



Watershed Currents

The newsletter for owners of land protected by Watershed Preservation Restrictions (WPRs) held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Water Supply Protection. Winter 2011

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Forestry on Watershed Lands

Tasked with the responsibility of assuring the availability of pure water for future generations, DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection recognizes that forest cover is the best type of land cover and provides for unparalleled long-term water quality. The Division has been actively managing its forests for decades. Guided by publicly reviewed Land Management Plans for each watershed (see www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/dwmplans.htm), the Division strives to diversify both the age structure and species composition of its forested lands. A vigorous, species-diverse, multiple-aged forest offers the most stable land cover in the face of potentially large-scale disturbances by wind, insects, ice, or disease.

In order to diversify the forest, openings are created in the canopy to provide sunlight to new tree seedlings and stump sprouts. Forest openings range - FORESTRY, CONTINUED PAGE 3

What is a WPR?

Watershed Preservation Restriction (WPR) and Conservation Restriction (CR) are terms used interchangeably to describe the written agreement between you and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR – formerly the Metropolitan District Commission or MDC) that you will refrain from certain activities on your property in order to protect water quality.



An Introduction to the DCR Water Supply WPR/CR Staff

DCR's WPR stewardship program mainly involves four staff people:

- Caroline Raisler, Watershed Preservation Restriction Coordinator. You will see Caroline on regular monitoring visits to your property. She is mainly responsible for the administration of the WPR program. If you have any questions about what you can do on your WPR, give her a call or send her an email.
- Jim Taylor, Regional Planner. You will likely see Jim on monitoring visits as well. When he is not monitoring, he

often works on graphic design projects, like this newsletter and our boundary signs.

- Jim French, Land Acquisition Coordinator. You won't see Jim on monitoring visits because he is busy acquiring new WPRs and land for the Agency. However, if you have recently become involved in the program, it is very likely that you already know him well.
- Dan Clark, Natural Resources Director. Dan supervises the rest of us, and occasionally gets to come out in the field and meet all of you.

Landowner Profile

Helen Haddad's Art Is Inspired by the Quabbin Landscape

One of my favorite parts of this job is getting out into the field and getting to know you – our landowners. I thought it would be fun to let you get to know each other through this series of landowner profiles. If you would like to be profiled for this series, please let me know.

- Caroline

Helen Haddad, one of our WPR landowners, placed a WPR on her property in Wendell in 2007. She wanted her property to be protected "for when I'm not there to look after it."

She says that being in such a beautiful landscape inspires her as she creates extraordinary art out of potatoes. Her potato prints involve cutting a potato in half, carving it, painting it, and then printing it onto paper. Each potato can make several prints before it is retired. She sometimes grows the potatoes she uses for her art (in the area



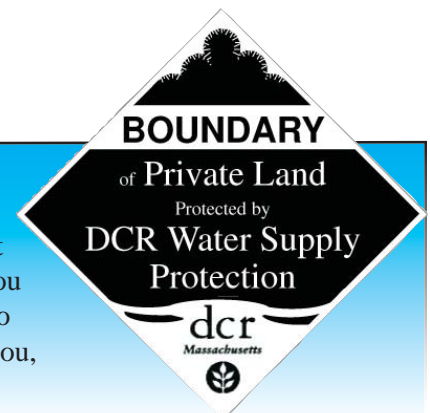
excluded from the WPR). It is not safe to eat the potato after it is used for printing, but she reports that if she has an especially delicious looking potato, sometimes she uses half for printing and cooks the other half.

You can see more of Helen Haddad's potato print art as well as art by other western Massachusetts artists inspired by the natural world at an exhibit called Four Seasons/5 Artists at the Artspace Gallery in Greenfield. The exhibit runs March 8 – April 15. Her prints are also shown at North Quabbin Woods in Orange and at the Salmon Falls gallery in Shelburne Falls.

This print of a red eft by Helen Haddad (approximate actual size) was inspired by one she saw while walking her property with her grandchildren.

Know Your Boundaries

Clearly marked boundaries are important for helping to protect your property against encroachment or trespassing. We have recently designed new boundary signs that you can use for this purpose. Boundary posting is not mandatory, but if you would like to post signs we can send you some. If you would like us to post your boundaries for you, we occasionally have time for that, too. Let us know and we will put you on the list.



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in size from single trees up to two acres and total less than 1% of the forest area per year. This deliberate pattern is spread over space and time and will produce a forest that is diverse, actively reproducing, multi-layered, and more resistant and resilient than the forest we have today.

In order to achieve its forest management goals, the Division relies on private loggers to bid on specific forestry lots set up by Division Foresters. The winning bidder is awarded the lot. During harvesting, the logger is closely supervised by Division Foresters and must meet stringent Best Management Practices (BMPs), equipment requirements, and timing restrictions. Careful planning and execution ensures that water resources are securely protected and the forest can continue to act as a biological filter for pure water.

- Dan Clark



This is a typical 1/2 acre forest opening, showing exceptional new tree regeneration and growth.

If you'd like to consider forest management on your land...

The WPR on your property allows for forest management. Each WPR, however, is different; your WPR documentation explains the specific forest management requirements that are in place on your property. Please ask us if you have any questions about what your WPR allows.

There are a lot of good reasons to do forest management. Some people like to manage their forest to attract certain wildlife species, such as deer, moose, or birds. Other people want to manage their forests as a source of income.

If you want to manage your forest, the first thing to do is find a licensed forester for advice. A good forester will listen to your goals for the property and help you develop a plan to achieve them. This plan can be written up as a Forest Management Plan or Forest Stewardship Plan (grants are sometimes available to help with the cost). Having a plan also makes your land eligible for the Chapter 61 open

land management program, which can reduce your property taxes. You should make sure that your forester has a copy of your WPR so they can integrate its requirements into your plan.

If you decide to harvest timber from your property, you will need to follow both the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Practices Act and the terms of your WPR. Your forester should be familiar with the terms of the Forest Cutting Practices Act, which requires that you file a Cutting Plan. Our WPRs differ with respect to what they require for forest management. Even if your WPR does not require it, we recommend following Best Management Practices to protect water quality, such as planning logging roads to avoid wetland and stream crossings, minimizing harvesting in wetlands, and doing the logging work when the ground is dry or frozen. We would also like to meet with you and your forester prior to a harvest to go over Best Management Practices and how you can do your timber harvest in a way that protects water quality.

- Caroline Raisler

For more information on forest management, please visit these web sites:

- www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/service/steward.htm (*description of forest stewardship program*).
- www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/service/fortax.htm (*description of Ch. 61/61A Current Use Forest Tax Program*).
- www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/docs/MA%20Licensed%20Foresters%20Directory.pdf (*listing of licensed foresters in Massachusetts*).

The Wildlife on Your Land: Black Bears

Black bears, the only species of bear that lives in Massachusetts, were relatively rare in the state during the 1970s. Today, there are over 3,000 bears in the Commonwealth.

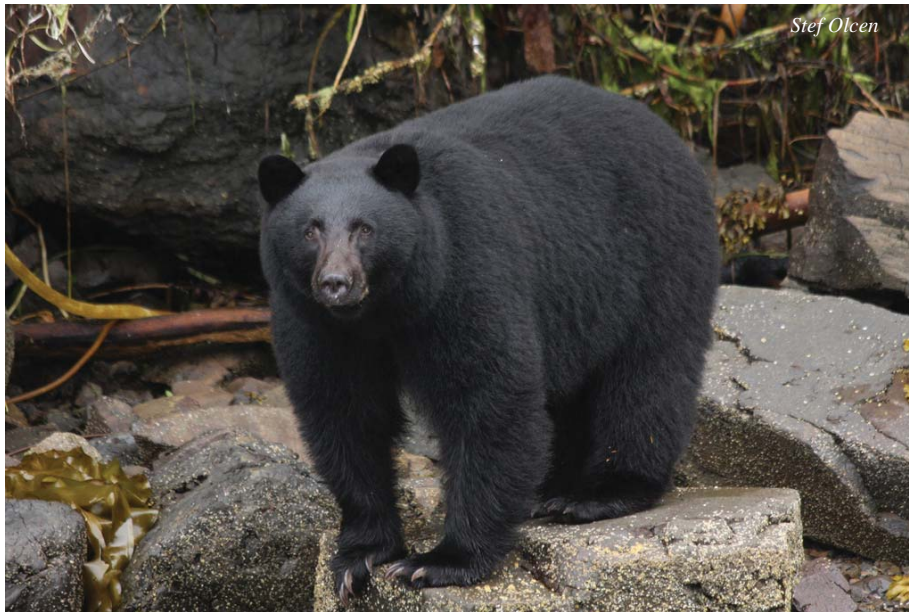
Black bears are fairly common in the western part of the state, relatively common in central MA, and very rare or absent in the east. Black bears have a tremendous sense of smell, which they use to locate food and identify danger. Though not as sensitive, bears have good eyesight and hearing. Male bears in Massachusetts

weigh up to 600 pounds and females can weigh up to 400 pounds. Despite their size and fierce reputation, bears are actually pretty timid. Most often bears will run away from people and will often disappear into the woods before they are even seen. Black bears that have become habituated to humans and their food can sometimes lead to unfortunate situations that often end with the bear being removed or destroyed.

While it can be exciting to see a bear in the wild, it is important to take simple measures to ensure that they remain

“wild.” Like other wildlife, bears are quick to take advantage of easy, reliable sources of food, even if the food is closely associated with people. The best approach to avoid

potential conflicts is to not tempt bears with easy food. Bird feeders should be removed by April 1 and kept down until December each year. All pet food and unsecured garbage should be removed from yards each night. Landowners who keep bees should consider using electric fences (temporary or permanent) around the hives. Hives should be placed well away from trees,



be mowed on all sides, and set back from wooded areas. Landowners with crops should also consider temporary electric fencing. Open and mowed areas should be maintained around the fields to cut down on bear pathways. Planting corn alternately with other crops may also reduce the amount of cover and food available to bears.

Visit MassWildlife's website at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/wildlife/facts/mammals/bear/black_bear_home.htm for more information on bears in Massachusetts.

-Dan Clark

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Massachusetts



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