



Massachusetts Water Resources Commission

FY2024 ANNUAL REPORT



The Commission's Role and Responsibilities



***Longest running active Commission in the Commonwealth
– meeting at least monthly since 1956***

- Responsible for developing, guiding, coordinating, and overseeing the Commonwealth's water policy and planning activities.
- Establish the scientific and policy foundation for the sustainability of Massachusetts' water resources.
- **Climate Change is Water Change.** Our programs focus broadly on the impacts of climate on water resources.

Structure of the MA WRC

Agency Members

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Chair & Member - Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary
Designee - Vandana Rao, Executive Director

Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities

Member - Edward M. Augustus Jr., Secretary
Designee - Chris Kluchman

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Member - Brian Arrigo, Commissioner
Designee - Anne Carroll

Office of Coastal Zone Management (non-voting member)

Member – Alison Brizius, Director
Designee - Tyler Soleau

Department of Environmental Protection

Member - Bonnie Heiple, Commissioner
Designee - Kathleen Baskin

Department of Agricultural Resources

Member - Ashley Randle, Commissioner
Designee - Hotze Wijnja

Department of Fish and Game

Member - Tom O'Shea, Commissioner
Designee - Todd Richards

Public Members

Thomas Cambareri, Centerville, MA
(representing groundwater industry)

Christine Hatch, Belchertown, MA

Vincent J. Ragucci III, North Reading, MA

Kenneth Weismantel, Hopkinton, MA

Samantha Woods, Norwell, MA



Water Resources Commission & Staff, December 2023 meeting

FY2024 Work of the Commission – Report Overview



1. Hydrologic Monitoring
2. Flood Hazard Management Program
3. Facilitation and Consensus Building to support Regional Water Efforts
4. Interbasin Transfer Act
5. Water Needs Forecasts
6. Oversight of State Water Programs
7. Special Projects
8. Water Efficiency





December 2023

MASSACHUSETTS
Drought Management Plan
 Preparedness & Response

Massachusetts
 Energy and
 Environmental
 Affairs



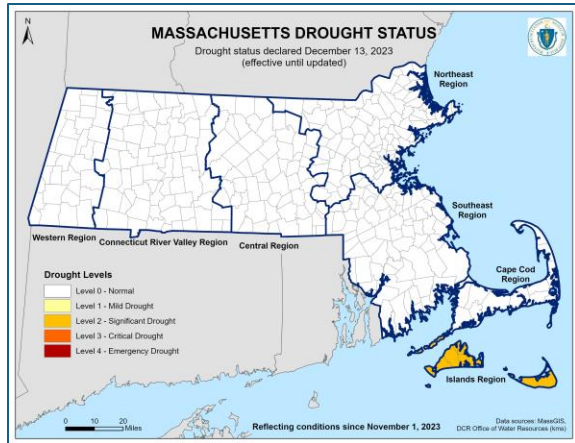
Massachusetts
 Emergency
 Management
 Agency



Hydrologic Monitoring

-Tracking Conditions and Advising on Drought

- DMTF met to track drought in the Islands Region, which lasted from November 2023 through March 2024. Level 2—Significant Drought was declared during the worst part of the drought.
- In December 2023, the Commission approved the updated MA Drought Management Plan.
 - Revised the Evapotranspiration Index
 - Approved Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) as the new Evapotranspiration Index in FY24
 - National data product, live on the dashboard - www.mass.gov/massdd
 - weekly and monthly time scales





Hydrologic Monitoring

-USGS Cooperative Program

- Analyzed the groundwater and streamflow networks for meeting state needs
- Evaluated potential sites for expanding the networks
- Convened a meeting of state and federal partners to gain feedback on the expansion recommendations
- Expansion is anticipated to take place in FY2025 and FY2026



Flooding in Attleboro, September 12, 2023



Flood Hazard Management Program

- Support and technical assistance directly to 326 MA communities (92.8% of all MA communities)
- Review of dozens of MEPA projects in 109 communities
- 26 training events on multiple topics
- 36 one-on-one meetings with local communities to offer guidance on specific projects or issues
- Work on numerous special projects including the 2021 BRIC building code project, Flooding & EJ Communities in MA, the statewide floodplain management Framework and more
- Developed and finalized the first-ever FHMP Strategic Plan

Facilitation and Consensus Building to Support Regional Water Efforts



North Shore Water Resilience Task Force

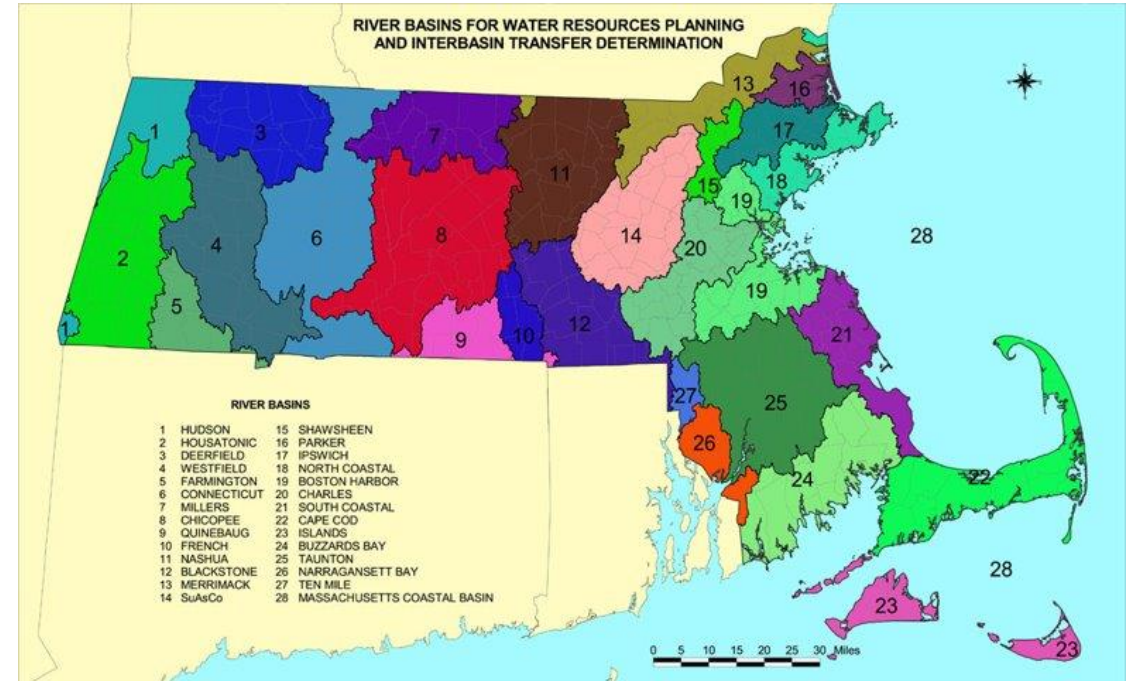
- The Task Force reached consensus on a “Joint Narrative” describing the challenges and opportunities facing the watershed
- Contracted three studies to help evaluate potential regional actions
- Explored how water conservation could improve regional resilience

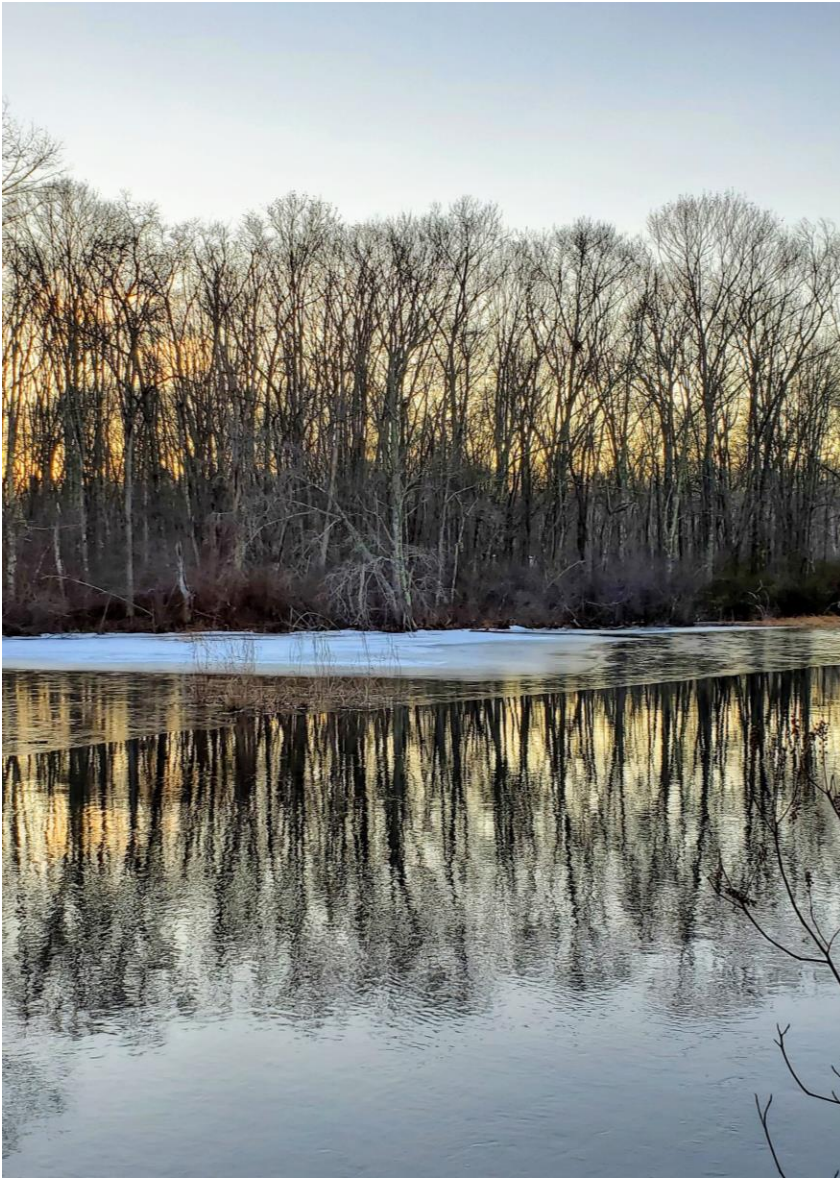
Southeastern MA

- Contracting with the Consensus Building Institute to evaluate the collaborative potential among ten communities.
- Provided facilitation services to explore regional collaboration

Interbasin Transfer Act

- Voted to approve the Town of Westport RDI
- Brought proposed revisions to the ITA Performance Standards before the Commission, with a vote to approve expected in FY2025
- Commemorated the 40th anniversary of the ITA
- Monitored compliance with previously approved ITA projects
- Provided consultations to project proponents with potential new interbasin transfers





Water Needs Forecasts & Oversight of State Water Programs

Water Needs Forecasts

- Staff consulted with MassDEP and four public water suppliers in three river basins (Concord, South Coastal, and Buzzards Bay) to review, revise, or prepare new water needs forecasts

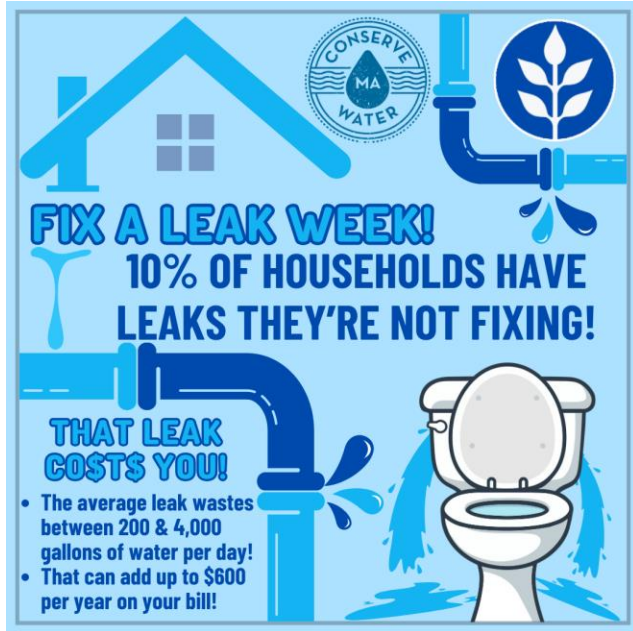
Oversight of State Water Programs

- Presentation and discussion on proposed resilience updates to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Water Quality Certification, and Chapter 91 Regulations
- Update from MassDEP staff on EPA's new drinking water regulations for PFAS.



FY2024 Special Projects

1. Low Flow Statistics at Gaged and Ungaged Sites
2. Drivers of Low Flow
3. Streamflow & Groundwater Network Analyses
4. Groundwater Flooding Vulnerability Mapping
5. Evaluation of Lakes and Impoundments Drought Index for MA DMP
6. Guidance for Local Water Suppliers on Developing Local DMPs
7. Drought Retrospectives from the 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 Droughts
8. Integrated Water Data Access and Visualization



Water Efficiency

Outreach

- Developed MA Native Plant Palette with many partners
- Supported the Growing Wild for Pollinators program
- Maintained promotional partnership with EPA's WaterSense program
- Water efficiency education and outreach for WaterSense campaigns such as Fix-A-Leak Week

Water Efficiency Advisory Committee

- Created the Water Efficiency Advisory Committee, a group of stakeholders with representation from water suppliers, environmental groups, and state agencies that meets regularly to discuss ideas for advancing water efficiency initiatives across the state



START >

Alliance for Water Efficiency

- Serving on AWE's education & outreach and research committees, multiple working groups, and the advisory committee for AWE's 2nd annual Water Efficiency and Conservation Symposium

Staff to the MA WRC



Leadership Team

Vandana Rao, EOEEA, Director of Water Policy/ED of the MA WRC
Purvi Patel, EOEEA, Assistant Director of Water Policy
Anne Carroll, DCR, Director, Office of Water Resources (OWR)
Vanessa Curran, DCR, Deputy Director, OWR

Staff to the WRC at DCR Office of Water Resources and Dam Safety

Eric Carlson, Environmental Engineer
Sara Cohen, Water Resources and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
Jason Duff, Water Resources Planner
Joy Duperault, Director, Flood Hazard Management Program
Erin Graham, Environmental Engineer
Nadia Madden, Floodplain Management Specialist
Katie Paight, Floodplain Management Specialist
Toni Stewart, Water Resources Scientist
Viki Zoltay, State Hydrologist
William Salomaa, Director, Office of Dam Safety