***Rare or Endangered Species***

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has determined that it does not expect the proposed activities to negatively impact Priority Habitat and will not result in a Take of plant or animal species protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.

Figures

Figure 1. Final Forest Cutting Plan

# Forest Cutting Plan

and Notice of Intent under M.G.L. Chapter 132 – The Forest Cutting Practices Act, 304 CMR 11.00 FEB 05 2025 (Effective Date: 1/1/04)

**For DCR Use Only:**

File Number 25743174.25 Case No.             
 Date Rec'd 2-5-25 Nat. Hert. YES /  
 Earliest Start 2-20-25 Nat. Hert. Imp.             
 River Basin CHICOPEE Pub. Dr. Wat. YES - WARE  
 Gen. Obj. LT ACEC NO

Site Information

**Location**

Town Rutland and Oakham Lot 4413  
 Road Whitehall Rd and Pine Plains Rd  
 Acres 123 Proposed Start Date 3/28/25  
 Vol. MBF 269.7 Vol. Cds. 404 Vol. Tons 2888

**Plan Preparer**

Name Russell Wilmot  
 Address 578 Old Turnpike Rd  
 Town, State, Zip Oakham, MA, 01068  
 Phone 1-857-262-3809  
 Type of Preparer Mass. Licensed Forester  
 \*Mass. Forester License # 426  
 \*Required for land under Ch61, Ch61A or Forest Stewardship

**Landowner**

Name DCR/DWSP/OWM Quabbin/Ware River  
 Mailing Address 485 Ware Rd.  
 Town, State, Zip Belchertown, MA 01007  
 Phone 857-262-3809  
 Ch61  Ch61A  Stew  \*Case #             
 Est. Stumpage Value           

**Licensed Timber Harvester\*\***

Name Will be provided when known  
 Address             
 Town, State, Zip             
 Phone             
 Mass. Lic. Harvester #             
 \*\*This information may be supplied after the plan is approved, but before work begins.

Best Management Practices

**Stream Crossings**

Indicate location on map	SC-1	SC-2	SC-3	SC-4
Type of Crossing	N/A			
Existing Structure				
Type of Bottom				
Bank Height (ft)				
Stabilization				

**Wetland Crossings**

Indicate location on map	WC-1	WC-2	WC-3	WC-4
Length of Crossing	N/A			
Mitigation				
Stabilization				

**Filter Strips**

Indicate location on map	FS-1	FS-2	FS-3	FS-4
Width (50', 100', or VA)	VA	VA	VA	VA

**Harvesting in Wetlands**

Indicate location on map	HW-1	HW-2	HW-3	HW-4
Forest Type (see pg 2)	N/A			
Acres to be Harvested				
Resid. Basal Area (>50%?)				

**Service Forester Comments**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Codes

Type of Preparer	Type of Crossing	Stabilization	Mitigation	Type of Bottom
LF Mass. Lic. For.	CU Culvert	SE Seed	FR Frozen	LE Ledge
TH Lic. Tim. Har	BR Bridge	MU Mulch	DR Dry	ST Stony
TB Timber Buyer	FO Ford	CO Corduroy	OT Other	MU Mud
LO Landowner	PO Poled	ST Stone		GR Gravel
OT Other	OT Other	HB Hay Bales		OT Other
		OT Other		

**Note:**  
 Applicant must provide DCR with all relevant information before plan may be approved and cutting may begin. Some forestry activities, such as prescribed burning and pesticide or fertilizer application may require additional permits. Consult MA Forestry BMP Manual for further information.

If Other (OT) is used in any category an explanation must be given on an attached narrative page

### Stream Crossings

Indicate location on map	SC-5	SC-6	SC-7	SC-8	SC-9	SC-10
Type of Crossing						
Existing Structure						
Type of Bottom						
Bank Height (ft)						
Stabilization						

### Wetland Crossings

Indicate location on map	WC-5	WC-6	WC-7	WC-8	WC-9	WC-10
Length						
Mitigation						
Stabilization						

### Filter Strips

Indicate location on map	FS-5	FS-6	FS-7	FS-8	FS-9	FS-10
Width (50', 100' or VA)	VA					

### Harvesting in Wetlands

Indicate location on map	HW-5	HW-6	HW-7	HW-8	HW-9	HW-10
Forest Type (see pg 2)						
Acres to be Harvested						
Resid. Basal Area (>50%)						

Type of Crossing	Stabilization	Mitigation	Type of Bottom
CU Culvert	SE Seed	FR Frozen	LE Ledge
BR Bridge	MU Mulch	DR Dry	ST Stony
FO Ford	CO Corduroy	OT Other	MU Mud
PO Poled	ST Stone		GR Gravel
OT Other	HB Hay Bales		OT Other
	OT Other		

**Note:**  
 Applicant must provide DCR with all relevant information before plan may be approved and cutting may begin. Some forestry activities, such as prescribed burning and pesticide or fertilizer application may require additional permits. Consult MA Forestry BMP Manual for further information.

If Other (OT) is used in any category an explanation must be given on narrative page

**Products to be Harvested\***

Species	Mbf/Cds		Mbf/Cds
White Pine	242.9	Red Maple	
Red Pine	12.3	Sugar Maple	
Pitch Pine		Red Oak	11.7
Hemlock		Black Oak	2.4
Spruce		White Oak	0.4
Other Sftwd.		Other Hdwd.	
White Ash		Total Mbf	269.7
Beech		Cordwood (Cds)	404
White Birch		SW Pulp (Tons)	
B & Y Birch		HW Pulp (Tons)	
Black Cherry		Chips (Tons)	2888

\*Note: Volumes and values indicated in the Plan are as reported by the plan preparer and have not been independently verified by the service forester upon approval. Mbf = thousand board feet.

**Cutting Standards**

Indicate location on map	ST-1	ST-2	ST-3	ST-4
Forest Type	WP	OM	WO	WO
Acres	27.4	16.5	0.5	79
Landowner Objective	LT	LT	LT	LT
Designation of Trees	LT	CT	CT	CT
Type of Cut	OT	OT	OT	OT
Source of Regeneration	AD/SE	AD/SE	AD/SE	AD/SE

**Landowner Signature**

The most important information on a cutting plan is the Landowner's objective, as this will determine which trees will be harvested and which will remain; this decision will also determine the future condition of the forest for decades to come. After having read the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Plan Information Sheet on page one, indicate your objective by checking the appropriate box below.

**LT - Long-term Forest Management**

Planned management of the forest to achieve one or more of the following objectives: produce immediate and maximize long-term income, enhance wildlife habitat, improve recreational opportunities, protect soil and water quality, or produce forest specialty products.

**ST - Short-term Harvest**

Harvest of trees with the main intention of producing short-term income with minimal consideration given to improving the future forest condition, which often results in a forest dominated by poor quality and low value species.

I (we) have read the Massachusetts Cutting Plan Information Sheet, and am aware of my (our) management options.

I (we) hereby certify that I (we) have the legal authority to carry out the operation described above.

I (we) certify that I (we) have notified the Conservation Commission in the town in which the operation is to take place and the abutters of record within two hundred feet of the area to be harvested.

I (we) understand that the volumes and values (Ch61 only) in this plan have not been independently verified by the service forester upon approval and will report final values and volumes to the Director or his/her agent if the final figures differ from those reported.

1/30/2025

Signature of landowner(s)

Date

**Determination and Status** 257.43174.25

Approved Disapproved Expires

Cutting Plan   2-5-27

3/13/2025  
Signature of Service Forester/Director's Agent Date

Extension 1  2  Expires 1 Ser. For. Ints. 1

Amendment App 1  Dis 1  App 2  Dis 2  1

**Final Report and Comments**

I hereby certify that the afore described Forest Cutting Plan and all relevant statutes have been substantially complied with.

Signature of Service Forester/Director's Agent Date

**Codes**

Forest Types	Designation of Trees	Type of Cut	Source of Regeneration
WP White Pine	CT Cut Tree	SH Shelterwood	AD Advanced
WK WP/Hem	LT Leave Tree	ST Seed Tree	SE Natural Seed
WH WP/Hdwd	SB Stand Boundary	CC Clear Cut	PL Plant
WO WP/Oak	OT Other	SE Selection	CO Coppice
RP Red Pine	Landowner Objective	SA Salvage	DS Direct Seed
SR Red Spruce	LT Long-term Mgt.	SN Sanitation	OT Other
	ST Short-term Har.		
		Intermediate Harvets:	
		CT Commercial Thin	
		NT Non Com Thin	
		Non-Standard Systems:*	
		HG Highgrade*	
		DL Diameter Limit*	
		OT Other*	

\*If Other (OT) or a non-standard system is used an explanation must be given on attached narrative page pg 4 of 5

# Forest Cutting Plan

## Narrative Page

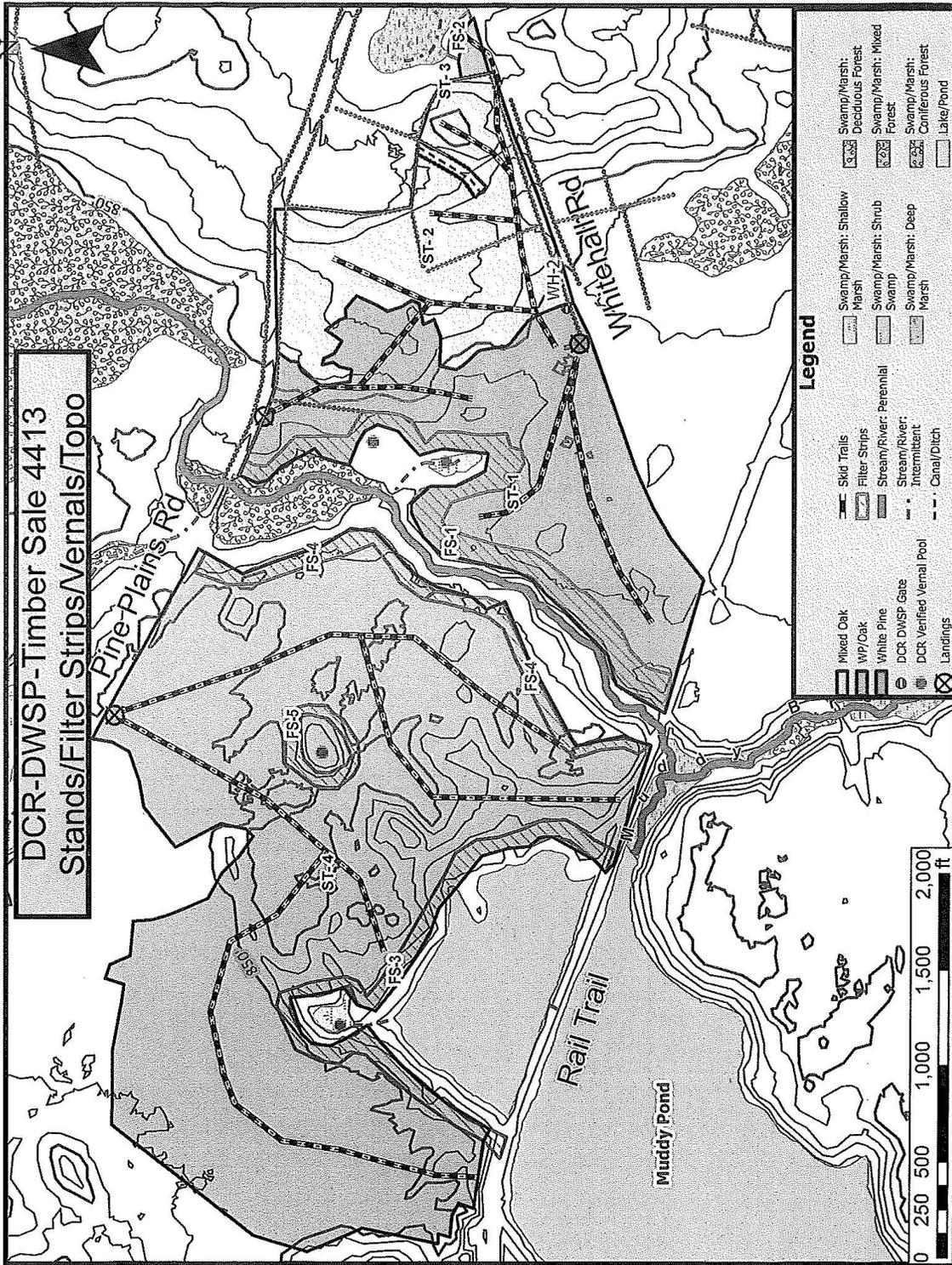
Landowner: MA DCR DWSP

Town: Rutland/Oakham

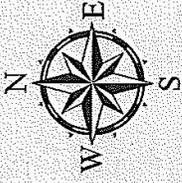
File Number: 257.43174.25

Use only if further explanation is required of information on pages one or two or if "other" was used in any category.

<b>BMPs</b>	<p><u>No stream or wetland crossings on this lot. There are 4 vernal pools in the sale area. Some portions of preexisting haul roads will be utilized. All the main haul roads are painted in a vertical blue stripe. Filter strips are painted in orange ringed trees with a dot facing outside the filter strip.</u></p> <p><u>FS-1 Is the beaver brook and two vernal pools. The Southwestern portion of this filter strip will have some individual pines selected for harvest. The Northeastern portion will have no cutting. FS-2 Some individual pines will be harvested near the wetland/pond area. FS-3 Individual pines have been selected for harvest around Muddy pond and one vernal pool. FS-4 Individual pines have been selected for harvest in the middle and northern portion of this filter strip. FS-5 is around a vernal pool and only a couple pines are marked on the eastern side of the filter strip. Only incidental understory cutting in the filter strips.</u></p>
<b>Silviculture</b>	<p><u>This operation is a pine barrens restoration harvest. This is a non-traditional whole tree timber harvest where almost the entire understory will be cut. In the overstory, white pine, red maple, black birch and black cherry will predominately be the species marked for harvest with exception to ST-2 which is a heavily stocked oak stand and will require some thinning. ST-1 is the result of a combination of several harvests that occurred in 1994 and 2008 that left predominately white/red pine and white oak as retention. Almost every white oak retained is now dead. The remaining live overstory species are undesirable for barrens habitat and will be harvested in addition to the majority of the understory composed of generalist species. There will be little to no retention in these 27 acres. Hundreds of oaks in the understory have been orange ringed and will be retained where it is feasibly possible for the harvest operation. Likely less than 1/3 of the understory ringed oaks will be retained. ST-3 is a small pine area to be cut out in a wp/oak stand near a wetland/pond edge. ST-4 is an oak/wp stand that will have varying levels of harvest depending on where the generalist species are. Some areas will resemble a large clear cut with no retention, while other areas will resemble a thinning operation.</u></p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p><u>The objective of this operation is to create and add on to the preexisting barrens habitat on Whitehall Rd.</u></p> <p><u>Barrens are a type of habitat characterized by an open tree canopy and lots of shrubby undergrowth. They are home to specialized plants and animals and are both regionally and globally imperiled.</u></p> <p><u>DWSP plans to use the application of prescribed fire and/or mowing in the future to maintain the habitat created by this project.</u></p> <p><u>Almost the entire understory, all of the dead pine trees and marked dead oak trees will be removed to prepare the site for prescribed fire.</u></p>
<b>Other</b>	<p><u>There are three landings, the first will be just inside gate WH-2 on Whitehall Rd, the second will be just uphill of the beaver brook on Pine Plains Rd and the third will be further down Pine Plains Rd at the Northern terminus of the sale. All three landings are preexisting.</u></p> <p><u>NHESP Estimated habitat next to FS-2. NHESP Priority habitat on all three landings and the eastern half of the sale area.</u></p> <p><u>Double ringed trees are the edge of the sale. Forest roads in the harvest area are DWSP gated roads.</u></p> <p><u>There will be some large pines cut along the edge of the rail trail East of Muddy pond and will be accessed from the ST-4 haul road.</u></p>



ale 4413  
ewalls  
ds/Trails







MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF  
**FISHERIES & WILDLIFE**

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581  
p: (508) 389-6300 | f: (508) 389-7890  
[MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE](http://MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE)

Jacob Seidel  
DCR Service Forestry  
East: District 5

Forest Cutting Plan No.: 257.43174.25  
NHESP Tracking No.: 25-19295  
Town: Rutland  
Road: Whitehall Road & Pine Plains Road  
Landowner: Massachusetts Division of Conservation and  
Recreation, Water Supply Protection: Ware River  
Watershed  
Preparer: Russell Wilmot (Oakham, MA)  
Date: February 28, 2025

Dear Jacob,

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife ("the Division") has reviewed the above-referenced Forest Cutting Plan ("the Plan") pursuant to the special approval procedures of the Forest Cutting Practices Regulations (304 CMR 11.04(6)).

Based on details of the Plan, and information in the NHESP database, the Division does not expect activities proposed in the Plan to negatively impact Priority Habitat and **will not result in a Take** (as defined in 321 CMR 10.02) of plant or animal species protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (M.G.L. c. 131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00). Therefore, the Division does not require that the Plan be modified or conditioned at this time.

Please copy the Division on any proposed amendment, extension, and on the approved Plan for the site. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Nikolis Gualco, Endangered Species Review Biologist at [nikolis.a.gualco@mass.gov](mailto:nikolis.a.gualco@mass.gov) OR (508) 389-6375.

Sincerely,

Jesse Leddick  
Assistant Director

cc: Rutland Conservation Commission

MASSWILDLIFE

dcf



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of State Parks and Recreation

FILE # 257.43174.25

**W**

# FOREST CUTTING PLAN CERTIFICATE

Post this in a conspicuous place within the area in which the harvesting operation is to take place.

This certifies that DCR/DWS/PLOWN 485 Ware Rd.  
Quobbin/Ware River Belmonttown in accordance with the  
(Name of Owner) (Address)

provision of M.G.L. Chapter 132, Section 40-46, filed in Clinton with the Dept. of Conservation  
and Recreation, Division of State Parks and Recreation, a Notice of Intent to cut forest products upon the

Whitchell Rd Pine Plains Rd. lot

Approval Date 3.3.2005

Director's Agent Jacob Seibel

DCR Phone No. 857.345.2535

ISSUED BY:

Priscilla E. Geigis, Director  
Division of State Parks and Recreation