



Fiscal Year 2026 Final Report



Prescott Peninsula. DCR/DWSP Photo

September 2026

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management

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Acronyms

AIS	Aquatic Invasive Species
BLA	Quabbin Boat Launch Area
BMP	Best Management Practices
CE	DWSP Civil Engineering Section
CMR	Code of Massachusetts Regulations
DCR	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
DEP	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
DER	Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game Division of Ecological Restoration
DPW	Department of Public Works (municipal)
DRD	Deputy Regional Direction
DWSP	DCR Division of Water Supply Protection
EOEEA	Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (also EEA)
EQ	DWSP Environmental Quality Section
EQA	Environmental Quality Assessment
FACS	Forest as Climate Solutions
FSI	DWSP Forest Stand Improvement
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IS	DWSP Interpretive Services Section
LAP	Land Acquisition Panel
MassDOT	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MDAR	Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
MEP	Massachusetts Environmental Police
MEPA	Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act
MSP	Massachusetts State Police
MWRA	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
NHESP	Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
NR	DWSP Natural Resources Section
PILOT	Payments in Lieu of Taxes
Q	Quarter
RD	Regional Director
ROW	Right of Way
UMass	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VMP	Vegetation Management Plan
WPR	Watershed Preservation Restriction
WsPA	Watershed Protection Act
YOP	Yearly Operational Plan

FY2026 Accomplishments

DCR/DWSP Office of Watershed Management FY2025 End of Year Highlights

Wachusett/Sudbury Region

A. Land Acquisition

Four projects protecting 139 acres (72 acres in fee; 67 acres in WPR) went to record this fiscal year. Nine projects totaling over 280 acres are currently underway at various stages of due diligence.

B. Watershed Preservation Restriction Monitoring

Twenty-four WPR monitoring visits were completed this year and the [fall and spring issues of the WPR landowner E-newsletter were distributed](#).

C. Land Management

The seasonal DWSP Forest Stand Improvement crew focused their work on releasing oak and other hardwood saplings from competition in 70 acres of 10- to 20-year-old silvicultural patch openings.

All work necessary to propose forest management activity for FY26 took place. All work related to the proposal of forest management operations for FY27 has been completed.

Regular phone calls and emails from abutters regarding overhanging branches and trees of concern were received. Staff completed timely visits and made recommendations for each.

The program to visit all silvicultural openings that are at least 10 years old was completed and the analysis of the data began.

Staff continued to assist Tighe & Bond with the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment of the DCR watershed system. Four contracts, using ResilientMass funding, were awarded to continue CCVA development and address data gaps.

D. Wildlife Management

Deer hunting was successfully carried out at both Wachusett and Sudbury watersheds.

Aquatic mammal surveys commenced in the fall and early spring. No aquatic mammals were observed in the pathogen control zone.

The Bird Harassment evening program began in October and ended in April. Evening observations were conducted on 43 of the 186 consecutive day season and harassment was

utilized on 28 of these evenings. Boat crews were not utilized this season. New lasers were tested and purchased to augment the program.

E. Public Access Management

Ranger staff patrolled all public areas. This year there were 14,963 visitor contacts, 828 witnessed violations, 22 unwitnessed violations and 16 parking tickets issued.

This Fiscal Year there were 16 law enforcement requests, referrals and assists required. A meeting was held with all watershed Police and Fire Chiefs.

The Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2023 Public Access Plan Update continued to be implemented. Due to the removal of the Quinapoxet River accretion dam, an amendment to the plan was written that clarified the location of prohibited fishing areas along this section of the river.

A long-term seasonal ranger was hired to assist with the most heavily visited areas of the watershed at the Wachusett Dam, the Old Stone Church and the Rail Trails. This ranger has been trained in not only rule violations, but watershed education and historical aspects of the reservoir.

F. Watershed Security

Staff continued to work with MWRA on issues of security around the Reservoir and at shared infrastructure. Ranger supervisors met and coordinated with the Massachusetts Environmental Police for the opening day of fishing and the Massachusetts State Police for security assistance at the spring and fall dam days.

Fencing along Route 70 has been extended to provide additional protection for the boat cove and Carville Basin.

Rangers conducted additional patrols and paid special attention to railways and infrastructure due to ongoing current world issues for most of FY26. EPA water security posters with emergency phone numbers were placed on all kiosks.

G. Infrastructure Management

Significant work was completed on the Stillwater Barn: structural repairs to the posts and beams, footings poured, and new posts installed. The milk room on the back of structure was demolished and the opening was closed to protect the interior from elements.

Drainage work and paving was completed for the Phase 1 portion of the Clinton Maintenance Facility. Plans have been prepared for Phase 2 of the Wilson Street Complex which will include

stormwater management improvements and repaving of the driveways and employee parking area.

All permitting was acquired and construction began on the last remaining direct discharge to the reservoir on Route 110.

All dams have been assessed on a regular basis.

H. Watershed Protection Act (WsPA)

Thirty-two new WsPA applications were reviewed and decisions issued within the regulatory time frames. Site visits are ongoing to monitor active construction sites and determine compliance with decisions.

WsPA placards were created to place along the boundary of the Primary Protection Zone on some projects to identify this critical area and prevent future alteration and welcome letters and new WsPA cards with QR codes for the website were distributed to new property owners in WsPA jurisdiction.

Staff contacted the watershed towns on a regular basis to ensure they have the most recent WsPA Affected Parcel Lists, fact sheets, and guidance documents.

I. Education and Outreach

DWSP offered 113 programs with attendance of 2,555 people (1,219 adults and 1,336 children); Dam Day Attendance was an additional 1,811 total. Weather cancelled more than five programs this year, including the First Day Hike, our largest interpretive program. Additional outreach, public programming, and evening presentations were added to offset weather-related attendance and maintain community engagement.

Community outreach was expanded through strategic partnerships and statewide initiatives. Regular monthly, quarterly, and evening programs engaged communities across the Wachusett and Sudbury library networks, highlighted by summer events aligned with the "Plant a Seed, Read" theme. History presentations were offered at Senior Centers. Staff collaborated in working group with the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area to develop "School Programs 101," hosted "Hidden Treasures" events, and secured an outreach mini-grant. Stewardship and outdoor equity were advanced through DCR initiatives and team participation in the West Boylston Town-Wide Clean-Up.

Kiosks received monthly updates featuring upcoming events, Massachusetts drought alerts, hunting and fishing information, fishing line recycling details, and EPA water security posters. Improvements included installing new kiosks highlighting the water supply and cultural and

natural history of the properties. An interpretive panel and bulletin board case was installed at Thomas Basin, along with two interpretive waysides below the dam.

J. Water Quality and Hydrologic Monitoring

Tributary Sampling was completed twice a month; nutrient, Chloride, Alkalinity, and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) sampling was completed monthly.

Stream flow was monitored continuously (in 15-minute increments) at the ten primary tributaries (three by USGS and seven by DWSP). Groundwater levels were monitored by USGS at the Sterling and West Boylston wells.

Six snow surveys took place January through February. Groundwater monitoring of field parameters was measured monthly (except for November) in seven wells.

The Reservoir District Environmental Quality Assessment was completed and recommendations are being added to the spreadsheet for review during the next annual work planning cycle.

K. Watershed Monitoring and Surveillance

Eighteen EQ files were created, and 53 site visits were conducted on new and pre-existing Active and Watch status EQ files to ensure environmental compliance and evaluate current file status conditions. Staff also monitored 225 agriculture sites within the watershed.

The Quinapoxet Environmental Quality Assessment was completed, and new recommendations were added to the EQA Tracking Spreadsheet for consideration in upcoming work plans.

A significant milestone was reached with 98% of the overall watershed stormwater infrastructure mapping completed (7,436 out of 7,595 storm drains connected). This project moved toward completion with the final editing of all attribute fields for drainage structures, stormwater infrastructure, and stormwater basins. The topology for the entire watershed began.

A Baystate Roads Winter Snow and Ice Operations training was hosted by DCR for 19 attendees and four salt reduction grant requests to watershed towns were awarded. A Make your Own Brine workshop was hosted for the public at John Augustus Hall and a salinity manuscript was submitted to the Journal of Hydrology with UMass and DCR authors.

L. Aquatic Invasive Species

DWSP AIS action plan has been implemented. Updated decontamination protocols, equipment, and paperwork have been utilized and enforced following research on emerging threat of Spiny Waterflea in New England.

As a result of the watershed ponds surveys, a new invasive species for the watershed – Water Chestnut – was discovered in Holden. Immediate responses included additional surveys of ponds in the area which resulted in detection of water chestnut in an additional water body in the Chaffins Brook sub-watershed. Management of these infestations via hand-harvesting of plants was undertaken immediately and will be ongoing.

DCR continues to oversee data collection and analysis for the Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting program in the reservoir and provide assistance to MWRA with contract plans for the coming management year

M. Wastewater

Staff continued to review septic As Built Plans for WsPA filings and recorded 157 Title V inspections, 92 septic repairs information and 43 new sewer connections in the wastewater database.

DCR continues to work with legal counsel and MWRA to try to establish a sewer district and transfer ownership of the trunk and relief sewer lines to the communities they serve.

N. Stormwater Management

Work for the Malden Brook Restoration and Edwards Pond Dam Removal Project continued. All project permit applications were approved by DCR Green Docket. A Project Notification Form was submitted to the Massachusetts Historic Commission and additional permits will be submitted to regulatory agencies following guidance from DER.

Work commenced on preparing a preliminary design for a new stormwater basin and erosion scour repair along Beaman Street.

The Sterling Rail Trail parking lot paving and stormwater improvements on Gates Road received Conservation Commission approval and work is planned for FY27.

Required inspections have been conducted on Wachusett and Sudbury dams.

A site visit was held to review the culvert over Spring Brook. Additional discussions will continue regarding the most appropriate way to replace, taking into account the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and climate change.

Staff recorded 465 site inspection points and 42 file updates in the Construction General Permit database for this fiscal year.

BMP outreach letters were sent to all golf courses in both Wachusett and Sudbury Watersheds. Building upon our previous outreach efforts that clean water makes great beer, staff created,

produced, and delivered a small poster to most liquor stores in the watershed. Coasters were designed, purchased and delivered to liquor establishments and restaurants during Drinking Water Week. Clean water makes great coffee posters were distributed to local coffee shops. A calendar was created and distributed which highlighted stormwater pollution prevention tips.

O. Emergency Response

An unannounced emergency response drill was held. In addition to DCR staff, the West Boylston Fire Department, Mass DEP, MWRA, and City of Worcester Water Department also took part in the scenario of a railroad derailment where a few railroad cars overturned and were leaking along the shore of the reservoir.

Emergency response trainings were held and consisted of river and small water body boom deployment, night operations, basic boom deployment, terrestrial spill response, cold weather operations and planning, boom training for supervisors, and health and safety.

P. GIS

Accessibility was the primary focus of GIS staff throughout FY26. Updates to existing workflows, maps and applications were made as-needed throughout the year. New workflows, maps and applications were developed with staff as they were needed. GIS staff were able to get all DWSP public-facing content updated before the original compliance data for the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II, while continuing to support other GIS work within DWSP. All shared (internal) content will be in compliance ahead of the new compliance date of April 26, 2027. DWSP is a leader at EEA in this regard.

A new Land Acquisition Panel process has been completed. This includes a new accessible StoryMap template to be used for LAP meetings, a new accessible project update dashboard and a new parcel in play management workflow.

The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment was supported by GIS staff throughout the year. An internal CCVA tool will be available for staff early in FY27.

Q. Support

During FY26, seven new vehicles were procured and placed into service, including one Ford F-550 equipped with a snowplow, three Ford F-250s with snowplows, two Ford F-150 Hybrids, and DWSP's first battery electric vehicle (BEV), a Ford F-150 Lightning.

A 40-foot by 50-foot fabric storage structure was purchased and installed at the watershed maintenance yard in Clinton. The new facility provides cold storage for equipment, boats, sanders, and other operational assets, helping protect equipment and improve yard organization.

The DCR JAH Building Study Team continued working with architect DHK throughout FY26. DHK completed the JAH Deep Energy Retrofit and Renovation Report, including preliminary cost estimates exceeding \$9 million. DCR Design and Engineering, the DCR Climate Office, and the JAH Building Study Team are actively exploring funding opportunities. Given the project's estimated cost, the renovation is expected to be phased, with priority placed on window replacements, insulation upgrades, and HVAC improvements in the East Wing.

PILOT program successfully administered distribution of \$9.3 million, an increase of 9.4% from FY25. Wachusett communities received \$4.1 million, with Sterling becoming the first town to receive over \$1 million in PILOT. Sudbury communities received \$952,000.

The front office has professionally managed room scheduling, assisted walk-in visitors, and served as a welcoming and reliable first point of contact for DWSP. Over the course of this fiscal year, staff answered and appropriately routed more than 500 telephone calls, helping ensure timely communication, efficient coordination, and strong customer service.

Quabbin/Ware Region

A. Land Procurement

Five Quabbin projects protecting 79 acres (49 acres in fee; 30 acres in WPR) went to record this fiscal year. One Ware River projects protecting 25.5 acres in fee went to record this fiscal year. Ten projects are currently underway at various stages of due diligence, including six projects totaling 290 acres in Quabbin and four projects totaling 140 acres in Ware River.

B. Watershed Protection Restriction Program

WPR Coordinator and Regional Monitors completed sixty WPR monitoring visits this FY. WPR Coordinator reviewed all monitoring reports completed by Regional Monitors. Two in-house baselines were completed, and [two issues of the landowner E-news were distributed.](#)

C. Land Management

Thirteen FY 26 lot proposals were reviewed and approved, except for two on the Prescott Peninsula. Forestry staff provided oversight and supervision on eight active timber sales in FY26, and nine lots were marked and successfully bid out in FY26.

Work continued on the long-term paired watershed study, and a draft report was written which will be finalized in FY27.

Ongoing work on Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) analysis continued. A more comprehensive regeneration survey method was successfully piloted in FY26, which is designed to be more robust.

Approximately 11 miles of boundary were located, marked, and maintained.

Five Quabbin staff became licensed drone pilots as DWSP continues to expand its drone capabilities.

D. Wildlife Management

During the CY 2025/2026 reporting period, staff conducted 31 scheduled shore observations from October 6, 2025 until ice coverage was complete on January 28, 2026, at which point monitoring ceased. Due to bacteria counts and gull numbers remaining below established action thresholds, no active harassment occurred during any of the four quarters. There were no coliform exceedances during the program. All operations were performed safely, and training continues on program orientation, cold water and trailer operations, pyrotechnics, and laser use.

There were 19 successful weekly drone flights to count gull roosts on the Quabbin Reservoir. The number of roosting gulls ranged from approximately 21 to 480 gulls.

The Canada goose control zone was surveyed during the nesting season, and no nesting geese were found; the annual report was produced. Three beaver were removed from the Wildlife Pathogen Control Zone. In addition, work continued to prevent beaver-related flooding issues, including monitoring and maintaining culverts, maintaining culvert fence guards, and repairing beaver-deceiver piping.

Research and management for common loons on DSWP waterbodies continued and the annual report was completed for the 2025 season.

Deer hunting was conducted at Quabbin in New Salem, Pelham and Hardwick during the two-week shotgun season in December 2025. A controlled hunt was held on Pelham, Quabbin Park and Petersham. The final deer report was completed and shared with staff ahead of the 2026 deer hunt planning meeting.

E. Public Access Management

Information on access policies and regulations was distributed through the Quabbin Visitor Center and through numerous public contacts by the watershed rangers. The rangers logged approximately 17,000 visitor contacts during FY26.

The three Quabbin Boat Launch Areas (BLAs) operated daily. The 2026 season opened on its normal date in April to private boats and rental boats. The 2025 season closed on October 13, 2025. The boat inspection and decontamination programs were implemented again this year, with both boat washings and cold weather quarantines overseen by DWSP staff. Staff continued to use iPads to implement the boat seal program. All three BLAs continued with credit payment only systems; no cash payments were allowed.

EQ staff conduct regular inspections through EQA fieldwork that occasionally uncover recreation-related water quality concerns. These concerns are analyzed and mitigated as needed.

Staff provided support and maintained the boat launch at Comet Pond. A new fence was installed in Hubbardston to prevent excessive dumping along the side of the road.

Twenty-one research permits were issued this year and the annual report was compiled and distributed.

F. Watershed Security

The watershed rangers conducted regular patrols of high-vulnerability areas around the reservations, and weekly summaries were submitted to MWRA. Rangers documented 236 violations in Quabbin and 721 violations in the Ware River.

Inspections of gates and bar ways on the reservations were performed and necessary repairs made.

Interactions and coordination with the State Police, Environmental Police, the State Police Marine Unit and other enforcement personnel continued throughout the year.

G. Infrastructure

Civil Engineering staff performed and reported on monthly inspections and piezometer readings. DWSP staff conducted mowing, brush-cutting, and other maintenance operations on dams and dikes.

CE staff, with financial support from the Friends of Quabbin, stabilized the failing conditions of the historic Keystone bridge on the middle branch Swift River in New Salem. In addition, a number of culverts and bridges were inventoried and inspected.

Routine grounds maintenance was completed in Quabbin Park, including field mowing, weed whacking, and the removal of several hazardous trees or limbs. Staff prepared for Memorial Day in the Quabbin Park Cemetery with numerous plantings and assisted with burials in the cemetery.

Road work performed by DWSP staff included clearing several miles of roadside brush, cleaning drains, and filling potholes in Quabbin Park.

DWSP staff monitored gravel extractions by the towns of New Salem and Petersham.

Construction began on the Quabbin Administration Building roof and chimney replacement project with all four chimneys being demolished, and interior demolition taking place.

All Quabbin Park Cemetery records have been scanned into a digital database.

H. Watershed Protection Act

Staff implemented the Watershed Protection Act through the review of applications, site visits, meetings with applicants and their representatives, holding variance hearings, and the issuance of decisions. Staff received 35 cases in the Quabbin and Ware River Watersheds. Staff investigated several violations in the Ware River and Quabbin watersheds.

Agendas and minutes were reviewed for all the relevant town boards in both watersheds. Staff contacted several towns regarding projects within WsPA jurisdiction.

I. Interpretive Services

The Quabbin Visitor Center was open to the public all year; about 7,800 people visited the Visitor Center. Staff presented 45 public programs, 22 private programs, and 58 school programs.

The DCR website was regularly updated with new information about the Quabbin Controlled Deer Hunt, fishing programs, AIS, meeting announcements, the boat decontamination program, plan developments, area closures, and forestry projects.

J. Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring

EQ staff conducted routine biweekly water quality monitoring of Quabbin Reservoir watershed (Reservoir and tributaries) and Ware River tributaries. Phytoplankton sampling was conducted following the established monitoring plan.

Stream gauge data from five tributary locations continued to be downloaded, processed, and stored in established data archives according to standard operating procedures.

Annual water quality report was completed.

K. Watershed Monitoring and Assessment

Staff regularly conducted site assessments, attended local board meetings, and monitored online databases to identify potential threats to water quality. Staff investigated various potential violations in the watersheds and followed up as needed. The East Branch Swift River EQA report was completed.

The Yearly Operating Plans for vegetation management work on both the National Grid and Providence and Worcester Railroad rights-of-way were reviewed, and comment letters were submitted.

L. Aquatic Invasive Species

Staff provided AIS information to the public through visitor contacts, displays in the Visitor Center, watershed kiosks, the DCR website, and distribution of brochures during Boat Decontamination and Cold Weather Quarantine programs.

The Quabbin Boat Seal Program conducted four warm-weather public decontamination events in Q1 and ten events in Q4, sealing 83 boats across both quarters. During the winter, the Cold-Weather Quarantine (CWQ) program ran across five dates in Q2, processing 70 boats with data recorded via Survey123. FY26 issued 727 season passes and 104 boater ID cards. The Emergency Contact Database is consistently updated throughout the year.

Staff inspected and maintained the fragment barriers at BLA 2 and BLA 3. Control efforts of swollen bladderwort continued at both Pottapaug and O'Loughlin ponds. Private boats were prohibited on both ponds when the 2026 season began in April 2026. Surveying and hand harvesting took place over several days in June and July.

M. Wastewater Management

No water quality issues were identified from septic systems, and the oversight provided by Title 5 was generally sufficient.

N. Stormwater Management

Inspections of stormwater BMPs were conducted in the Ware River watershed. EQ staff monitored potential stormwater issues through field investigations and aerial imagery.

O. Emergency Response

Emergency Contact Information was updated by staff online in Smartsheet. BLA emergency Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was also reviewed and updated.

FY26 Spill Response training was conducted through [Technical Instruction and Guidance for Emergency Response \(T.I.G.E.R.\) Training Corp.](#) Emergency response trailers were inventoried and regularly stocked.

All spill plans were prepared for timber harvesting operations.

P. Support

Staff participated in a wide variety of job-related trainings and workshops, interagency planning teams, and professional organizations.

PILOT program successfully administered distribution of \$9.3 million, an increase of 9.4% from FY25. Quabbin Reservoir communities received \$3 million, or 32% of total PILOT. The Annexed Lands payments to Belchertown, Hardwick, New Salem, Pelham, Petersham, and Ware were \$662,000, or 22% of total Quabbin watershed payments. While there was an increase of \$74,000 in the Quabbin watershed PILOT, there was still \$550,000 in hold harmless amount for the six towns that did not have an increase in PILOT. Ware River watershed communities received \$1.2 million. There was an increase of \$140,000 in the watershed, and \$9,000 in hold harmless amount for the one town that did not have an increase in PILOT. Staff worked with Department of Revenue to update the Watershed PILOT information on the DOR Gateway website; data now current from FY21 to FY26. Staff provided expertise to Governor's Commission on PILOT for State-Owned Land, including a presentation on Watershed PILOT to Commission on 6/16/2026.

FY2026 Work Plan Final Summary

Wachusett/Sudbury FY26 Final Report

Update on all tasks in the Wachusett-Sudbury Work Plan for July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

A. Land Acquisition

Task Number	Task Description	Final Report Comments
A1	Acquire land. Coordinate due diligence and other tasks/services from DCR and private contractors to complete survey, appraisal, title, engineering, and environmental assessments for proposed acquisitions. Negotiate WPR language, purchase prices and conditions of sale with sellers of property.	Four projects protecting 139 acres (72 acres in fee; 67 acres in WPR) went to record this fiscal year. Nine projects totaling over 280 acres are currently underway at various stages of due diligence.
A2	Develop individual parcel presentation materials and meet with MWRA Board for approval.	One project was brought to the board this year.
A3	Communicate with and convene LAP meetings to review parcels and prioritize land purchases.	Three LAP meetings were held with a total of three projects approved.
A4	Use the LAP Prioritization Model to identify priority parcels in the watersheds.	Work to identify parcels is ongoing.
A5	Continue to solicit and work with landowners in donating conservation interests in land and assist in advising landowners on the tax incentives available when donating conservation interests.	Of the four projects that went to record this fiscal year one was a bargain sale. Of the ongoing projects, work continues on one proposed donation and two proposed bargain sales.
A6	Establish regularly scheduled land/legal meetings to address attorney assignments and project logistics.	Meetings with Legal are ongoing.
A7	Identify and work to acquire Forest Reserves to meet the goals of the Forests as Climate Solutions (FACS) Initiative. Continue participating in and meeting with agency and private partners to develop Reserve designation and expansion strategies consistent with FACS.	Work to identify and acquire Forest Reserves to meet the goals of FACS continues through participating in working groups and internal designation mapping.

B. Watershed Preservation Restriction Monitoring

Task Number	Task Description	Update
B1	Monitor WPRs on a regular basis, following monitoring procedures. Monitor high priority WPRs (WPRs under new ownership and ones with potential or ongoing issues), monitor WPRs acquired with Forest Legacy Funds (annual monitoring required) and Supervise Regional Staff that monitor WPRs. Review and file completed monitoring reports and update mobile WPR monitoring app as needed.	WPR Coordinator and Regional Monitors completed twenty-four WPR monitoring visits this FY. WPR Coordinator reviewed all monitoring reports completed by Regional Monitors.
B2	Complete baseline documentation reports for new WPRs prior to acquisition or within a reasonable time after acquisition, following EOEEA specifications. Baselines will be done in-house or through appropriate contracts.	Two in-house baselines completed this FY.
B3	Produce baselines for existing WPRs without baselines	Two in-house baselines completed this FY.
B4	Review and file WPR baselines that were contracted.	No baselines contracted out this FY.
B5	Meet with Restriction Stewardship Working Group and confer with legal to respond to enforcement issues and requests to exercise reserved rights.	Restriction Working Group met twice this FY.
B6	Track changes in landownership for WPRs, Forest Legacy WPRs and Non-Forest Legacy WPRs.	WPR Coordinator and Regional Monitors tracked changes in landownership.
B7	Distribute WPR landowner E-news & Notes from the Field Story Map twice a year to landowners.	Two issues of the WPR landowner E-news were distributed this FY.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
B8	Implement WPR records procedure with DCR records manager	WPR Coordinator participated in meetings on creation of new LIS database. The new LIS went live in June and WPR Coordinator began updating the WPR records.

C. Land Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C1	Implement the system-wide comprehensive Land Management Plan (LMP).	This is ongoing requiring coordination with the Director of Natural Resources for several tasks outlined in the plan. Implemented the Land Management Plan to guide consistent, watershed-focused stewardship across DWSP properties.
C2	DWSP Forestry: Prepare forest harvest proposals for next fiscal year including data on proposed harvest areas, characteristics of stands, soils, cultural resources, wetlands, wildlife, unique features, and priority habitats. Proposals shall also include information on lot layout, landings, stream crossings, wetland crossings, and stonewall crossings.	All work related to the proposal of forest management operations for FY27 has been completed.
C3	DWSP Forestry: Plan and conduct an internal review of proposed logging operations for the coming year, including assessments of silviculture, water quality and stream crossings, wildlife/vernal pool, cultural resources and other potential impacts/benefits. Review lots to ensure consistency with aspects of the LMP as well as the Climate Considerations resulting from the FACS initiative.	FY 2026 proposals were delayed in getting out to public review until the end of Q1. Comments from the public were received until the end of October and responses were prepared that covered all topics prior to the end of Q2. Approval to post comments, post our response, and proceed with project implementation for all FY26 proposals was given at the very end of Q4. FY26 proposal documents were edited following completion of the internal review process. Static maps were created and added to the narratives and posted online for public comment late in Q1. All proposals were made accessible through the forestry web application. FY27 proposals were still in Review stage (pre-public) at the end of Q4. Creation of public-facing, accessible versions with maps is pending completion of Commissioner review and approval to post for public comment in FY27.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C4	DWSP Forestry: Present annual forest harvest proposals at a public meeting. Publish Online Public Review document/story map. Accept public comment and respond as needed.	A public meeting was scheduled for FY27 harvest proposals but was postponed until FY27 Q1.
C5	DWSP Forestry: Plan, lay out, mark products for removal, prepare maps and permits, establish photo monitoring points, file Forest Cutting Plans, seek bids, award permits, and properly advertise and post forest management operations consistent with the Forest Cutting Practices regulations, the LMP, FACS and approved harvest proposals.	Two lots on a combined 109.9 acres were prepared and sold and one previously prepared lot was sold.
C6	DWSP Forestry: Provide supervision and oversight of all forest harvesting operations on DWSP property. Assure compliance with applicable DCR and NHESP regulations and restrictions, approved BMPs, and all Permit conditions. Maintain adequate site visit records. Monitor post-harvest and collect photo point images consistent with internal policy.	Eight lots on a combined 443 acres were supervised. Six lots on a combined 360 acres were completed.
C7	DWSP Forestry: Continue to implement long-term paired watershed monitoring (WATBMP) to assess impact of DWSP forest management on tributary water quality by collecting dry and wet weather samples during different harvest periods. Summarize study progress in annual water quality reports and complete preliminary and final reports at the appropriate stages of the study.	Due to the EAIV vacancy, stormwater sampling for this task was paused. Routine dry weather sampling has continued. The EAIV position is being filled and an internal meeting was held to discuss resuming stormwater collections for FY27.
C8	DWSP Forest Monitoring: Conduct inventory and analyze forest composition on paired study watersheds	NR and EQ continued collaboration on this project.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C9	DWSP Forest Monitoring: Conduct periodical regeneration and invasive species surveys to monitor forest health and development resulting from silvicultural activities or other natural disturbances and processes.	Regeneration was assessed in all 10-year-old silvicultural openings and a survey was begun on zero-to-nine-year-old openings.
C10	DWSP Forest Monitoring: Conduct periodic reviews and monitoring of land management activities and forest conditions to assure compliance and consistency with Land Management Plan.	This was a year of transition for the DWSP CFI program. Worked with DSPR to develop updated CFI protocols to include additional measurements of downed woody debris, leaf and duff depths, and updated regeneration sampling methods. Initiated annual surveys of 10% of all DWSP CFI plots, which will enable more up to date information on forest conditions and allow foresters to better adapt their management approaches. Data collection under the new protocol commenced in late September and halted in early December with the onset of snowpack and the inability to sample downed woody debris. Data collection resumed in spring of 2026 with the focus on completing the remaining 2025 plots. Late in Q4 DWSP began the first round of growing season plots where the complete understory flora is surveyed. Data entry still lags behind, and database updates are needed to store all new data. Data sheets, however, are scanned and stored online.
C11	DWSP Forest Data: Collect data and maintain GIS datalayers related to forest structure, composition, regeneration, roads, boundary information, stone walls, wetlands, streams, and other data to guide the land management program. Maintain GIS data documenting the location, extent, and intensity of all silvicultural operations.	A significant amount of effort has gone into correcting many of the forestry-related datalayers. The 2021 Lidar data has allowed the creation of very detailed hill shade models and forest canopy height models that allow for the very accurate mapping of features such as stone walls, roads and forest stands.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C12	New Acquisitions: Assess all new fee land acquisitions, documenting existing conditions of forests, access roads, bridges and culverts, boundary markings, and restoration needs. Integrate these lands into existing GIS datasets and land management, public access, and other watershed management programs.	All work related to the two new fee acquisitions was completed.
C13	Boundary Marking: Locate, mark, and maintain property boundaries periodically and as needed.	DWSP maintained 18.3 miles of property boundary lines this fiscal year.
C14	Boundary Marking: Develop scope of work and manage contracted property boundary survey work.	Completed eight projects. Started investigations for future potential projects.
C15	Boundary Monitoring: Document and pursue resolution of all property boundary encroachments. Update Database. Draft encroachment letters for RD to sign.	An internal working group has been developed and has met as needed this year to discuss new and outstanding encroachments. One large trespass with property damage was mitigated and work continues to resolve a larger encroachment issue of structures on DCR property.
C16	Land Management: Identify, plan, and oversee non-forest or other unique habitat restoration, field reclamation, and maintenance work.	Contracted invasive plant control work was completed at several sites, including Smith Field and the Veld. In-house restoration work is ongoing at Parker Pit. Crew plans follow-up work at Antinerella and Marshall fields in FY27, continuing work started by contract crews.
C17	Land Management: Maintain existing DWSP non-administrative fields through regular periodic mowing using DWSP staff and equipment.	Staff was down one tractor driver for the majority of the fiscal year.
C18	Land Management: Conduct restoration work utilizing DWSP staff and specialized equipment (i.e., mulching).	Contracted invasive plant control work was completed at several sites, including Smith Field and the Veld. In-house restoration work is ongoing at Parker Pit. Crew plans follow-up work at Antinerella and Marshall fields in FY27, continuing work started by contract crews.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C19	Land Management: Develop, award, and oversee contracted restoration work; assure performance meets contract standards.	Contracted invasive plant control work was completed at Smith Field and the Veld. Smith field underwent a round of chemical control, followed by several rounds of mowing. Contract work at The Veld included the treatment of 16 acres of invasive shrubs, vines, and grasses. Contract work at the Veld also included 90 chemically treated plots that will be planted with trees to shade out reed canary grass.
C20	Monitoring: Assess and document conditions on non-forested land; oversee and conduct follow-up work using mechanical and chemical methods to ensure long-term success of restoration efforts.	The FSI crew continued invasive plant control efforts to restore habitat at Parker Pit. The crew also assessed site conditions at Antinerella, Marshall, and Williams field in order to plan late summer/ FY27 in-house treatment.
C21	Develop, implement, award, and supervise agricultural use permits on DWSP lands.	All agricultural use permits were supervised as needed.
C22	Invasive Plants: Identify, prioritize, and implement terrestrial invasive plant (TIP) control projects in line with the expanded Terrestrial Invasive Plant Management Plan. Respond as needed to newly discovered and controllable TIP populations.	Throughout the year our invasive control work continued to be focused on habitat projects rather than forest projects. One forestry landing was pre-treated in Q4, but otherwise the program is stalled to some degree with the pause on releasing a draft invasive management plan to the public for review and comment. Some progress was made on exploring a mapping solution, but other plan elements such as staff education and development of a prioritization tool are on hold until the future of the program is settled.
C23	Rare Communities Data: Collect data and maintain datasets, GIS datalayers, and related maps and reports of rare and listed plants and communities.	This year saw the beginning of a collaboration with DSPR, DFW, Princeton Land Trust, and the Princeton Conservation Commission on a public-private habitat restoration project in Princeton. A small area of the project falls on DWSP property near the Ware River. The focus is an inland oak-pitch pine barrens restoration that would support a host of state-listed native species.
C24	Rare Plant Monitoring: Monitor known state listed plant occurrences, document new discoveries and provide reports to NHESP.	No new rare plant occurrences at Wachusett/Sudbury were brought to DWSP's attention during the year. Existing occurrences continue to be monitored by the Native Plant Trust.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C25	Forest Data Collection: Use of unmanned aerial system (UAS) to document forest conditions, map openings, identify invasive plant populations, assess internal road conditions, and other remote sensing activities.	Work to get a DWSP-specific drone policy is on-going. Although still on a project by project approval basis, work has progressed and DWSP is now able to get some staff trained as certified Drone pilots through the FAA (Part 107 certificate). Training of five DWSP pilots has begun and will continue into next FY.
C26	Monitor Spotted Lanternfly information and regional observation	Staff continued to be diligent for observations of SLF. Communications with DCR Forest Health Program and MDAR as needed. The Spotted lanternfly has been detected in West Boylston, Boylston, and Holden this fiscal year.
C27	Address abutter inquiries regarding potential hazardous trees and plan for selected DWSP hazardous trees to be removed according to budget.	It appears that the number of abutters with tree concerns continues to increase, but all abutter inquiries were addressed quickly. Hazardous trees were removed from locations in Framingham, Holden, and Sterling. MA Endangered Species Act approval was obtained for an additional site in Sterling for FY27.
C28	Forest Monitoring: Maintain deer exclosures and sample vegetation periodically to assess impacts of herbivore browsing.	Exclosures have been in place for a number of years with mixed results to report. They either show little difference inside and out due to lack of disturbance or thick interfering cover, or have been compromised and are allowing access to herbivores. Early results did show clear evidence of oak regeneration development in one of the fenced plots, which is to be expected. Deer hunting has since lowered populations (pellet line evidence) such that fencing trials may be of less use to demonstrate browsing pressure.
C29	Monitoring: Conduct field inspections of mapped sensitive resource areas, review YOPs and VMPs, and provides comment for ROW Management projects.	Reviewed National Grid 2026 YOP and Providence & Worcester Railroad 2026 YOP. Reviewed Sensitive Resource Area maps. Submitted comment letters.
C30	Organize, inventory, and categorize permit, lease, and easement information and enter information into the database.	Continued to organize as needed

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C31	Assist state parks regional director with the transition of South Sudbury lands (Res 1 and 2) to State Parks	DWSP staff supported State Parks staff with efforts to establish a partnership to help manage the property at 322 Salem End Road in Framingham. Acted as liaison between DCR General Counsel and Framingham Economic Development Council in preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding and eventual legislation. Several abutter issues were referred to the State Parks Central Region Director.
C32	Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA): use results of the CCVA to collect necessary natural asset data, prioritize opportunities to enhance resilience, implement climate adaptation strategies, and address capital planning decisions and designs.	Awarded four contracts using ResilientMass funding to continue CCVA development and address data gaps. Work advanced substantially this year, including collaboration with Tighe and Bond to refine the Asset Condition Assessment framework, develop ecological tipping points and thresholds, and weight indicators based on ecological impact, management leverage, and potential loss of service. Automation tools for data summarization and scoring are complete, with final quality control and handoff materials ready. The public-facing report, executive summary, informational pamphlet and presentation materials have been completed and reviewed by DWSP. Overall, all of the tasks have been completed, with the project's final materials delivered by the end of the fiscal year with potential adjustments through the start of FY27.
C33	Identify sites that would benefit from the application of prescribed fire to meet silvicultural and habitat restoration objectives.	Several locations were identified as potential sites to incorporate fire as a management tool. These include some fields, auxiliary spillway, Parker Pit and a harvest proposal area. Most efforts on the fire program were put into increasing capacity and the number of NWCG Firefighter II's.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
C34	DWSP Forestry: Evaluate potential sites for Forest Stand Improvement (FSI) work and take actions aimed at enhancing the structure and composition of a forest stand as defined in the LMP.	Crew continued FSI efforts, mostly during winter months. Progress slowed due to deep snow cover. The crew is working through a backlog of 200 harvest openings that were noted as needing FSI work. When the Wachusett FSI backlog is completed, the FSI crew will circle back to the earliest completed FSI openings to monitor conditions and expand release, per oak study that recommended returning several years later to expand release. The annual FSI cycle will fall into a routine of assessing regeneration openings, working those regeneration openings, and returning several years later to monitor and expand release, while performing understory prep cuts and habitat restoration work in the meantime.

D. Wildlife Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D1	Bird Harassment Program: continue program within the Pathogen Control Zone at Wachusett Reservoir, using human presence, boats, pyrotechnics, passive scare devices, and other techniques. Continue to identify and test new harassment techniques.	Evening operations were conducted on 46 of the 185 consecutive days the program ran (10/28/25 to 4/30/26). Harassment was utilized on 39 of these evenings. One staff member began operations and was joined by a second on November 25. Boat crews were utilized on five evenings at the end of December, followed by the suspension of the Program due to ice cover for 57 days (Jan 20 - March 17). Daytime observations were conducted during this time. On March 25 ice melted and operations resumed until April 30.
D2	Bird Control: Obtain annual Federal depredation permit for bird removal	USFWS Federal Depredation Permit was obtained in Q3.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D3	BHP administration: finalize participant lists, revise program SOP and data collection methods as necessary, evaluate equipment and supplies and purchase new items when necessary, notify abutters, plan and run training/orientation meeting for all participants, and conduct Survival Suit training for new participants. Review BHP data collection in AGOL.	Supplies tracked during operations. Two handheld lasers and two noise cannons were procured as harassment devices. The Bird Harassment Program dashboard was updated for accessibility and improved to combine both bird number data and bacteria values.
D4	BHP reporting: Produce a weekly report during active Bird Harassment Program season. Produce an annual report to interpret and analyze program success using criteria such as bird numbers at the North and South Basins, bacteria samples and harassment efforts.	Weekly reports number 1 through number 19 as well as the Season 2025-2026 Final Report were drafted and distributed. Season Overview presentation completed.
D5	BHP Administration: Schedule staff for the BHP program to ensure that all positions in the current schedule are staffed appropriately.	Program schedule was distributed and replacement staff were added as necessary. Six key metrics that drive decision making were monitored throughout the program: 1) The number of birds at the North Basin; 2) Daily bacteria samples from Carrol Water Treatment Plant; 3) Transect bacteria sampling; 4) Roost counts; 5) Reservoir elevation; 6) Ice cover.
D6	Explore alternatives and determine the feasibility for boat dock improvements to facilitate safer and better winter BHP program and emergency operations	Design has been finalized and Conservation Commission approval has been obtained for the installation of solar to power heat tracks mats.
D7	Gull Roost Monitoring: Observe and document the nocturnal roost of gulls on the reservoir weekly during the months of September- March.	Gull roost monitoring occurred weekly from September to early April, with the exception of several weeks from late January into March when the Reservoir was under complete ice cover. Roost counts ranged from a high of 812 gulls on January 14 and low counts of zero.
D8	Gull Roost Monitoring: use a UAS to document the gull roost abundance.	Four drone surveys with the DOT Aeronautics team took place at the roost in FY26. Drones are useful for getting accurate counts of gulls and also searching for the roost if it is not in the normal location.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D9	Canada Goose Control: maintain and reduce goose populations at Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoirs by treating eggs during nesting season to prevent hatching.	Canada goose egg treatment took place at Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoirs. A total of 83 eggs in 18 nests were treated at Wachusett, and 138 eggs in 30 nests were treated at Sudbury. Permission was given to USDA Wildlife Services to conduct goose control activities on West Waushacum Pond and the Quag.
D10	Canada Goose Control: Implement additional control activities as needed, including coyote decoys, habitat management practices or harassment to limit goose presence. Monitor geese activity on the North and South Dikes.	Coyote decoys were deployed on South Dike to deter goose activity. Harassment occurred on North Dike as needed. Goose activity was monitored on South and North Dike, with numbers ranging between 525 in late December when other waterbodies were freezing, and 100 during other times of FY26.
D11	Regional Gull Monitoring: Identify places in MA where human derived food is available for gulls and work to prevent feeding through educational signage, interaction and enforcement.	Regional monitoring commenced this quarter. Activity at hotspots has been lower than previous years. A couple of new gull activity areas in parking lots are now being monitored. Educational signage was not installed this quarter. Interaction with feeders occurred when observed.
D12	Regional Gull Monitoring: Monitor area landfills for gull presence. Work cooperatively with landfill operators to ensure DEP landfill regulations are being followed.	USDA continued their seasonal harassment at the Fitchburg-Westminster Landfill. The numbers have increased since October but continue to be significantly lower than historical numbers. The Fitchburg-Westminster landfill is included in the monthly regional gull surveys. Numbers ranged from 21 to 150 gulls. Surveys ended in the 3rd Quarter and will begin again in the fall of 2026.
D13	Regional Gull Monitoring: Monitor waste water treatment plants in Massachusetts that have wires installed to prevent feeding to make sure they function and continue to exclude gulls. Identify other wastewater treatment plants in MA with gulls and work to install wires at those plants.	Staff met with facility manager to discuss wire maintenance and installation of new wire when needed. Exclusion measures continue to be effective. Low gull counts remain at WWTP with exclusion measures. No additional WWTP with gull issues were identified.
D14	Gull Feeding: Work with cities and municipalities in MA to educate feeders and/or enforce feeding regulations.	No activity in FY26. Gull numbers were lower than in previous years so additional action with municipalities was not warranted.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D15	Aquatic Mammal Control: Remove beaver and muskrat in the Aquatic Wildlife Pathogen Control Zone at Wachusett and monitor beaver activity in the Watershed.	A colony of four beaver were removed from the pathogen zone in FY26. Beaver were removed from other areas of the reservoir and specific problem areas in other areas of the watershed.
D16	Pathogen monitoring: Analyze aquatic mammals removed from the Pathogen Control Zone at Wachusett Reservoir for the presence of Giardia and Cryptosporidium by sending fecal samples to a laboratory for analysis.	Fecal samples from trapped beaver were negative for pathogens.
D17	Beaver Issues: Respond to beaver-caused flooding issues on DWSP property; assess situations and take appropriate actions.	Due to ongoing drought, there were no major flooding issues associated with beaver dams in FY26. Four sites were regularly monitored and dams cleared, as needed. A pipe was installed at one site to help moderate the water level associated with beaver damming.
D18	Beaver Issues: Respond to private landowner complaints caused by beaver on DCR property, provide technical assistance and issue access permits as necessary.	No beaver issues on private land arose in FY26.
D19	Burrowing Animal Control: Respond to problems of burrowing animals on dams and dikes; take appropriate action.	Wachusett dikes and dams were regularly monitored for animal burrow activity. One burrow was treated in FY26.
D20	Loon Monitoring: Research and manage for common loons on DWSP waterbodies; provide nesting platforms, capture and sample birds for contaminants.	Loon monitoring and banding was successfully completed during the 2025 season. Eight loon nesting platforms were deployed in May 2025, with five of six nesting pairs using the platforms to successfully hatch seven chicks, five of which fledged. Surveys and banding took place during the 2025 Common Loon breeding season. Necropsy sessions and monthly Northeast Loon Study Working Group subgroup meetings were attended. Raft deployment for 2026 was completed on May 5 and breeding season surveys began.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D21	Collect lead tackle and discarded monofilament fishing line	Lead tackle and monofilament fishing line collection continued throughout the reporting period. During the 2025 season, 3.88 pounds of lead tackle and 16.1 miles of monofilament fishing line were collected for recycling. Collection efforts resumed for the 2026 season and will continue through the fall.
D22	Long-term Forest-Wildlife Monitoring: Continue Annual Amphibian/ Reptile survey using pitfall traps	Amphibian and reptile surveys were conducted at long-term monitoring plots. All data were entered in the database, analyzed for long-term trends, and reports compiled.
D23	Long-term Forest-Wildlife Monitoring: Continue Annual Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)	Breeding bird surveys were conducted at long-term monitoring plots. All data were entered in the database, analyzed for long-term trends, and reports compiled.
D24	Long-term Forest-Wildlife Monitoring: Continue Annual Acoustic Bat Survey	Acoustic bat surveys were conducted at long-term monitoring plots. All data were entered in the database, analyzed for long-term trends, and reports compiled.
D25	Long-term Forest-Wildlife Monitoring: Continue Annual Small Mammal Trapping Survey	Small mammal surveys were conducted at long-term monitoring plots. All data were entered in the database, analyzed for long-term trends, and reports compiled.
D26	DWSP Deer Hunt: Administer the White-tailed Deer Management Program on DWSP lands in the Wachusett and Sudbury Watersheds;	The deer hunts in Wachusett and Sudbury finished on December 31. Hunting permit applications were issued.
D27	DWSP Deer Hunt: Publish the applications/permits and prepare and schedule hunter Orientations if needed.	No orientations or additional areas were opened for Wachusett and Sudbury in 2025. Five-year Watershed hunting access permits continue to be issued as needed. There are no plans or need to expand the current hunts in these two watersheds in 2026.
D28	Deer Density Monitoring: Conduct pellet surveys on DWSP lands to assess populations of deer and moose.	Deer density surveys took place at Sudbury and Quabbin in FY26. Results at Sudbury indicate a deer density range of 19-50 deer per square mile (average of 27 deer per square mile).
D29	DWSP Deer Hunt: Analyze results of hunt and publish Annual Deer Report	Analysis of the Wachusett and Sudbury deer hunts was completed and published in the 2025 Deer Report.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
D30	Coordinate with the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program concerning rare species occurrences and protection	State listed breeding bird species and breeding bird species on the State Wildlife Action Plan were reported to NHESP and/or State Ornithologist. DWSP biologists assisted with a state-wide American Goshawk (species of greatest conservation need) survey with no detections on watershed lands. Bald Eagle nesting success was documented at Wachusett.

E. Public Access Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
E1	Proactively patrol watershed lands to ensure compliance with DCR regulations and policies. Tally visitor contact and produce quarterly and annual summary reports that include a separate field for law enforcement assistance or referrals. Conduct trend analysis on visitor statistics and rule violations.	Rangers interacted with 14,963 visitors this FY. There were 828 witnessed violations and 22 unwitnessed violations in the same time period. Sixteen parking tickets were issued. Rangers continued to monitor social media accounts.
E2	Continue to cooperate with state, environmental, and local police for help with enforcement when required.	Seventeen law enforcement requests, referrals and assists were required this fiscal year. Law enforcement assistance was utilized for five rule violations of trespassing and swimming at Wachusett. Rangers provided assistance to law enforcement on seven occasions: one at Sudbury and six at Wachusett. Rangers also assisted with access for a Mass State Police dive team search.
E3	Continue to use DCR social media accounts for advertisement of interpretive programs, general or emergency information (such as closings).	Social media requests were submitted as needed and interpretive program schedules and public advisories were submitted to DCR Communications.
E4	Develop public outreach regarding allowed uses on DCR Wachusett lands.	New kiosks were installed, an interpretive panel and bulletin board case at Thomas Basin and two interpretive Waysides below the dam.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
E5	Continue updates and improvements to access points with signs, gates and improved parking areas. Conduct regular inspections of gates and access barriers.	Updated signage and fencing were placed at Shaft 1 by the ADA fishing platform and the new access trail from the rail trail. Several site visits were conducted with Wachusett Greenways for improvements to the Thomas Street parking lot. Permitting was completed for the Gates Road parking lot paving and stormwater improvements for FY27. Added signage to Lily ponds because of increased violations.
E6	Regularly evaluate and modify policies within the current Public Access Plan and publish annual appendices with policy modifications or to regulate new proposed uses on DWSP lands.	An amendment to the Public Access plan was published that updated and clarified fishing regulations along the Quinapoxet River due to the removal of the Dam.
E7	Continue to conduct “special operations” such as night operations, ATV, and snowmobile operations, as needed.	Rangers have received additional training and developed greater capacity to conduct special operations during night and early morning shifts. They have also received expanded training in boat operations.
E8	Enforce rules and regulations of 313 CMR 11.09 through education and continue targeted enforcement days.	Rangers while out on patrol educated the public if violations were found to gain compliance. Rangers post at specific areas to monitor visitor traffic and violations such as dog walkers when reports of activity are occurring in certain areas.
E9	Implement Public Access Plans for Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoir Watersheds	Rangers continued to conduct regular patrols of Wachusett and Sudbury Watersheds and enforced regulations according to the Public Access Plans.
E10	Construct a small handicapped parking area at Gate 43 and retrofit Gate 42 public access entrance	Draft parking design options have been completed and base pricing has been obtained.
E11	Expand upon sensory trail as budget allows and apply for applicable grant funding.	Accessible programs were held on the trail and additional supplies such as adaptive birding equipment and a large wildlife track panel were purchased with Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation Grant funding.

F. Watershed Security

Task Number	Task Description	Update
F1	Maintain an active presence in the watershed. Monitor watershed lands, roadways, and railways for unusual or suspicious activities; provide appropriate response.	Rangers conducted additional patrols and paid special attention to railways and infrastructure due to ongoing current world issues for most of FY26. EPA water security posters with emergency phone numbers were placed on all kiosks.
F2	Continue ongoing communication and coordination with local, state, and federal emergency responders; coordinate with MWRA on all security issues.	Rangers coordinated with state law enforcement for opening day of fishing and hunting and two Dam Days. They also responded to two emergencies at the dam in Q4 which required communication and coordination with law enforcement and MWRA security.
F3	Continue program of enhancing security infrastructure around Wachusett Reservoir.	Rangers submitted work requests for risk trees, boulder placement, damaged fence and gate replacement. Fencing has been improved at Shaft 1 through the dam removal project.
F4	Inspect, maintain, and monitor gates, barways, and signage throughout the watersheds for security and access control.	Rangers conducted regular inspections while on patrol. Several issues and replacements related to DCR locks were addressed.
F5	Remain up to date with agency policy changes for signage that incorporates diversity and includes the updated MEMA dispatch phone number.	While the revised DCR logo has been issued, guidance and recommendations for official signage has not at this time. Simple public advisories meet ADA requirements.
F6	Provide annual emergency contact information to municipal public safety departments and schedule an annual meeting with Police and Fire Chiefs	A meeting with management, ranger supervisors and local police and fire chiefs was held. Emergency contact information and maps were provided.
F7	Investigate feasibility of blocking off access to boat cove from Route 70	Fencing was installed along Route 70 to the boat cove.

G. Infrastructure

Task Number	Task Description	Update
G1	Assess Wachusett and Sudbury dams, spillways, and dikes monthly, monitor conditions and maintenance activities, and prepare work requests as necessary. Forward all significant issues to the Regional Director and the MWRA. Coordinate with MWRA on biannual dam safety inspections for compliance with 302 CMR 10.00.	Continued to assess the dams monthly. Submitted maintenance requests and work orders. Followed up for Phase one inspections.
G2	Assess DWSP smaller dams semi-annually, monitor conditions and maintenance activities, and prepare work requests as necessary. Coordinate DCR's role in dam removal projects.	Continued to assess DWSP small dams semi-annually and assessed some more regular as needed. Coordinated maintenance and work orders as needed. Phase one inspections will be required in the next FY.
G3	Work with DER to develop plans and permit the Malden Brook restoration project	This project is progressing through the design and permitting stages. Starting to consider funding sources.
G4	Conduct annual inspection/evaluation of Wachusett internal roads, parking lots, drainage structures, shoreline access points; update GIS data layers as needed and develop list of maintenance and repairs needs.	Inspections and maintenance are ongoing on all structures. All data layers and plans are updated as work progresses.
G5	Develop annual plan for internal road repair/reconstruction projects. Provide oversight to ensure protection of water resources. Update trails GIS datalayer.	Ongoing. Plan and data layers are updated as maintenance is completed and issues are found.
G6	Conduct regular inspections of all DWSP BMPs, monitor conditions and maintenance activities, prepare work requests and plans for maintenance and repair projects.	On-going. Completed inspections and maintenance as necessary.
G7	Design and oversee installation of drain valves from forebays at Gate 25 and WB10.	Submitted a work order for this project to occur in first quarter of FY27.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
G8	Evaluate Sudbury watershed access, internal roads and develop work plan, as necessary.	This is an ongoing task. Staff will continue to evaluate the Sudbury water access roads and develop a work plan as needed. A permanent easement on the left side of Framingham Reservoir 2 was filed with the Registry so there is now official access to that side of the dam.
G9	Design Foss Boat ramp off Old Worcester Road	This project is on hold until completion of the MWRA's overtopping work at Foss Reservoir.
G10	Provide supervision, coordination, oversight, and technical support or assistance for all engineering, construction, and renovation work in Section.	All CE-related projects have been overseen and coordinated as necessary and appropriate.
G11	Maintain records and plans regarding property lines, reservoir and facility construction, and maintenance operations.	Assistance was provided to management on several occasions where property boundary locations were required. All records and plans were maintained.
G12	Implement annual Major Projects	Major project statuses were monitored and completed by the FY26 deadline.
G13	Oversee installation of remaining section of replacement fence on North Dike	All fencing has been completed.
G14	Oversee phased repairs to Clinton Ranger Station based on funding and recommendations from consultant evaluation	It is the goal to address the replacement of the windows and doors, add insulation and new siding in FY27, pending cost estimate for repairs.
G15	Oversee Stillwater Farmhouse roof replacement and associated structural repairs	Structural repairs were made to the posts and beams in Sections 6C and 6D of the structural plan. Footings were poured; new posts were installed along with brackets and plates for additional stability and reinforcement. Beam for first level was rotten and replaced with beam from lower level stock. Milk room on back of structure was demolished and opening was closed in using plywood to protect the interior from elements. Due to a motor vehicle accident impacting the farmhouse in Q4, a structural engineer will be required to assess any unseen damage to the building.
G16	Oversee demolition of Hulick cabins in Sterling	Abatement work was performed at cabins. Archaeology site walk was performed. Permitting to begin for FY27 demolition.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
G17	Paving and stormwater management at the Clinton complex	MEO's completed drainage work and Design and Engineering's paving contractor paved the Phase 1 portion of the yard. Plans were prepared for Phase 2 of the Wilson Street Complex which will include stormwater management improvements and repaving of the driveways and employee parking area.

H. Watershed Protection Act

Task Number	Task Description	Update
H1	Continue implementation of the WsPA. Review and process all WsPA applications. Enter data in the ArcGIS WsPA database. Prepare and issue decisions within timeframes as required by the regulations. Perform site visits for all active WsPA construction projects regularly to ensure compliance with decisions. Enter data in the ArcGIS WsPA database.	Thirty-two new WsPA applications were reviewed and decisions issued within the regulatory time frames, along with one violation. Site visits are ongoing to monitor active construction sites and determine compliance with decisions.
H2	Perform site visits and/or review submitted information for WsPA projects that have ongoing or perpetual monitoring conditions. Work with property owners to resolve issues. Enter inspection information in the WsPA ArcGIS database.	Reviewed all submitted information for ongoing perpetual monitoring conditions. Currently working on a list of sites where stormwater BMP maintenance records need to be submitted annually.
H3	Respond to and/or identify any potential WsPA violations. Work with property owners to resolve issues. Enter data in the ArcGIS WsPA database (as identified in SOP).	Responded to potential WsPA violation complaints and tried to resolve through site visits, correspondence, and Notices of Noncompliance.
H4	Convene the Watershed Protection Act Working Group regularly to discuss policy and address specific problems related to the WsPA	Watershed Protection Act Working Group continued to communicate regularly by phone, email, virtually, and in-person to coordinate implementation of the Watershed Protection regulations.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
H5	Review permits for watershed towns on a monthly basis with letters sent to property owners of affected parcels.	Continue to review agendas and meeting minutes for watershed towns for proposed activities in WsPA jurisdiction.
H6	Review property transfers for seven towns on a monthly basis with letters sent to new property owners of affected parcels informing them of the WsPA and how they may obtain additional information.	Welcome letters and new WsPA cards with QR codes for website distributed to new property owners in WsPA jurisdiction.
H7	Review files from previous year on an ongoing basis, including contact with owners and site visits as needed. Emphasis placed on monitoring active variances.	Continue to review the previous year's projects to ensure all work is being done in accordance with the WsPA decisions.
H8	Visit all unresolved variances, determinations, and advisory opinions and determine status. Resolve if possible, request action if needed, and refer violations to legal department	Continue to resolve older Variances, Advisory Rulings, and Applicability Decisions.
H9	Contact Town Halls on a regular basis to ensure access to WsPA Affected Parcel Lists and provide paper WsPA maps as requested. Also provide any updated brochures and applications.	Contacted the watershed towns on a regular basis to ensure they have the most recent WsPA Affected Parcel Lists, fact sheets, and guidance documents.

I. Education and Outreach

Task Number	Task Description	Update
I1	Implement the Wachusett Interpretive Services Plan; amend as needed.	The Interpretive Services plan was updated to enhance community outreach and streamline program delivery. The School and Library Program Menu was revised with library offerings categorized by age group. To broaden audience reach, a program menu was developed for adult audiences and Senior Centers. Presentation and program templates were standardized and compiled into an editable format ready for digital and print distribution to schools, libraries, and community groups.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
12	Coordinate Educational and Outreach programs, develop and present programs, advertise public programs using DCR social media accounts as necessary and create non-personal media.	Staff offered 113 programs with the attendance of 2,555 (1,219 adults and 1,336 children). Dam Day attendance was an additional 1,811 total. October Dam Day was 781 and May Dam Day attendance was 1,030 people. Weather cancelled more than five programs, including the First Day Hike, which is the largest interpretive program. Rain also dampened the spring and fall Dam Days. To offset weather-related attendance, additional outreach, public programming, and evening presentations were added to maintain community engagement. Programs were promoted through a newsletter, posting on kiosks, through local media, and library and community group social media accounts.
13	Develop public outreach regarding allowed uses on DCR Wachusett lands and conduct watershed, wildlife, forests and history education programs in the local schools using current curriculum standards.	Expanded library outreach through "Water Science with DCR" programs for preschool to teen groups. Achieved a milestone in Sterling by engaging eighth graders across a three-year loop starting in fifth grade, alongside expanding environmental curriculum for grades 5, 7, and 8. Hosted the annual 7th Grade Water Symposium at the Fay School, successfully empowering local youth to become active protectors of the Wachusett and Sudbury watersheds.
14	Participate in state-wide agency initiatives, partner with other organizations, maintain relationships with Secretary's Advisory Group on Environmental Education (SAGEE), Massachusetts Environmental Education Society (MEES), curriculum coordinators, libraries, community groups and non-profits.	Community outreach was expanded through strategic partnerships and statewide initiatives. Regular monthly, quarterly, and evening programs engaged communities across the Wachusett and Sudbury library networks, highlighted by summer events aligned with the "Plant a Seed, Read" theme. History presentations were offered at Senior Centers. Staff collaborated with a Freedom's Way National Heritage Area working group to develop "School Programs 101," hosted "Hidden Treasures" events, and secured an outreach mini-grant. Stewardship and outdoor equity were advanced through DCR initiatives and team participation in the West Boylston Town-Wide Clean-Up.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
15	Maintain and enhance kiosks and bulletin boards throughout the watershed update as necessary highlighting water supply, cultural and natural history of our properties; at least 4 times/year; obtain quotes, develop materials and replace (1-2) 4-sided kiosk with panel signage.	Kiosks received monthly updates featuring upcoming events, Massachusetts drought alerts, hunting and fishing information, and fishing line recycling details. Improvements included installing new kiosks highlighting the water supply and cultural and natural history of the properties. An interpretive panel and bulletin board case was installed at Thomas Basin, along with two interpretive waysides below the dam.
16	Perform inventory of signage and make recommendations for improvements and additions of stewardship signs	DCR logo rebranding has been completed but we are still waiting on guidance for ADA requirements. Once this is finalized inventory and budget for replacement of rules signage will begin.
17	Assess interpretive and safety needs and allowed uses on watershed lands with respect to trail and other signage.	Kiosk posters were updated monthly. EPA Drinking water security posters and information on fish kills as a natural occurrence and drought status were placed on kiosks. Updated safety and restriction signage was placed at Shaft 1. Hunting and fishing season notices were posted.
18	Provide IS review and participate in approving and designing interpretive signage and printed materials using DCR standards and guidelines.	All pertinent public facing internet materials were revised for ADA accessibility. Reviewed and provided input on new interpretive panel and wayside panels.
19	Develop requirements and expectations for non-personal interpretive media such as brochures, signage, exhibits, displays, etc.; to ensure that media is appropriate, thematic, and high quality.	Designed and distributed educational materials to promote water quality. Key items included: watershed-wide "Please Don't Litter" posters, stormwater pollution prevention postcards, loon stickers, and Aquatic Invasive Species rack cards for events. Created Wachusett/Sudbury Region printed calendars that included stormwater and water quality tips that have been supplied to watershed town offices and given out to the public. A request submitted for new templates is near completion which will provide a standardized look to all printed information moving forward.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
I10	Provide educational materials, teacher training, and support for Mass Envirothon and assist with preparation and logistics for annual competition	Supported the Envirothon by attending Steering Committee, Station Leader, and site planning meetings. Staff mentored the Lexington Team for nationals and led educational workshops at UMass Amherst and Verdantas in Holden. Staff hosted the Water EcoStation during the competition at Hopkinton State Park.
I11	Maintain and update the DWSP website to provide information and resources for the public. Update website education pages with teaching resources, school programs, and field trip menu.	Maintained website with up-to-date information about events, public access, forestry, emergencies, and other watershed management activities. Reviewed all posted material to meet federal accessibility standards.
I12	Create an educational visual video with no sound for JAH entry way	A six-minute Watershed protection video was completed. The video plays on loop at JAH lobby, and was used for outreach events. Narration has been added, and the video was highlighted on local access cable television stations in the watershed. Video clips are being collected for additional educational videos.
I13	Create, evaluate and revise Property Interpretive Profiles for all areas within the Region. Continue to develop and implement the Stillwater Farm Operational Plan.	The narrative for the Old Stone Church history tour was updated to include the improvements and plantings around the church. This program was offered once a month. Prepared temporary displays and activities for a monthly Stillwater Farm Open House and BioBlitz. The Sterling Garden Club dedicated a bench added to the front garden at Stillwater Farm.
I14	Design, develop, and maintain interpretive materials and educational kits. Maintain a reference library.	Inventoried of all interpretive materials and educational kits. To support program expansion, additional storage bins and consumable supplies were purchased. Environmental literacy early learning kits were developed specifically for library story times. These kits feature hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities and include educational take-home handouts for participants.

J. Water Quality and Hydrologic Monitoring

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J1	Perform routine tributary sampling twice per month (bacteria, turbidity, field parameters) (WATTRB).	WATTRB sampling was successfully conducted through FY26 with only minor discrepancies due to weather events and hazardous access.
J2	Perform Nutrient, Chloride, Alkalinity and TSS sampling every month at 10 tributaries, including field parameters (and Shaft 1 when Quabbin transfer is active.) (WATMDC).	WATMDC sampling was successfully conducted through FY26 with only minor discrepancies due to weather events and hazardous access.
J3	Regular data review, processing, and upload of water quality and hydrologic data to Water Quality Database. Scanning and filing of all paper Chains of Custody and field sheets.	Data review and filing has gone more or less uninterrupted for the year. All FY 26 data is currently accounted for with the exception of the June water quality data that is received over the summer.
J4	Conduct reservoir bacteria transect sampling (WATTRN) as needed in conjunction with gull harassment program.	This fiscal year had a relatively significant stretch of time where WATTRN sampling was postponed due to ice cover. Sampling has been consistent and will continue uninterrupted into FY27.
J5	Produce annual water quality report and document changes to sampling plan in the report.	The 2024 annual water quality report was finalized and posted on the website. The general report template for 2025 was updated but minimal work was completed on this task this year due to the EA IV vacancy.
J6	Produce and distribute a monthly water quality summary and a monthly Quality Control summary (internal)	All reports were completed and distributed.
J7	Maintain continuous stream flow gages in all four watersheds through USGS contract (JFA). Coordinate with USGS to ensure proper performance of all gages, and accurate and timely reporting of data.	USGS continued to do field visits to check discharge regularly throughout the year. All invoices were reviewed and paid. A Notice to Proceed was issued to the vendor for FY27.
J8	Coordinate with MWRA labs on sampling projects, including modifying sampling plans (analytes, methods, locations, frequency), delivery of bottles and Chains of Custody, and distribution of laboratory results	Coordination continued throughout the year.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J9	Augment hydrologic data in Wachusett watershed through monitoring of stream flows, groundwater levels, and precipitation. Take snow pack measurements (seasonally) and distribute results in standardized report. Report monitoring times and water depth of Sterling Well to USGS.	During FY26, groundwater level measurements were collected monthly at seven wells, real-time flow was monitored at 10 primary tributaries, a total of 10 snowpack measurements were collected, and daily precipitation data was downloaded and imported into the WQ database from four sites.
J10	Conduct reservoir profile and plankton sampling and report results at least weekly from April - September and every other week from October - March when ice conditions permit.	A total of 103 phytoplankton samples were analyzed on 34 dates in FY26. There were 43 profiles collected in conjunction with phytoplankton and nutrient sampling.
J11	Conduct seasonal reservoir nutrient sampling	All seasonal nutrient samples were successfully collected this fiscal year.
J12	Develop and maintain accurate rating curves by measuring stream discharge two (or more) times per year per site; Confirm or update ratings annually.	Two discharge measurements were collected at each site during FY26 and the rating curves were confirmed with the new measurements.
J13	Maintain Water Quality Monitoring stations on 7 primary tributaries. Maintain HOBO/Mayfly sensors and manage associated data. Maintain control structures, survey staff plates every 2 years.	Maintenance was required at four of the seven Mayfly stations during FY26. The Malden Brook Mayfly station will require additional testing during the beginning of FY27 to resolve the microSD card issue. The staff plate surveys were conducted and finalized during FY26. The French Brook staff plate will be adjusted also at the beginning of FY27.
J14	Monitor groundwater quality monthly (field parameters).	Groundwater sampling was completed monthly during FY26. Field parameters were not collected at the Boylston well four times and the Princeton well eight times due to drought conditions.
J15	Identify and outline system-wide water quality issues and challenges. Bring to ResOPs and/or WQSAT for discussion and integrate into water quality analysis/modeling work with UMass. Manage UMASS ISA/contract.	Bi-Monthly meetings were held with MWRA and DCR water quality staff to coordinate sampling, as well as discuss sampling logistics, cyanobacteria, algae response plan, Quabbin interflow establishment and data sharing. UMass ISA final budget and scope of work were finalized and signed by UMass and DCR to cover FY27-28.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J16	Continue to work to reduce applications of road salt in the watershed and prevent additional increases in chloride concentrations in tributaries and the reservoir through multiple initiatives that DWSP has developed, including: Training and outreach, improving our own salt use and adopting best practices, collaborating with research partners at UMass and the Interagency Salt Working group, improving water quality data collection, and assisting with salt reduction grant program.	Town specific and MassDOT salt totals for winter 2024-2025 were collected and analyzed. Annual totals were compared to the newly acquired MassDOT District 3 Winter Severity Index (WSI). Staff presented salt reduction information at Sterling and Princeton town "touch a truck" community events. UMass research on salt reduction is currently includes efforts to use machine learning to predict groundwater salinity using surface water salinity. A salt spreader calibration workshop was hosted by DCR and MWRA on November 25; Twenty-five attendees from West Boylston, Paxton, Oakham, Boylston, and Rutland attended, along with MWRA and DCR staff. Seven town trucks were calibrated during the training. Staff coordinated with the town of West Boylston for an equipment loan of a salt brine generator for the town to use to start their liquid brine program.
J17	Continue to collect and analyze conductivity/chloride data throughout the watershed to document annual variability and long-term trends in tributary and groundwater salinity and support watershed salt reduction efforts.	Conductivity through the watershed has continued to follow the traditional pattern of high spikes during winter storm/runoff events. Monitoring will continue into FY27 and special interest projects/monitoring may take place if values rise or new patterns emerge.
J18	Continue to implement a Salt Reduction grant program (matching funds or reimbursements) to support new technologies or improved protocols for Wachusett watershed communities	Solicited proposals from Wachusett communities and awarded three grants to West Boylston, Sterling, and Paxton for a total of \$30,560. Grants used to purchase salt brine equipment and improved plow blades. Received approval to expand program to include Quabbin and Ware communities in FY2027.
J19	Conduct phytoplankton monitoring in accordance with the Phytoplankton Action Plan, including use of remote sensors (MWRA Buoys) to inform sampling program.	Routine phytoplankton sampling was conducted and monitoring events were added in response to elevated densities of taxa of concern and/or concentrations of chlorophyll a reported by the MWRA remote sensing buoys. Remote sensing data was compiled and imported into the EQ database.
J20	Continue monitoring stormwater basins at Rt 12/140 and Rt 62 intersection for water quality, algae, invasive species, and mosquito larva.	Stormwater basins were routinely surveyed. Surveys throughout the fall and winter months were conducted when snow cover allowed.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J21	Review, process, and import all aquatic biology data to the SQL Server Database, as appropriate. Maintain all Aquatic Biology data management workflows	All data were reviewed and imported to the water quality monitoring database or ArcGIS online.
J22	Continue to develop and maintain database backed tools and applications (R,GIS,MS Access, SQL Server, AGOL Apps) to facilitate water quality data management, review and analysis, writing reports and modeling efforts.	The script for importing the storm sample results was updated and the data from the FY25 storms were imported into the database in Q1. No work was completed on this task in remainder of the year.
J23	Field and laboratory equipment maintenance and calibration; Management and inventory tracking of field/lab equipment and supplies.	A new "Lab Binder" was developed to organize lab materials and information. Lab organization and maintenance have continued. Equipment is routinely calibrated. Field and lab equipment are currently functioning well for our needs. Improvements and adjustments will continue.
J24	Review and update Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and SOPs for Water Quality and Hydrologic Monitoring Programs	All of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for active monitoring programs were reviewed and updated during FY26. No updates made to the QAPP.
J25	Implement a plan for Harmful Algal Bloom response including routine monitoring for HABs in the reservoir and priority watershed ponds. Coordinate sampling with MWRA and work with DPH and DEP as needed.	Biologists routinely collected samples from the reservoir for MWRA for cyanotoxin testing. Arrangements for opportunistic cyanotoxin sampling were made with MWRA, but were not necessary. Surface samples were also included in the routine weekly summer sample collection to scan for the presence of cyanobacteria. Elevated levels of cyanobacteria did not present any water quality concerns this fiscal year.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J26	Investigate and implement use of remote sensing tools for monitoring water quality in the reservoir and watershed impoundments, specifically for cyanobacteria and AIS.	Biology staff continued use of remote sensing tools including wildlife cameras, satellite imagery, and profiling buoys to monitor water quality in the reservoir and watershed. The EPA's CyAN application was also used to detect potential cyanobacteria blooms in the reservoir and watershed. Detections of elevated chlorophyll a reported by the CyAN app were investigated but no significant detections were made this fiscal year. A project using current and historically available satellite data to detect ice cover was completed through a contract and results were used to develop an evaluation metric for the CCVA.
J27	Conduct benthic macroinvertebrate sampling every other year, continue identification and assessment of historic samples.	Historic macroinvertebrate sample identification was sent to Cole Ecological, per CCVA funding. Data set included macroinvertebrate records, site information, and collection and analysis dates. Macroinvertebrate samples from 2014-2024 were completed by Cole Ecological. Macroinvertebrate identification through 2024 is complete and the entire 1988-2024 dataset has been reviewed. An updated Benthic Macroinvertebrate Sampling SOP was drafted and sample collection and habitat assessments were completed at 22 sites in Spring 2026.
J28	Continue cooperative study of current population status, life history, and sustainable yield of lake trout.	Lake Trout sampling was completed in three nights in fall 2025. Staff deployed 119 new tags and relevant summary reports and plots were produced.
J29	Collaborate with MA DFW to conduct basic fish monitoring in the reservoir and watershed and coordinate trout stocking activities when necessary.	Biology staff assisted DFW with annual fall tributary sampling and spring trout stocking. Juvenile landlocked salmon were present in Gates Brook and Stillwater River. Approximately 1,400 Rainbow Trout were stocked into the Reservoir. Surveys for winter fish kills were undertaken at several small ponds in the watershed.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
J30	Develop a study to identify trends in the long-term phytoplankton and water quality data sets and identify variables influencing these dynamics. Continue to review historic datasets and conduct short and long term analyses to better understand phytoplankton and water quality dynamics.	Analysis of trends is conducted on an ad hoc basis when phytoplankton concerns arise.
J31	Make recommendations for stormwater sampling based on historical data. Sample storm events as determined necessary.	Due to EA IV vacancy, no work has been completed on this task.
J32	Assist with monitoring and research surrounding any ongoing dam removal/riparian habitat restoration projects.	Biology staff assisted DFW with Eastern pearlshell mussel relocation survey in the Quinapoxet River. Biology staff attended Edwards Pond/Malden Brook Dam removal meetings, site visits with DER and Civil Engineering, and reviewed permit documents.

K. Watershed Monitoring and Assessment

Task Number	Task Description	Update
K1	Continue to review local records and conduct watershed surveillance to identify potential issues in the Wachusett and Sudbury watersheds that could impact water quality. Work with local boards and land owners when problems are identified. Document all work in EQ database.	Eighteen EQ files were created, and 53 site visits were conducted on new and pre-existing Active and Watch status EQ files to ensure environmental compliance and evaluate current file status conditions.
K2	Provide technical assistance to state and municipal boards and commissions.	Minutes and agendas for Princeton, Boylston, West Boylston, Clinton, Sterling, Framingham, Marlborough, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough and Leominster Conservation Commissions were routinely reviewed and any relevant issues were referred to appropriate DCR personnel.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
K3	Maintain records of all water quality related issues and EQ actions taken within an updated and modernized AGOL EQ database.	Monthly reviews were conducted of all Active and Watch status EQ database files as well as DEP Monitoring files. More than 40 EQ File Log Updates were made. <i>Wachusett Watershed:</i> • Active Files: 13 • Watch Files: 19 • DEP Monitoring Files: 29 • Resolved Files: 717 <i>Sudbury Watershed:</i> • Active Files: 3 • Watch Files: 1 • DEP Monitoring Files: 2 • Resolved Files: 127
K4	Manage the Wachusett Watershed Hydrology Mapping Project to ensure progress towards completion within selected subwatersheds and subbasins by verifying, revising and mapping structures and conditions in the field using observations, plans and any information available from towns or other outside sources.	Project moved toward completion with desktop editing and field verification of feature layers within all subwatersheds.
K5	Map all surface hydrography (streams and wetlands) in the watershed to show the hydrology flowing from the headwaters to the reservoir by verifying stream flow direction and connections, routing flowpaths through wetlands and waterbodies. This includes mapping drainage structures conveying the hydrology such as culverts, dams, weirs and pipes.	Project moved toward completion with the final editing of all attribute fields for natural hydro and wetlands. Topology for entire watershed began.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
K6	Map all stormwater infrastructure within the watershed from collection points (i.e., storm drains) to terminal discharge points (i.e., outlets) by identifying and verifying stormwater pipe networks and flow direction. This includes routing flow through stormwater BMPs.	A significant milestone was reached with 98% of the overall watershed total of mapping completed (7,436 out of 7,595 storm drains connected). Project moved toward completion with the final editing of all attribute fields for drainage structures, stormwater infrastructure, and stormwater basins. Topology for entire watershed began.
K7	Complete Quinapoxet District EQA and use recommendations to develop tasks for FY27 Work Plan.	Quinapoxet EQA completed and submitted. Quinapoxet EQA recommendations added to EQA Tracking Spreadsheet.
K8	Monitor hazardous materials spills and releases until considered complete for Wachusett and Sudbury watersheds. Compile and update hazardous materials sites, USTs and ASTs. Follow up with DEP as needed.	During this year, eight new releases occurred in Wachusett Watershed and three new releases occurred in Sudbury Watershed. All active releases are monitored by Environmental Quality staff.
K9	Inspect all agricultural operations in Quinapoxet District and continue to compile an inventory of agricultural sites in Wachusett/Sudbury using iPad app	Staff monitored 225 agriculture sites within Wachusett Reservoir Watershed. No Issues were found.
K10	Develop and implement outreach strategies and programs for topics identified through EQAs, such as partnering with watershed businesses such as breweries and golf courses for clean water signage and outreach	DWSP staff created a 2026 calendar with stormwater pollution prevention tips and distributed to the watershed towns. "Clean Water Makes Great Coffee" posters and "Clean Water Makes Great Beer" lawn signs were developed and distributed.
K11	Remain up to date on all PFAS issues and regulations	Staff continued to review documents submitted to DEP for PFAS sites within the watershed.
K12	Continue to communicate with MassDOT on roadway projects. Emphasize need for contractor to maintain safe conditions at all times. Investigate possibility of requiring contractor to have absorbent materials at work area for the duration of the project.	Staff continued to monitor bridge and roadway projects and maintained open communication with contractors and DOT. Uploaded all site photos and inspections into database.

L. Aquatic Invasive Species

Task Number	Task Description	Update
L1	Implement the DWSP AIS action plan by following the framework for monitoring and making decisions regarding current and new AIS threats across the watersheds.	DWSP AIS action plan has been implemented. Updated decontamination protocols, equipment, and paperwork have been utilized and enforced following research on emerging threat of Spiny Waterflea in New England.
L2	Prioritize and conduct surveys of watershed/local waterways to inspect reservoirs, lakes, ponds, and tributaries for presence of aquatic invasive species.	Surveys of 30 watershed ponds were conducted in FY26. Observations including native and non-native plant species and any potential water quality concerns were documented during each survey using QuickCapture and FieldMaps. GIS Survey tools were updated to meet accessibility standards and streamline data collection. EQ staff targeted and removed water chestnut plants from multiple ponds.
L3	Conduct surveys, gather information, and make recommendations for management actions on an individual basis if/when new introductions are found in accordance with the Wachusett AIS management plan.	As a result of the watershed ponds surveys, a new invasive species for the watershed; Water Chestnut, was discovered in Holden. Immediate responses included additional surveys of ponds in the area which resulted in detection of water chestnut in an additional water body in the Chaffins Brook sub-watershed. Management of these infestations via hand-harvesting of plants was undertaken immediately and will be ongoing.
L4	Advise on budget for and administer AIS control contracts as appropriate and conduct aquatic vegetation surveys in conjunction with management of invasive species in the Lily Ponds, South Meadow Pond complex, and Clamshell Pond.	Management and monitoring for AIS in the water bodies close to the Reservoir shoreline is ongoing. Surveys of Clamshell Pond indicate that Brazilian elodea has not returned since treatment in 2018 and water chestnut distribution remains low with annual DCR hand-pulling efforts. The Lily Ponds have received fluridone treatment to successfully target brittle naiad the past four years. Intensive surveys and targeted treatments of AIS in South Meadow Pond continued in FY26 including fluridone treatment for Hydrilla and diquat treatments for Curly-leaf Pondweed. A contractor was selected to obtain an updated Order of Conditions for continued management of South Meadow Pond.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
L5	Continue to use appropriate methods to manage the current population and prevent the spread of Phragmites along the reservoir shoreline.	Phragmites management program initiated for 2026 growing season at 14 active stands. New/additional management methods, including smothering/solarization with sheeting is being evaluated as materials have been acquired from MWRA.
L6	Perform aquatic vegetation surveys in conjunction with reservoir AIS management projects. Provide results to MWRA and contractors to guide plant removal efforts.	DCR staff assisted with review of AIS management contract RFQs and provided relevant updates. Reservoir biovolume surveys completed prior to FY27 AIS management project start.
L7	Monitor, advise, and assist contractors with plant removal operations as necessary, including boat decontamination inspections and data management through ArcGIS Online apps.	Maintenance and use of the Survey123 data collection applications and dashboards by MWRA and project contractors continued. Staff guided dive contractors in AIS removal efforts and provided updates to ArcGIS Online management reporting tools. Staff completed decontamination inspections and collected decontamination certification paperwork.
L8	Enforce the decontamination procedures for all watercraft, dive gear, and survey equipment entering the reservoir by inspecting each vessel and collecting completed decontamination certification forms.	Staff updated decontamination protocols and notified contractors. New protocols have been enforced during decontamination inspections. EQ staff completed decontamination of NR boats and equipment using hot water pressure washer.
L9	Continue to educate ranger and interpretive staff on AIS and other water quality topics for incorporation into routine education program. Update DWSP web pages with current AIS information.	Relevant information was provided to Watershed Ranger staff, including evidence of DCR public access violations and updated creel survey information.
L10	Monitor beaver activity; if necessary make recommendations to NR for removal where contributing to spread of invasive plants or causing water quality impacts due to flooding abutting property.	Observations of beaver activity continue to be passed onto NR. Location sharing and activity documentation has been streamlined with updates to GIS survey tools.
L11	Conduct quarterly Zooplankton sampling in association with reservoir nutrient sampling. Complete assessment of Zooplankton samples for priority AIS.	Staff collected 24 zooplankton samples during routine monitoring. All samples have been scanned to verify absence of invasive zooplankton species.

M. Wastewater Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
M1	Provide plan review to determine compliance with WsPA regulations, if requested, to Boards of Health.	Staff continued to review septic As Built Plans for WsPA filings. No requests of plan reviews from BOH this fiscal year.
M2	Compile septic system information (installation date, repair date, location, etc.) from watershed communities in wastewater database. Include linked electronic plans where available.	Recorded 157 Title V inspections and 92 septic repairs information from watershed communities in wastewater database.
M3	Obtain sewer connection information from Holden and West Boylston; add to Wastewater database and GIS datalayer	A total of 43 new sewer connections in Holden and West Boylston added into Wastewater database this fiscal year.
M4	Continue to provide management support, with the MWRA, of the Rutland-Holden trunk sewer and Rutland Holden Relief trunk sewer. Coordinate inspections and maintenance projects for the sewer lines. Prepare and submit quarterly bills to the user communities in a timely manner.	Payments are forwarded to Worcester as received. No community is paying full payments on time at this point in time.
M5	Research and provide sewer management information for legal issues regarding the Trunk and Relief sewer lines, as necessary. Work with legal and MWRA to research the option of transferring ownership of sewer lines to MWRA or the communities (would require legislative action).	DCR continues to work with legal counsel and MWRA to try to establish a sewer district and transfer ownership of the trunk and relief sewer lines to the communities they serve.
M6	Evaluate and manage new trunk line connections. Monitor trunk line for encroachments; resolve any problems.	All requests for sewer connections were addressed. The one new connection that was made was observed/monitored for compliance with standards.
M7	Monitor Inflow and Infiltration issues within trunk and relief sewers per DEP requirements	Inflow and Infiltration issues within the trunk and relief sewers were monitored on MWRA's recommended schedule.

N. Stormwater Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
N1	Work to secure funds for oversight during DOT construction for Route 110 Sterling direct discharge elimination project.	Construction is underway and we are coordinating with MassDOT as necessary.
N2	Manage contract with Tighe & Bond for preparing final construction documents and permitting for the Direct Discharge Elimination Project at Route 110 Sterling	Construction started on this project and is expected to wrap up in FY27 Q2. A contract extension request was submitted and approved for oversight during this final phase.
N3	Work with watershed towns to ensure compliance with Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) requirements. Provide details of DWSP activities that indirectly support town MS4 requirements (education, sampling, inspections) and provide technical assistance or training of requested.	Provided MS4 letters detailing DWSP activities supporting MS4 compliance requirements to Boylston, Holden, Rutland, Sterling, and West Boylston. A printed 2026 calendar was developed that included stormwater pollution prevention tips. EQ staff created a scarecrow that was displayed on the West Boylston town common and clean water makes great coffee posters and great water makes great beer lawn signs were developed and distributed.
N4	Conduct regular inspections of all construction sites greater than one acre. Record information in Construction General Permit (CGP) application.	Recorded a total of 465 site inspection points and 42 file updates in CGP database for this fiscal year.
N5	Continue work with local DPWs to identify locations of concern, evaluate options for BMP installation, and ways to cooperatively implement recommendations.	DWSP EQ staff met and communicated with staff from Sterling, Holden, West Boylston and Boylston DPW's throughout the year. DWSP EQ staff also met with the new DPW directors for both Holden and West Boylston.
N6	Work with the watershed towns to assist with getting funding for priority culvert replacements to improve climate resilience and aquatic habitat. Assist towns with culvert assessments as needed	Internal discussions with DWSP staff are ongoing. DWSP staff met with Sterling DPW regarding a culvert on Newell Hill Road.
N7	Provide annual maintenance staff training on stormwater pollution prevention and good housekeeping practices	Stormwater pollution prevention training is being revised and will be held in July/August.

O. Emergency Response

Task Number	Task Description	Update
O1	Provide and coordinate Incident Command System, emergency response and safety trainings to appropriate staff. Work with other agencies to provide trainings and exercises	Conducted boom deployment, night operations, small river boom deployment, terrestrial spills, winter emergency preparedness spill training, health and safety training for emergency response, boom training for supervisors, and small boat operator trainings this FY. Staff responded to an incident with a DCR boat in the boat cove where containment boom was deployed and proper notifications were made. No impacts to the water supply had occurred but this turned into a valuable unscheduled additional training opportunity.
O2	Update information in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Training & Exercise Plan, EAPs, and other emergency response plans.	Plans are updated as necessary.
O3	Organize and maintain emergency response supplies and services.	Supplies were organized and replenished as they were used.
O4	Provide and coordinate ICS, emergency response and safety trainings to appropriate staff. Work with other agencies to provide trainings and exercises	Trainings were provided as needed.
O5	Evaluate, monitor and oversee spill clean-ups that impact or threaten water resources of DWSP property. Work with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure that containment, cleanup, and mitigation of the spill are proceeding in a manner that protects drinking water quality	Continued to work with contractor to address remaining items from oil release in JAH boiler room.

P. GIS

Task Number	Task Description	Update
P1	Configure and maintain both internal and externally facing ArcGIS Online tools and applications. Work with staff to generate new field data collection tools using Survey123, Field Maps or QuickCapture. Maintain existing field data collection tools for staff; maintenance includes archiving of data (as needed) and ensuring that all tools remain functional through upgrades to ArcGIS Online and mobile apps. Encourage collaboration between sections and regions, where possible, when there is overlap of effort and need.	Accessibility was the primary focus of GIS staff throughout FY26. Updates to existing workflows, maps and applications were made as-needed throughout the year. New workflows, maps and applications were developed with staff as they were needed.
P2	Manage and publish hosted feature layers, tile layers and tile packages on an as-needed basis to support projects; ensure all data is current and available to staff through the DWSP - Data Store group, and has updated FGDC-compliant metadata. Published data should be recorded within the DWSP Data Inventory (Excel doc. shared via the DWSP-GIS Team). Ensure that all public-facing data has proper metadata added as per the DWSP Metadata SOP and EEA ArcGIS Online Best Practices.	Vast improvements were made to shared feature layers in ArcGIS Online. All Creators have increased their compliance with ArcGIS Online Best Practices, ensuring that all feature layers have base-level metadata. This ensures content is properly documented, in addition to accessible. Support has continued for contracted projects throughout the year. GIS was able to successfully provide quick turnaround on data reviews and making preliminary data deliveries available for Subject Matter Experts to review within a timely manner.
P3	Provide staff with training in ArcGIS Pro either through written workflows, DWSP-led training or access to Esri's training catalog. Train staff in the use of field data collection applications as needed for specific projects. Alert GIS users to free training or webinars, and encourage continued learning.	Many DWPS staff received training in how to make GIS content accessible.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
P4	Assist staff with their GIS needs for reports, projects and analysis as needed; this could include, but is not limited to, maps (hardcopy and web), data analysis, statistics, data exports and data collection. Assist municipalities and other partners by providing maps (hardcopy or web), data analysis and data exports.	GIS staff continue to support other staff and sections in their needs and requests.
P5	Create parcel maps for Land Acquisition Coordinator meetings with landowners and MWRA board. Create and maintain one Story Map for each Land Acquisition Panel meeting, with one section per potential property.	A new LAP process has been completed. This includes a new accessible StoryMap template to be used for LAP meetings, a new accessible project update dashboard and a new parcel in play management workflow.
P6	Complete GIS-related special projects as needed.	CCVA was supported by GIS staff throughout the year. An internal CCVA tool will be available for staff early in FY27.
P7	Keep current in new and emerging GIS technologies by attending webinars, taking self-paced trainings and attending conferences (where possible).	No report.
P8	Maintain iPad inventory; ensure all devices are loaded into EEA-IT mobile device management system. Ensure iPads are replaced on a rolling 5-year basis from FY of purchase.	New GPS units were purchased for staff and distributed.
P9	Assist staff in setting up iPads to work with mobile apps (Field Maps, Survey123 and QuickCapture) and to work with Bluetooth GPS units (Bad Elf Pro+ and Arrow 100 GNSS). Provide troubleshooting and assistance as-needed.	No report.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
P10	Ensure compliance of all GIS-based web tools (web maps, apps, etc.) with Americans with Disabilities Act Title II by April 2026. Provide all staff with best practices (documents, training) and dedicated office hours to assist staff in bringing all tools (internal and public) up to compliance as soon as practically possible.	GIS staff were able to get all DWSP public-facing content updated before the original compliance data for the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II, while continuing to support other GIS work within DWSP. DWSP is well on the way to having all shared (internal) content in compliance ahead of the new compliance date of April 26, 2027. DWSP is a leader at EEA in this regard.

Q. Support

Task Number	Task Description	Update
Q1	Prepare and submit to MWRA and the Water Supply Protection Trust Annual Work Plans, budgets, progress reports, and program goals and objectives. Track Section progress in meeting program goals.	FY2027 work plan and budget were developed and FY2026 projects and progress were monitored.
Q2	Administer the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program.	PILOT program successfully administered distribution of \$9.3 million, an increase of 9.4% from FY25. Wachusett communities received \$4.1 million, with Sterling becoming the first town to receive over \$1 million in PILOT. The “hold harmless” provision accounts for 10% of the total payment. While there was an increase of \$485,000 dollars in the watershed, there was still \$277,000 in hold harmless amount for the three towns that did not have an increase in PILOT. Sudbury communities received \$952,000. There was an increase of \$97,000 dollars in the watershed, and \$112,000 in hold harmless amount for the two towns that did not have an increase in PILOT. Staff worked with Department of Revenue to update the Watershed PILOT information on the DOR Gateway website; data now current from FY21 to FY26. Staff provided expertise to Governor’s Commission on PILOT for State-Owned Land, including a presentation on Watershed PILOT to Commission on 6/16/2026.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
Q3	Operate administrative offices including answering phones, greeting visitors, scheduling interviews, receiving orders for office supplies, updating emergency contacts and other documents as needed. Managing the BHP unit 2, 3 and 9 weekly schedules.	Successfully coordinated facility and vehicle reservations. Processed mail, records, and administrative requests in a timely manner. Supported staff, visitors, and constituents with professionalism and accuracy. Ensured office databases, schedules, and files remained current and organized.
Q4	Provide payroll assistance and personnel services for all Section employees.	Payroll and personnel services continued for all DWSP sections this FY. Assisted staff with payroll and accrued time errors, leave requirements and seasonal employee account management system issues. Created an expanded onboarding for both full time employees and seasonal staff.
Q5	Provide contract administration, financial management, record-keeping, purchasing of goods and services, and other financial support services.	Maintained a high volume of transactions, processing 289 encumbrances and paying 1,156 invoices for Unit 7300 alone. Additionally, 42 encumbrances were processed, and 58 invoices were paid for Unit 7100/NR. Also processed one encumbrance and paid three invoices for the USGS Streamflow Gauges JFA, alongside nine invoices paid for the UMass Water Quality ISA. Processed 33 due diligence encumbrances over the year and finalized and submitted payments for nine property closings. Successfully managed 49 Commbuys Bid Solicitations, resulting in 46 successful awards. Posted three Requests for Response (RFRs), with two successfully awarded by the close of the final quarter. Total fiscal revenue collection from performance bonds, settlements, and grants reached \$62,634.73, with \$19,000.00 in performance bonds being released back to forestry vendors.
Q6	Coordinate with EEA IT to provide local MIS support for the Section.	Several helpdesk tickets were submitted to IT for assistance which required follow up communications. Problems included a network issue affecting the entirety of JAH, restoring a full time employee's computer and e-mail access, laptop upgrades and seasonal employees e-mail account issues. Older laptops are scheduled to be replaced in FY27 for many staff.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
Q7	Administer Logging Permit program, including mailings, bid openings, financial management, database management, permit and key issuance, etc.	Continued to maintain up-to-date records within the timber sales database ensuring compliance with established procedures and timelines. Reviewed permits for accuracy and completeness and verified required documents. Coordinated with the Forester to process lot approvals, extensions and completions in a timely and organized manner. Prepared and distributed official correspondence, notices and mailings related to logging activity. Maintained a detailed mailing log and monitored outgoing and incoming correspondence to support documentation and follow-up requirements.
Q8	Plan and implement vehicle and equipment purchases and leases.	Received seven new vehicles in FY26: one Ford F-550, three F-250 crew cabs, two F-150 Hybrids, and one BEV F-150 Lightning. OVM did not have funding for the additional OVM funded BEV. FY27 Workbook sent to OVM for review.
Q9	Inspect, provide regular maintenance and repair vehicles, boats and other motorized equipment utilizing Fleet Wave system. Maintain up-to-date records of all vehicles and equipment in Fleet Wave system.	The Motor Equipment Mechanics completed 88 work orders in FY26 in addition to performing routine and preventative maintenance.
Q10	Coordinate staff and prepare presentation for annual DEP filtration waiver inspection	Developed presentation, scheduled speakers and attended the DEP inspection, reviewed the inspection update letter and compiled updates and accomplishments document and distributed as required. Filed all information.

Quabbin/Ware FY26 Final Report

Update on all tasks in the Wachusett-Sudbury Work Plan for July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

A. Land Acquisition

Task Number	Task Description	Final Report Comments
1	Acquire land. Coordinate due diligence and other tasks/services from DCR and private contractors to complete survey, appraisal, title, engineering, and environmental assessments for proposed acquisitions. Negotiate WPR language, purchase prices, and conditions of sale with sellers of property.	Five Quabbin projects, protecting 79 acres (49 acres in fee; 30 acres in WPR), went to record this fiscal year. One Ware River project protecting 25.5 acres in fee went to record this fiscal year. Ten projects are currently underway at various stages of due diligence including six projects totaling 290 acres in Quabbin and four projects totaling 140 acres in Ware River.
2	Develop individual parcel presentation materials and meet with MWRA Board for approval.	Two Quabbin projects and one Ware River project were brought to the board this year.
3	Communicate with and convene LAP meetings to review parcels and prioritize land purchases.	Three LAP meetings were held with a total of four projects approved, two in Quabbin and two in Ware River.
4	Use the LAP Prioritization Model to identify priority parcels in the watersheds.	Work to identify parcels is ongoing.
5	Continue to solicit and work with landowners in donating conservation interests in land and assist in advising landowners on the tax incentives available when donating conservation interests.	Of the six projects that went to record this fiscal year three were bargain sales (Anderson WPR in Petersham, Carmody WPR in Petersham, and Breezeway Realty Trust fee acquisition in New Salem). Of the ongoing projects, work continues on one proposed donation and three proposed bargain sales. In total, one donation is in Quabbin, and one bargain sale is in Quabbin and two are in Ware River.
6	Meet regularly with DCR Legal to address attorney assignments and project logistics.	Meetings with Legal are ongoing.

Task Number	Task Description	Final Report Comments
7	Identify and work to acquire Forest Reserves to meet the goals of the Forests as Climate Solutions (FACS) Initiative. Continue participating in and meeting with agency and private partners to develop Reserve designation and expansion strategies consistent with FACS.	Of the projects that went to record this fiscal year, the 29.58 acre fee acquisition in Shutesbury is expected to expand an area recommended for Reserve designation. Work to identify and acquire Forest Reserves to meet the goals of FACS continues through participating in working groups and internal designation mapping.

B. Watershed Preservation Restriction Monitoring

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Monitor WPRs on a regular basis, following monitoring procedures, to meet schedule of monitoring WPRs every 1-3 years.	WPR Coordinator and Regional Monitors completed sixty WPR monitoring visits this FY. WPR Coordinator reviewed all monitoring reports completed by Regional Monitors.
2	Complete baseline documentation reports for new WPRs prior to acquisition or within a reasonable time after acquisition, following EOEEA specifications. Baselines will be done in-house or through appropriate contracts.	Two in-house baselines completed this FY.
3	Meet with Restriction Stewardship Working Group and confer with legal to respond to enforcement issues and requests to exercise reserved rights.	Restriction Working Group met twice this FY.
4	Track changes in landownership for WPRs.	WPR Coordinator and Regional Monitors tracked changes in landownership.
5	Implement WPR records procedure with DCR records manager.	WPR Coordinator participated in meetings on creation of new LIS database. The new LIS went live in June and WPR Coordinator began updating the WPR records.
6	Distribute WPR landowner E-news & Notes from the Field Story Map twice a year to landowners.	Two issues of the WPR landowner E-news were distributed this FY.

C. Land Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Implement the current system-wide Land Management Plan.	Land Management Plan successfully implemented during FY26.
2	Prepare forest harvest proposals for next fiscal year including data on proposed harvest areas, climate considerations, characteristics of stands, soils, cultural resources, wetlands, wildlife, unique features, and priority habitats. Proposals shall also include information on lot layout, landings, stream crossings, wetland crossings, and stonewall crossings..	Thirteen FY26 proposals were approved except for two on the Prescott Peninsula. Those two will be updated and submitted as FY27 proposals. Internal review lot walks were completed for the FY27 proposals. Public presentations and public review of the FY 27 proposals was postponed until after the FY 26 proposals were approved. Awaiting administration approval to send the FY27 forestry project proposals out to public review.
3	Plan and conduct an internal review of proposed logging operations for the coming year, including assessments of silviculture, water quality, wildlife, cultural resource protection, and other potential impacts/benefits. Review lots to ensure consistency with aspects of the LMP as well as the Climate Considerations resulting from the FACS initiative.	FY26 proposals were delayed in getting out to public review until the end of Q1. Comments from the public were received until the end of October, 2025, many of which opposed all forest management, and responses were prepared that covered all topics prior to the end of Q2. Approval to post comments, post our response, and proceed with project implementation for all FY26 proposals was delayed six months until the very end of Q4.
4	Present annual forest harvest proposals at public meetings. Publish Online Public Review document/story map. Accept public comment and respond as needed.	FY 26 Proposals were added to the public facing forestry hub at the start of the public comment period. FY26 Proposals in Ware River watershed were presented to Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee and Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee. Public walks in Quabbin Watershed and Ware River Watershed of FY26 proposals were offered. Only one member of the public signed up and no one showed up at either walk. Forestry staff replied to several emails from the public about FY26 proposal process and public comments.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
5	Plan, lay out, mark products for removal, prepare maps and permits, establish photo monitoring points, file Forest Cutting Plans, seek bids, award permits, and properly advertise and post forest management operations consistent with the Forest Cutting Practices regulations, the LMP, and approved harvest proposals.	Seven forestry projects in Quabbin and two in the Ware River Watershed were marked and successfully bid.
6	Provide supervision and oversight of all forest harvesting operations on DWSP property from sale until final service forester sign-off and bond return. Assure compliance with applicable DCR and NHESP regulations and restrictions, approved BMPs, and all Permit conditions. Maintain adequate site visit records. Monitor post-harvest and collect photo point images consistent with internal policy.	Eight forestry projects were successfully supervised to completion.
7	Monitor BMP effectiveness at active or completed stream crossings utilizing customized assessment protocol.	Given the data collected by EQ showing successful utilization of stream crossing BMPs at all watersheds, this task was set as low priority. Uncertain whether it should continue in FY27.
8	Complete long-term paired watershed monitoring to assess impact of DWSP forest management on tributary water quality and submit final report.	FY26 saw significant progress towards project completion. EQ finished event-based sampling, with monthly sampling ongoing through the end of CY 2026. Solute concentration data and event-based streamflow data went through extensive Quality Assurance and Quality Control. Analytical methods were evaluated and established. A draft final report has been submitted to management detailing the analytical results of this study.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
9	Conduct periodical regeneration and invasive species surveys to monitor forest health and development resulting from silvicultural activities or other natural disturbances and processes.	A new, more comprehensive regeneration survey was successfully piloted in FY26. The survey is designed to provide more robust data at an earlier stage (eight years) post-harvest. The old regeneration survey method was also completed on 15-year-old harvests for the sake of data continuity. Both methods will be employed again in FY27. Together, they will offer better insight into how DWSP forests respond to management.
10	Conduct periodic reviews and monitoring of land management activities to assure compliance and consistency with land management plans.	Completed Phase II of work done by contractor (NV5) to analyze forest structural characteristics using remote sensing data. Final deliverables for the contract were received at the end of Q4, with ongoing review and feedback expected through the beginning of Q1 of FY27. CFI data collection began in Q2 and resumed in Q4, with any analysis pending completion of data entry.
11	Collect data and maintain GIS datalayers related to forest structure, composition, regeneration, roads, boundary information, stone walls, wetlands, streams, and other data to guide the land management program. Maintain GIS data documenting the location, extent, and intensity of all silvicultural operations.	All relevant GIS data layers have been maintained.
12	Integrate new land acquisitions into land management, public access, and other watershed management programs, including forest conditions, etc.	New land acquisitions have been integrated into land management.
13	Locate, mark, and maintain property boundaries periodically or as needed. Identify and document encroachments on DWSP property. Assist with encroachment resolution.	Maintained 10.6 miles of boundary lines. Foresters collaborated with CE staff to develop survey bids for boundary lines that needed surveys.
14	Develop scope of work and manage contracted property boundary survey work.	All contracted surveying projects were finished. Fiscal year summary report to follow.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
15	Document and pursue resolution of all property boundary encroachments using the Encroachment Tracking Hub.	EQ continues to utilize the Encroachment Hub to monitor and document progress for all encroachments, with the help of CE to add new encroachments, add parcel/landowner information, and determine boundaries. Two encroachments were resolved in the Ware River watershed.
16	Identify, plan, and oversee non-forest or other unique habitat restoration, field reclamation, prescribed fire implementation and maintenance work.	FSI crew conducted several projects related to non-forested restoration, including Twin Hill fields, New Salem barrens, Gay's Hill, Prescott hunt shack fields, Hardwick Hibernacula, and the Quabbin spillway. Mechanical and chemical control efforts at most non-forest and habitat restoration sites are ongoing.
17	Maintain the non-silvicultural lands described in the land management plan	WM staff maintained numerous fields and field edges in both watersheds in consultation with NR section staff. Lands along or adjacent to the reservoir's shoreline continued to be monitored by EQ staff as reservoir elevations decreased. Administration areas of Quabbin Park and Quabbin Park Cemetery were maintained by cutting, plantings, and general maintenance during this active growing season. Areas that serve as historic, recreational, or aesthetic places – primarily viewscales – were maintained by WM staff and patrolled by Watershed Rangers.
18	Identify, prioritize, and implement terrestrial invasive plant (TIP) control projects in line with the expanded Terrestrial Invasive Plant Plan. Respond as needed to newly discovered and controllable TIP populations.	Invasive control work throughout the year continued to be focused on habitat projects rather than forest projects. One forestry landing was pre-treated in Q4, but otherwise the program is stalled to some degree with the pause on releasing a draft invasive management plan to the public for review and comment. Some progress was made on exploring a mapping solution, but other plan elements such as staff education and development of a prioritization tool are on hold until the future of the program is settled.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
19	Collect data and maintain datasets, GIS datalayers, and related maps and reports of rare and listed plants and communities.	This past year purple milkweed population was monitored throughout the growing season and progress reported to NHESP. The purple milkweed has been doing better with the associated woodland restoration. The fencing was replaced with metal fencing to prepare for fire and slightly widened. The <i>Xyris montana</i> population was not found due to the low water conditions and woody encroachment on South Spectacle Pond. The <i>Mimulus moschatus</i> was also monitored; the population seems stable and associated with the hillside seeps. There were more plants in areas that had been disturbed and more open. Purple clematis populations are continuing to show stability. Harper, Bertin, and Charpentier initiated their study of flora across the entire Quabbin reservation this FY, with surveys and collections conducted in Q1, Q2, and Q4. The project is expected to continue for several years.
20	Develop and implement a DWSP drone program to document forest conditions, map openings, identify invasive plant populations, assess internal road conditions, and other remote sensing activities.	Work to get a DWSP-specific drone policy is on-going. While still on a project by project approval basis, work has progressed so that DWSP is now able to get some staff trained as certified Drone pilots through the FAA (Part 107 certificate). Training of five DWSP pilots has begun and will continue into next FY.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
21	Analyze CFI and other available data on forest structure, composition, and regeneration. Report findings for public presentation at meetings and in updated land management plans	FY26 was a year of transition for the DWSP CFI program. Staff worked with DSPR to develop updated CFI protocols to include additional measurements of downed woody debris, leaf and duff depths, and updated regeneration sampling methods. Annual surveys of 10% of all DWSP CFI plots were initiated, which will enable more up-to-date information on forest conditions and allow foresters to better adapt their management approaches. Data collection under the new protocol commenced in late September and halted in early December with the onset of snowpack and the inability to sample downed woody debris. Data collection resumed in spring of 2026 with a focus on completing the remaining 2025 plots. The first round of growing season plots began late in Q4 where the complete understory flora is surveyed. Data entry still lags behind, and database updates are needed to store all new data. Datasheets, however, are scanned and stored online.
22	Implement Quabbin Park Operation and Maintenance Plan	Currently in maintenance mode. Mowing and detail work throughout the park. Cleaning up fallen trees on roads, interior walks and interior roads. Side arm mower completed the summer round of mowing in the park.
23	Implement Quabbin and Ware River Road Management Plan	The Roads Management Working group conducted quarterly meetings which covered a range of topics needing coordination among work groups (WM, CE, EQ). FY27 work will continue to improve processes needed for road repair and maintenance involving country drainage, culvert replacements, and culvert enlargements.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
24	DWSP Forestry: Evaluate potential sites for Forest Stand Improvement (FSI) work and take actions aimed at enhancing the structure and composition of a forest stand as defined in the LMP.	FY26 FSI work largely consisted of understory preparation cutting at forest management sites that are intended to be treated with prescribed fire or mechanical mountain laurel removal. The FSI crew assessed regeneration openings identified during 2025 regeneration surveys as needing work. The large backlog of Quabbin FSI work was completed in winter of 2024. When Wachusett FSI is completed in FY27, the FSI crew will circle back to the earliest completed Quabbin FSI openings to monitor conditions and expand release, per oak study that recommended returning several years later to expand release. The annual FSI cycle will fall into a routine of assessing regeneration openings, working those regeneration openings, and returning several years later to monitor and expand release, while in the meantime performing understory prep cuts and habitat restoration.
25	Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA): use results of the CCVA to collect necessary natural asset data, prioritize opportunities to enhance resilience, implement climate adaptation strategies, and address capital planning decisions and designs.	Awarded four contracts using ResilientMass funding to continue CCVA development and address data gaps. Work advanced substantially this year, including collaboration with Tighe and Bond to refine the Asset Condition Assessment framework, develop ecological tipping points and thresholds, and weight indicators based on ecological impact, management leverage, and potential loss of service. Automation tools for data summarization and scoring are complete, with final quality control and handoff materials ready. The public-facing report, executive summary, informational pamphlet and presentation materials have been completed and reviewed by DWSP. Overall, all of the tasks have been completed, with the project's final materials delivered by the end of the fiscal year with potential adjustments through the start of FY27.

D. Wildlife Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Continue the observations and active harassment of birds within the Bird Harassment Zone at Quabbin Reservoir, using human presence, boats, pyrotechnics, passive scare devices, and other techniques. Continue to identify and test new harassment techniques.	Staff conducted 31 scheduled shore observations during the CY 2025/2026 reporting period, from October 6, 2026 until ice coverage was complete on January 28, 2026, at which point monitoring ceased. Due to bacteria counts and gull numbers remaining below established action thresholds, no active harassment occurred during any of the four quarters. Staff maintained boats, pyrotechnics, and safety equipment in a state of operational readiness to resume monitoring and deployment if conditions change.
2	Develop GIS workflows for the Bird Harassment Program for data recording and reporting	No updates to report this FY.
3	Observe and document the nocturnal gull roost on Quabbin Reservoir.	There were 19 successful weekly drone flights to count gull roosts on the Quabbin Reservoir. The number of roosting gulls ranged from approximately 21 to 480 gulls.
4	Control Canada geese populations on Quabbin Reservoir (focus in the Bird Harassment Zone) by treating eggs during nesting season to prevent hatching.	The majority of the Quabbin Reservoir was surveyed in 2026, with the Control Zone serving as the primary focus. In addition to the Control Zone, surveys extended north to Russ Mountain, east beyond that area, and south into the Boat Area 3 section of the reservoir. No Canada goose nests were found within the Quabbin Reservoir survey area. Since the completion of surveys, several groups of geese with goslings have been observed. While there is always the possibility that a nest was missed during surveys, it is more likely that these geese originated from smaller nearby waterbodies and subsequently moved into the Quabbin Reservoir to molt. The 2025 annual summary is completed and the 2026 annual summary is currently in progress.
5	Identify places in MA where human derived food is available and work to prevent feeding gulls through educational signage, interaction and enforcement.	Surveys began again in October and continued through the winter to compare survey results with weekly roost counts. The regional gull surveys concluded in March and are scheduled to resume in fall 2026. No new gull feeding areas were identified during the survey period.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
6	Remove beaver and muskrat in the Aquatic Wildlife Pathogen Control Zone at Quabbin and assess beaver issues in the Watershed.	Pathogen Control Zone stream surveys are completed in the spring and fall of each year. Three beaver were removed from the Pathogen Control Zone. Eight beavers were removed from Peppers Mill Pond after causing blockages at the spillway. Eleven beavers were removed from Boat Area 3/Pottapaug Pond area due to their use of boat docks as food cache locations, which impacted the structural integrity of the dock system. Active monitoring and response efforts continued for several beaver-related issues across the watersheds. Mitigation measures were implemented as needed, including adjustments and repairs to multiple flow devices.
7	Respond to problems of burrowing animals on dams and dikes; report problems and treat all active animal burrows on the Quabbin dam and dikes.	Joint inspections with engineering staff were conducted and no immediate concerns were identified

Task Number	Task Description	Update
8	Research and manage for common loons on DWSP waterbodies; provide nesting platforms, capture and sample birds for contaminants.	Common loon monitoring continues at the Quabbin Reservoir, Pottapaug Pond, O'Loughlin Pond and Basset Pond. A total of 16 nesting pairs were documented, with four pairs successfully hatching eight chicks in 2025. Of those chicks, three successfully fledged. Night banding efforts at Quabbin Reservoir in 2025 resulted in the capture of eight adult loons and one chick, with samples collected from each individual. Unviable whole eggs and shell fragments were collected, inventoried, and packaged for contaminant analysis. The 2025 loon summary is available upon request. Additional loon program activities included participation in a loon necropsy sessions, attendance at the annual Northeast Loon Study Working Group (NELSWG) conference in March, where DWSP Common loon data were presented. Participation in monthly NELSWG subgroup meetings continues as time allows. The 2026 Common loon monitoring season kicked off with raft repair and deployment and weekly monitoring.
9	Continue long-term wildlife resource monitoring program.	Camera trap, moth trapping, breeding bird surveys, whip-poor-will surveys, snakeboard surveys, owl surveys and bat acoustic recording surveys were conducted during this report period. The 2025 Prescott Beaver Survey was completed, and camera trap footage review is ongoing.
10	Work with DFW to survey and document breeding bald eagles around Quabbin Reservoir.	Survey efforts in coordination with MassWildlife biologists continues.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
11	Administer the applications, permits, and orientations for the Quabbin and Ware River Deer Management Program. Analyze results of hunt.	Applications for the Quabbin controlled deer hunts were posted on July 1, with 734 applications received for the Petersham and Pelham hunts and 412 applications received for Quabbin Park. The 2024 Deer Hunt Report was completed, and the 2025 deer hunts at Quabbin and Ware River were successfully conducted during the first two weeks of December despite challenging snowy conditions. Results and analysis of the hunts have been completed and published in the 2025 Deer Report. Pellet surveys conducted at Quabbin Park indicated a deer density of 26.6 deer per square mile, nearly identical to the previous year's results, with densities ranging from 19 to 50 deer per square mile.
12	Implement internal operations of all DWSP controlled deer hunts in the Quabbin/Ware Region	The 2025 Quabbin Controlled Deer Hunt was conducted successfully in the Pelham, Petersham, and Quabbin Park areas. Snow was on the ground for all the controlled hunts this year including a significant snow storm the night before the Pelham hunt. WM crew worked most of the night before the Pelham hunt preparing the roads for hunters. Many positive comments received from hunters on the condition of the roads. All hunts were implemented safely and successfully.
13	Coordinate with the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program concerning rare species occurrences and protection.	DWSP continues to collaborate with NHESP to document rare species occurrences and support conservation and protection efforts. Two new moth traps were acquired from NHESP and will be used for additional sampling at Focus Area, Young Forest, and Chestnut Oak sites. Whip-poor-will surveys were also conducted at these sites.

E. Public Access Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Monitor DWSP lands and water to ensure compliance with rules and regulations designed to protect the water supply and protect the public.	Quabbin Rangers conducted 16,720 visitor contacts, providing education, regulatory enforcement, and public assistance while maintaining a visible presence throughout the reservation. Enforcement efforts resulted in 236 witnessed violations and 105 unwitnessed violations being documented. The most common compliance issues involved unauthorized public access to restricted areas, prohibited animals on watershed property, motor vehicle violations, improper use of non-motorized transportation, after-hours access, littering, and failure to obey posted regulations. In addition to proactive patrols and enforcement, Rangers issued parking citations, investigated environmental and public safety concerns, and coordinated 23 law enforcement referrals with the Massachusetts State Police, Environmental Police, and local police departments. Ware River Rangers conducted 10,292 visitor contacts, providing public education, regulatory enforcement, and visitor assistance while maintaining a visible presence across the reservation. Enforcement efforts resulted in 721 witnessed violations and 277 unwitnessed violations being documented. The most common compliance issues involved unauthorized motor vehicle use, failure to obey regulatory signs and ranger directions, prohibited animals, unauthorized access to tributaries and surface waters, after-hours access, littering, unauthorized fishing activities, property damage, and violations of Ware River fishing regulations. In addition to proactive patrols and enforcement, Rangers issued one parking citation, investigated environmental and public safety concerns, and coordinated 21 law enforcement referrals with the Massachusetts State Police, Massachusetts Environmental Police, and local police departments.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
2	Maintain working relationships with State, Environmental, and local police.	Quabbin Rangers maintained and strengthened working relationships with the Massachusetts State Police (C7 and Marine Unit), Massachusetts Environmental Police, and local law enforcement agencies to ensure effective enforcement of watershed regulations, public safety, and emergency response operations within the Quabbin Reservoir watershed. Rangers coordinated with partner agencies on 23 separate incidents involving a wide range of public safety, law enforcement, and resource protection issues. These incidents included trespassing complaints, unauthorized ATV and motor vehicle activity, after-hours access violations, shoreline fishing violations, dangerous and erratic boating activity, stranded and disabled boaters, traffic and parking concerns, drone operations, medical emergencies, and public safety hazards. Rangers worked with Belchertown Police regarding a downed tree obstructing Route 202 and collaborated with the Massachusetts Environmental Police during a hunting-related investigation in the Petersham Zone Hunt area. Through regular communication, information sharing, and coordinated responses, these partnerships helped ensure timely resolution of incidents while protecting the Quabbin Reservoir water supply and the visiting public. Maintaining strong professional relationships with state, environmental, and local law enforcement agencies enhanced our ability to address complex situations, provide emergency assistance, and support regulatory compliance throughout the watershed. These collaborative efforts continue to be critical to the successful management and protection of Quabbin Reservoir resources.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
3	Use Agency social media accounts for advertisement of interpretive programs, including general info or emergency info (e.g., closings).	Quabbin IS staff obtained access to the DCR agency-wide facility alerts and are now able to post both scheduled and emergency closures directly to the DCR Park Alerts website . IS staff have not approached the agency communications regarding a Facebook page again due to lack of success in previous discussions.
4	Continue to implement Quabbin Public Access Management Plan (QPAMP). Enforce rules and regulations of 313 CMR 11.09 through education. Complete semi-annual Compliance and Enforcement Reporting to MassDEP.	Rangers addressed violations through education, warnings, parking citations, and documentation as appropriate, ensuring consistent application of DWSP regulations while promoting voluntary compliance.
5	Implement Ware River Public Access Management Plan	A new 10-foot fence was installed on Burnshirt road at the town line of Hubbardston and Templeton to deter dumping. Ware River trail project completed including adding trail names to the Public Access Map. Continued working with user groups to improve signage, maintain safe trail access and limit unauthorized use of the trail network.
6	Develop improved, uniform signage.	New boundary signs are being installed around the perimeter of Quabbin and Ware River Watersheds. Boundary signs existing locations are being cleared of vegetation. Old outdated plywood boundary signage is removed, and new aluminum boundary signs with QR code links to Watershed rules are installed in location and updated in app.
7	Conduct night operations, as needed (e.g., night access permits, ATV use monitoring, illegal camping)	Night operations focused on monitoring permitted night access, identifying unauthorized activity, addressing potential illegal camping, monitoring ATV use, and ensuring compliance with watershed regulations. Ware River Watershed night operations began in April and Quabbin Reservoir night operations began in July.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
8	Operate the boat fishing program in designated portions of Quabbin Reservoir in a manner that minimizes threats to water quality and accommodates visitors with accessibility needs.	Annual Quabbin Fishing report finalized in December 2025 and presented to Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee. Pottapaug and O'Loughlin Ponds remained closed to public boat fishing while efforts continued to monitor and control swollen bladderwort in both ponds and the reservoir. Normal BLA operations continued throughout the season with no issues.
9	Provide ongoing support and consultation to DCR's Division of Parks regarding Comet Pond beach. Maintain boat ramp launch at Long Pond and boat ramp launch and parking lot at Comet Pond.	Moving Jersey barrier as needed. Snow plowing as needed.
10	Coordinate and/or support special programs and events, including Memorial Day services, public meetings, and Tuesday Tea events.	Quabbin IS staff coordinated with the Friends of Quabbin for the annual Memorial Day event at Quabbin Park Cemetery. Staff also working with Friends of Quabbin to coordinate a possible event for the 2026 Quabbin Days in October. Staff will assist with planning the ribbon cutting for the Keystone Bridge event in the fall. Staff offered several programs in cooperation with the Oakham and Rutland Historical Society.
11	Continue to provide/expand Universal Access opportunities at Quabbin.	Quabbin IS staff received training on 4/8/26 from DCR-Universal Access on recommended signage for accessible trails as well as how to use equipment to take measurements of trails for the signs. DCR-IS is looking into options for purchasing some equipment that could be used at multiple sites as needed.
12	Continue to control and monitor research and other public access through an internal review process and permit system. Maintain electronic databases for permit issuances, access notification, and any problems.	Twenty-one research applications were received in 2026. Eleven were renewals, and nine were new applications. All nine new applications were approved.
13	Manage public access permits for large groups, short-term vehicles, etc.	Quabbin IS staff sent out 60 group access permits with a total of 2572 people participating in events.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
14	Implement social media trial program	IS staff have not approached the agency communications regarding a Facebook page again as we have not had any success in previous discussions.
15	Update and implement Quabbin Park Operations and Maintenance Plan.	Planning phase. Taking notes and beginning to update possible sections within the plan.

F. Watershed Security

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Continue regular ranger patrols to provide watershed security. Perform regular security checks at key access points and MWRA facilities. Record all encounters and violations using iPad applications. Produce periodic reports.	Rangers conducted routine security checks of key access points, gates, restricted areas, and MWRA facilities to ensure infrastructure remained secure and operational. These patrols allowed Rangers to identify and address issues involving unauthorized access, damaged or missing signage, security concerns, and other conditions that could impact public safety or watershed protection.
2	Maintain gates, barways, bollards and signage throughout the watersheds. Install barriers (such as guardrails or fences) as needed to protect properties and control public access.	Staff completed gate and barway repairs as needed. Maintenance Program underway on iPad with several sections, including Rangers, Watershed Maintenance, and GIS.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
3	Continue ongoing communication and coordination with local, state, and federal emergency responders;	Rangers coordinated with partner agencies on 23 separate incidents involving a wide range of public safety, law enforcement, and resource protection issues. These incidents included trespassing complaints, unauthorized ATV and motor vehicle activity, after-hours access violations, shoreline fishing violations, dangerous and erratic boating activity, stranded and disabled boaters, traffic and parking concerns, drone operations, medical emergencies, and public safety hazards. Rangers worked with Belchertown Police regarding a downed tree obstructing Route 202 and collaborated with the Massachusetts Environmental Police during a hunting-related investigation in the Petersham Zone Hunt area.
4	Coordinate with MWRA in order to maintain comprehensive system-wide approach on all security issues.	Coordination with MWRA continued throughout FY26.

G. Infrastructure

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Conduct monthly inspections and issue findings on Winsor Dam and spillway and Goodnough Dike. Coordinate inspections with MWRA and consultants. Plan for or conduct dam repair work as called for in dam inspection reports.	CE staff maintained a monthly program of dam inspections and piezometer data monitoring. Staff regularly monitor dam conditions for wildlife activity, ground cover conditions and assess ongoing maintenance activities. In 2026, an annual summary report was produced comparing piezometer data to levels observed over the past decade. Special soil sampling was completed along the downstream slopes of both Winsor Dam and Goodnough Dike in May 2026. The samples were submitted to the UMass Extension soil testing lab. Results will be used to determine soil nutrient needs for fall season enrichment efforts. A written report was produced comparing soil test data to previous findings and recommendations were made for future turf improvements.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
2	Conduct periodic inspections and issue findings on DCR's jurisdictional small dams in the Quabbin/Ware Region. Assure compliance with all dam safety requirements for small dams on DWSP lands, including the review of new or updated Emergency Action Plans, updating of inventory records and addressing upgrade needs.	CE staff completed inspections at Brigham Pond Dam during the months of September, December, and March. In October, WM staff applied hydroseed to downstream slopes. The Department of Fish and Game Office of Fishing and Boating Access notified DCR of their plans to make parking and accessibility improvements at Comet Pond in Hubbardston. Civil Engineering reviewed the plans and assisted in coordinating a permit exemption application submittal to ODS. Minor earthwork and riprap maintenance were proposed along the dam to facilitate the future install of an accessible floating fishing pier. Construction began in May 2026, and was nearly finished by the end of the fiscal year.
3	Implement lawn and grounds maintenance activities at the Dam, Dike, and spillway as needed	Currently seeding with the ventrac and water/fertilizer with the hydroseeder on the dam and the dike.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
4	Quabbin Admin Complex - Continue working with MWRA on facility improvements to the Quabbin Admin Building Complex, including planning and development for future renovations, facility upgrades and studies.	Homer Contracting was awarded a \$2.77M contract in April 2026 to replace original, slate roofing and masonry chimneys on the Administration Building Headquarters. In addition, work will include new TPO roofing, waterproofing, gypsum plank repairs, gutter replacement and masonry improvements to building exterior walls. Miscellaneous carpentry, HVAC energy recovery (ventilation) upgrades, interior asbestos abatement and selective carpet replacements will be included on the interior in areas impacted by the work. Contracted work is tentatively scheduled to be completed by February 2027. The install of building envelope scaffolding was completed in May and initial contractor mobilization occurred in late June. HKT Architects prepared design plans and construction documents for the Quabbin Roof and Chimney Replacement Project that was publicly advertised for bidding on January 21, 2026. The project requires the use of seven different Filed Sub-Bid categories. Across those seven categories, a total of 34 bids were received by the 2/19/2026 deadline. General bids were received from three bidders on March 5, 2026. HKT remains under contract to provide construction administration and oversight services thru to project completion. Building Engineering Resources (BER) Incorporated provided DCR House Doctor Contract services to support mechanical upgrades and necessary ventilation improvements being pursued with the proposed chimney reconstruction effort.
5	New Salem Facility - Continue working with MWRA on the site restoration including final design, construction bidding, and construction oversight.	No progress to report on design and construction of a permanent office building in New Salem. A new construction trailer was ordered to replace the existing rented trailer. Delivery and installation to take place in early FY27.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
6	Quabbin Maintenance Facility - Continue working with MWRA on the final design, construction documents, bidding, evaluation, award, planning, and construction services	MWRA advertised for bids for the construction of the new Quabbin Maintenance Building in Belchertown on June 20, 2026. Construction contract award is expected in FY27.
7	Maintain records regarding reservoir and facility construction, as well as maintenance and repair operations. Provide surveying and drafting services, maintain records, and respond to in-house and other requests for information related to land ownership, property lines, buildings, and construction projects.	Private surveyors were contracted for three watershed properties surveyed under the FWE-Survey-19 contract funded using Stewardship grant monies. In total, \$41K was awarded for boundary surveys of properties on Main Street in Rutland, Evergreen Road in Hubbardston, and Ware Road in Belchertown. Research and field reconnaissance was completed for two new 2026 DWSP acquisitions: the Barnett property on Wendell Rd in New Salem and the Briarwood property on Barre Rd in Hubbardston (a follow-up will be performed at the Briarwood property in the fall 2026). Also researched and reconned was the Breezeway Farms property (2025 acquisition) adjacent to the Barnett property. All work was coordinated with the Forestry section, and the Briarwood property appears to be a good potential candidate for the FY27 FWE-Survey-26 Project.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
8	Conduct building maintenance activities, including painting, carpentry, cleaning, minor repairs, and other routine maintenance.	Ongoing. End of fiscal projects included removing old broken furniture from the 3rd floor, consolidating items, and moving them to the basement. Performed seasonal window cleaning and air purifier/dehumidifier maintenance. Air purifiers are due for internal filter replacement. All steam traps have mostly been updated within the last five years, though some very old traps were found that were past expiration. Spreadsheet on traps is almost complete with locations, when they were changed and when the next change is due. Gate maintenance is ongoing; working to get a tablet to better organize gates that need attention and to possibly add hunt shacks and BLA's to that management list. Docks have been damaged by beavers; staff have pulled apart the boat cove dock to inventory and document what is needed for repairs. Preventative maintenance on gate keys and locks along with gutters. Reorganizing the keys in the administration lock box.
9	Conduct periodic inspections of septic systems at the various Regional office buildings. Assure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations.	Performed as needed.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
10	Quabbin Emergency Generator Replacement - continue working with MEMA on the final design, bidding, construction, and testing of new emergency generators at the QAB and Quabbin Tower.	•In January, DCR received MA Historical Commission approval for proposed site alterations associated with the install of an exterior, pad mounted generator unit. •B2Q Associates remains under contract to provide construction bidding and support services for a new generator to be installed in FY27. •In February, DCR Contract W26-7610-C01 was posted to the Bid Express Platform for public bidding. The contract estimated at \$442K includes the replacement of two (2) emergency generator units for the Quabbin Tower and Quabbin Administration Building located in Belchertown. Tilton Electric provided the low bid amount of \$293,000 and was recommended for award. Project kick-off is anticipated for early FY27. •A request was made to FEMA to approve a project extension to February 2027 for the completion of the Emergency Generator replacement projects. Both projects were bid as one construction contract which is currently awaiting final award. No change to the awarded authorization value of \$185,250 is being requested.
11	Conduct periodic inspections, maintenance, or oversight of heating systems, fuel pump operations, and fuel deliveries.	End of year mechanical budget was spent doing minor repairs on the admin boiler, installing a RIB controller, adding a fresh air intake boot to the stockroom furnace and inspecting the hangar heat issue. TJ fixed our leaking Modine in the carpentry shop without a charge, Cemetery oil system has been disconnected and will be replaced a single ceiling mount electric heater.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
12	Utilize engineering experience and expertise to develop specifications, bid packages, plans and contracts for facility and infrastructure projects identified in the projected FY26 Spending Budget.	Warner Brothers contracted to reclaim and resurface entrance roads to Quabbin Park. Road reclamation and grading work completed May 13-15, 2026. Road resurfacing completed May 20-22, 2026. Road shoulder restoration work completed on May 28-29, June 1, and June 4, 2026. CE oversaw project erosion and sedimentation controls and coordinated efforts with the Ware Conservation Commission. Quabbin Boat Cove: On June 23 and 26, 2026, the MSP Dive team provided assistance to WM staff to reset anchor lines on the two docks inside the Boat Cove. CE collaborated with DCR Carpentry, BLA Foreman, and WM staff to fabricate new concrete anchors and procure and install new hardware and stainless steel chain. In total, four new stainless steel anchor lines were installed, and six existing lines were reconfigured and fortified with heavier chain. DCR contracted with MG Harbor who advised on existing dock conditions, gangway modifications and anchor deployments. Contract authorized for the fabrication of a new gangway and bracket supports to service the East Dock. MG Harbor anticipates that fabrication will be completed and ready for install in early FY27. Boat Cove Dock Repairs: In late June DCR staff set new boat mooring anchors inside the Cove and removed the East Boat Dock for repairs. Carpentry staff will be assessing damage to the dock by beaver activity and will be replacing impacted floats under the FY27 budget.
13	Conduct maintenance and management activities in Quabbin Park, including roads, interpretive trails, roadsides, parking areas, drainage structures, fields, vistas, snowplowing, and other management activities.	Ongoing maintenance continues for these areas. Some cleanup/road improvements may be needed following the logging operation off Webster road in Quabbin Park.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
14	Implement updated Quabbin Park Cemetery Management and Operations Plan to continue to conduct routine maintenance and burial activities in the Quabbin Park cemetery.	Performed mowing and string trimming within the cemetery. Weekly inspections of the cemetery were done after storms to identify and remove fallen trees. Any and all damaged head stones and monuments reported to administration. QPC FY26 Report summarized ongoing efforts to maintain burial and lot records. Records were processed and tracked in FY26 for 11 cremations, five full burials, six foundations, two grave openings and three new deed assignments. The GIS Interment Hub platform was upgraded by staff to meet accessibility standards.
15	Conduct Quabbin Park Cemetery business and record keeping.	FY26 had 11 cremations, five full burials, six foundations, two grave openings and three new deed assignments.
16	Continue to conduct road maintenance activities on DWSP lands.	Road maintenance completed around both watersheds. Washouts fixed and tree debris removed. Gate 8 road maintained throughout the fishing season.
17	Continue to inspect and assess the condition of roads and culverts. Update attributes, conditions, and photos of infrastructure cataloged along with inspection reports through the ArcGIS data collection system.	CE staff focused on performing inspections on culverts in the East Branch Swift River, Quabbin Reservation, and Coldbrook and Longmeadow EQA Districts that lacked inspections since 2019. The team completed a total of 159 culvert inspections (four Off-Watershed) and five bridge inspections. All targeted FY26 goals were accomplished.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
18	Assess gravel pits and gravel resources on DWSP lands in the Quabbin/Ware Region, to include both DWSP internal-use pits and pits designated for use by the Towns of New Salem and Petersham. Annually review and monitor sand and gravel extraction and site closure and Best Management Practices (BMPs).	Formal and informal communications with towns ongoing, with annual permit requests received and approved and extraction volume estimates provided as truckload tallies. Regular inspections conducted at active sites as time/access allow. After discussions with CE staff and EQ Supervisor, a decision has been made to modify annual extraction volume accounting to discontinue active pit face surveying and to instead work with towns and WM staff/FOTL to acquire accurate truckload tallies for extraction volume data. These data will be used to estimate sand and gravel resource longevity. Survey efforts will instead focus on defining the boundary limit of extraction to be clearly marked in the field and on GIS.
19	Redevelop and improve the condition of roads and stream crossings to allow for greater access to the New Boston Road corridor in the Quabbin Reservoir Northwest Region, including the installation or repair of three new bridges.	Camel Brook Bridge Repairs project was awarded in October to Eurovia (aka Northeast Paving) under the DCR-SP Western Mass Roads and Trails contract. The project kicked off in October and was substantially completed by the end of November. Bridge repair work included construction of new retaining wall to improve safety and approach to bridge deck, road surface and site improvements. CE staff oversaw project permitting and coordinated with the Shutesbury Conservation Commission.
20	Investigate reservoir shoreline conditions in vicinity of hangar ramp and Winsor Intake	EQ maintained routine shoreline and ice cover inspections, improving weekly surveys and using historical imagery to analyze historical ice dynamics with consulting firm CEI. Also in collaboration with CEI, the section completed a Shoreline Erosion Risk Assessment as part of the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA), generating a high-resolution map based on slope, soil sampling, and erosion potential around the West Arm and Winsor Intake.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
21	Investigate and implement wind monitoring to help determine wind impacts to changes in water quality parameters, such as turbidity and fecal coliform levels.	FY26 established the foundation for a wind monitoring program. A literature review on wind-wave action and thermal stratification impacts on sediment transport was completed and presented to the turbidity working group. Preliminary analysis of wind data from the Winsor Dam sensor characterized seasonal patterns, with westerly winds dominant in spring, fall, and winter. Weekly wind summaries for Belchertown were established and are shared with EQ staff to flag high wind conditions and trigger turbidity investigations. A fetch-weighted shoreline exposure analysis was developed and integrated into shoreline erosion assessment tools built by DWSP contractors, and high-exposure areas were incorporated into Phase 2 CCVA sediment sampling.
22	Finalize MOU with Wachusett Greenways regarding management of Mass Central Rail Trail.	MOU finalized, signed, and distributed to staff.

H. Watershed Protection Act

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Implement the Watershed Protection Act regulations in 14 Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River Watershed towns. Review and process all WsPA applications, and track the status of applications and associated projects using an Access database. Inspect sites throughout the duration of any activity to ensure compliance. Investigate and resolve violations of WsPA regulations.	Received 35 cases in the Ware River and Quabbin Watersheds. Processed 19 cases in Ware River and nine in the Quabbin Watershed. Investigated and resolved several violations in the Ware River Watershed. Conducted multiple site inspections in the Ware and Quabbin Watersheds. Fielded numerous calls from town boards, consultants, and homeowners.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
2	Continue to review or evaluate public notices, local board agendas and minutes, and information provided by local sources for additional jurisdictional activities or enforcement actions.	Reviewed agendas and minutes for all the towns in both watersheds. Contacted towns regarding projects and violations with WsPA Jurisdiction.
3	Convene WsPA Working Group meetings.	Watershed Protection Act Working Group continued to communicate regularly by phone, email, virtually, and in-person to coordinate implementation of the Watershed Protection regulations.
4	Educate and interact with local boards and officials in the watersheds about watershed protection regulations. Educate local officials, realtors, prospective buyers, land development consultants, and homeowners on WsPA regulations and procedures.	Fielded calls from town officials, developers, engineering firms, and homeowners and assisted them with the Watershed Protection Act.
5	Provide technical assistance support to local boards through contact, meetings, and/or through regulatory review process.	No activity

I. Education and Outreach

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Implement Interpretive Services Plan for the Ware River Watershed	Both interpretive and educational programming in the Ware River Watershed expanded throughout FY26. Staff offered special programs with libraries, senior centers and hiking groups. Public programs were offered every quarter and staff increased outreach to school districts in the area this year. Ranger and interpretive staff have reviewed the informational signs and will be planning updates starting in FY27.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
2	Implement Interpretive Services Plan for the Quabbin Watershed	The issues and concerns of managing the Quabbin Reservoir and watershed lands have changed since the original interpretive plan was developed. The new public access plan that will be written for 2028 will help Quabbin IS staff focus on issues that may warrant more educational and interpretive focus.
3	Staff and operate the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center at Quabbin to educate visitors about watershed management and related topics.	The Quabbin Visitor Center continues to be open six days a week throughout the year with the exception of a planned closure between Christmas and New Year's Day. In FY26, the center had a total of 7,823 visitors. This number accounts for only weekends and holidays. Staff offered 45 public programs, 22 private programs, and 58 school programs.
4	Continue established programs of public education, including school programs and field trips on DWSP properties.	Quabbin IS staff continued to expand educational offerings and outreach to school districts in the Quabbin/Ware Region in FY26. Programs focus on watershed management, history, wildlife, as well as dam construction. This fiscal year there were 71 programs attended by 2,263 students.
5	Collaborate with other organizations and watershed communities to reach more diverse audiences. Identify specific groups and their educational needs.	Quabbin IS staff offered 25 programs to private groups (senior centers, historical societies and libraries) in FY26. Approximately 275 people attended these programs, primarily slide presentations although staff offered three hikes to the Appalachian Mountain Club.
6	Monitor self-guided Quabbin Park interpretive trails for current conditions and to identify any maintenance issues.	Quabbin Park trails are in good shape. Almost all the trails have been re-blazed with the new metal, colored markers. Quabbin participated in DCR's park serve day in 2026. The Pioneer Valley Hiking Club held a trail day in Quabbin Park as well. Forestry staff completed a harvest operation near the Goodnough Dike Vista Trail; after the forestry project was completed, staff rerouted and re-blazed the trail.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
7	Maintain vital records collection for former Quabbin valley towns, issue official records and conduct genealogical and historical research upon request.	Vital records and genealogical research continue to be maintained by Quabbin Visitor Center staff
8	Manage audio-visual collection of the Region including photographs, slides, and media coverage of Regional activities and Quabbin-related topics.	The Quabbin/Ware Region photo library was created to provide a common location for all section staff to save photos that could be used by any staff for reports or presentations. Quabbin IS staff has made an effort to copy many historic Quabbin Valley photos into the library. Staff has also been encouraged to save copies of photos in the library as well. Participation, unfortunately, has been low but there is still a number of photos available.
9	Coordinate with staff archivist to organize and digitize oral history collection using outside contractor	Oral history collection shared with state archivist and outside contractor for conservation.
10	Continue to support and participate in the Envirothon, America's leading natural resource education program for high school students.	EEA successfully took over running the Envirothon program. EEA's Assistant Secretary of Environmental Justice was the chair of the steering committee and Quabbin IS staff served as vice chair, helping with continuity from previous years. The same Quabbin staff continued to serve as one of the site supervisors for the Envirothon and ordered the tables/tents/chairs for the event and was on site in the days leading up to the event to supervise the delivery and setup. The 2026 event at Hopkinton State Park in May was once again a success.
11	Promote outreach to user groups in the Ware River watershed.	Quabbin IS staff doubled the number of interpretive programs in the Ware River watershed towns working both with local historical societies and libraries as well as offering public walks. Staff also worked with local elementary schools to offer programs on watershed protection and wildlife. Staff have begun planning with the Ware River watershed Rangers to expand and redo the informational and interpretive signage in the area.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
12	Utilize the DWSP website to provide information and resources for the public.	Maintained website with up-to-date information about events, public access, forestry, emergencies, and other watershed management activities. Reviewed all posted material to meet federal accessibility standards.

J. Water Quality and Hydrologic Monitoring

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Conduct routine and non-routine water quality sampling and analysis.	All Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River watershed sampling runs were collected successfully in FY26, though a few tributary samples were skipped during the winter due to access issues on non-DCR roads. Reservoir samples were completed as well, though sampling began later in 2026 than usual due to the extended ice cover this winter. 2025 data were analyzed and reported in the 2025 Quabbin and Ware annual water quality report.
2	Perform Shaft 8 Intake Zone Sanitary Survey prior to transfers.	One inspection was completed this FY, prior to diversion to Quabbin in early March. MWRA successfully transferred water for a period of 17 days.
3	Monitor plankton in Quabbin Reservoir. Evaluate need for sampling before/during Quabbin Transfers.	During the first quarter, monitoring frequency at site 202 was increased due to a <i>Chrysosphaerella</i> aggregation. Monitoring frequency did not increase during the second, third, or fourth quarter.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
4	Collect, interpret, and manage data on reservoir elevations, water transfers and releases. Share data with DWSP staff and MWRA.	The Quabbin Reservoir elevation on July 1, 2025, at the start of fiscal year 2026, was 526.19 ft and the quantity in storage was at 383,025 MG (92.9%). On June 30, 2026, the end of the fiscal year, the elevation was 520.26 ft and the quantity in storage was 338,624 MG (82.1%), for a decrease of 5.93 feet or 44,401 million gallons. The reservoir has been experiencing Below Normal storage conditions since February 2026. The highest reservoir elevation during this past fiscal year was observed on July 1, 2025 with an elevation of 526.19 ft and storage of 383,025 MG (92.9%), or 3.81 feet below the 100% Capacity elevation of 530.00 ft. The reservoir did not spill in FY26. The lowest elevation observed during the fiscal year was 519.40 ft with a storage of 332,320 MG (80.6%) on December 17, 2025. A total of 60,149 MG of Quabbin Reservoir water was transferred to Wachusett Reservoir during fiscal year 2026. An additional 2,686 MG of water was supplied to the Chicopee Valley Aqueduct. The Ware River was diverted to Quabbin Reservoir for 17 days, totaling 3,597 MG of diverted water. The Winsor Power Station Release to the Swift River was approximately 12,750 MG.
5	Continue improvements to databases for compiling of water quality, quantity, and other relevant data for data and trend analyses.	Scripts for working with data in the database were updated and refined as needed throughout FY26. Assistance was provided to Quabbin/Ware staff to access data in the database. Additionally, quarterly meetings were held with Quabbin/Ware and Wachusett EQ staff to review ongoing database improvements and solve minor issues that have arisen.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
6	Implement streamflow monitoring at selected sites. Coordinate flow monitoring with annual water quality sampling plan.	Streamflow monitoring continued at selected sites throughout FY26 in coordination with the annual water quality sampling plan. Eighteen field visits captured low to moderate streamflow conditions in the Quabbin watershed, conducted independently and with intern support, alongside ongoing HOBO water level logger downloads and gage maintenance. Rating curve scripts were updated and analytical tools developed to estimate discharge at DWSP monitoring stages. Correlative analyses against USGS discharge data from the East Branch and West Branch Swift Rivers identified gaps in moderate- and high-flow datasets, prompting development of flow proxies at USGS gages to predict optimal field sampling windows. Discussions with USGS and DFW explored safe methods for capturing high flow measurements
7	Assist MWRA with the continuous water quality monitoring buoy at Quabbin Reservoir	EQ staff assisted MWRA with buoy deployment, maintenance, and removal.
8	Implement ISA with UMass for Research	EQ worked with DWSP management to identify future ISA research interests, leading to the development and submission of a final FY27-28 project proposal focused on Quabbin Reservoir Algal Dynamics. Senior EQ staff coordinated across the Quabbin/Ware and Wachusett/Sudbury regions and integrated MWRA input to finalize the project scope, budget, and formal agreement. Throughout this process, staff supported Dr. Kumpel's total coliform analysis during their data analysis and writing phases.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
9	Coordinate with MWRA on Res Ops work groups as needed.	The Environmental Quality section completed the annual Ware River sanitary inspection and revised the Quabbin Algae Response Plan with the MWRA, while facilitating GIS mapping, trend data, and automated monitoring data-sharing workflows. Staff contributed updates to Res Ops and the Turbidity Working Group on aquatic biology, watershed monitoring, and UMass wind/wave dynamic research at the Winsor Dam Intake area. Annual work this cycle included data deliverables on turbidity dynamics alongside follow-up coordination for Winsor Dam sediment sampling, anchor deployment depth measurements, and South Basin shoreline plant growth investigations.
10	Engage researchers to investigate climate change questions related to algae blooms and invasive species in the Quabbin Reservoir.	EQ staff collaborated with other DWSP staff and hired contractors on the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment project. EQ staff continued water quality trend analysis to assess changes in climatic and environmental conditions. Aquatic Biology staff collaborated with DEP staff on the expansion of swollen bladderwort in MA.
11	Work on future climate change/algae blooms/invasive species work in Quabbin Reservoir with UMass ISA	UMass collaborators and EQ staff worked closely together to evaluate environmental conditions and climate driver while summarizing and documenting results in a manuscript for the total coliform investigation work. This findings will be used to inform the next ISA cycle, where the FY27-28 project scope will focus on Quabbin Reservoir algal dynamics. Sample collection began for fine-scale analysis of these algal dynamics in the reservoir, with coverage extending across CY26.
12	Finalize and implement a Cryptosporidium and Giardia Action Plan with MWRA to establish guidelines for inter-agency notifications and coordination.	Following DWSP and Environmental Quality management completing their updates to the draft response plan, the MWRA spent the remainder of the year reviewing and finalizing the updated document. Awaiting final document from MWRA.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
13	Manage contract with Whitewater for Public Water Supply system management and oversight of DCR water supply systems.	Monthly monitoring and testing ongoing.

K. Watershed Monitoring and Assessment

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Complete Environmental Quality Assessments in the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River watersheds according to a prescribed schedule. Present EQAs to RD and DRD.	There was no EQA this year for Ware River watershed. Completed field work and drafted the East Branch Swift District EQA report in the Quabbin Reservoir watershed, which will be finalized in FY27.
2	Monitor status of agricultural operations, above ground storage tanks, hazardous waste generators, spills, and hazardous materials use through field inspections and records reviews.	Ware River: Spill in Hubbardston was monitored; met consultants on site to discuss extent of contamination and scope of work. Remediation work was completed in Q3. DEP Reportable Releases website continues to be monitored weekly for new spills. A hazardous waste generators list has been created for the Coldbrook and Longmeadow District. Agricultural site documentation is completed for half of the district. Quabbin Reservoir: Weekly monitoring of DEP Reportable Release database ongoing. No new releases identified in FY26. Continued tracking Atherton/Shutesbury Fire Dept. PFAS release site, drafted and managed RFP and worked with EKI consultants during execution of migration and mitigation assessment. Developed follow up strategy for implementing strategies recommended in EKI's report.
3	Prioritize recommendations in completed EQAs as necessary and complete short- and long-term remedial actions.	EQ has developed a template to track progress on EQA recommendations as well as routine meetings to coordinate on progressing priorities for this program. Major tasks will be scoped for inclusion in EPRS documentation as work progresses.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
4	Conduct routine inspections of the Winsor basin/CVA intake area. Inspect MWRA CVA screen washing when necessary. Report debris and aquatic organisms trapped on screens.	Staff conducted Quabbin Reservoir Winsor Dam Intake Area and CVA intake screen surveys via Survey123, contacting appropriate parties as warranted. The survey design was updated in Q3, and database logging continued through Q4.
5	Review and comment on Yearly Operational Plans related to herbicide use. Monitor and inspect no-spray and limited spray zones along rights-of-way.	Environmental Monitor notifications were reviewed, as publications were released, for any work being done in watershed towns. The 2026 National Grid YOP was reviewed. The Providence and Worcester Railroad YOP was also reviewed, with an inspection of the railroad completed, and work summarized.
6	Work with timber harvesters to reduce the risk of introducing invasive species into the watersheds.	All contractor equipment was inspected as needed.
7	Monitor large ROW projects on DCR lands for water quality problems.	EQ maintained year-round coordination with right-of-way managers, approving multiple short-term access permits and providing Best Management Practice guidance for National Grid contractors. Field oversight included virtual and multi-location site reviews for the active E5/F6 powerline upgrade project. FY26 concluded with increased ROW monitoring by EQ during seasonal maintenance.

L. Aquatic Invasive Species

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Implement the Divisional AIS management plan and update as necessary.	The AIS management and response planned was consulted to inform holding ponds closure decision.
2	Continue program to monitor AIS in the Reservoir.	Macrophyte surveys and invasive zooplankton scans were completed for CY25 and are ongoing for CY26. There were no new observations of invasive species in FY26.
3	Inspect equipment and gear to be used in or on Quabbin Reservoir. Notify other agencies and/or consultants of decontamination requirements.	Staff completed routine inspections of contractor boats, partner agency boats, and state police dive gear as needed across all four quarters.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
4	Monitor condition of fragment barriers at the Quabbin Reservoir regulating ponds and Shaft 8, replacing or adjusting as needed.	Staff conducted inspections of the three fragment barriers across all four quarters to evaluate maintenance, structural integrity, and AIS concerns.
5	Work in conjunction with MWRA contractors to survey areas of the Reservoir for AIS. Evaluate and make changes in program as needed.	The Annual Macrophyte Survey for CY25 was completed by TRC, and no new AIS were identified. The draft report was reviewed, and the final report received. DRG conducted milfoil removal near Shaft 8, removing a total of 1,825 gallons of material. The CY26 Annual Macrophyte Survey was awarded to TRC, and work related to this project will begin in FY27. The swollen bladderwort project began, and included point intercept surveys of the holding ponds and adjacent reservoir areas at BLA2 and BLA3. Work on this project will conclude in FY27.
6	Control populations of AIS, when possible and necessary, in Quabbin Reservoir and surrounding water bodies.	EQ staff spent four days removing water chestnut from Brigham Pond during the first quarter. Water chestnut removal efforts will continue in FY27. EQ staff collaborated with MWRA's contractor to survey and remove swollen bladderwort from the reservoir and holding ponds in the third and fourth quarter.
7	Oversee Quabbin Boat Seal Program	The Quabbin Boat Seal Program conducted four warm-weather public decontamination events in Q1 and ten events in Q4, sealing 83 boats across both quarters. During the winter, the Cold-Weather Quarantine (CWQ) program ran across five dates in Q2, processing 70 boats with data recorded via Survey123. FY26 issued 727 season passes and 104 boater ID cards. The Emergency Contact Database is consistently updated throughout the year.

M. Wastewater Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Identify potential problem sites or areas through review of local records, water quality data, and other pertinent information.	Routine biweekly water quality sampling across the Quabbin and Ware River tributaries identified elevated results in Roaring Brook, prompting an upstream investigation that confirmed beaver activity and altered hydrology rather than a wastewater issue. The section also completed follow-up sampling downstream of Cushing Pond to assess elevated nutrient dynamics, while general water quality results remained largely within historical normal ranges. To enhance data management and quality assurance, staff implemented field duplicate samples for Quality Assurance/Quality Control and adopted a new quarterly data review tracking system.

N. Stormwater Management

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Advise local boards on stormwater management issues related to construction activities within WsPA jurisdiction.	No activity this FY.
2	Monitor stormwater management in the watersheds, particularly at large construction sites.	Monitored construction sites in the Ware River watershed. No large construction sites in the Quabbin Watershed this year.
3	Monitor state and local road reconstruction projects that fall outside of WsPA jurisdiction for water quality concerns	No activity in Quabbin Reservoir Watershed. In Ware River watershed, most road projects were mutually monitored with Environmental Planning for WsPA compliance.
4	Integrate, maintain, and monitor structural storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs) needed and/or constructed on DWSP property.	DCR met with MA DOT officials and representatives from Harvard Forest to advocate for storm water improvements for future stream crossing/road improvement projects being planned for Route 122 in Petersham.
5	Monitor the EPA NPDES database to determine number of non-WsPA related CGPs being issued within the watersheds, and locations.	Construction General Permits for watershed towns in Quabbin and Ware River were reviewed and documented throughout the year.

O. Emergency Response

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Develop and/or update Emergency Spill Response materials for the Quabbin and Ware River watersheds, with up-to-date contact information, emergency procedures, and roles/responsibilities.	Utilized 2023 Response Plan and Notification Procedure Document.
2	Implement SOPs for spill response and dumping and define DCR staff roles in both assessment and response.	Staff continued using Spill and Dumping Dashboard for all watersheds.
3	In conjunction with MWRA, coordinate spill response and/or incident command system (ICS) training to staff.	Rangers participated in a comprehensive training program that included Health and Safety Planning, Basic Boom Deployment, Terrestrial Spill Response, River/Small Waterbody Spill Response, Night Emergency Response Operations, Fishing Area-Specific Spill/Boom/Boat Operations, and Safety Guidelines for Handling Dead Birds or Animals on DCR Property. Additional training included Wildland Firefighting, First Responder certification, and Massachusetts Boating Safety Certification.
4	Coordinate cleanup operations for any spills and dumping that impact or threaten water resources. Work with the appropriate local, state and federal agencies to ensure that spill containment, cleanup, and mitigation is conducted in a manner that protects water quality.	Single-engine plane crash incident in O'Laughlin Pond was responded to by DWSP Managers. Response operations for potential spill and dumping were jointly coordinated by DWSP, MWRA, MSP, and DEP. There was no measurable impact on water quality. FY27 Emergency Spill Response Training will include follow-up trainings needed following the plane crash incident in FY26 for DWSP staff, managers, and local emergency response teams.
5	Develop and implement spill response plans for all timber harvesting operations on DWSP lands.	Spill plans were drafted for all forestry lots.
6	Establish a boom shed on Prescott peninsula.	Final establishment of the Prescott/East Branch Swift River Spill Response Station is planned for FY27. Equipment and supplies have been refreshed in FY26 and will be inventoried in FY27.

P. GIS

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Configure and maintain both internal and externally facing ArcGIS Online tools and applications. Work with staff to generate new field data collection tools using Survey123, Field Maps or QuickCapture. Maintain existing field data collection tools for staff; maintenance includes archiving of data (as needed) and ensuring that all tools remain functional through upgrades to ArcGIS Online and mobile apps. Encourage collaboration between sections and regions, where possible, when there is overlap of effort and need.	Accessibility was the primary focus of GIS staff throughout FY26. Updates to existing workflows, maps and applications were made as-needed throughout the year. New workflows, maps and applications were developed with staff as they were needed.
2	Manage and publish hosted feature layers, tile layers and tile packages on an as-needed basis to support projects; ensure all data is current and available to staff through the DWSP - Data Store group, and has updated FGDC-compliant metadata. Published data should be recorded within the DWSP Data Inventory (Excel doc. shared via the DWSP-GIS Team). Ensure that all public-facing data has proper metadata added as per the DWSP Metadata SOP and EEA ArcGIS Online Best Practices.	Vast improvements were made to shared feature layers in ArcGIS Online. All Creators have increased their compliance with ArcGIS Online Best Practices, ensuring that all feature layers have base-level metadata. This ensures content is properly documented, in addition to accessible. Support has continued for contracted projects throughout the year. GIS was able to successfully provide quick turnaround on data reviews and making preliminary data deliveries available for Subject Matter Experts to review within a timely manner.
3	Provide staff with training in ArcGIS Pro either through written workflows, DWSP-led training or access to Esri's training catalog. Train staff in the use of field data collection applications as needed for specific projects. Alert GIS users to free training or webinars, and encourage continued learning.	Many DWPS staff received training in how to make GIS content accessible.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
4	Assist staff with their GIS needs for reports, projects and analysis as needed; this could include, but is not limited to, maps (hardcopy and web), data analysis, statistics, data exports and data collection. Assist municipalities and other partners by providing maps (hardcopy or web), data analysis and data exports.	GIS staff continue to support other staff and sections in their needs and requests.
5	Provide support for Quabbin Park Cemetery management by maintaining the associated GIS layers for Deed Lots, Grave Lots, Interments, grave markers, metes and bounds, and irrigation system. Moreover, maintain the Cemetery Experience Builder website and develop additional data requested by Civil Engineering.	Cemetery content has been updated for accessibility requirements and to reflect changes in procedure and staffing. Data has been updated and maintained.
6	Complete GIS-related special projects as needed.	CCVA was supported by GIS staff throughout the year. An internal CCVA tool will be available for staff early in FY27.
7	Keep current in new and emerging GIS technologies by attending webinars, taking self-paced trainings and attending conferences (where possible).	No report.
8	Maintain iPad inventory; ensure all devices are loaded into EEA-IT mobile device management system. Ensure iPads are replaced on a rolling 5-year basis from FY of purchase.	New GPS units were purchased for staff and distributed.
9	Assist staff in setting up iPads to work with mobile apps (Field Maps, Survey123 and QuickCapture) and to work with Bluetooth GPS units (Bad Elf Pro+ and Arrow 100 GNSS). Provide troubleshooting and assistance as-needed.	No report.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
10	Ensure compliance of all GIS-based web tools (web maps, apps, etc.) with Americans with Disabilities Act Title II by April 2026. Provide all staff with best practices (documents, training) and dedicated office hours to assist staff in bringing all tools (internal and public) up to compliance as soon as practically possible.	GIS staff were able to get all DWSP public-facing content updated before the original compliance data for the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II, while continuing to support other GIS work within DWSP. DWSP is well on the way to having all shared (internal) content in compliance ahead of the new compliance date of April 26, 2027. DWSP is a leader at EEA in this regard.

Q. Support

Task Number	Task Description	Update
1	Operate administrative office	Admin office is staffed appropriately, supplies ordered quarterly. Community stock monitored regularly. Printer and copier regularly checked to ensure that paper and ink stores are sufficient. Visitors are greeted and directed as needed.
2	Manage payroll through SSTA and HR/CMS.	Payroll maintained throughout FY26.
3	Provide contract administration and related procurement	Working in conjunction with other sections, completed the following major procurements: tree removal services; installation of barriers; hazardous materials cleanup; surveying services; forest data analysis; Quabbin Administration Building burner replacement; and the purchase of EV lawn and grounds equipment, hybrid slope mower, and a wheel loader. Procured and awarded replacement contracts for Ranger uniform cleaning and tailoring, purchase of piping and stabilization materials, and extended contract for the purchase of rental boats.
4	Conduct purchasing, maintain inventory, and keep records of supplies	Total requisitions/purchases for FY26 totaled \$232,131.
5	Process revenue for BLAs, Cemetery, and Forestry	FY26 total revenue deposited was \$179,291; of that \$5,172 was received for interment services. DWSP received \$33,500 in forestry performance bonds, of which \$29,500 was released due to successful timber harvesting.
6	Coordinate with EOEEA IT to provide local MIS support for the Quabbin/Ware Region.	Ongoing communication with IT related to phone/computer systems, network, cell phones, etc.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
7	Provide personnel services and assistance for all Quabbin/Ware Region employees.	Assistance provided.
8	Submit regular reports to Division Director, MWRA, and the Water Supply Protection Trust Board.	All reports submitted on time.
9	Plan and implement vehicle and equipment purchases in coordination with WA.	DWSP participated in both Fleet Modernization and Fleet Electrification Programs in FY26. DWSP completed training on RTA360. Quabbin Vehicle and Heavy Equipment Workbook was refined in FY26 by Working Group.
10	Manage and maintain mechanical equipment (boats, vehicles, heavy equipment, small engines).	Ongoing as needed.
11	Administer the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program	PILOT program successfully administered distribution of \$9.3 million, an increase of 9.4% from FY25. Quabbin Reservoir communities received \$3 million, or 32% of total PILOT. The Annexed Lands payments to Belchertown, Hardwick, New Salem, Pelham, Petersham, and Ware were \$662,000, or 22% of total Quabbin watershed payments. While there was an increase of \$74,000 in the Quabbin watershed PILOT, there was still \$550,000 in hold harmless amount for the six towns that did not have an increase in PILOT. Ware River watershed communities received \$1.2 million. There was an increase of \$140,000 dollars in the watershed, and \$9,000 in hold harmless amount for the one town that did not have an increase in PILOT. Staff worked with Department of Revenue to update the Watershed PILOT information on the DOR Gateway website; data now current from FY21 to FY26. Staff provided expertise to Governor's Commission on PILOT for State-Owned Land, including a presentation on Watershed PILOT to Commission on 6/16/2026.

Task Number	Task Description	Update
12	Encourage staff to participate in professional development opportunities, including professional memberships, meetings, trainings, webinars, and field trips.	Staff attended a variety of trainings and professional development, but it is still challenging to attend events out of state.
13	Budget development, maintenance, monitoring, and forecasting (e.g., Operating, Capital when available, Major Projects, other)	A regional operations line-item budget by workgroup was developed for FY2026. Monthly budget versus actual reports were compiled and sent to each work group/section to monitor their spending. The Major Projects Working Group met monthly to monitor project status and funding. The RD, DRD, and accountant met in quarterly to monitor the operations budget and adjust as needed.

Summary of Wachusett Watershed Ranger Interactions

Fiscal Year 2026

Summary

Visitor Contacts: 14,963

Total Witnessed Violations: 828

Total Unwitnessed Violations: 22

Parking Tickets: 16

Law Enforcement Referrals: 17

Regulations

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
1a	No Taking/Diverting Water.	0	0
1b1	No construction, filling, dredging, altering land without provisions to prevent erosion.	1	3
1b2	No construction, establishing, maintaining agricultural facilities or animal manure without adequate provision to prevent manure/other pollutants from entering Waters of Watershed System.	0	0
1b3	No engaging in any other activity that could degrade water quality.	1	0
1c	No person's property condition should result in discharge of any Pollutants into waters of Watershed system.	0	0
1d	Records of board of health or health agent concerning Watershed open to inspection by DCR/DEP.	0	0
1e	Person's causing incident/situation threatening pollutants to watershed shall notify DCR/DEP.	0	0
2a1	Entrance/Exit only through gates or designated areas.	0	0
2a2	Allowed on Watershed land one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.	93	0
2a3	No powered boats except in designated areas.	0	0
2a4	No acts which may pollute the water system. No litter thrown or left. Must use sanitary facilities.	0	3
2a5	All acts injuring the property are prohibited. No person shall injure, deface, destroy remove or carry off any property, including historic artifacts and natural materials. No removal of gravel, topsoil, stones, boulders or other material. No building or constructing any object or structure on property. Collection of berries and mushrooms is allowed for personal use only.	1	0
2a6	No cooking or fires.	9	6
2a7	No wading or swimming in reservoir except wading while using boots to launch boats in designated areas.	170	2
2a8	No wading or swimming in Tributary or Surface Waters, except in designated areas.	27	2
2a9	No organized sport activities except by written permission.	0	0

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2a10	DCR, DWSP, and its employees are not responsible for damage to or loss of property sustained by fishermen, or for any loss of life which may be incurred in connection with public use of the reservoirs and watershed system.	0	0
2a11	No breach of peace, profanity or other disorderly conduct offensive to general public. No possession or drinking alcoholic beverages.	12	0
2a12	No Motorized Vehicles. No recreational vehicles, except snowmobiles in designated areas. Motor vehicle parking in designated areas only. Operators of motor vehicles shall obey all regulatory signage unless otherwise directed. No willfully obstructing the free passage of vehicles or persons within the system.	27	1
2a13	No animals, except for horses and dogs at Ware River designated areas.	143	2
2a14	Bicycles, skis and other non-motorized transportation permitted in designated areas only.	72	0
2a15	No person shall bring land or cause to descend any aircraft within the Watershed except in an emergency.	1	0
2a16	No parades, games, fairs, bazaars, carnivals, fishing derbies, gifts or solicitation for raising funds without written approval.	0	0
2a17	No lotteries, raffles, gambling or games of chance. No possession of machinery for the former.	0	0
2a18	No groups of more than 25 people without written permit.	1	0
2a19	No engaging in business, sale or display of goods or wares without written permit.	0	0
2a20	No commercial signs or advertising.	0	0
2a21	No persons (unless authorized by law, license, or permit) shall have possession of or discharge any weapon, firearm, fireworks or other explosive on or within the watershed system except at times and areas designated. All forms of target shooting are prohibited.	0	0
2a22	No hunting, shooting, or trapping animals except at designated times and areas.	1	1
2a23	All persons within the watershed system shall obey the lawful directions of regulatory signs, police officers, DCR Rangers, or persons in charge, or of Federal or Commonwealth wardens or enforcement officers.	17	1
2a24	Any part of the watershed lands may be closed for the public access at any time by the commissioner.	83	1
2a25	The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all of the Watershed System property.	2	0

Special Regulations for Wachusett

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2d1	Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from shore of Wachusett Reservoir in areas designated by the commission or its designee.	128	0
2d2	Boating is prohibited in Wachusett Reservoir.	3	0
2d3	Fishing from the shoreline of the Reservoir shall be allowed only during a season designated by the Commission or its designee.	31	0
2d4	Any violation of 313 CMR 11.09 will be deemed sufficient cause for revocation of fishing privileges for not less than one year	0	0

Special Regulations for Sudbury

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2e1	Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from shore of Sudbury Reservoir in areas designated by the commission or its designee.	4	0
2e2	Boating is prohibited on Sudbury Reservoir and Foss Reservoir.	1	0

Total Violations

Type	Total
Witnessed	828
Unwitnessed	22

Law Enforcement Referrals

Date	Agency	Incident
7/15/25	Marlborough Police	Fireworks being set off on Broadmeadow Point.
8/31/25	State Police Holden	Trespassing behind Shaft 1
9/30/25	State Police Holden	Trespassing behind Shaft 1
10/05/25	MSP Holden	Trespassing
10/23/25	MSP Framingham	Boating
11/30/25	MSP Holden	Trespassing
4/11/26	Boylston PD/FD	Fire
4/22/26	MSP	Trespass on RR
4/30/26	West Boylston PD	Abandoned property
4/30/26	MSP	Trespass on Dam
5/3/26	West Boylston PD	Suspicious package
6/10/26	Clinton PD	Trespassing/Swimming

Date	Agency	Incident
6/14/26	Clinton PD	Missing Person
6/15/26	Clinton PD, MSP	Fatality/Suicide
6/16/26	MSP	MSP Dive Search
6/16/26	MEP	Recreation conflict
6/29/26	Clinton PD, MSP	Missing Person Search and Rescue/Fatality/Suicide

Summary of Quabbin Watershed Ranger Interactions

Fiscal Year 2026

Summary

Visitor Contacts: 16,720

Total Witnessed Violations: 236

Total Unwitnessed Violations: 105

Parking Tickets: 2

Law Enforcement Referrals: 23

Regulations

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
1a	No Taking/Diverting Water.	0	0
1b1	No construction, filling, dredging, altering land without provisions to prevent erosion.	1	8
1b2	No construction, establishing, maintaining agricultural facilities or animal manure without adequate provision to prevent manure/other pollutants from entering Waters of Watershed System.	0	0
1b3	No engaging in any other activity that could degrade water quality.	0	6
1c	No person's property condition should result in discharge of any Pollutants into waters of Watershed system.	0	0
1d	Records of board of health or health agent concerning Watershed open to inspection by DCR/DEP.	0	0
1e	Person's causing incident/situation threatening pollutants to watershed shall notify DCR/DEP.	0	0
2a1	Entrance/Exit only through gates or designated areas.	8	0
2a2	Allowed on Watershed land one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.	9	0
2a3	No powered boats except in designated areas.	0	0
2a4	No acts which may pollute the water system. No litter thrown or left. Must use sanitary facilities.	1	48
2a5	All acts injuring the property are prohibited. No person shall injure, deface, destroy remove or carry off any property, including historic artifacts and natural materials. No removal of gravel, topsoil, stones, boulders or other material. No building or constructing any object or structure on property. Collection of berries and mushrooms is allowed for personal use only.	0	6
2a6	No cooking or fires.	3	4
2a7	No wading or swimming in reservoir except wading while using boots to launch boats in designated areas.	9	0
2a8	No wading or swimming in Tributary or Surface Waters, except in designated areas.	1	0
2a9	No organized sport activities except by written permission.	0	0

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2a10	DCR, DWSP, and its employees are not responsible for damage to or loss of property sustained by fishermen, or for any loss of life which may be incurred in connection with public use of the reservoirs and watershed system.	5	1
2a11	No breach of peace, profanity or other disorderly conduct offensive to general public. No possession or drinking alcoholic beverages.	5	0
2a12	No Motorized Vehicles. No recreational vehicles, except snowmobiles in designated areas. Motor vehicle parking in designated areas only. Operators of motor vehicles shall obey all regulatory signage unless otherwise directed. No willfully obstructing the free passage of vehicles or persons within the system.	24	6
2a13	No animals, except for horses and dogs at Ware River designated areas.	59	4
2a14	Bicycles, skis and other non-motorized transportation permitted in designated areas only.	16	14
2a15	No person shall bring land or cause to descend any aircraft within the Watershed except in an emergency.	5	1
2a16	No parades, games, fairs, bazaars, carnivals, fishing derbies, gifts or solicitation for raising funds without written approval.	0	0
2a17	No lotteries, raffles, gambling or games of chance. No possession of machinery for the former.	0	0
2a18	No groups of more than 25 people without written permit.	0	0
2a19	No engaging in business, sale or display of goods or wares without written permit.	0	0
2a20	No commercial signs or advertising.	0	0
2a21	No persons (unless authorized by law, license, or permit) shall have possession of or discharge any weapon, firearm, fireworks or other explosive on or within the watershed system except at times and areas designated. All forms of target shooting are prohibited.	0	0
2a22	No hunting, shooting, or trapping animals except at designated times and areas.	3	0
2a23	All persons within the watershed system shall obey the lawful directions of regulatory signs, police officers, DCR Rangers, or persons in charge, or of Federal or Commonwealth wardens or enforcement officers.	14	1
2a24	Any part of the watershed lands may be closed for the public access at any time by the commissioner.	63	5
2a25	The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all of the Watershed System property.	0	0

Special Regulations for Quabbin

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2b1	Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from shore in areas designated by the Commission or its designee. A valid state fishing or sporting license is required by any person renting or launching a boat at any commission facility subject to 313 CMR 11.09. Reasonable fees for the use of boats, for rental of outboard motors for fishing purposes, or use of Commission facilities including parking and boat ramps, may be charged by the Commission.	8	1
2b2	Persons permitted to fish from boats shall at all times be responsible for the sanitary conditions of the boat. Persons under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a person possessing a valid fishing license in order to boat on Quabbin Reservoir.	0	0
2b3	Only boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used. No inboard motors, collapsible boats, sailboats, pontoon boats, square stern canoes, or similar craft will be permitted in the water except in areas designated for boating by the Commission or its designee. Outboard motors shall have a rating of not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the BIA or OBC rated horsepower for the boat and shall not exceed 20 horsepower, except that outboard motors for Commission boats less than 14 feet six inches shall not exceed 10 horsepower. Boats less than 14 feet shall be limited to 3 occupants, and boats of that length and in excess thereof may be licensed to carry 4 occupants. No boats shall carry more than 4 occupants. Canoes and Jon boats of a minimum of 12 feet, and a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used only in areas designated for boating by the Commission on Pottapaug Pond above the regulating dam and at Gate 31 above the regulating dam. Canoes less than 16 feet and Jon boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to 2 occupants, and canoes and Jon boats in excess thereof may be licensed to carry 3 occupants. All boats must be in compliance with current Commonwealth Boating Laws. All boats must be clean and contain no refuse of any kind. Commission personnel shall have the right to inspect all private boats launched at Commonwealth facilities and may deny access in order to protect water quality or safety of occupants. Chock blocks must be used on vehicles when removing boats from the reservoir.	1	0
2b4	No person shall operate a motor boat at a speed other than responsible and proper or in such a manner as to annoy or endanger the occupants of other boats.	1	0
2b5	All privately owned boats, motors and other equipment must be removed from the property of the Commission each day.	0	0
2b6	Boats shall not leave the mooring areas before dawn and must at the time posted at each mooring area. The beaching of boats at any point except at the designated mooring and landing areas is strictly prohibited except in cases of extreme emergency.	0	0
2b7	Any violation of 350 CMR 11.09 can result in loss of fishing privileges for not less than one year	0	0

Special Regulations for Ware River

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2c1	Ware River Watershed Fishing in designated areas.	0	0
2c2	Powered boats and powered canoes prohibited in the Ware River Reservation.	0	0
2c3	Powered boat motor restrictions outside the Ware River Reservation.	0	0
2c4	Any violation of 350 CMR 11.09 can result in loss of fishing privileges for not less than one year.	0	0

Total Violations

Type	Total
Witnessed	236
Unwitnessed	105

Law Enforcement Referrals

Date	Agency	Incident
7/11/2025	Marine Unit MSP	Rental boat beached and fishing from shore.
7/13/2025	C7 MSP	ATV operator trespassing on Blue Meadow Rd.
7/17/2025	C7 MSP	Visitors skinny-dipping at Dana Common.
9/6/2025	Marine Unit MSP	Stranded rental boater.
9/7/2025	Belchertown PD	Downed tree blocking Rt 202.
9/9/2025	C7 MSP	Vehicle parked after hours at BLA2.
9/10/2025	C7 MSP	Speeding vehicle in Quabbin Park.
9/14/2025	C7 MSP	Trespasser inside Gate 17.
9/15/2025	C7 MSP	Lost key - owner returning and let in to retrieve vehicle after hours.
9/21/2026	C7 MSP	Speeding and erratic driver in Quabbin Park.
9/26/2025	C7 MSP	Vehicle parked at Spillway Bridge/drone operator .
9/28/2025	Marine Unit MSP	Late and dangerous/erratic boater at BLA1.
12/10/2025	MEP	A hunter reported two hunters shooting a deer on shoreline/in the water during the Petersham Zone Hunt. After investigation it was determined the hunters were not in violation.
4/4/2026	C7 MSP	Unauthorized vehicle driving on dirt road behind the administration building.
5/7/2026	C7 MSP Marine Unit MSP	Person fishing from the Goodnough shoreline.
5/11/2026	Marine Unit MSP	Rental boat assist with tow.

Date	Agency	Incident
5/17/2026	Marine Unit MSP	Rental boat fishing below the barrel lines.
5/20/2026	C7 MSP	Assist with visitors who had managed to drive through construction zone at the Middle gate and become locked inside Quabbin Park.
5/22/2026	Marine Unit MSP	Assist with disabled rental boat (out of gas).
6/4/2026	C7 MSP	Two people fishing at Hank's Meadow shore.
6/24/2026	Marine Unit MSP	Disabled rental boat.
6/24/2026	C7 MSP	Teen in motor vehicle at BLA1 refused to leave when area closed for the evening.
6/27/2026	C7 MSP Marine Unit MSP	Medical at BLA1.

Summary of Ware River Watershed Ranger Interactions

Fiscal Year 2026

Summary

Visitor Contacts: 10,292

Total Witnessed Violations: 721

Total Unwitnessed Violations: 277

Parking Tickets: 1

Law Enforcement Referrals: 21

Regulations

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
1a	No Taking/Diverting Water.	0	0
1b1	No construction, filling, dredging, altering land without provisions to prevent erosion.	0	3
1b2	No construction, establishing, maintaining agricultural facilities or animal manure without adequate provision to prevent manure/other pollutants from entering Waters of Watershed System.	0	0
1b3	No engaging in any other activity that could degrade water quality.	0	3
1c	No person's property condition should result in discharge of any Pollutants into waters of Watershed system.	0	0
1d	Records of board of health or health agent concerning Watershed open to inspection by DCR/DEP.	0	0
1e	Person's causing incident/situation threatening pollutants to watershed shall notify DCR/DEP.	0	0
2a1	Entrance/Exit only through gates or designated areas.	7	4
2a2	Allowed on Watershed land one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.	54	25
2a3	No powered boats except in designated areas.	0	0
2a4	No acts which may pollute the water system. No litter thrown or left. Must use sanitary facilities.	0	64
2a5	All acts injuring the property are prohibited. No person shall injure, deface, destroy remove or carry off any property, including historic artifacts and natural materials. No removal of gravel, topsoil, stones, boulders or other material. No building or constructing any object or structure on property. Collection of berries and mushrooms is allowed for personal use only.	8	50
2a6	No cooking or fires.	18	10
2a7	No wading or swimming in reservoir except wading while using boots to launch boats in designated areas.	0	0
2a8	No wading or swimming in Tributary or Surface Waters, except in designated areas.	89	2
2a9	No organized sport activities except by written permission.	0	0

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2a10	DCR, DWSP, and its employees are not responsible for damage to or loss of property sustained by fishermen, or for any loss of life which may be incurred in connection with public use of the reservoirs and watershed system.	0	0
2a11	No breach of peace, profanity or other disorderly conduct offensive to general public. No possession or drinking alcoholic beverages.	24	21
2a12	No Motorized Vehicles. No recreational vehicles, except snowmobiles in designated areas. Motor vehicle parking in designated areas only. Operators of motor vehicles shall obey all regulatory signage unless otherwise directed. No willfully obstructing the free passage of vehicles or persons within the system.	149	76
2a13	No animals, except for horses and dogs at Ware River designated areas.	106	0
2a14	Bicycles, skis and other non-motorized transportation permitted in designated areas only.	0	0
2a15	No person shall bring land or cause to descend any aircraft within the Watershed except in an emergency.	4	0
2a16	No parades, games, fairs, bazaars, carnivals, fishing derbies, gifts or solicitation for raising funds without written approval.	9	0
2a17	No lotteries, raffles, gambling or games of chance. No possession of machinery for the former.	0	0
2a18	No groups of more than 25 people without written permit.	0	0
2a19	No engaging in business, sale or display of goods or wares without written permit.	0	0
2a20	No commercial signs or advertising.	0	8
2a21	No persons (unless authorized by law, license, or permit) shall have possession of or discharge any weapon, firearm, fireworks or other explosive on or within the watershed system except at times and areas designated. All forms of target shooting are prohibited.	2	3
2a22	No hunting, shooting, or trapping animals except at designated times and areas.	0	5
2a23	All persons within the watershed system shall obey the lawful directions of regulatory signs, police officers, DCR Rangers, or persons in charge, or of Federal or Commonwealth wardens or enforcement officers.	130	2
2a24	Any part of the watershed lands may be closed for the public access at any time by the commissioner.	17	1
2a25	The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all of the Watershed System property.	2	0

Special Regulations for Quabbin

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2b1	Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from shore in areas designated by the Commission or its designee. A valid state fishing or sporting license is required by any person renting or launching a boat at any commission facility subject to 313 CMR 11.09. Reasonable fees for the use of boats, for rental of outboard motors for fishing purposes, or use of Commission facilities including parking and boat ramps, may be charged by the Commission.	16	0
2b2	Persons permitted to fish from boats shall at all times be responsible for the sanitary conditions of the boat. Persons under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a person possessing a valid fishing license in order to boat on Quabbin Reservoir.	2	0
2b3	Only boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used. No inboard motors, collapsible boats, sailboats, pontoon boats, square stern canoes, or similar craft will be permitted in the water except in areas designated for boating by the Commission or its designee. Outboard motors shall have a rating of not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the BIA or OBC rated horsepower for the boat and shall not exceed 20 horsepower, except that outboard motors for Commission boats less than 14 feet six inches shall not exceed 10 horsepower. Boats less than 14 feet shall be limited to 3 occupants, and boats of that length and in excess thereof may be licensed to carry 4 occupants. No boats shall carry more than 4 occupants. Canoes and Jon boats of a minimum of 12 feet, and a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used only in areas designated for boating by the Commission on Pottapaug Pond above the regulating dam and at Gate 31 above the regulating dam. Canoes less than 16 feet and Jon boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to 2 occupants, and canoes and Jon boats in excess thereof may be licensed to carry 3 occupants. All boats must be in compliance with current Commonwealth Boating Laws. All boats must be clean and contain no refuse of any kind. Commission personnel shall have the right to inspect all private boats launched at Commonwealth facilities and may deny access in order to protect water quality or safety of occupants. Chock blocks must be used on vehicles when removing boats from the reservoir.	1	0
2b4	No person shall operate a motor boat at a speed other than responsible and proper or in such a manner as to annoy or endanger the occupants of other boats.	0	0
2b5	All privately owned boats, motors and other equipment must be removed from the property of the Commission each day.	0	0
2b6	Boats shall not leave the mooring areas before dawn and must at the time posted at each mooring area. The beaching of boats at any point except at the designated mooring and landing areas is strictly prohibited except in cases of extreme emergency.	0	0
2b7	Any violation of 350 CMR 11.09 can result in loss of fishing privileges for not less than one year	0	0

Special Regulations for Ware River

313 CMR 11.09	Condensed CMRs	Number of Witnessed Violations	Number of Unwitnessed Violations
2c1	Ware River Watershed Fishing in designated areas.	60	0
2c2	Powered boats and powered canoes prohibited in the Ware River Reservation.	0	0
2c3	Powered boat motor restrictions outside the Ware River Reservation.	23	0
2c4	Any violation of 350 CMR 11.09 can result in loss of fishing privileges for not less than one year.	0	0

Total Violations

Type	Total
Witnessed	721
Unwitnessed	277

Law Enforcement Referrals

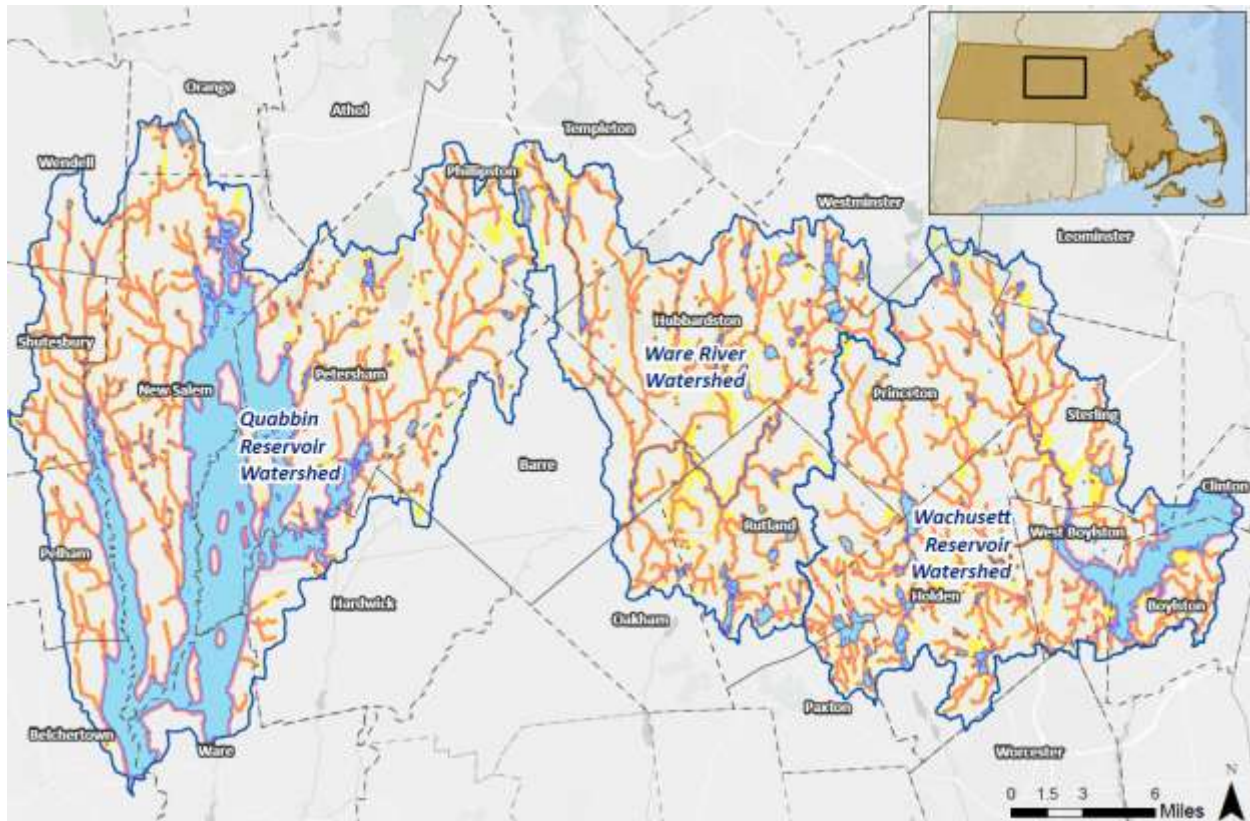
Date	Agency	Incident
07-19-25	Barre PD	Suspicious vehicle after hours
08-23-25	Rutland Regional	Suspicious vehicle
09-02-25	MEP	Jet skis on Long Pond
09-04-25	Rutland PD	Vehicle drove into gate IV-1
10-24-25	MEP	Rangers received a call from an individual regarding a wooden sign located on Brigham Rd, which featured an arrow and the word "Help." They responded to the area, and the reporting party also informed EPO Arthur O'Connell at the Prison Camps. Upon investigation of the area, no disturbances were found. EPO utilized a dog, which did not alert to any issues. It was theorized that a hunter had obtained a deer and required assistance from a friend to retrieve it. The sign was collected, and the location coordinates were recorded.
10-15-25	Rutland PD, MSP	Rangers conducted a foot patrol of the root cellar, removed Patriot Front stickers and graffiti, attempted to cover the graffiti.
11-18-25	Rutland PD	The Central Rail Trail tunnel Patriot Front graffiti.
01-16-26	Hubbardston PD	Logging truck vandalized, Old Westminster Road, Hubbardston
02-13-26	MEP	Vehicle (Hogan) driving on snowmobile trail, WRRT, Barre
03-13-26	MEP	Pig hides dumped on Granger Road, Barre
04-03-26	Rutland PD	Four dirt bikes on Intervale Road
04-03-26	MEP	Four dirt bikes reported on Pine Plains Road in Oakham

Date	Agency	Incident
04-13-26	Rutland PD	Large block of cement dislodged from top of prison cell structure – individual and plate caught on surveillance camera.
04-25-26	MEP	Prison Camp, jeep drove up and over rocks into the field and up the side of the root cellar – vehicle, driver and plate caught on surveillance camera.
05-07-26	Hubbardston PD	Hale Fire Rd, potential encampment site determined to be a very large firewood storage with tarp over top with a recently used fire ring.
05-26-26	Rutland PD	Prison Cells, young woman that was spray painting the cells earlier in the month returned with another young woman and was again spray painting the cells and in the root cellar, also appeared that she left a spray paint can – caught on surveillance camera.
05-27-26	Hubbardston PD	Drone flying over Comet Pond from resident at 20 Morrow Lane.
06-17-26	Rutland PD	Prison Cells vandalism – graffiti – caught on surveillance camera.
06-22-26	Rutland PD	Prison Cells vandalism – graffiti – caught on surveillance camera.
06-30-26	Rutland PD	Homeless encampment off Whitehall Road – currently on Rutland State Park property abutting DWSP.
06-30-26	Rutland PD	Pellet guns shot at the Prison Camp – individuals and plate number caught on surveillance.



Watershed Protection Act Report – Fiscal Year 2026

The Watershed Protection Act (WsPA; 313 CMR 11.04) regulates land use within critical areas of the Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds. For more information, [go to the WsPA website](#).



Areas regulated by the Watershed Protection Act shown in red (Primary Protection Zone – 313 CMR 11.04(3)(a)) and yellow (Secondary Protection Zone – 313 CMR 11.04(3)(b)).

WsPA Applications and Decisions Issued: This table contains any application for which a decision has been issued during FY26 within the Wachusett Reservoir, Quabbin Reservoir, and Ware River watersheds. Details for each watershed are on following pages.

Application Type	Number of Decisions
Advisory Opinions	28
Determinations	31
Variances Decisions	8
Total	67



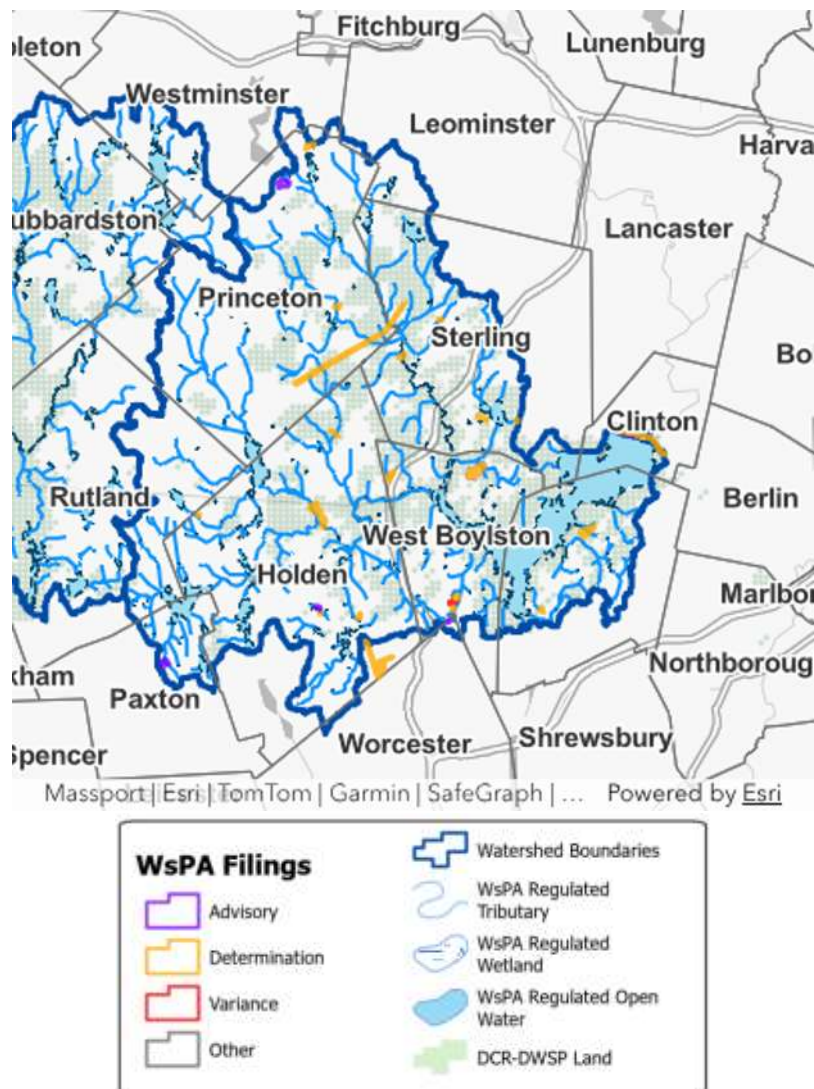
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management

Watershed: **Wachusett**

WsPA Decisions Issued

This table and accompanying map contain any applications for which a decision has been issued during the specified time period at the top of this report.

Application Type	Number of Decisions
Advisory Opinions	7
Determinations	20
Variances Decisions	5
Total	32





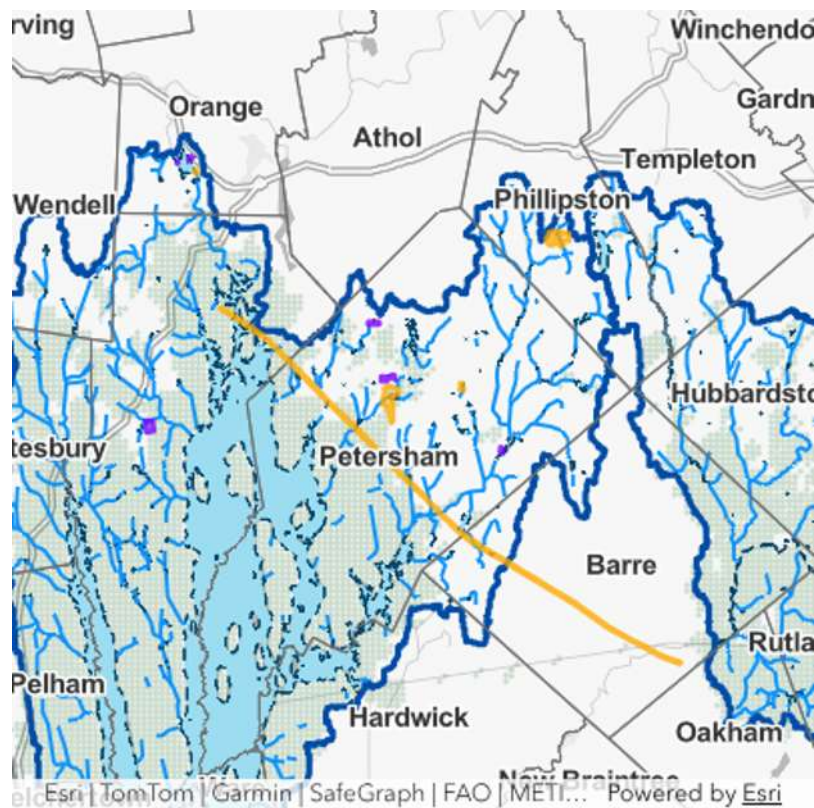
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management

Watershed: **Quabbin**

WsPA Decisions Issued

This table and accompanying map contain any applications for which a decision has been issued during the specified time period at the top of this report.

Application Type	Number of Decisions
Advisory Opinions	10
Determinations	7
Variances Decisions	0
Total	17





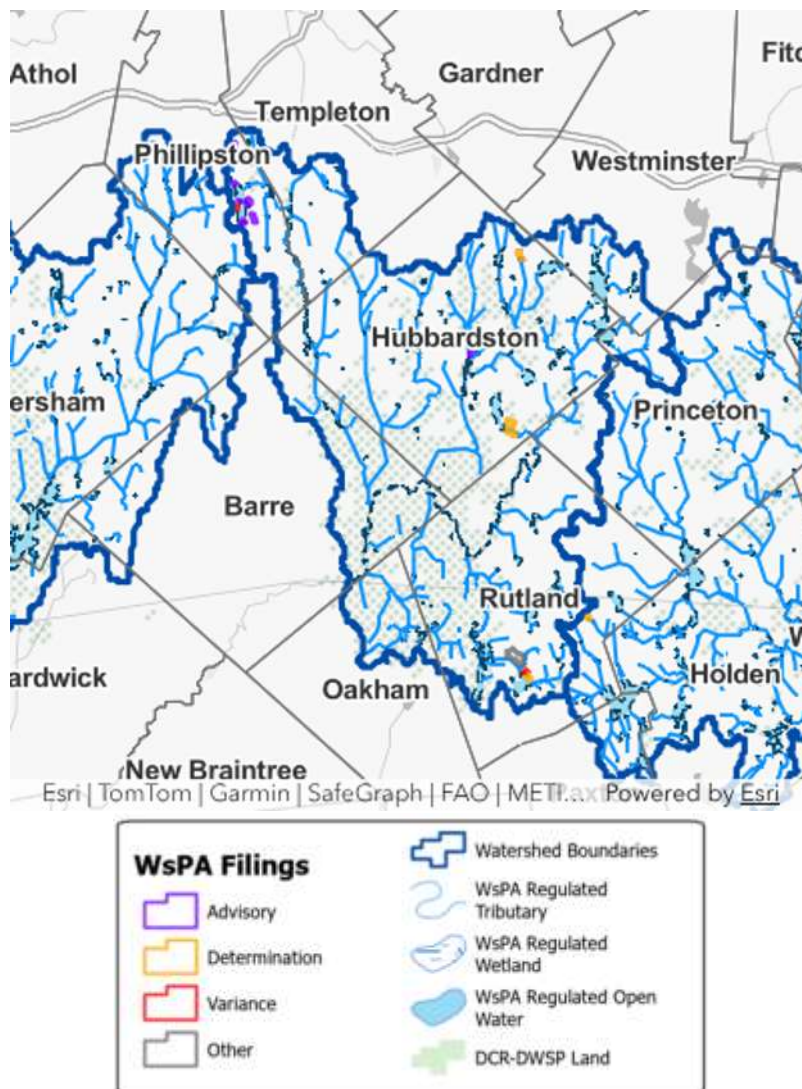
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management

Watershed: Ware River

WsPA Decisions Issued

This table and accompanying map contain any applications for which a decision has been issued during the specified time period at the top of this report.

Application Type	Number of Decisions
Advisory Opinions	11
Determinations	4
Variances Decisions	3
Total	18



FY2026 Final Expenditures

**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Office of Watershed Management
FY26 Expenditures**

Object Class	Object	Object Name	FY26 Total Expenditures	FY26 Budget	Expended versus Budget Difference	Percent Difference
AA	A01	Salaries: Inclusive	\$12,592,400.44	-	-	-
AA	A06	Stand-By-Pay	\$0.00	-	-	-
AA	A07	Shift Differential Pay	\$39,538.56	-	-	-
AA	A08	Overtime Pay	\$272,264.32	-	-	-
AA	A10	Holiday Pay	\$65,308.98	-	-	-
AA	A11	Salaries-Supplemental	\$0.00	-	-	-
AA	A12	Sick-Leave Buy Back	\$20,839.91	-	-	-
AA	A13	Vacation-In-Lieu	\$148,610.33	-	-	-
AA	A14	Stipends, Bonus Pay and Awards	\$0.00	-	-	-
AA	AA1	Salaries: Supplemental	\$38,167.78	-	-	-
AA Total	-	-	\$13,177,130.32	\$14,515,596.00	(\$1,338,465.68)	91%
BB	B01	Other Out Of State Travel	\$2,626.29	-	-	-
BB	B02	In-State Travel	\$1,281.85	-	-	-
BB	B03	Overtime Meals	\$0.00	-	-	-
BB	B05	Conference, Training, Registration and Membership Dues	\$5,712.85	-	-	-
BB	B10	Exigent Job Related Expenses	\$0.00	-	-	-
BB	B11	Employer Refund of Non-Tax Benefits	\$0.00	-	-	-
BB	B91	Employee Reimbursement Accounts Payable	\$285.00	-	-	-
BB Total	-	-	\$9,905.99	\$20,000.00	(\$10,094.01)	50%
CC	C01	Contracted Seasonal Facilities	\$0.00	-	-	-
CC	C04	Contracted Seasonal Employees	\$680.00	-	-	-
CC	C23	Management, Business Professionals & Admin Services	\$0.00	-	-	-
CC Total	-	-	\$680.00	\$20,000.00	(\$19,320.00)	3%
DD	D09	Non-Fringe Benefit Cost Recoupment (payroll tax)	-	-	-	-
DD	D09	Fringe Benefits Costs Recoupment	\$4,801,787.69	-	-	-
DD	D15	Workers' Compensation Chargebacks	\$230,000.00	-	-	-
DD	D21	Health Ins Costs of Employ/Leave in Excess of 1 Yr Chgback	\$0.00	-	-	-
DD Total	-	-	\$5,031,787.69	\$6,705,804.00	(\$1,674,016.31)	75%
EE	E01	Office & Administrative Supplies	\$8,174.49	-	-	-
EE	E02	Printing Expenses & Supplies	\$5,914.29	-	-	-
EE	E04	Central Reprographics Chargeback	\$0.00	-	-	-
EE	E06	Postage	\$1,800.00	-	-	-
EE	E12	Subscriptions, Memberships & Licensing Fees	\$240.00	-	-	-
EE	E13	Advertising Expenses	\$281.05	-	-	-
EE	E14	Exhibits/Displays	\$4,064.17	-	-	-
EE	E15	Water Treatment - Office Water	\$4,039.26	-	-	-
EE	E19	Fees, Fines, Licenses, Permits & Chargebacks	\$33,301.77	-	-	-
EE	E20	Motor Vehicle Chargeback	\$114,285.07	-	-	-
EE	E22	Temp Use Space/Confer-Incidental Includes Reservation Fees	\$0.00	-	-	-
EE	E30	Credit card Purchases	\$399.00	-	-	-
EE	E53	S&J: Non-reportable to claiment, sole payee	\$10,000.00	-	-	-
EE	EE2	Conference, Training and Registration Fees	\$705.00	-	-	-
EE Total	-	-	\$183,204.10	\$160,000.00	\$23,204.10	115%
FF	F01	Food, Beverages & Preservation	\$572.34	-	-	-
FF	F03	Laundry and Cleaning Supplies	\$529.33	-	-	-
FF	F05	Laboratory Supplies	\$3,623.52	-	-	-
FF	F06	Medical & Surgical Supplies	\$3,275.17	-	-	-
FF	F09	Clothing & Footwear	\$52,076.46	-	-	-
FF	F10	Facility Furnshings	\$624.77	-	-	-
FF	F11	Laundry & Cleaning Supplies	\$16,958.86	-	-	-
FF	F13	Live Animals & Related Supplies	\$1,515.13	-	-	-
FF	F16	Library and Teaching Supplies and Materials	\$2,459.17	-	-	-
FF	F18	Recreation, Religious & Social Supplies & Materials	\$23,448.69	-	-	-
FF	F19	Manufacturing Supply & Materials & Raw Materials	\$7,136.84	-	-	-
FF	F21	Navigational & Nautical Supplies	\$18,696.35	-	-	-
FF	F24	Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Parts	\$103,158.00	-	-	-
FF	F27	Law Enforcement & Security Supplies	\$2,338.78	-	-	-
FF Total	-	-	\$236,413.41	\$270,000.00	(\$33,586.59)	88%
GG	G03	Electricity	\$141,542.33	-	-	-
GG	G05	Fuel For Vehicles	\$171,076.37	-	-	-
GG	G06	Fuel For Buildings	\$128,270.62	-	-	-
GG	G08	Sewage Disposal & Water	\$3,614.03	-	-	-
GG	G11	Natural Gas	\$870.21	-	-	-
GG	GG1	Natural Gas Supply	\$0.00	-	-	-
GG Total	-	-	\$445,373.56	\$460,000.00	(\$14,626.44)	97%
HH	H09	Attorneys/Legal Services	\$4,268.96	-	-	-
HH	HH1	Financial Services	\$51,569.50	-	-	-
HH	HH2	Engineering, Research and Scientific Services	\$183,257.36	-	-	-
HH	HH3		\$14,485.00	-	-	-
HH	HH4	Health and Safety Services	\$0.00	-	-	-
HH Total	-	-	\$253,580.82	\$314,000.00	(\$60,419.18)	81%

**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Office of Watershed Management
FY26 Expenditures**

Object Class	Object	Object Name	FY26 Total Expenditures	FY26 Budget	Expended versus Budget Difference	Percent Difference
JJ	JJ2	Auxiliary Services	\$0.00	-	-	-
JJ	J10	Auxiliary Financial Services	\$4,823.17	-	-	-
JJ	J27	Laundry Services	\$10,243.01	-	-	-
JJ	J25	Laboratory & Pharmaceutical Services	\$13,429.80	-	-	-
JJ	J28	Law Enforcement	\$0.00	-	-	-
JJ	J33	Photographic & Micrographic Services	\$0.00	-	-	-
JJ	J41	Sheriffs, Constables, Process Servers	\$32.18	-	-	-
JJ	J44	Surveyors	\$29,647.71	-	-	-
JJ	J50	Instructors/Lecturers/Trainers	\$6,187.10	-	-	-
JJ	JJ1	Legal Support Services	\$16,424.75	-	-	-
JJ Total	-	-	\$80,787.72	\$130,000.00	(\$49,212.28)	62%
KK	K02	Educational Equipment	\$0.00	-	-	-
KK	K03	Programmatic Facility Equipment	\$203,476.47	-	-	-
KK	K04	Motorized Vehicle Equipment	\$1,060,300.58	-	-	-
KK	K05	Office Equipment	\$1,222.12	-	-	-
KK	K06	Printing, Photocopying, and Micrographics Equipment	\$0.00	-	-	-
KK	K07	Office Furnishings	\$2,823.57	-	-	-
KK	K09	Medical Equipment	\$9,237.52	-	-	-
KK	K10	Law Enforcement & Security Equipment	\$4,304.18	-	-	-
KK	K11	Heavy Equipment	\$394,020.00	-	-	-
KK	K12	Television Broadcasting Equipment	\$66.30	-	-	-
KK Total	-	-	\$1,675,450.74	\$1,491,000.00	\$184,450.74	112%
LL	L11	Heavy Equipment Lease-Purchase	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L23	Programmatic Facility Equipment Rental or Lease	\$108,147.48	-	-	-
LL	L24	Motorized Vehicle Equip. Rental or Lease	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L25	Office Equipment Rental or Lease	\$2,466.36	-	-	-
LL	L26	Printing/Photocopy & Micrographics Equip Rent/Lease	\$18,667.61	-	-	-
LL	L31	Heavy Equipment Rental or Lease	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L42	Educational Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L44	Motorized Vehicle Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$66,563.18	-	-	-
LL	L45	Office Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L46	Print, Photocopying & Micrograph Equipment Maint/Repair	\$3,599.94	-	-	-
LL	L50	Law Enforcemt/Security Equipment Maintenance/Repair	\$0.00	-	-	-
LL	L51	Heavy Equipment Maintenance/Repair	\$29,141.78	-	-	-
LL	L63	Programmatic Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$9,346.83	-	-	-
LL Total	-	-	\$237,933.18	\$230,000.00	\$7,933.18	103%
NN	N15	Building/Vertical Structure Construction	\$0.00	-	-	-
NN	N16	Major Const/Renovation Bldg & Land Improvements	\$13,057.63	-	-	-
NN	N17	Major Building Maintenance and Land Improvements	\$0.00	-	-	-
NN	N18	Initial Funishings & Equipment Purchases	\$4,037.60	-	-	-
NN	N19	Land Acquistion and Eminent Domain	\$0.00	-	-	-
NN	N21	Highway Horizontal/Lateral Constssruction	\$605,312.02	-	-	-
NN	N22	Highway Horizontal/Lateral Maintenance & Improvements	\$313,707.14	-	-	-
NN	N23	Highway Maintenance Materials	\$87,535.57	-	-	-
NN	N41	State Park & Recreation Facilities Construction	\$531,864.36	-	-	-
NN	N50	Non-Major Facility Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair	\$95,278.03	-	-	-
NN	N52	Facility Infrastructure Maintenance & Repair Tools & Supplies	\$189,732.57	-	-	-
NN	N60	Lawn & Grounds Equipment Maint & Repair	\$56,059.55	-	-	-
NN	N61	Lawn and Grounds Equipment	\$194,415.49	-	-	-
NN	N63	Rental or Lease of Facility	\$0.00	-	-	-
NN	N64	Garden Expenses, Tools and Supplies	\$25,960.15	-	-	-
NN	N71	Exterminators/Integrated Pest Management	\$8,716.60	-	-	-
NN	N72	Hazardous Waste Removal Services	\$73,404.91	-	-	-
NN	N73	Non-Hazardous Waste Removal Services	\$41,188.23	-	-	-
NN	N74	Snow Removal and Groundskeeping Services	\$38,016.00	-	-	-
NN	N98	Reimbursement for Travel/Other Expense Infras Projects	\$0.00	-	-	-
NN	NN1	Engineering, Research and Scientific Services	\$216,827.61	-	-	-
NN Total	-	-	\$2,495,113.46	\$1,878,500.00	\$616,613.46	133%
PP	P01	Grants to Public Entities	\$30,559.71	-	-	-
PP Total	-	-	\$30,559.71	\$100,000.00	(\$69,440.29)	31%
TT	T04	Payments and Refunds	\$187,260.00	-	-	-
TT Total	-	-	\$187,260.00	\$188,000.00	(\$740.00)	100%
UU	U01	Telecommunications Services Data	\$1,921.92	-	-	-
UU	U02	Telecommunications Services - Voice	\$95,360.10	-	-	-
UU	U03	Software & Information Technology Licenses (IT)	\$0.00	-	-	-
UU	U04	Information Technology (IT) Chargeback	\$48,114.80	-	-	-
UU	U05	Information Technology (IT) Professionals	\$0.00	-	-	-
UU	U06	Information Technology (IT) Cabling	\$0.00	-	-	-
UU	U07	Information Technology (IT) Equipment	\$54,821.29	-	-	-
UU	U09	Information Technology (IT) Equip Rental Or Lease	\$0.00	-	-	-
UU	U10	Information Tech (IT) Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$7,343.82	-	-	-
UU	U11	Information Technology (IT) Contract Services	\$533.40	-	-	-
UU	U12	Cloud based subscription, membership and Licensing fees	\$2,321.20	-	-	-
UU Total	-	-	\$210,416.53	\$240,000.00	(\$29,583.47)	88%
Grand Total	-	-	\$24,255,597.23	\$26,723,900.00	(\$2,468,302.77)	91%

FY2026 Final Revenue

**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management
FY2026 Revenue Summary**

Revenue Budget	Description	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total Collected Revenue Period 1-6
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/0500	Interment Fees	\$150.00	\$295.00	-\$150.00	\$175.00	\$325.00	\$537.00	\$1,332.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/3148	Fish and Boating/Deer Hunt	\$49,840.00	\$34,508.00	\$21,205.00	\$13,212.00		\$350.00	\$119,115.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/4000	Rents	-	-	-	\$75.76	-	-	\$75.76
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/4500	Forestry Sales	\$30,883.00	\$11,840.00	-	-	-	\$64,545.00	\$107,268.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6900	Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6901	Prior Year Refunds/Reimbursements	-	-	\$111.61	-	-	-	\$111.61
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6995	Hydropower/TR Lines	\$177,408.82	\$98,516.54	\$95,582.60	\$124,269.81	-	\$54,503.56	\$550,281.33
Totals	-	\$258,281.82	\$145,159.54	\$116,749.21	\$137,732.57	\$325.00	\$119,935.56	\$778,183.70

Revenue Budget	Description	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total Collected Revenue Period 7-12	Total Revenue FY26
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/0500	Interment Fees	\$151.00		\$110.00	\$875.00	\$1,454.00	\$1,120.00	\$3,710.00	\$5,042.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/3148	Fish and Boating/Deer Hunt	\$175.00	\$1,795.00	\$7,440.00	\$21,630.00	-	\$39,939.00	\$70,979.00	\$190,094.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/4000	Rents	\$134.17	\$225.30	-	-	-	\$7,110.13	\$7,469.60	\$7,545.36
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/4500	Forestry Sales	-	\$26,200.00	-	\$15,600.00	\$3,000.00	\$74,251.00	\$119,051.00	\$226,319.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6900	Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-		-	\$0.00
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6901	Prior Year Refunds/Reimbursements	-	-	-	\$2,513.19	-	\$1,145.49	-	\$3,658.68
2010/0300/WMP1/DCR/6995	Hydropower/TR Lines	\$112,186.07		\$31,380.78	\$28,173.07	\$44,351.77	\$83,184.55	\$299,276.24	\$849,557.57
Totals	-	\$112,646.24	\$28,220.30	\$38,930.78	\$68,791.26	\$48,805.77	\$206,750.17	\$504,144.52	\$1,282,216.61

Note: Does not include Special Assessment Revenues-MWRA Assessment and Debt Service Reimbursement.

FY2026 Final Land Acquisition

**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection
FY2026 Office of Watershed Management Land Acquisitions**

DCR acquired control of 243.9 additional acres of watershed land in FY26. DCR utilized \$1,603,900 of MWRA funds on land acquisition in FY26 to purchase the control of 214.3 acres of land. DCR capital funds were used to purchase the remaining 29.6 acres. Approximately 60% of these lands, 146 acres, were fee transactions, while the remaining 97.9 acres were in Watershed Preservation Restrictions (WPRs).

Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River Watersheds

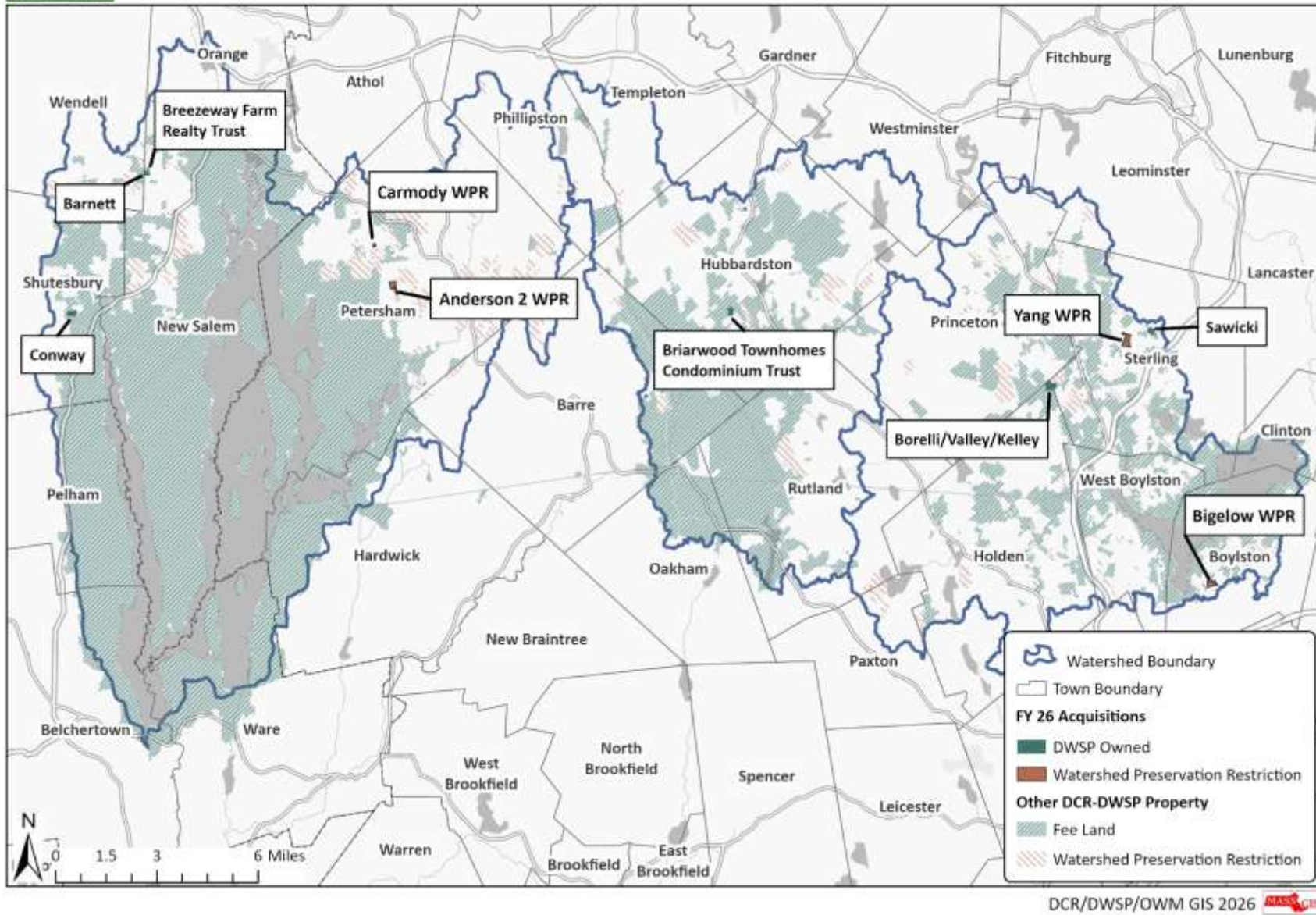
Owner	Town	File Number	Acres	Fee/ WPR	Date Recorded	Funding Source	Price
Carmody	Petersham	W-001264	4.3	WPR	11/14/2025	MWRA	\$45,900
Anderson	Petersham	W-001272	26.3	WPR	12/22/2025	MWRA	\$30,000
Breezeway Farm Realty Trust	New Salem	W-001263	2.3	Fee	12/23/2025	MWRA	\$10,000
Barnett	New Salem	W-001275	16.6	Fee	6/3/2026	MWRA	\$115,000
Conway	Shutesbury	W-001282	29.6	Fee	6/29/2026	DCR Capital	\$155,000
Briarwood Townhomes Condominium Trust	Hubbardston	W-000079	25.5	Fee	5/21/2026	MWRA	\$55,000
Sub-Total	-	-	104.6	-	-	-	\$410,900

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed

Owner	Town	File Number	Acres	Fee/ WPR	Date Recorded	Funding Source	Price
Borelli, Valley, and Kelley	Sterling, Holden	W-001261	48.0	Fee	7/21/2025	MWRA	\$180,000
Bigelow	Boylston	W-001262	24.0	WPR	7/28/2025	MWRA	\$528,000
Yang Realty Trust-2025	Sterling	W-001270	43.3	WPR	12/23/2025	MWRA	\$200,000
Sawicki	Sterling	W-001215	24.0	Fee	6/30/2026	MWRA	\$440,000
Sub-Total	-	-	139.3	-	-	-	\$1,348,000

Total FY26 Land Acquisitions

Category	Acres	Amount
Total	243.9	\$1,758,900
Sub-Total MWRA	214.3	\$1,603,900
Sub-Total DCR Capital	29.6	\$155,000
Sub-Total Fee Acquisitions	146	\$800,000
Sub-Total WPR Acquisitions	97.9	\$803,900



FY2026 Final Payments in Lieu of Taxes

**DCR Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management**

FY2026 Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)

The total PILOT paid under MGL c. 59, s. 5G for Fiscal Year 2026 was \$9,312,874.

This figure represents a 9.5% increase from FY25 PILOT. This amount is within the estimated increase of between 8% to 10.5% to approximately \$9.2 million - \$9.4 million presented in the FY2026 Work Plan.

FY26 PILOT utilized the valuations set by the Department of Revenue (DOR) in 2017 that are subsequently adjusted every other year, starting in FY20, using DOR's Equalized Valuation method (EQV). EQV percentages are calculated by DOR for every community to determine the full and fair cash value in the municipality. This revaluation process was established by the Municipal Modernization Act, St. 2016, c. 218. FY2026 PILOT utilized the valuations set by the Department of Revenue (DOR) that were adjusted by EQV in FY2026. Every community in the watershed system had an increase in their valuations, as the EQV percentages ranged from 14% to 37%.

Three acquisitions were added to the PILOT payment process: Dale (Boylston - 9.54 acres), Gentl (New Salem - 1.5 acres), and Salloom (Wendell - 19.3 acres).. The Boylston and Wendell properties were added to the increase the towns saw in PILOT. Despite increase in valuation and addition of this small property, New Salem's calculated PILOT due was still less than the town's hold harmless threshold.

Thirteen towns had increases to their PILOT, ranging from 6% in Templeton to 35% in Boylston, adding \$1,056,166 to the total PILOT amount. Sterling became the first community to receive PILOT of over \$1 million. The hold harmless clause maintained payment levels in FY26 for the remaining communities, totaling \$804,082.

DWSP coordinated with DOR's Division of Local Services to make PILOT information available to municipalities and the public through [DOR's municipal gateway](#).

Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management
FY26 Payments in Lieu of Taxes - May 2026 Final

Community	FY25 PILOT	Total 2025 Property Valuation	FY25 EQV	Total FY26 Property Valuation	Assessed Acres	Valuation per Acre	2024-2025 Acquisitions (acres)	Added Valuation for Acquisitions	Total 2026 Property Valuation	FY26 Tax Rate	FY26 Minimum PILOT Due	FY26 PILOT	Hold Harmless	Increase	Percent Increase
Barre	\$186,168.60	\$8,391,200	1.3418	\$11,259,312	5,423.9	\$2,076	0	\$0	\$11,259,312	\$13.35	\$150,311.82	\$186,168.60	\$35,857	\$0	0.0%
Belchertown	\$257,074.40	\$15,335,700	1.2567	\$19,272,374	3,190.2	\$6,041	0	\$0	\$19,272,374	\$15.13	\$291,591.02	\$291,591.02	\$0	\$34,517	13.4%
Belchertown - Annexed Lands	\$50,625.10	\$2,042,900	1.2567	\$2,567,312	670.0	\$3,832	0	\$0	\$2,567,312	\$15.13	\$38,843.44	\$50,625.10	\$11,782	\$0	0.0%
Berlin	\$62,502.66	\$2,455,900	1.3628	\$3,346,901	46.6	\$71,884	0	\$0	\$3,346,901	\$21.13	\$70,720.01	\$70,720.01	\$0	\$8,217	13.1%
Boylston	\$599,930.50	\$43,335,900	1.3698	\$59,361,516	2,758.2	\$21,522	9.54	\$205,321	\$59,566,836	\$13.58	\$808,917.64	\$808,917.64	\$0	\$208,987	34.8%
Clinton	\$205,948.72	\$8,830,200	1.2711	\$11,224,067	469.2	\$23,921	0	\$0	\$11,224,067	\$21.58	\$242,215.37	\$242,215.37	\$0	\$36,267	17.6%
Framingham	\$261,930.91	\$6,802,900	1.2175	\$8,282,531	109.7	\$75,502	0	\$0	\$8,282,531	\$24.13	\$199,857.47	\$261,930.91	\$62,073	\$0	0.0%
Hardwick	\$123,021.36	\$9,025,100	1.3487	\$12,172,152	4,718.9	\$2,579	0	\$0	\$12,172,152	\$12.74	\$155,073.22	\$155,073.22	\$0	\$32,052	26.1%
Hardwick - Annexed Lands	\$941.41	\$45,500	1.3487	\$61,366	150.0	\$409	0	\$0	\$61,366	\$12.74	\$781.80	\$941.41	\$160	\$0	0.0%
Holden	\$919,615.57	\$46,107,300	1.2884	\$59,404,645	3,910.4	\$15,191	0	\$0	\$59,404,645	\$13.48	\$800,774.62	\$919,615.57	\$118,841	\$0	0.0%
Hubbardston	\$380,387.00	\$30,563,900	1.3363	\$40,842,540	8,745.9	\$4,670	0	\$0	\$40,842,540	\$11.18	\$456,619.59	\$456,619.59	\$0	\$76,233	20.0%
Leominster	\$8,688.49	\$379,400	1.2417	\$471,101	66.3	\$7,106	0	\$0	\$471,101	\$13.66	\$6,435.24	\$8,688.49	\$2,253	\$0	0.0%
Ludlow	\$10,524.06	\$255,300	1.2640	\$322,699	50.8	\$6,352	0	\$0	\$322,699	\$16.01	\$5,166.41	\$10,524.06	\$5,358	\$0	0.0%
Marlborough	\$112,802.46	\$2,777,300	1.2185	\$3,384,140	570.4	\$5,933	0	\$0	\$3,384,140	\$18.43	\$62,369.70	\$112,802.46	\$50,433	\$0	0.0%
New Salem	\$520,470.61	\$21,259,900	1.3161	\$27,980,154	22,462.7	\$1,246	1.5	\$1,868	\$27,982,023	\$13.62	\$381,115.15	\$520,470.61	\$139,355	\$0	0.0%
New Salem - Annexed Lands	\$201,603.91	\$7,302,900	1.3161	\$9,611,347	11,580.0	\$830	0	\$0	\$9,611,347	\$13.62	\$130,906.54	\$201,603.91	\$70,697	\$0	0.0%
Northborough	\$103,466.89	\$6,595,900	1.2492	\$8,239,598	360.9	\$22,833	0	\$0	\$8,239,598	\$14.82	\$122,110.85	\$122,110.85	\$0	\$18,644	18.0%
Oakham	\$147,867.72	\$12,802,400	1.2561	\$16,081,095	2,537.1	\$6,338	0	\$0	\$16,081,095	\$11.12	\$178,821.77	\$178,821.77	\$0	\$30,954	20.9%
Orange	\$11,965.58	\$686,100	1.2447	\$853,989	82.8	\$10,314	0	\$0	\$853,989	\$16.60	\$14,176.21	\$14,176.21	\$0	\$2,211	18.5%
Pelham	\$338,086.39	\$12,831,900	1.3070	\$16,771,293	5,974.0	\$2,807	0	\$0	\$16,771,293	\$18.79	\$315,132.60	\$338,086.39	\$22,954	\$0	0.0%
Pelham - Annexed Lands	\$38,096.61	\$923,000	1.3070	\$1,206,361	1,080.0	\$1,117	0	\$0	\$1,206,361	\$18.79	\$22,667.52	\$38,096.61	\$15,429	\$0	0.0%
Petersham	\$296,721.61	\$13,084,900	1.3365	\$17,487,969	12,417.6	\$1,408	0	\$0	\$17,487,969	\$14.24	\$249,028.68	\$296,721.61	\$47,693	\$0	0.0%
Petersham - Annexed Lands	\$203,305.78	\$6,432,200	1.3365	\$8,596,635	10,000.0	\$860	0	\$0	\$8,596,635	\$14.24	\$122,416.09	\$203,305.78	\$80,890	\$0	0.0%
Phillipston	\$11,912.74	\$193,800	1.3344	\$258,607	162.8	\$1,589	0	\$0	\$258,607	\$10.95	\$2,831.74	\$11,912.74	\$9,081	\$0	0.0%
Princeton	\$338,018.66	\$23,263,500	1.2716	\$29,581,867	3,336.7	\$8,866	0	\$0	\$29,581,867	\$13.44	\$397,580.29	\$397,580.29	\$0	\$59,562	17.6%
Rutland	\$525,860.45	\$32,441,300	1.2405	\$40,243,433	6,560.5	\$6,134	0	\$0	\$40,243,433	\$13.87	\$558,176.41	\$558,176.41	\$0	\$32,316	6.1%
Shutesbury	\$299,391.54	\$8,617,400	1.2610	\$10,866,541	4,979.4	\$2,182	0	\$0	\$10,866,541	\$16.19	\$175,929.31	\$299,391.54	\$123,462	\$0	0.0%
Southborough	\$317,481.16	\$21,274,000	1.2539	\$26,675,469	1,310.6	\$20,353	0	\$0	\$26,675,469	\$14.36	\$383,059.73	\$383,059.73	\$0	\$65,579	20.7%
Sterling	\$832,165.16	\$62,976,400	1.2816	\$80,710,554	5,263.9	\$15,333	0	\$0	\$80,710,554	\$12.55	\$1,012,917.46	\$1,012,917.46	\$0	\$180,752	21.7%
Templeton	\$1,082.18	\$76,900	1.2953	\$99,609	92.1	\$1,082	0	\$0	\$99,609	\$11.87	\$1,182.35	\$1,182.35	\$0	\$100	9.3%
Ware	\$193,261.40	\$8,605,900	1.2335	\$10,615,378	4,845.0	\$2,191	0	\$0	\$10,615,378	\$14.49	\$153,816.82	\$193,261.40	\$39,445	\$0	0.0%
Ware - Annexed Lands	\$167,580.62	\$5,795,800	1.2335	\$7,149,119	3,865.0	\$1,850	0	\$0	\$7,149,119	\$14.49	\$103,590.74	\$167,580.62	\$63,990	\$0	0.0%
Wendell	\$36,930.70	\$1,742,200	1.1444	\$1,993,774	684.1	\$2,914	19.3	\$56,248	\$2,050,022	\$20.50	\$42,025.44	\$42,025.44	\$0	\$5,095	13.8%
West Boylston	\$683,581.59	\$27,763,500	1.3068	\$36,281,342	2,940.2	\$12,340	0	\$0	\$36,281,342	\$14.53	\$527,167.90	\$683,581.59	\$156,414	\$0	0.0%
Westborough	\$59,780.02	\$3,563,500	1.2750	\$4,543,463	190.8	\$23,815	0	\$0	\$4,543,463	\$15.93	\$72,377.36	\$72,377.36	\$0	\$12,597	21.1%
TOTAL	\$8,508,793	\$454,581,900					30.34	\$263,437				\$9,312,874.11	\$1,056,166	\$804,082	9.5%

NOTES:
1. Watershed PILOT, per MGL c. 59 s.5G, is determined by multiplying the DOR valuation by the local commercial tax rate. DOR posts property valuations for [watershed lands](#) and [annexed lands](#) as well as [community tax rates](#).
2. "Hold Harmless" is a provision in the legislation that requires any payment to never be less than the previous year's payment. Therefore, if either valuations or tax rates drop, the municipality is guaranteed a consistent payment.
3. Acquisitions added: Dale (Boylston - 9.54 acres); Gentl (New Salem - 1.5 acres); Salloom (Wendell - 19.3 acres). DOR rounds valuation to nearest 100.