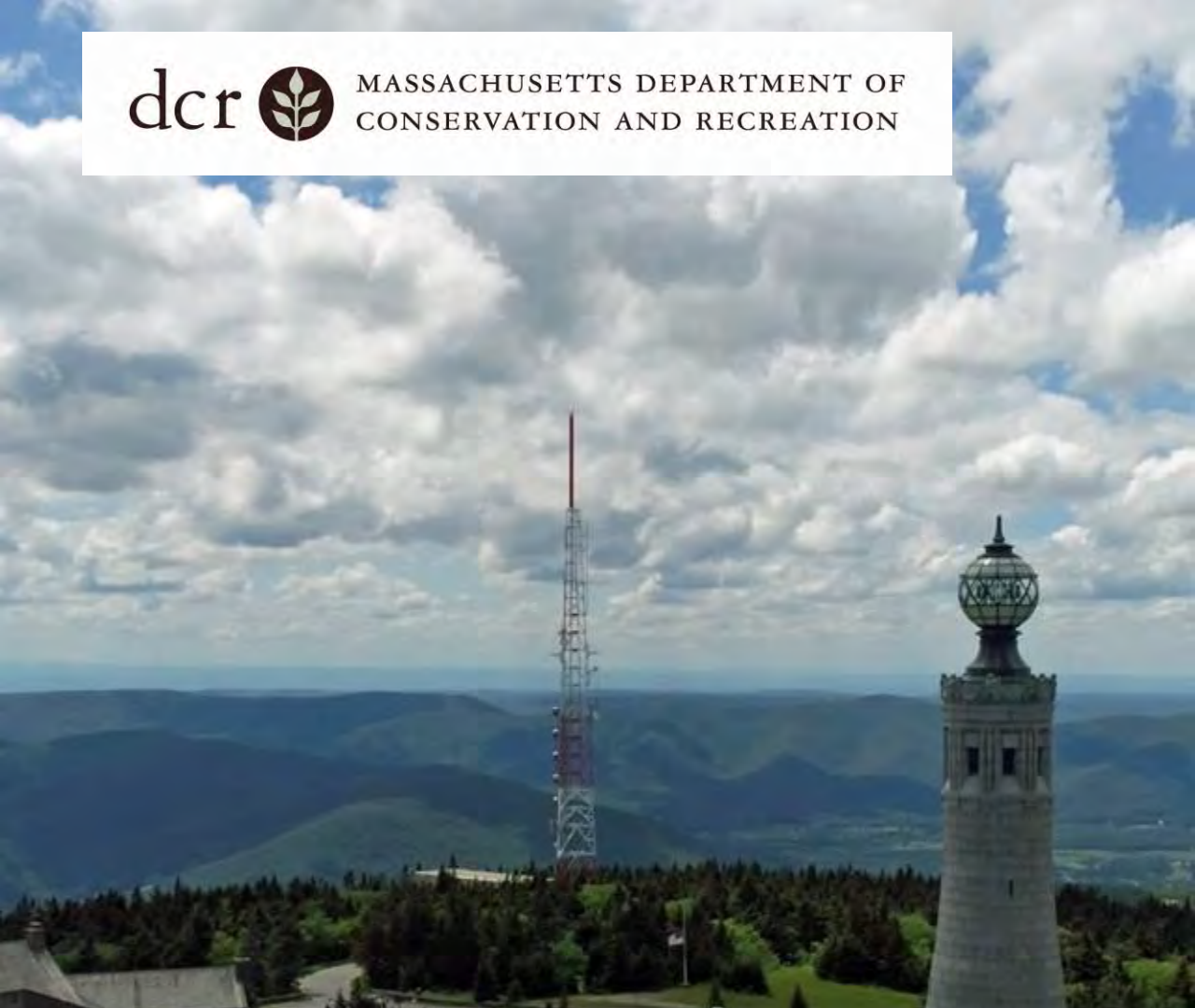




MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



Resource Management Plans for DCR's South Coast District

Wednesday, August 2, 2023



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor
Maura T. Healey

Lieutenant Governor
Kimberley Driscoll

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary
Rebecca L. Tepper

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner
Brian Arrigo

DCR MISSION

**To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth
of natural, cultural, and recreational resources
for the well-being of all**

Our Core Principles

- **Provide access to a diversity of outdoor recreational experiences & unique landscapes**
- **Conserve lands, water, and forests**
- **Advance climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts**
- **Support healthy communities**
- **Inspire generations of stewards**



Meeting Logistics

Two ways to offer comments during the meeting:

- Use chat feature – comments go to moderator
- Raise your hand using the Zoom function, and you will be given permissions to unmute and speak

After the meeting you may submit comments through September 8th, at:

- DCR Public Comments <https://www.mass.gov/forms/dcr-public-comments>

Please note that this public meeting will be recorded; the recording will be a public record

Tonight's Meeting

- Resource Management Plans (RMPs)
- Project Timeline
- South Coast District Properties
 - Key Features and Sample Recommendations
- Your input on draft RMPs



Resource Management Plans (RMPs)

- **Foundational documents that:**
 - Identify unique resources;
 - Include guidelines for park operation and land stewardship;
 - Provide for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources;
 - Ensure consistency among recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management; and
 - Serve as the basis (“foundation”) of future planning.
- **Prepared for all DCR Forests, Parks, and Reservations**

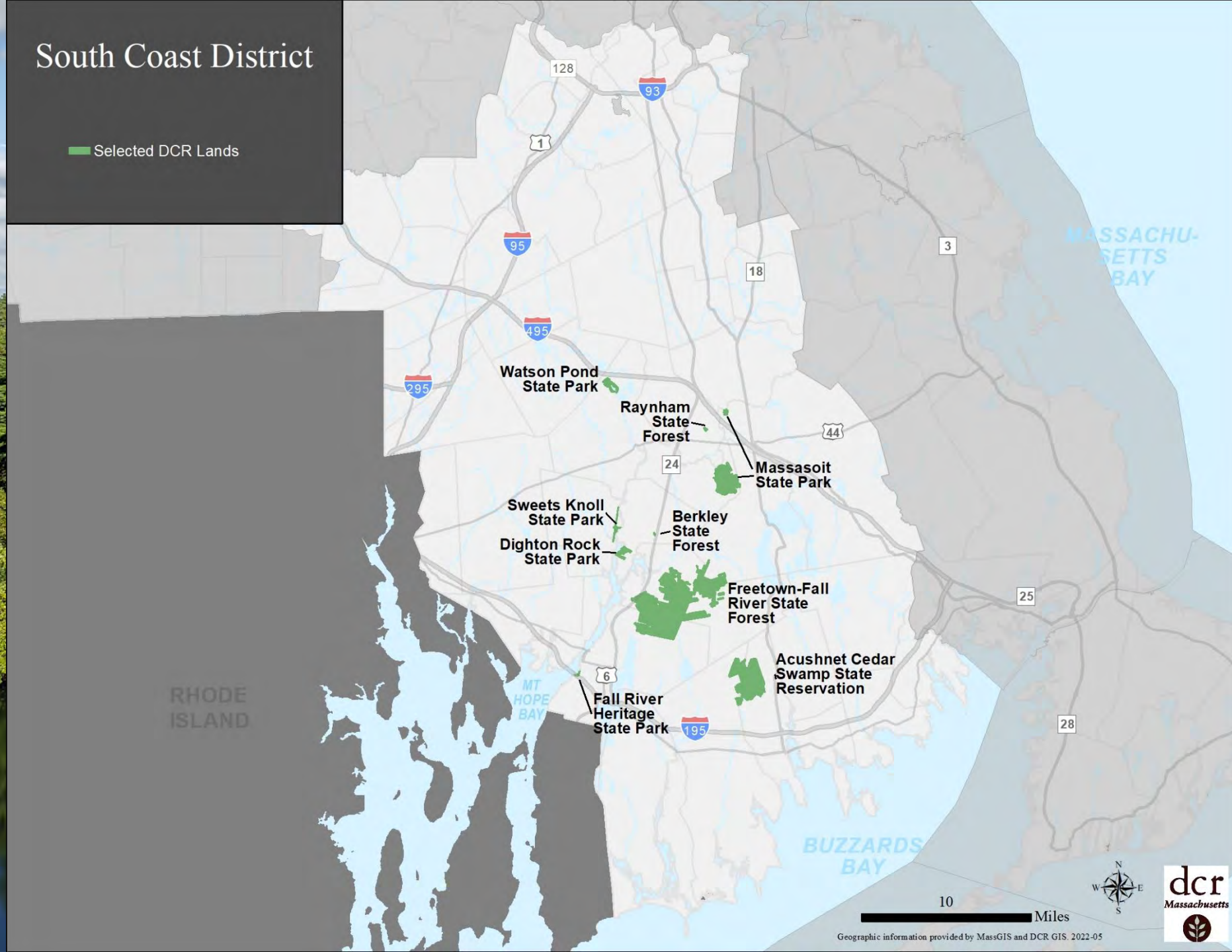


South Coast RMPs – Project Timeline

Date	Action/Event
June 2, 2022	Public Meeting #1 Public Input
July 26, 2023	Meeting Announcement Release of draft RMPs Start of Public Comment Period
August 2, 2023	Public Meeting #2 Public Comments on Draft RMPs
September 8, 2023	Close of Public Comment Period
Fall 2023	Present RMPs to Stewardship Council

South Coast District

Selected DCR Lands



Acushnet Cedar Swamp State Reservation

Contains one of the densest and purest stands of Atlantic white cedar in the state, forming one of the largest, wildest, and most impenetrable swamps in Massachusetts.



Acushnet Cedar Swamp State Reservation

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 2,100.1
- Landscape Designation: Reserve
- Rare Species: 7
- Cultural Resources: 3
- Environmental Justice (acres): 1,560.2



Acushnet Cedar Swamp State Reservation

Sample Recommendations:

- Work with City of New Bedford and the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program to identify and implement water management strategy to meet City's needs and benefit ecology of Reservation.
- Reopening portion of former parking area to encourage visitation and meet Land and Water Conservation Fund requirements.
- Work with Office of Fishing and Boating Access to assess potential for hardened cartop boat launch on Turner's Pond.
- Reestablish trail connection to City's Flora B. Pierce Nature Trail.
- Explore opportunities to enhance recreational and biological connections between Reservation and the Southeastern Massachusetts Bioreserve.



Berkley State Forest

Permanently protects common natural resources and offers opportunities to engage in passive recreation.



Berkley State Forest

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 5.5
- Landscape Designation: Woodland
- Rare Species: 0
- Cultural Resources: 0
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Berkley State Forest

Sample Recommendations:

- Standard suite of park amenities (official trail, Welcome Wayside panel, Berkley SF web page).



Dighton Rock State Park

The Park is strongly identified with its namesake feature, a glacial erratic that bears petroglyphs, and is on display in a museum that provides interpretive information.



Dighton Rock State Park

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 151.0
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 0
- Cultural Resources: 3 – Including one on National Register
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Dighton Rock State Park

Sample Recommendations:

- Following appropriate review and permitting, implement the *Invasive Plant Management Plan: South Region* for aquatic and terrestrial invasive plants. Maintain actions as needed.
- Engage local Native American tribes in the telling of the story of Dighton Rock from their perspective.
- Determine if the replacement or major repair of existing recreation infrastructure, or the construction of new recreation infrastructure, is appropriate given the facilities' locations within flood and hurricane inundation zones.
- Contact the Office of Fishing and Boating Access to discuss the potential for adding a hardened car-top boat launch.
- Conduct an accessibility assessment.



Fall River Heritage State Park

An important part of the Fall River community, telling the story of the Fall River's industrial history, providing access to its waterfront, and serving as a venue for cultural and civic events.



Fall River Heritage State Park

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 9.3
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 0
- Cultural Resources: 0
- Environmental Justice (acres): 9.3



Fall River Heritage State Park

Sample Recommendations:

- As funding allows, and within the context of the Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model, prioritize and implement the building envelope repair and decarbonization recommendations identified in HTK Architects, Inc. (2021).
- Replace the wooden pilings near the boat house.
- Conduct an engineering assessment of the seawall along the Central Street parking lot; repair as warranted.
- As appropriate, promote Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Environmental Justice Policy goals at Fall River Heritage State Park.
- Develop interpretive panel related to the Taunton's status as a Wild and Scenic River.



Freetown – Fall River State Forest

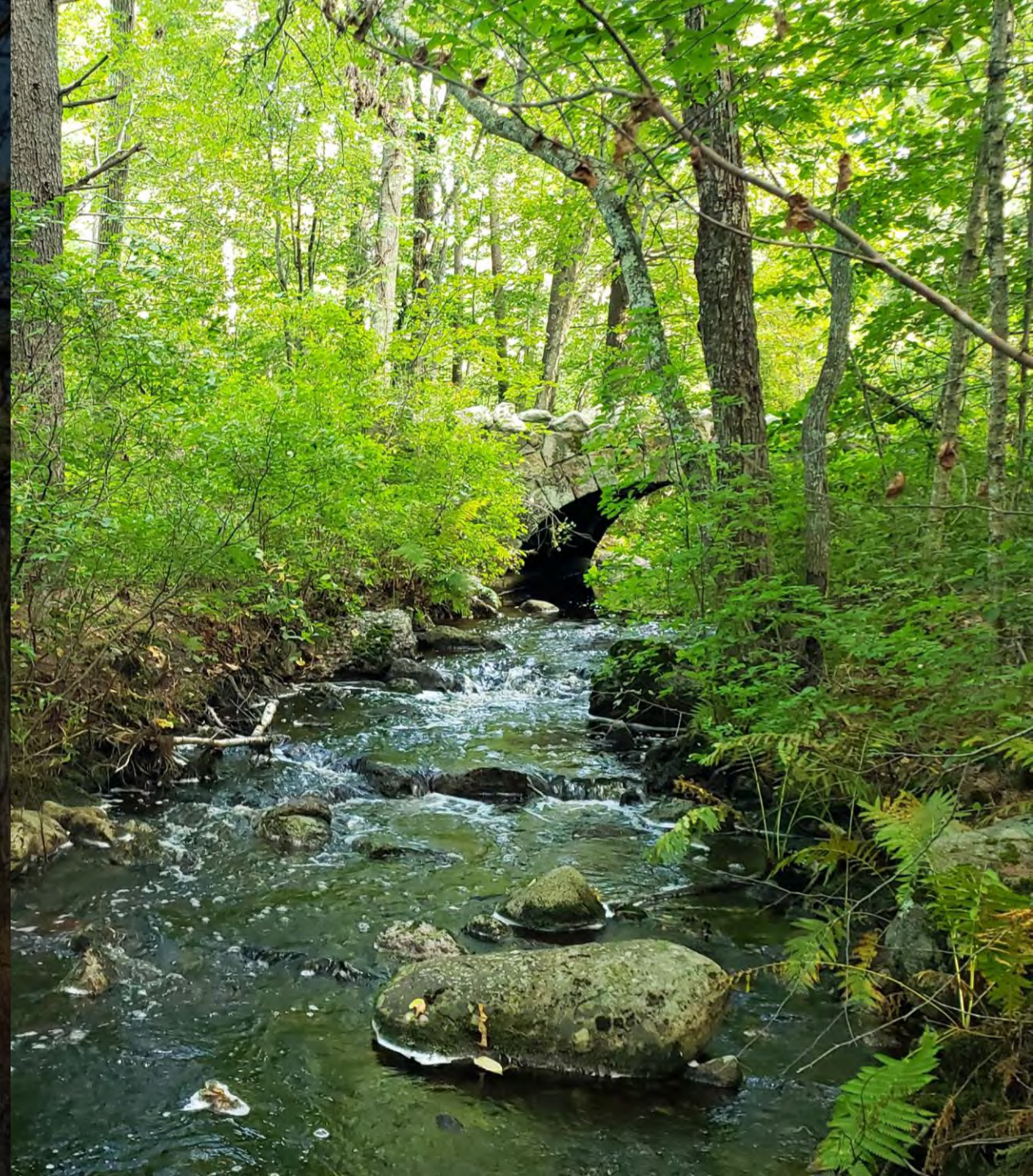
A year-round recreation destination that combines distinctive cultural and recreational resources with unique resource protection strategies.



Freetown – Fall River State Forest

Key Features:

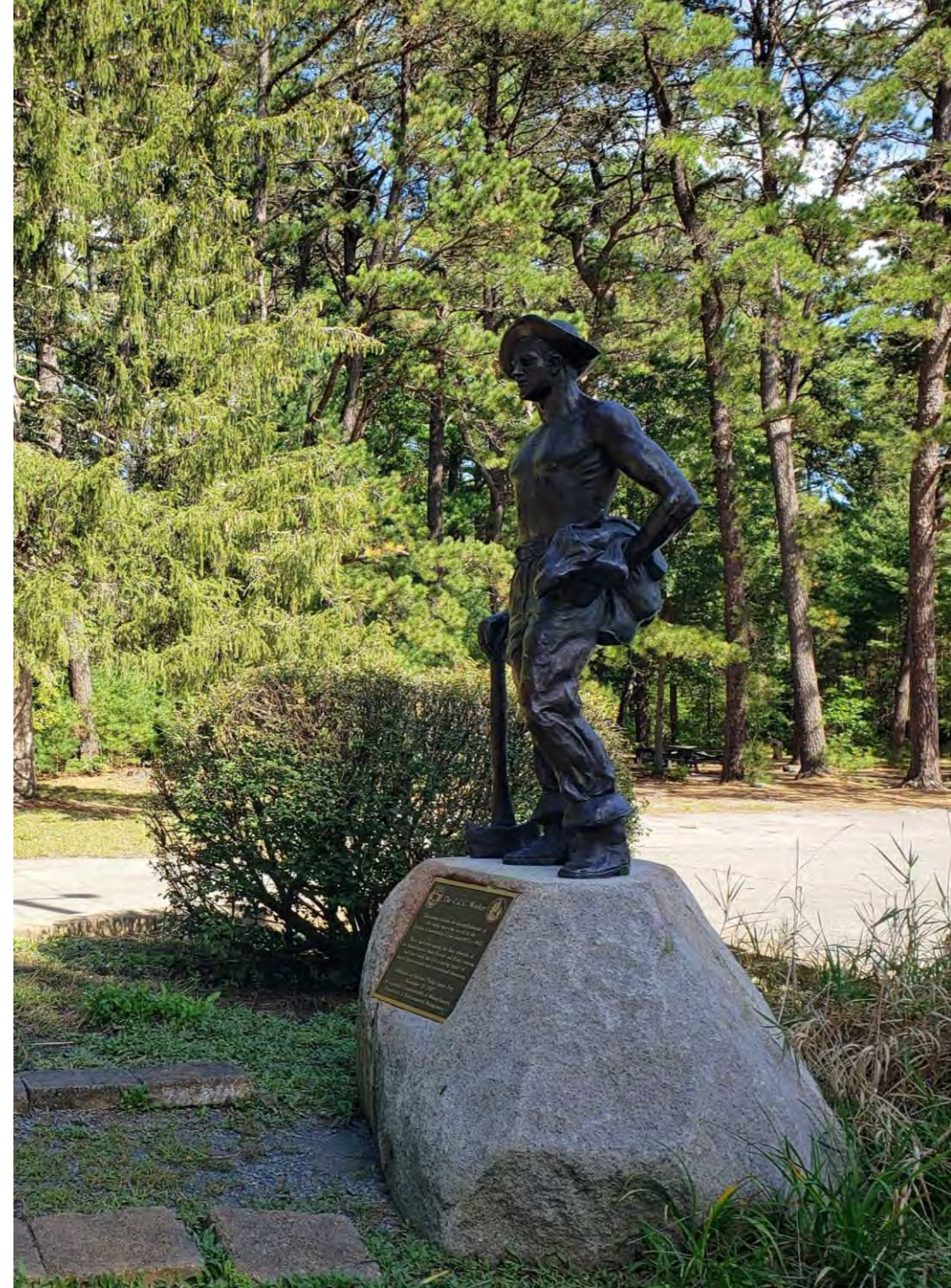
- Size (acres): 6,595.5
- Landscape Designation(s):
Woodland & Parkland
- Rare Species: 10
- Cultural Resources: 22
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Freetown – Fall River State Forest

Sample Recommendations:

- As mutually agreeable, meet with tribal representatives to discuss management issues within the Reservation, and ways to incorporate tribal knowledge and perspective into issues related to managing and interpreting portions of the Forest outside of the Reservation.
- Develop an interpretive plan for Freetown-Fall River and assess the possibility for interpretive staff to develop materials, signage, and activities for the public at the Forest, including Profile Rock. Work closely with the Assonet Band of the Wampanoag Nation.
- Continue to work with Bioreserve partners to update and implement Natural Resource, Cultural Resource, and Visitor Experience goals.
- Develop a comprehensive Trails Plan consistent with DCR Trails Guidelines and Best Practices and guidance in the Bioreserve Management Plan.



Massasoit State Park

An outdoor recreation destination that offers year-round day use and seasonal camping experiences.



Massasoit State Park

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 1,207.1
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 5, including 1 ESA listed species
- Cultural Resources: 8
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Massasoit State Park

Sample Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive management plan for the Big Bearhole Pond–Middle Pond–Lake Rico system to address hydrological, chemical, and physical inputs from both outside and within the Park, and outputs leaving the Park via Furnace Brook.
- Develop a monitoring program for rare species populations at Massasoit.
- Implement key recommendations from the 2020 Universal Access assessment.
- Redesign road segments and parking around the Contact Station to improve traffic flow, enhance park operations, and increase safety.
- Assess the need for a new restroom building specifically for use by day-use visitors.



Raynham State Forest

Permanently protects common natural resources and offers opportunities to engage in passive recreation.



Raynham State Forest

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 14.9
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 0
- Cultural Resources: 0
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Raynham State Forest

Sample Recommendations:

- Standard suite of park amenities (official trail, Welcome Wayside panel, Raynham State Forest web page).
- Resolve potential encroachments in accordance with draft Agency-wide guidance and Best Management Practices.



Sweets Knoll State Park

Protects significant natural and cultural resources associated with the Taunton, while providing public access to the river for passive recreation.



Sweets Knoll State Park

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 54.0
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 3, including 1 ESA listed species
- Cultural Resources: 3
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Sweets Knoll State Park

Sample Recommendations:

- Consult with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources, Dighton Historical Commission, and other potential partners, as appropriate, regarding all potential sub-surface impacts within archaeologically sensitive areas.
- Develop a mowing plan for existing trails and seek and obtain regulatory approval for ongoing activities.
- Finalize the design plan for the park entrance, parking area, building area, and car-top boat launch access. Implement as funding allows.
- Finalize the design plan for an accessible multi-use trail within the Park. Implement as funding allows.



Watson Pond State Park

Recreational opportunities on the tree-lined shore of a beautiful pond. Visitors come to enjoy swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, and playing on the playground and in the field area.



Watson Pond State Park

Key Features:

- Size (acres): 162.8
- Landscape Designation: Parkland
- Rare Species: 0
- Cultural Resources: 7
- Environmental Justice (acres): 0.0



Watson Pond State Park

Sample Recommendations:

- Conduct a study of the pond's aquatic impairments in order to provide a clearer picture of the threats facing the pond and to identify actionable steps for mitigation.
- Create a Master Plan for the Watson Pond day-use area to address many of the threats and opportunities identified in this document.
- Install additional gates and barricades along access roads and open areas in the north and west sections of the Park in order to block off entry points to prevent unauthorized OHV use, fires, and dumping.
- Assess the potential for a trails network on the north and west sides of the pond to “allow for the participation of individuals with disabilities to the extent possible.” If warranted, design and construct the trails network.



Questions and Comments



Additional Information

- Draft RMPs are available for review at:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/south-coast-district-rmps>
- Recording and tonight's slide deck will be available at:
www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings
- If you have comments on this project:
 - *Submit online:* www.mass.gov/dcr/public-comment
 - *Deadline: Friday, September 8, 2023*
Please note: the contents of comments submitted to DCR, including your name, town and zip code, will be posted on DCR's website. Additional contact information provided, notably email address, will only be used for outreach on future updates to the subject project or property.
- If you wish to subscribe to a DCR general information or project-related listserv: contact DCR's Office of Community Relations via email at
mass.parks@mass.gov