



**CELEBRATING 100 YEARS—1916 TO 2016**

Since its creation in 1916, Myles Standish State Forest has been the largest public open space in southeastern Massachusetts. For 100 years, the forest has provided visitors with access to history, nature, and recreation. Such luminaries as Daniel Webster, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson visited this forest to camp, fish, hunt, and enjoy the beautiful landscape that is now open for all to enjoy.

Over the last 100 years the forest has been transformed by the hands of countless stewards from the earliest workers of the Massachusetts State Forest Commission, to the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression, to the Department of Conservation and Recreation today. As we celebrate the MSSF Centennial, we hope to strengthen people's appreciation of the forest with various programs, special events, and partnerships.

Myles Standish State Forest  
Cranberry Road, P.O. Box 66  
South Carver, MA 02366  
(508) 866-2526

**2016 TRAIL MAP**

*Myles Standish State Forest:  
Born of Fire and Ice*

**DISCOVER THE PINE BARRENS**

The landscape of Myles Standish State Forest has been shaped over time by the forces of glaciers, climate, fire, and human activity. About 20,000 years ago, this area was covered by a massive glacier. As the ice retreated, billions of tons of sand and stone were deposited in this area of southeastern Massachusetts. Enormous chunks of ice occasionally lodged in these deposits creating depressions as they melted, resulting in today's frost pockets and kettle hole ponds.

Sandy, dry, and prone to fire, this ecosystem supports rare plant communities known as "Pine Barrens." The Pine Barrens are characterized by an open canopy of scattered Pitch Pines with an understory of scrub oaks and shrubs like blueberry, huckleberry, and crowberry. MSSF is home to the third-largest Pine Barrens in the world!

The Pine Barrens Path on the eastern side of the forest is a nice hike for those who wish to experience this unusual landscape.



**FROST POCKETS: A LANDSCAPE OF EXTREMES**

Frost pockets are depressions that accumulate cooler air, allowing frost to occur in any season—even summer. In contrast, on a hot day, the temperatures in frost pockets can exceed the maximum temperatures of the surrounding areas as there is little to no shade from canopy trees. These conditions

support distinctive shrub, heathland, and grassland plant communities as well as a variety of interesting lichens.

Frost pockets are very sensitive to human disturbance and are easily damaged by motorized vehicles, hikers, and cyclists. These plant communities take decades to recover. Please view these unique environments only from established trails to avoid causing harm.

You can explore these beautiful landscapes on a self-guided hike along the Frost Pocket Loop. Self-guided trail brochures can be found at Headquarters.

**KETTLE HOLE PONDS**

Myles Standish has 58 kettle hole ponds created by glaciers, which are filled with groundwater and have no inlet or outlet. Water levels of these ponds fluctuate greatly from year to year. These conditions support a unique community of plants that can survive alternating periods of inundation and desiccation along the edges of these ponds.

**OF CANNONBALLS & CRANBERRIES**

Southeastern Massachusetts is home to the oldest and one of the largest cranberry growing industries in the world. Long before people discovered they could be used for commercial cranberry production, the bogs were an important source of iron ore. The iron was made into tools for early colonists, as well as cannonballs for artillery used in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

MSSF has two working cranberry bogs next to Rocky Pond off Bare Hill Road. These are experimental bogs, where Best Management Practices in cranberry agriculture are tested and the results are shared with local cranberry farmers.



Explore the bogs on a short hiking trail that loops around them. To learn about the bogs and their history, a self-guided brochure is available at Headquarters.

**THE LEGACY OF THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC)**

In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, millions of unemployed young men signed up to improve state and national parks all over the country. This federal program, called the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), shaped many state forests in Massachusetts including Myles Standish.

Much of the recreational landscape found at MSSF today is a legacy of the CCC and the young men employed by it. The CCC built the fire roads that crisscross the forest. They planted over 700,000 trees. They built the campgrounds and day-use areas enjoyed by thousands of visitors every year. At Fearing Pond, the bathhouse is a rare remaining example of the CCC style of architecture and construction. It is the only remaining CCC-era log bathhouse in the Massachusetts State Parks system.



Civilian Conservation Corps workers at MSSF, 1933

**THE ROLE OF WILDFIRE AND FORESTRY**

Native Americans used fire as a land management tool in precolonial times. Long ago, these forests were dominated by pine, hemlock, and a variety of hardwoods. Extensive logging and severe wildfires during the late 1700s and 1800s contributed to establishment of the drier Pine Barrens ecosystem that exists in Myles Standish today. The communities of



Brush-breaker fire truck invented by MSSF Forestry staff, late 1930s

plants and animals in the Pine Barrens are adapted to fire, and the numerous rare species here thrive following a fire. An immense blaze known as The Great Fire of 1900 burned about 50 square miles of Plymouth, from Myles Standish to Cape Cod Bay. There have been other large fires throughout the decades with the last notable wildfire in 1985.

In 2000, a prescribed fire program began at MSSF to reduce vegetation that can fuel an uncontrollable wildfire and to maintain the Pine Barrens habitats. Timber harvests, mowing, and brush cutting are other means that DCR uses to reduce the risk of wildfire and sustain the Pine Barrens ecosystem. Visitors may encounter active forest management and prescribed fires as they explore Myles Standish.



A damselfly trapped by a Thread-leaf Sundew · *Drosera filiformis*

**WILDLIFE OF MYLES STANDISH**

Many animal species make their home in MSSF including white-tailed deer, wild turkey, red squirrel, and gray fox. Over 130 bird species visit the forest including some that are uncommon elsewhere in Massachusetts like Prairie Warblers and Eastern Whip-poor-wills.

Southeastern Massachusetts, including MSSF, is the only place in the world to find the federally endangered Northern Red-bellied Cooter. These turtles can most often be seen in the spring basking on logs in large ponds. They look similar to Painted Turtles, though adults are many times larger, with a bright red plastron (bottom shell).

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has documented 42 rare and endangered species in MSSF, the highest number for any state property. These protected species include moths, butterflies, damselflies, dragonflies, beetles, birds, reptiles and plants. Visit the Interpretive Center at the Headquarters to learn more about the animals that make their homes in Myles Standish.

Melzheimer's Sack-bearer (moth) · *Cicinnus melzheimeri*



Melzheimer's Sack-bearer (moth) · *Cicinnus melzheimeri*

**Welcome to DCR's Myles Standish State Forest**

Myles Standish State Forest (MSSF), at over 12,400 acres, is one of the state's largest and most important protected areas. It is home to many rare habitats and species, including the globally rare Pine Barrens ecosystem, sensitive frost pocket habitats, scores of coastal plain kettle ponds, and 42 rare and endangered plants and animals. The forest also provides a wealth of recreational opportunities. Visitors can camp at one of the four camping areas, swim at College Pond, bicycle along 15 miles of paved bike paths, hike one of the many forest loop trails, or ride miles of equestrian-friendly trails.

**ABOUT DCR**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is steward to over 450,000 acres of forests, parks, greenways, trails, historic sites and landscapes, seashores, beaches, ponds, reservoirs, and watersheds. The DCR serves to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well-being of all; and to cooperate and partner with those who share this common purpose. To learn about DCR and discover more about the parks, programs, and recreational opportunities within Massachusetts state parks, please visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr) or contact us at [mass.parks@state.ma.us](mailto:mass.parks@state.ma.us).

**FRIENDS OF MYLES STANDISH STATE FOREST**

Caring for the forest would not be possible without the support of visitors like you, as well as our committed volunteers. The Friends of Myles Standish State Forest is organized to promote and conserve the natural, scenic, and historical resources of Myles Standish; to foster the use and enjoyment of Myles Standish State Forest by the public in a manner consistent with the protection and preservation of the environment; to engage in such educational, scientific, and charitable activities that will assist the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the operation of Myles Standish State Forest; and to assist and work in cooperation with the Forest Supervisor in general support and enrichment of Myles Standish State Forest. For more information, visit [www.friendsmssf.com](http://www.friendsmssf.com).



J. MONTGOMERY

*Suggested Hikes and Rides*

Self-guided trail brochures, updated trail information, and a paved bike path guide can be picked up at Headquarters.

**BICYCLE THE CAMPING POND LOOPS**

6.25± miles round trip. Easy.

These scenic bike loops are perfect for families and people looking for a relaxing ride to Fearing Pond and Charge Pond. Begin at Headquarters **P1** where you will find public restrooms and a water station.

**BICYCLE THE ROCKY POND PATH**

7.8 miles round trip. Moderate.

Starting at Headquarters **P1**, this paved path winds through the pine, spruce, and scrub oak forests on its way to the Rocky Pond parking lot **P2**. At Rocky Pond, take a hike on the Rocky Pond Bog Loop trail.

**EAST HEAD LOOP/HEALTHY HEART TRAIL**

2.6 miles circling East Head Reservoir. Blue blazes. Easy.

This hike is an ideal introduction to the forest. Starting from Headquarters **P1**, the trail hugs the shoreline of the East Head Reservoir. Traverse the boardwalk sections over wetlands and enjoy the scenery in any season.



R. GRAHAM

**BENTLEY LOOP TRAIL**

3.6 miles. Blue blazes. Moderate.

The Bentley Loop starts from the parking lot **P2** off Upper College Pond Road. It passes some lovely ponds and meadows. Hikers are reminded that the Bentley Loop travels through a Wildlife Management Area stocked with game birds during the fall. Be sure to wear blaze orange if you go out during the fall and check the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife guide for a full list of hunting season dates.

**FRIENDS' LOOP TRAIL**

2.7 miles. Blue blazes. Moderate.

Begin at the East Entrance parking lot **P4**. Take the Frost Pocket Bike Path to the Friends' Loop Trail. The trail is somewhat hilly, crosses a glacial moraine, and offers a number of excellent views through the tall pines. At the trail's southwest corner, it connects to the 8-mile Pine Barrens Path.

**CHARGE POND LOOP TRAIL**

4.8 miles. Blue blazes. Moderate.

This trail circles the campgrounds near Charge Pond. Easiest trail access is provided from the parking lot **P5** along Charge Pond Road. Take a short walk north along the bike path from the parking lot and turn onto Sasemine Way. The trail passes close to the campgrounds at several points and crosses a number of the fire roads.

**PINE BARRENS PATH**

8 miles one-way. Blue blazes. Difficult.

This trail connects the Friends' Loop to the Charge Pond Loop along the eastern side of the forest. You can also access the trail from the fourth parking pull-off on Cutter Field Road. This path will take you through the globally rare Pine Barrens habitats and past various frost pockets. Look for the Buck Moth, a black, white, and orange species that flies during the day like a butterfly, and birds like the Rufous-sided Towhee and the Pine Warbler.

**HORSEBACK RIDING**

Riders can start from the Equestrian Parking Lot **P3** near Barrett Pond, or (if camping) from the Equestrian Campground **Ac** at Charge Pond, and ride on many miles of unpaved roads and trails.

*Accessing the Forest*

**PARKING LOTS**

- P1** Forest Headquarters (open year-round): Camping Check-in, Interpretive Center, restrooms, bike path system, and Healthy Heart Trail/East Head Loop hiking trail
- P2** Bentley Trail Lot (open year-round): Bentley Loop and Frost Pocket Loop hiking trails, Frost Pocket Path bike trail, and Pheasant Wildlife Management Area
- P3** Equestrian Lot (seasonal): Access to the forest's large network of equestrian-friendly trails
- P4** East Entrance (open year-round): Picnicking, Friends' Loop and Pine Barrens Path hiking trails and Frost Pocket Path bike trail
- P5** Charge Pond (seasonal): Charge Pond Loop & Pine Barrens Path hiking trails, and Camping Pond Loops bike trail
- P6** Fire Tower Lot (seasonal): Scenic views, Rocky Pond Path bike trail
- P7** Rocky Pond Lot (seasonal): Rocky Pond Bog Loop hiking trail, and Rocky Pond Path bike trail
- P8** College Pond Day-Use Area (seasonal): Paid parking lot, bathhouse, restrooms, swimming, and picnicking
- ▲** Pull-off parking areas on Cutter Field Road: Quail Wildlife Management Area



M. KINTON

*Who do I call?*

For emergency situations or crimes needing immediate police response, dial **911**.

To contact Myles Standish State Forest staff, dial **(508) 866-2526**.

DCR administers a program called ParkWatch that allows park users to report their concerns over rules violations, vandalism, unsafe conditions, and suspicious activity. To report rules violations, vandalism, or unsafe conditions, call 1-866-PK WATCH (1-866-759-2824) and indicate that this is a "ParkWatch Call."



*Trail Use Guidelines*

- Trails are open dawn to dusk.
- Stay on designated roads and trails.
- Carry in, carry out.
- **Motorized vehicles (except snowmobiles) are prohibited from all unpaved roads and trails.**
- Please be courteous and respectful to other trail users.
- Give a clear signal before passing.
- When encountering a horse, stop, announce yourself and wait for the rider's instructions.
- Dogs (except hunting dogs) should be on leash and under control at all times.
- Always pick up after your dog.
- Fires, dumping, alcohol, and disorderly conduct prohibited.
- Be aware of hunting seasons and wear blaze orange when appropriate.



J. MONTGOMERY

# MYLES STANDISH STATE FOREST

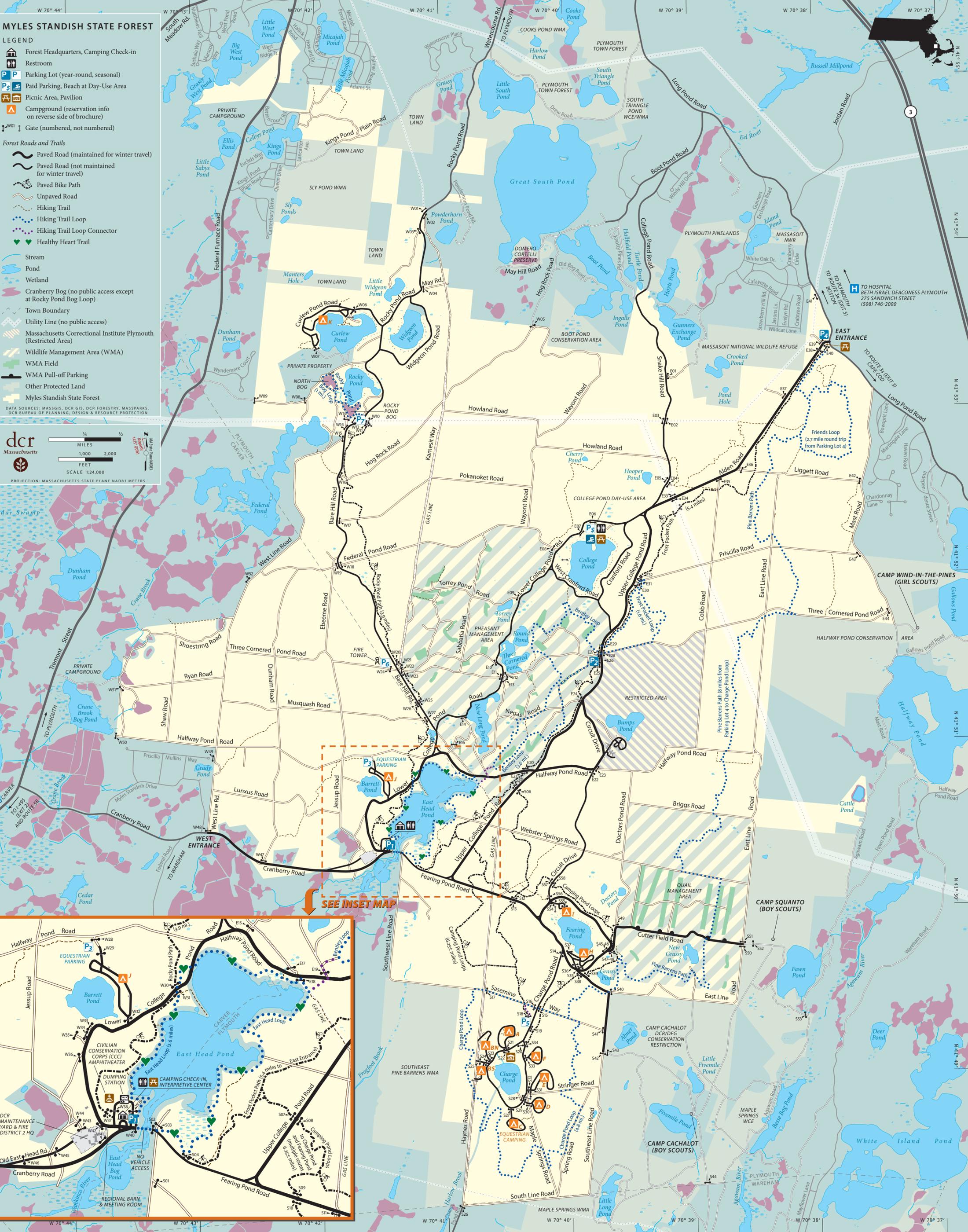
- LEGEND**
- Forest Headquarters, Camping Check-in
  - Restroom
  - Parking Lot (year-round, seasonal)
  - Paid Parking, Beach at Day-Use Area
  - Picnic Area, Pavilion
  - Campground (reservation info on reverse side of brochure)
  - Gate (numbered, not numbered)
- Forest Roads and Trails**
- Paved Road (maintained for winter travel)
  - Paved Road (not maintained for winter travel)
  - Paved Bike Path
  - Unpaved Road
  - Hiking Trail
  - Hiking Trail Loop
  - Hiking Trail Loop Connector
  - Healthy Heart Trail
- Other Features**
- Stream
  - Pond
  - Wetland
  - Cranberry Bog (no public access except at Rocky Pond Bog Loop)
  - Town Boundary
  - Utility Line (no public access)
  - Massachusetts Correctional Institute Plymouth (Restricted Area)
  - Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
  - WMA Field
  - WMA Pull-off Parking
  - Other Protected Land
  - Myles Standish State Forest

DATA SOURCES: MASSGIS, DCR GIS, DCR FORESTRY, MASSPARKS, DCR BUREAU OF PLANNING, DESIGN & RESOURCE PROTECTION

**dc**r  
Massachusetts

SCALE 1:24,000

PROJECTION: MASSACHUSETTS STATE PLANE NAD83 METERS



SEE INSET MAP

DCR MAINTENANCE YARD & FIRE DISTRICT 2 HQ

REGIONAL BARN & MEETING ROOM

NO VEHICLE ACCESS

TO HOSPITAL  
BETH ISRAEL DEACONESS PLYMOUTH  
275 SANDWICH STREET  
(508) 746-2000

CAMP WIND-IN-THE-PINES  
(GIRL SCOUTS)

CAMP SQUANTO  
(BOY SCOUTS)

CAMP CACHALOT  
DCR/DFG CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

CAMP CACHALOT  
(BOY SCOUTS)

PLYMOUTH  
WAREHAM