



The newsletter for owners of land protected by a Watershed Preservation Restriction (WPR) held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Water Supply Protection.

Winter 2014

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Contact

Caroline Raisler
Watershed Preservation
Restriction Coordinator
508-792-7806 x 609
caroline.raisler@state.ma.us

Bobcat in West Boylston



Photo: Lorraine Goodale

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Watershed Currents

The Community Preservation Act

At least some portion of 26 towns lay within the 400 square mile Quabbin/Ware River/Wachusett watershed area. Seven of these towns – Shutesbury, Pelham, Belchertown, Phillipston, Templeton, Hubbardston, and West Boylston – have something else in common: they have chosen to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Since 2001, 155 Massachusetts towns have voted to enjoy access to dedicated CPA funds for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation initiatives.

All towns struggle to pay for essential services such as schools, public safety, and roads, leaving little or no money for projects that preserve and improve a community's unique character and quality of life. The CPA provides a remedy to this shortfall by combining funds from two sources: a municipal contribution through a voluntary surcharge (up to 3%) on local real estate taxes and an equal match from the state collected through a surcharge on Registry of Deeds transactions.

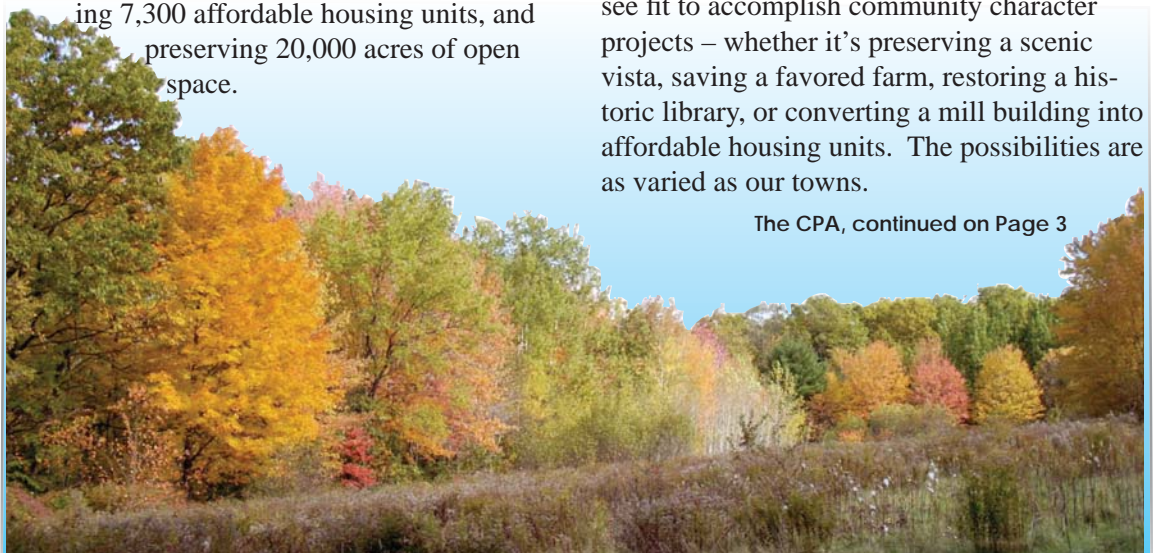
Since its inception, nearly \$1.2 billion has been raised and distributed to participating towns to use as each town sees fit (subject to threshold expenditures) on historic preservation, open space protection, and accessible housing. The power of partnership has rarely been more evident, as more than 6,600 projects have been approved statewide, assisting 3,300 historic preservation projects, creating 7,300 affordable housing units, and preserving 20,000 acres of open space.



CPA funding has helped preserve this quiet picnic spot in Hubbardston. Photo: Caroline Raisler

The statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue, oversees the distribution of funds to participating towns. CPA towns establish their own Community Preservation Committees that make recommendations to Town Meetings (or other local legislative bodies). The CPA provides participating towns with dedicated resources that residents use as they see fit to accomplish community character projects – whether it's preserving a scenic vista, saving a favored farm, restoring a historic library, or converting a mill building into affordable housing units. The possibilities are as varied as our towns.

The CPA, continued on Page 3



This meadow off Malone Road in Hubbardston was acquired, in part, through CPA funding.

Photo: Andy Olesin

Landowner Profile

Norman and Lorraine Goodale

Preserving generations of family farm history



Norman and Lorraine Goodale in the barn with the old hay wagon they use on special occasions for family hay-rides

Photo: Caroline Raisler

Norman and Lorraine Goodale's house in West Boylston has been in Norman's family for 250 years. It was built by his ancestor, William Whitney, the first settler of West Boylston, in 1761. Over the years, the one-room house has been added on to dozens of times. There are also several outbuildings, including a large barn and a blacksmith shop. Norman's grandfather made a living from the property by growing apples and making apple cider, and the stone foundation of his cider house remains on the property.

Lorraine moved in when she and Norman got married in 1957. Though she grew up in Boston and Worcester, she quickly learned to love the more rural surroundings of West Boylston and the old farmhouse.

Because the house has always been in the family, the attic and barn are full of old tools, used by past generations, which have been stored rather than thrown away. Norman and Lorraine decided to convert

one of their outbuildings to a "Farm History Museum" where they display some of these materials. They first showed me this museum when I came by on a Watershed Preservation Restriction monitoring visit. I loved getting to handle the objects which previous generations had used to accomplish their daily tasks. I wanted to share some of these great artifacts

with you in this newsletter. Local schoolchildren also get to experience this museum, as Norman and Lorraine invite them to come for field trips.

The Goodales put a Watershed Preservation Restriction on their property thirteen years ago. Norman said that he had been approached by developers over the years, but he wanted to look out over his field and know that it would stay the same forever. He said that over the years he has had no regrets about agreeing to the WPR, as he has never wanted to do anything that the WPR would not allow.

Norman enjoys managing his 14 acre property, which includes woods and a hayfield, for wildlife. He recently received a wildlife camera for his 80th birthday. Norman and Lorraine have enjoyed seeing the shots it takes of turkeys and deer. They have also seen and photographed a bobcat crossing their property (see photo on page 1).

- Caroline Raisler

The Goodale Family Farm Museum holds an array of artifacts collected over several generations, including farm tools (left), and various household items from the days of early farm life (center and right). Norman Goodale heard the announcement of the beginning of World War II on the radio shown at center bottom.

Photos: Caroline Raisler



The CPA- from Page 1

Hats off to those towns that have seen the wisdom in voting in the CPA. DCR encourages others who have not yet taken up the CPA option to explore the benefits of adopting the CPA with their neighbors. It is an opportunity to have a share of a dedicated funding stream that cannot be used for any other purpose than the preservation of what makes your town...your town.

How is it done?

Any town wishing to adopt the CPA can bring it to residents for consideration either by a town meeting vote (Legislative Body Action) or by a Ballot Question Petition signed by 5% or more of registered voters. *A Guide to Accepting the CPA*, which outlines the steps needed to pass this initiative, is available from the MA Secretary of State. Excellent assistance may also be found by contacting the Community Preservation Coalition (www.community-preservation.org), where information on how to launch a successful CPA campaign strategy for your town is readily available. Informative materials, ballot language, revenue projections, surcharge options, and taxpayer impacts and benefits are provided by a staff well versed in the history, efficacy, challenges, and successes experienced by those communities that have already taken advantage of the resources provided by inclusion in the CPA. One particularly inspiring publication by the Highland Communities Initiative entitled *The CPA at Work in Small Towns* is recommended for anyone interested in learning more about actual success stories as a result of CPA adoption.

One hundred and fifty five towns have done it. Might your town be the next to enjoy the benefits of the Community Preservation Act? Learn more, take action, seek support, and work with others to make it so. We highly recommend it!

- Jim French

Malone Road In Hubbardston, A CPA Success Story

The Town of Hubbardston Open Space Committee used CPA funds (as well as other funds) to protect a 67 acre parcel on Malone Road. This parcel abuts the town's Mount Jefferson Conservation Area, on which DCR-DWSP holds a 249 acre Watershed Preservation Restriction, as well as abutting land that DCR-DWSP owns outright. DCR State Park land is also in this large complex of protected land.

The Malone Road property is a mix of open fields, woodlands, and wetlands. With its trails, open fields, and scenic vistas, the property provides great recreational opportunities. A trail map can be found at: www.hubbardstonma.us/pages/hubbardstonma_bcomm/open/MtJeff.pdf. In addition, protection of that property in the Ware River Watershed helps maintain the excellent quality of Boston's drinking water.

Caroline Raisler



A scenic trail within the Malone Road Conservation Area.

Photo: Andy Olesin

PILOT- from Page 4

who use the reservoir waters. They pay their water bills to the MWRA, which provides DCR with the funds to distribute the PILOT to each community.

Watershed PILOT was just under \$2 million in the late 1980s. The purchase of more than 17,000 acres of land combined with legislative mandates has seen this amount quadruple over the past 25 years to almost \$8 million. The biggest jumps came from DOR revaluations in 2000 and

2005 when the majority of the new property was incorporated into the program. In recent years the steady climb of local tax rates has also played a role in annual PILOT increases of four to five percent.

For more information about the watershed PILOT program, including details for each town, go to www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/water-res-protection/watershed-mgmt/payment-in-lieu-of-taxes-pilot-program.html.

- Joel Zimmerman

FYI

Payment In Lieu of Taxes

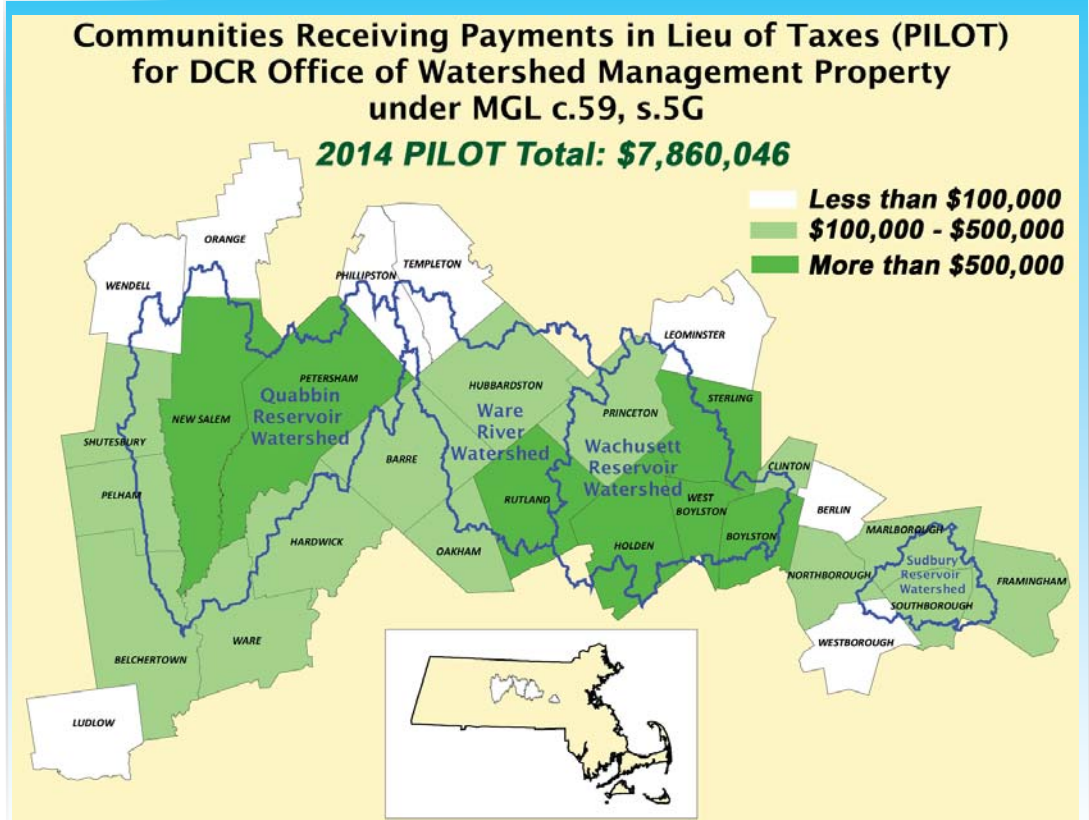
Many people aren't aware that significant Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) are made on DCR's watershed management land. PILOTs are made only on lands owned outright by the state, not on WPRs which, as you well know, are still private property. The Fiscal Year 2014 PILOT, distributed to 29 communities that encompass the watershed system, is \$7,860,046. The law that dictates how watershed PILOT is calculated, MGL c. 59, §5G, has several twists that benefit the town's payment.

PILOT is calculated by multiplying a Department of Revenue valuation (which takes place every four years) by each town's commercial tax rate. So towns that not only have a lot of DCR land but also high land values and/or high tax rates will receive the largest PILOT.

Payments can never be less than the previous year. This "hold harmless" clause means that no matter if the valuation or tax rates go down the town's payment will stay steady. The PILOT distributed in FY14 is over \$1.7 million more than the direct calculation of DOR valuation times local tax rate.

Most folks know that four towns – Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott – were lost to the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir. Few, however, realize that a second PILOT payment, totaling \$622,285 in FY14, is made to the six towns around the Quabbin Reservoir that annexed lands that did not end up under water.

Money for the PILOT program comes from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) rate payers PILOT, continued on Page 3



Department of Conservation and Recreation
 Division of Water Supply Protection
 Office of Watershed Management
 180 Beaman Street
 West Boylston, MA 01583

Watershed Currents is produced semi-annually for WPR landowners in the DCR water supply watersheds.

Governor: Deval L. Patrick
 EOEEA Secretary: Richard K. Sullivan Jr.
 DCR Commissioner: John P. Murray
 DWSP Director: Jonathan L. Yeo
 Editor: James E. Taylor