



Hiking trail at Wrentham State Forest. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

SECTION 8. FRANKLIN STATE FOREST

8.1. INTRODUCTION

Franklin State Forest is located in the towns of Franklin and Wrentham, near the intersection of Route 140 and Interstate 495. (Figure 8.1.1) It is located approximately 7 miles west of F. Gilbert Hills State Forest.

The Forest was established in 1935 in order to create a “recreation and forest improvement center for the entire region” (Hills 1955). The Massachusetts Department of Conservation acquired several cut over properties in the vicinity of Forge Hill, Franklin. A CCC Camp (S-90) was established on site, and forest improvements (e.g., road construction) and recreation development soon followed. When the CCC camp closed a few months after opening, there was no longer a ready source of labor. Roads and trails soon fell into disrepair and forestry activities were conducted less frequently.

Two disjunct properties were added to the forest in the late 1960s and early 1970s; both are located along Miscoe Brook. (Figure 8.1) In 1965 a small parcel (i.e., 15.9 acres) was acquired on South Street and in 1972 a 133 acre parcel was acquired on West Street. Unlike the Forge Hill section of the forest, which was acquired for forest improvement and

recreation, the properties along Miscoe Brook were acquired to protect the Brook and its floodplain.

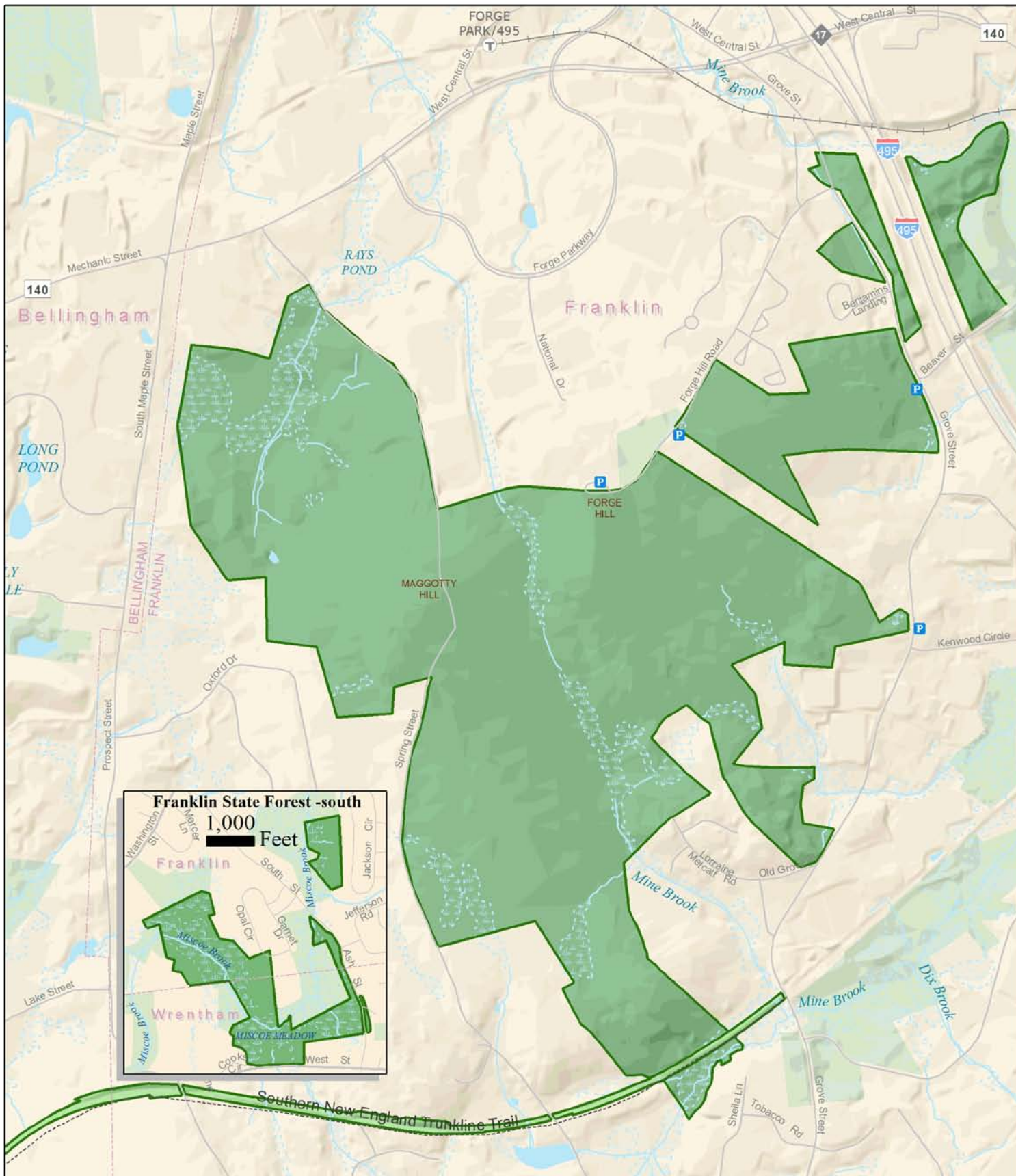
Franklin State Forest is best known for trail-based recreation including hiking, mountain biking, and the authorized use of Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs). The forest’s physical, political, and regulatory attributes are summarized in Table 8.1.1.

Table 8.1.1. Physical, political, and regulatory settings of Franklin State Forest.

Setting	Name or Metric
Location:	Franklin, Wrentham
Area (acres)^a:	874.81
Perimeter (miles)^a:	17.47
Landscape Designation(s)^b:	Parkland
Legislative Districts:	
House	9 th Norfolk 10 th Norfolk
Senate	Norfolk, Bristol, and Middlesex Second Middlesex and Norfolk
Regulatory Designations:	Priority Habitat

a. Calculated using a Geographic Information System (GIS).

b. For a summary of DCR’s landscape designations, see <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/ld/ld-factsheet-final.pdf>.



- Franklin State Forest
- Blue Hills Complex Land
- Other DCR Land
- Other Protected Open Space
- DCR Legal Interest
- Public Parking

Franklin State Forest

Figure 8.1.1

1,000 Feet



Geographic information provided by MassGIS and DCR GIS, 2016

Associated Properties. There is one associated property, it is:

- **Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT).** The eastern end of the SNETT passes through Franklin State Forest. It is managed as part of the Blackstone Complex and will be addressed in that complex's RMP.

The Forest and Park Supervisor from F. Gilbert Hills State Forest manages, as time and resources permit, several DCR properties, including F. Gilbert Hills State Forest (Section 6), Bristol Blake State Reservation (Section 7), Franklin State Forest, Wrentham State Forest (Section 9), Rehoboth State Forest (Section 10), West Bridgewater State Forest (Section 11), and Bridgewater State Forest (Section 12). They also oversee DCR's interests in Angle Tree Monument Reservation (Section 1).

8.2. NATURAL RESOURCES

Physical Features

The main section of the forest has a row of three hills along its northern boundary, adjacent to Forge Hill Road. The highest of these, Forge Hill, has an elevation of 426 feet above sea level. The other two hills are unnamed, and have elevations of 412 and 403 feet. Elevation decreases in all directions from this row of hills. One additional hill, Magotty Hill (374 feet), is located adjacent to the SNETT near this section's southern boundary. The forest's lowest elevation, 216 feet, is realized along Mine Brook near Chilson Park. The South Street portion of the forest ranges from 285 to 255 feet in elevation. The West Street section ranges in elevation from 324 to 265 feet.

Water Resources

The occurrence of water resources varies geographically within the forest. The main section of the forest is hilly, with wetlands located at lower elevations along the forest's periphery; four unnamed streams originate in these wetlands and flow out of the forest. Mine Brook flows through the southernmost part of this section (i.e., south of the SNETT). Miscoe Brook passes through the West Street section of the forest and near the South Street section; associated wetlands are common in both sections. These and other water resources are summarized in Table 8.2.1.

Table 8.2.1. Water resources of Franklin State Forest.

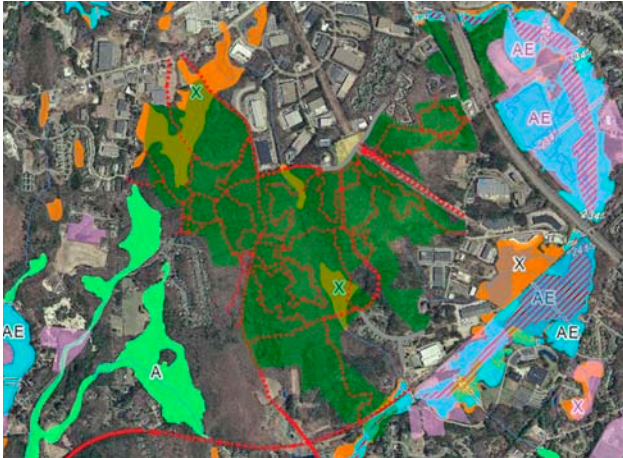
Water Resource	Name or Metric
Watershed:	Blackstone Charles
Aquifer:	
Medium Yield (acres)	22.16
High Yield (acres)	5.78
Rivers and Streams (miles)	1.27
Vernal Pools	
Certified (#)	1
Potential (#)	1
Wetlands (acres)	137.27
Lakes and Ponds (acres)	0.25

Less than 18% of the forest is susceptible to flooding. (Table 8.2.2) Areas along Mine and Miscoe Brooks are predicted to be inundated by 100-year floods. Wetlands that function as stream headwaters are predicted to be impacted by 500-year floods. There is no critical park infrastructure within the 100-year flood zone. Approximately 2,100 feet of multi-use trails are located in the 500-year flood zone; approximately 920 feet of which are open to OHVs.

Table 8.2.2. Potential impacts of flooding to Franklin State Forest.

Type of Impact	Acres	%
Flooding:		
100-year Storm	96.02	10.97
500-year Storm ^a	156.07	17.91

a. Cumulative value; includes 100-year storm impacts.



Predicted flooding at the main section of Franklin State Forest; the 100-year flood zone is represented in blue and light green, and the 500-year zone in orange. The forest is indicated in dark green, and its trails in red. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

Nearly all of the Forest's parcels along Miscoe Brook are within the 100-year flood zone. A variety of private, municipal, and federally-owned properties are also located along this brook.

Rare Species

State-listed Species

Only one state-listed species, the eastern box turtle, is known from Franklin State Forest. (Table 8.2.3) It is associated with fields, dry and moist woodlands, and a variety of wetlands (NHESP 2015b).

Table 8.2.3. State-listed species of Franklin State Forest, as identified by the NHESP.

Species ^{a, b}	Type ^c	MESA ^d
Eastern box turtle	R	SC

- Presented alphabetically, by common name.
- Fact sheets are available at: <http://www.mass.gov/cea/agencies/dfg/dfw/natural-heritage/species-information-and-conservation/mesa-list/list-of-rare-species-in-massachusetts.html>.
- Types of state-listed species include: A = Amphibian; B = Bird; I = Insect; P = Plant; and R = Reptile.
- Status of species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA): E = Endangered, SC = Special Concern; and T = Threatened.

Priority Habitat

There is little Priority Habitat (51.55 acres, 5.81%). It is entirely associated with the portion of the forest on the Franklin-Wrentham town line (i.e., former reforestation lot 224).

Vegetation

There has been no floristic inventory of this forest; information on its plants comes from ongoing forest monitoring efforts. (See *Forests*, below.)

Invasive Species

Invasive species have not been surveyed. One species was recorded in a CFI plot. (Table 8.2.4)

Table 8.2.4. Known invasive plants of Franklin State Forest.

Species ^a	Status ^b	Source ^c
Japanese barberry	I	1

- Presented alphabetically, by common name.
- Plants are classified as being either Invasive (I), Likely Invasive (L), or Potentially Invasive (P) according to MIPAG (2005).
- Information contained in this table was obtained from the following sources:
 - CFI data.

Natural Communities

Two natural communities have been identified. (Table 8.2.4) CFI data identify the upland areas as an Oak–Mixed forest, but this has not been assessed to determine if it is consistent with the Mixed Oak Forest community type described by Swain and Kearsley (2011).

Table 8.2.5. Known natural communities of Franklin State Forest.

Community Type ^a	System ^b	State Rank ^c	Source ^d
Red Maple Swamp	P	S5	1
Shrub Swamp	P	S3	1

- Classified according to Swain and Kearsley (2011).
- E = Estuarine, P = Palustrine, T = Terrestrial.
- The NHESP ranks communities from most rare (S1) to the most common (S5).
- Information contained in this table was obtained from the following sources:
 - DEP Wetlands (1:12,000) data layer.

Forests

Most of Franklin State Forest (733.49 acres, 83.85%) is covered in upland forest. As indicated by CFI data, these forests have a variable mixture of black, northern red, and white oak in the canopy with lesser amounts of white pine and red maple. Understory species include black huckleberry, low-bush blueberry, American beech, red maple, and white pine in the drier areas. In moister areas the understory also includes species commonly associated with wetlands such as sweet pepperbush, red maple, ferns, and high-bush blueberry. The age of mixed oak stands in CFI plots ranged from 65 to 72 years and Site Index values ranged from 49 to 79. Gypsy moth and white pine weevil damage is common.

The forest's red maple swamps are dominated by red maple with black gum, yellow birch, sugar maple, white pine, and black and white oaks present in lower numbers. The understory is diverse and includes such plants as ferns, sweet pepperbush, azalea, highbush blueberry, skunk cabbage, gold thread, sedges, viburnums, partridgeberry, and sassafras. In the drier parts of the red maple swamp upland species, such as white pine, black oak, black

cherry, and American hazelnut are also present. The age of red maple swamp stands in CFI plots ranged from 70 to 85 years and site index values ranged from 53 to 59.

Wildlife

Few formal surveys have been conducted. The Forest is identified as a birding hotspot by e-Bird and as of July 2016, 23 species have been recorded (eBird 2012). This information is preliminary and provides only an incomplete picture of the Forest's birds. Information is lacking on other taxa.

8.3. CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section describes the known and potential cultural resource areas, including pre-Contact and post-Contact archaeological resources, and historic landscapes, buildings, structures, and objects. An overview of significant events in the history of Franklin State Forest is presented in Table 8.3.1. Cultural Resources are identified in Table 8.3.2. There are no archaeological resources listed by the MHC for this forest.

Table 8.3.1. Significant events in the history of Franklin State Forest.

Year(s)	Events
1935	The Department of Conservation begins acquiring options to purchase land in the Forge Hill Area of Franklin. By summer, acquisitions begin in order to establish a "recreation and forest improvement center for the entire region" (Hills 1955a).
1935	CCC Camp S-90 established on east side of forest, at the end of Beaver Street.
1938	The CCC created Forge Pond picnic grove is damaged by a hurricane; it is never reopened.
1952	Forest acreage "about 869 acres" (Hills 1952).
1965	The Department of Public Works takes 18.5 acres (Parcel Number 1-27) for the construction of Route 495, which opens in 1969.
1965	A 15.9 acre parcel on South Street, along Miscoe Brook, is added to the forest.
1972	A 133 acre parcel on West Street, along Miscoe Brook, is acquired.
1989	A 15.7 acre parcel on Forge Hill Road is added to the forest.
1992	The Department of Environmental Management acquires 36.4 acres of land south of the main section of the state forest. This land, which includes Magotty Hill, establishes a connection between the forest and the Southern New England Trunkline Trail.

Table 8.3.2. Cultural resources of Franklin State Forest.

Resource	Type ^a	Date ^b	Condition ^c	Integrity ^d	In Use ^e	Utilities ^f	MHC # ^g	Guidance ^h
Franklin State Forest – CCC Camp	LA	1935	-	L	-	-	FRN.N	1, 2
Franklin State Forest – CCC Camp Road	ST	1935	4	M	-	-	FRN.909	2
Franklin State Forest – CCC Camp Water Supply	ST	1935	6	L	-	-	FRN.910	2
CCC Water Hole	ST	1935	4	M	-	-	-	3
Pond Family Farm	LA	ca. 1700	6	L	-	-	-	1, 2
Pond Farm Well	ST	ca. 1701	5	L	-	-	-	2
Moses Family Farm	LA	ca. 1701	-	L	-	-	-	1
New York & New England Rail Roadⁱ	LA	1847	-	L	-	-	-	2
South Franklin Local Historic District	LHD	18 th century– present	-	H	-	-	FRN.E	-
Additional Resources^j								
Indian Site	AR	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Trail – Colonial (3)	LA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Road – West Street	ST	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Road – South Street	ST	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Road – Spring Street	ST	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Colonial Cottage (2)	AR	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Old House Site (3)	AR	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Old mill site and forge	AR	-	-	-	-	-	-	3

- a. Resource types include the following: AR = Archaeological; BU = Building; CM = Cemetery; LA = Landscape; LHD = Local Historic District; NRHD = National Register Historic District; OB = Object; and ST = Structure.
- b. Date of construction provided, when known.
- c. Preliminary condition assessment using the building system and equipment condition codes as used in the Massachusetts Capital Asset management Information System (CAMIS). The following codes are used: 1 = Excellent-easily restorable to like new condition; 2 = Good-routine maintenance required; 3 = Adequate-some corrective and preventative maintenance required; 4 = Fair-excessive corrective maintenance and repair required; 5 = Poor-renovation needed; and 6 = Fail.
- d. Integrity is a relative assessment of the condition of a resource's retention of its historic character-defining features; H = High; L = Low; M = Medium; and U = Unknown.
- e. Use categories include N = No, building is not in use; S = Building is used on a seasonal basis; and Y = Yes, building is in use year-round.
- f. The following codes are used to identify utilities associated with buildings: E = Electric, H = Heat; I = Internet; S = Septic system; T = Telephone; W = Water; and W(S) = Water is available on a seasonal basis. This information is included for all buildings.
- g. Massachusetts Historical Commission inventory number; does not include Historic Archaeology numbers.
- h. The following guidance is offered for the ongoing maintenance of these cultural resources:
1. Refer to Vegetation in Historic Landscapes BMP (DCR n.d.e).
 2. Refer to Historic Landscapes - Built Features BMP (DCR n.d.d).
 3. Refer to Water holes BMP (DCR n.d.j).
 4. Refer to Archaeological Features BMP (DCR n.d.g)
- i. The railroad bed (i.e., the SNETT) is not in Franklin State Forest; it is an inholding that passes through the forest.
- j. Documented through the 1984/1985 Cultural Resources Evaluation Project but not yet field verified or confirmed.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Pre-Contact Resources

Franklin State Forest has not been surveyed archaeologically, and no pre-Contact sites have been recorded. Multiple pre-Contact sites are recorded surrounding a lake to the west of the Forest and within a wetland to the east of the Forest, both within one mile of the property. These sites date from the Early Archaic 9,000 years B.P. through to

the Late Woodland 450 B.P. Franklin State Forest has a high archaeological potential for pre-Contact sites. Any proposed below ground impacts must be reviewed by the DCR Archaeologist.

Post-Contact Resources

There are no recorded post-Contact archaeological sites within Franklin State Forest. Background research will determine if the forest is sensitive for locating historic period archaeological sites.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Franklin State Forest is a wooded area that has seen minimal development throughout its history. Considering the Forest's size, settlement of land and the introduction of infrastructure were kept to a minimum when compared to surrounding areas. The development and the introduction of infrastructure that did occur are associated with the following time periods.

- **18th and 19th Century Agrarian Life**; resources from this era are associated with the conversion of wooded areas into farms for agriculture and livestock.
- **18th and 19th Century Infrastructure**; resources from this era are associated with the early development of lands for purposes of travel
- **19th Century CCC/Department of Conservation/DEM Development**; resources from this era are associated with the development of wooded or agrarian lands into recreational facilities for the public.

Historic Landscapes

CCC Camp S-90. In 1935, the State began acquiring land for Franklin State Forest. That same year, the CCC established Camp S-90 along Grove Street, Franklin, within the Forest. This camp once contained multiple buildings that housed men, whose mission was to improve the nation's publically owned forests and parks. It shut down before any major recreation infrastructure was created, and the only two remaining structures are a road and a concrete cistern (i.e., water supply). Multiple building footprints are still visible; their level and squared appearance standing in stark contrast to the surrounding rugged terrain. The historic integrity for this resource is low. A water hole, originally intended to function as an artificial pond to hold water for firefighting, is located off Forge Hill Road.



This water hole at Franklin State Forest is believed to have been constructed by the CCC. The stone wall visible in the foreground and on the left side of this photo once encircled the entire water hole. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

Pond Family Farm. This landscape, which was once the location for a large dairy farm, was owned for multiple generations by the Pond Family. It is located in the northwest corner of the park, near South Maple Street. The farm's well is the only known remaining resource.

Moses Family Farm. This home site is located just west of the residential neighborhood on Lorraine Metcalf Road. A cellar hole is believed to be the only remaining resource; however, this information has not been field verified.

New York & New England Rail Road. This rail road was established in the mid-1800s; 90 years before the state forest. Throughout most of its history, the forest did not connect to the rail road and was little impacted by its presence. In 1992, the Forest expanded southward to include both the north and south shoulders of the railroad bed. The historic rail road bed is now part of the SNETT. Although the rails and ties are gone, the railroad bed and grade cuts remain visible. The Forest abuts the SNETT and the railroad bed.

South Franklin Local Historic District. Two of the Forest's parcels fall partially or wholly within the South Franklin Local Historic District. This district is significant for its abundance of 18th and early 19th century residential buildings clustered around the main thoroughfares of Washington and Union streets. Although there are no historic structures located within the Forest's parcels, their proximity to colonial housing stock suggests that they have been used by townspeople dating back to the early to mid-18th Century.

Buildings

There are no historic buildings.

Structures

There are no historic structures that are not associated with the CCC Camp S-90 historic landscape.

Objects

There are no known historic objects.

8.4. RECREATION RESOURCES

Recreation at Franklin State Forest is primarily trails based. There are few recreation resources that are not associated with the forest's trails. The following recreation activities take place:

- Bicycling, mountain
- Dog walking, on leash
- Geocaching (8 caches in the Forge Hill section and 1 in the West Street section as of July 2016)
- Hiking
- Hunting
- Nature study/Photography
- OHV use, dirt bikes only
- Running/Jogging
- Skiing, cross-country

Franklin State Forest is one of eight DCR parks where OHVs use is authorized; it is one of only four in eastern Massachusetts. The King Philip Trail Riders, a club that promotes off-road trail riding, conducts group motorcycle events under a one-year special permit.

Despite the provision of trails authorized for OHV use, and despite a productive relationship with the regional trail riding organization, illegal OHV use continues to take place in the Forest. As a result, environmental damage has occurred in portions of the forest not intended for OHV use. The greatest illegal use and damage appears to be in the portion of the Forest between Grove Street and Route 495.



The Forest and Park Supervisor from F. Gilbert Hills State Forest stands in an eroded trail created by illegal OHV use at Franklin State Forest. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

8.5. INFRASTRUCTURE

Property Boundary

The Forge Hill section of the forest generally lies within an area delimited by Route 140 to the North, Route I-495 to the east, Washington Street to the South, and Prospect Street, Franklin/South Maple Street, Bellingham to the west. Industrial, commercial, and high-density residential development borders the forest to the north, along Route 140. To the east is industrial development associated with Grove Street. This intensive development is associated with the nearby exchange on I-495. To the south and west is unprotected open space and limited residential development. The portion of the forest east of I-495 abuts Town of Franklin municipal property. The boundaries of the Forge Hill Section of the forest are marked. These boundaries were last marked in 2015.

The DCR is in discussions with the Town of Franklin to exchange 5.3 acres of State Forest adjacent to the Town's transfer station for 29.25 acres of undeveloped land abutting the Forge Hill Section of the Forest (Nutting 2014). As of this writing, no legislation has been filed regarding this matter.

The South Street section of the Forest is bordered by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property to the north. To the east, south, and west is residential development primarily constructed during the 1990s. The boundaries of this section are not marked.

The West Street section is bounded on the north by a residential development constructed in the late 2000s

and by open space owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Town of Franklin. To the east and south is low density residential development. Agricultural lands and other unprotected open space about the forest's west side. Boundary markings in this section are sparse or absent.

No easements were identified during the preparation of this RMP.

Buildings and Structures

There are no non-historic buildings. Three wooden bridges are associated with the trails system. (Table 8.5.1)

Roads

There are no public or administrative roads in the forest. The forest roads, including those constructed

or expanded by the CCC, are now classified as trails and are not included in Table 8.5.2. Information on the Forest's trails is presented elsewhere in this chapter.

Although the Forest's roads have become trails, and are now largely unnamed, a 1955 plan (Hills 1955a) identified the following roads as being in and around the Forest: Camp Road, CCC Road, Crooks Road, Ellsworth Road, Forge Hill Road, Pine Road, Pond Road, and Spring Street. Of these, only Spring Street and Forge Hill Street (sic) are identified on a 1951 map of the Forest (Hills 1951). Locations of the other named roads are unknown at this time.

Table 8.5.1. Non-historic buildings and structures of Franklin State Forest.

Location and Infrastructure	Date ^a	Condition ^b	In Use ^c	Utilities ^d
Forge Hill Area				
Trail bridges (3)	-	3-4	-	-

a. Date of construction provided, when known.

b. Preliminary condition assessment using the building system and equipment condition codes as used in the Massachusetts Capital Asset Management Information System (CAMIS). The following codes are used: 1 = Excellent-easily restorable to like new condition; 2 = Good-routine maintenance required; 3 = Adequate-some corrective and preventative maintenance required; 4 = Fair-excessive corrective maintenance and repair required; 5 = Poor-renovation needed; and 6 = Fail.

c. Use categories include N = No, building is not in use; S = Building is used on a seasonal basis; and Y = Yes, building is in use year-round.

d. The following codes are used to identify utilities associated with buildings: E = Electric, H = Heat; I = Internet; S = Septic system; T = Telephone; W = Water; and W(S) = Water is available on a seasonal basis. This information is included for all buildings.

Parking

There is no formal parking lot within the Forest. Parking for the Forge Hill portion of the Forest is available at four locations. (Table 8.5.2) A paved parking lot, associated with the Town of Franklin's water tank at 781 Forge Hill Road, functions as the forest's main lot. During the summer months, the adjacent YMCA uses the area, under agreement with the Town, temporarily eliminating parking at this location. Roadside parking is available on Forge Hill Road opposite the entrance to the Hockomock YMCA, near the intersection of Grove Street and Kenwood Circle, and at the trailhead at the intersection of Grove and Beaver Streets. There is no parking for other sections of the Forest.

Table 8.5.2. Number of public parking spaces, by location and type, at Franklin State Forest.^a

Location	HP	Restricted	Other	Total
71 Forge Hill Road ^b	0	0	13	13
Forge Hill Road – Opposite YMCA ^b	0	0	4	4
Grove Street – Opposite Beaver Street	0	0	2	2
Grove Street ^b	0	0	4	4
Total	0	0	23	23

a. Based on the number of potential 9-foot-wide spaces.

b. This lot is not on DCR property.



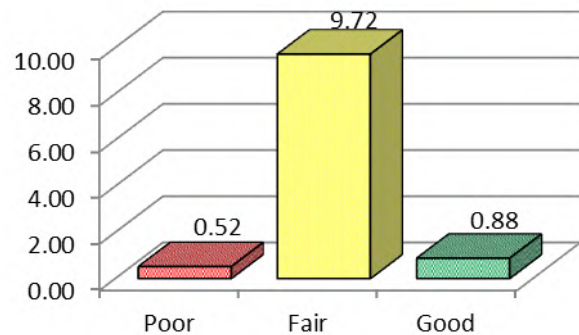
This municipal parking area (right) at the top of Forge Hill is the main parking area for visitors to Franklin State Forest. During the summer, this area is used by the YMCA for its summer camp and is not available to park visitors. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

Trails

There are 11.12 miles of official trails in the Forest, all are multi-use (Figure 8.5.1). Approximately 7.81 miles of these trails are open to motorized use (i.e., motorcycles). A one-mile-long Healthy Heart Trail loop begins and ends at the Grove Street trailhead.

An additional 1.82 miles of unauthorized user-created trails have also been documented.

Figure 8.5.1. Condition and length of official trails at Franklin State Forest.^a



Several roads that pre-date the creation of the Forest, or were constructed or expanded by the CCC, are located within the Forge Hill section and are now part of the trails system. They are intended to provide vehicle access for fighting fires. However, most are no longer accessible to emergency vehicles. Erosion and vegetative growth have made them impassible to anything but pedestrians, cyclists, and OHV riders.

An initial assessment of the Forest's trails (DCR 2015) identified the following five management issues:

- Poor separation and distinction between trails open to motorized use and those closed to motorized use.
- Lack of clear signage and markings to distinguish trails open to motorized use from those closed to motorized use.
- A confusing and inaccurate trails map.
- Numerous access points from adjacent properties.
- Most trails are classified as being in "Fair" condition.

Current trail markings are primarily to indicate which trail segments are open to OHV use and which are not.

Some of the Forest's trails connect to adjacent properties. A segment of multi-use trail passes over Maggotty Hill and connects to the SNETT. There is no trailhead or intersection sign at this intersection. Trail segments also extend from the Forest, across private lands, to connect to Spring Street, West Central Street, and Benjamin Landing Lane in Franklin, and South Maple Street in Bellingham. Other segments leave the Forest, cross private land, and then reconnect to the Forest's trails.

Kiosks and Signs

The Forest's Main Identification Sign is located at the intersection of Grove and Beaver streets, Franklin; there is no kiosk. A sign identifying OHV regulations is located at the trailhead on Forge Hill. Map boards are located along the OHV loop on Forge Hill, near the Main Identification Sign at the intersection of Grove and Beaver streets, and near the forest's boundary with Lorraine Metcalf Road, Franklin. An identification sign bearing the legend "Southern New England Trunkline Trail Franklin State Forest" is located on the SNETT near Grove Street; it is not on Franklin State Forest.



The Forest's Main Identification sign; limited parking is available on the road shoulder in front of this sign. (See Appendix K for photo information.)

Iron Ranger

An iron ranger is located at the Grove Street trailhead; it was installed in July 2016.

Memorials and Markers

There are no known memorials and markers. However, the Forest has not been inventoried for these markers, so some may be present.

8.6. INTERPRETATION

There is no regular interpretive programming, and there are no interpretive panels. Occasional programming is provided by the Visitors Services Supervisor from Borderland State Park.

8.7. MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

Staffing

DCR Personnel

This property is unstaffed. The Forest and Park Supervisor from F. Gilbert Hills is responsible for its operation and maintenance.

Partnerships and Volunteers

The Foxborough-Wrentham-Franklin State Forests Advisory Council was formed during the preparation of the GOALS Plan (DEM 1989). It remains active, and provides advice and assistance on a variety of topics and projects. The King Philip Trail Riders is a motorcycle club that promotes off-road riding and works to ensure the continued availability of off-road recreational opportunities. Club members individually and collectively ride at Franklin State Forest and help maintain its trails.

Safety

The Franklin and Wrentham fire departments provide fire response and emergency services. Additional fire response is provided by personnel from DCR's Fire District 4, which is based at F. G. Hills. Municipal police departments, the Massachusetts State Police (Station H-3, Foxborough), and the Massachusetts Environmental Police (Region C-7) provide law enforcement.

Funding

Conservation Trust Fund

There are no Conservation Trust Fund revenues dedicated to Franklin State Forest.

Retained Revenue

The park does not generate or retain revenue; there are no access or parking fees.

Other Revenues

There are no other revenues.

8.8. MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Management of DCR properties is guided by a variety of regulations, policies, BMPs (e.g., Table 8.3.2), legal agreements, and institutional knowledge. This section describes those practices unique to the management of Franklin State Forest. Legal agreements unique to the reservation are listed in Table 8.8.1.

Table 8.8.1. Key legal agreements for Franklin State Forest.

Party and Subject of Agreement	Type ^a	Expiration Date ^b
King Philip Trail Riders Use of off-road vehicles in F. Gilbert Hills, Franklin, and Wrentham State Forests.	A	2003

- a. Agreement types include: A = Memorandum of Agreement; C = Conservation Easement; E = Easement; L = Lease; P = Permit; S = Special Use Permit; U=Memorandum of Understanding.
- b. Year that agreement expires.

Key planning documents are identified in Table 8.8.2.

Table 8.8.2. Key management and guidance documents for Franklin State Forest.

Author and Document	Year
Department of Environmental Management F. Gilbert Hills State Forest: Guidelines for Operations and Land Stewardship.	1989
Gannett Fleming, Inc. Environmental Audit Report: Franklin State Forest, Franklin, Massachusetts.	1998

Annual Maintenance

Ongoing management practices are typically performed on an as needed basis. These activities are identified in Table 8.8.3.

Table 8.8.3. Annual cycle of management activities at Franklin State Forest.

Activity	Spring ^a	Summer ^a	Fall ^a	Winter ^a
Litter removal - Trails	E7	E7	AN	AN
Pruning - Trees and shrubs	AN	AN	AN	N/A

- a. Frequency codes are: A = Annually; AN = As needed; D = Daily, # times; E = Every # days; N/A = Not applicable.

Natural Resources

Water Resources

There are no water management activities.

Rare Species

There are no rare species monitoring or management activities.

Invasive Species

There is no monitoring or management of invasive plants.

Vegetation

There are six CFI plots; they were last monitored in 2010.

Wildlife

MassWildlife stocks trout in Miscoe Brook in Franklin once each the spring. Under DCR's Forest and Park Regulations (302 CMR 12.11), fishing and hunting is allowed in the forest.

Cultural Resources

There are no management practices unique to this forest.

Recreation Resources

The F. Gilbert Hills Forest and Park Supervisor, with the assistance of volunteers, maintains trails and trail markings on an as needed basis.

Infrastructure

Boundary

The Forest and Park Supervisor from F. Gilbert Hills and the Regional Forester maintain the boundaries.

Buildings and Structures

There are no buildings to repair or maintain.

Roads

There are no ongoing road maintenance activities.

Parking Areas

Because parking is on adjacent Town of Franklin property, the DCR does not maintain the parking area.

Trails

The Forest's motorcycle trails are maintained by volunteers from the King Philip Trail Riders. Motorcyclists are restricted to an approximately eight-mile-long designated OHV trail. Their riding season extends from May 1 through the last Sunday in November. Mountain bikes are allowed on trails designated for their use, as well as OHV trails, on a year-round basis. Pedestrians are allowed on all trails year-round. Use of OHV trails is unidirectional for all user groups; trail markings indicate the direction of travel.

Kiosks and Signs

The Forest and Park Supervisor from F. Gilbert Hills maintains the OHV regulation sign at the Forge Hill Road trailhead. There is no kiosk to maintain.

8.9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This section provides recommendations for the near- and long-term management of Franklin State Forest. Applied Land Stewardship Zoning recommendations provide general guidance for managing these properties. Future activities and projects should be checked against the zoning map (Figure 8.9.1) for consistency. Management recommendations are all high-priority, and should be addressed as soon as resources become available.

Applied Land Stewardship Zoning (Figure 8.9.1)

The following Land Stewardship Zoning is recommended.

Zone 1

- No sections of Franklin State Forest have been designated Zone 1.

Zone 2

- All areas not specifically designated as Zone 3.

Zone 3

The following portions of Franklin State Forest have been designated Zone 3.

- A 30 by 300 foot section along the south shoulder of Forge Hill Road, east of the municipal parcel currently used for Forest parking; for potential development of a roadside parking area.

Significant Feature Overlay

An OHV trail management significant feature overlay was developed for the Forest. This overlay follows the centerline of trails currently open to OHVs, and extends outward to the limits of the pre-existing road bed or trail (i.e., it does not include areas expanded by OHV use.) Special trail management activities are associated with the trails in this overlay.

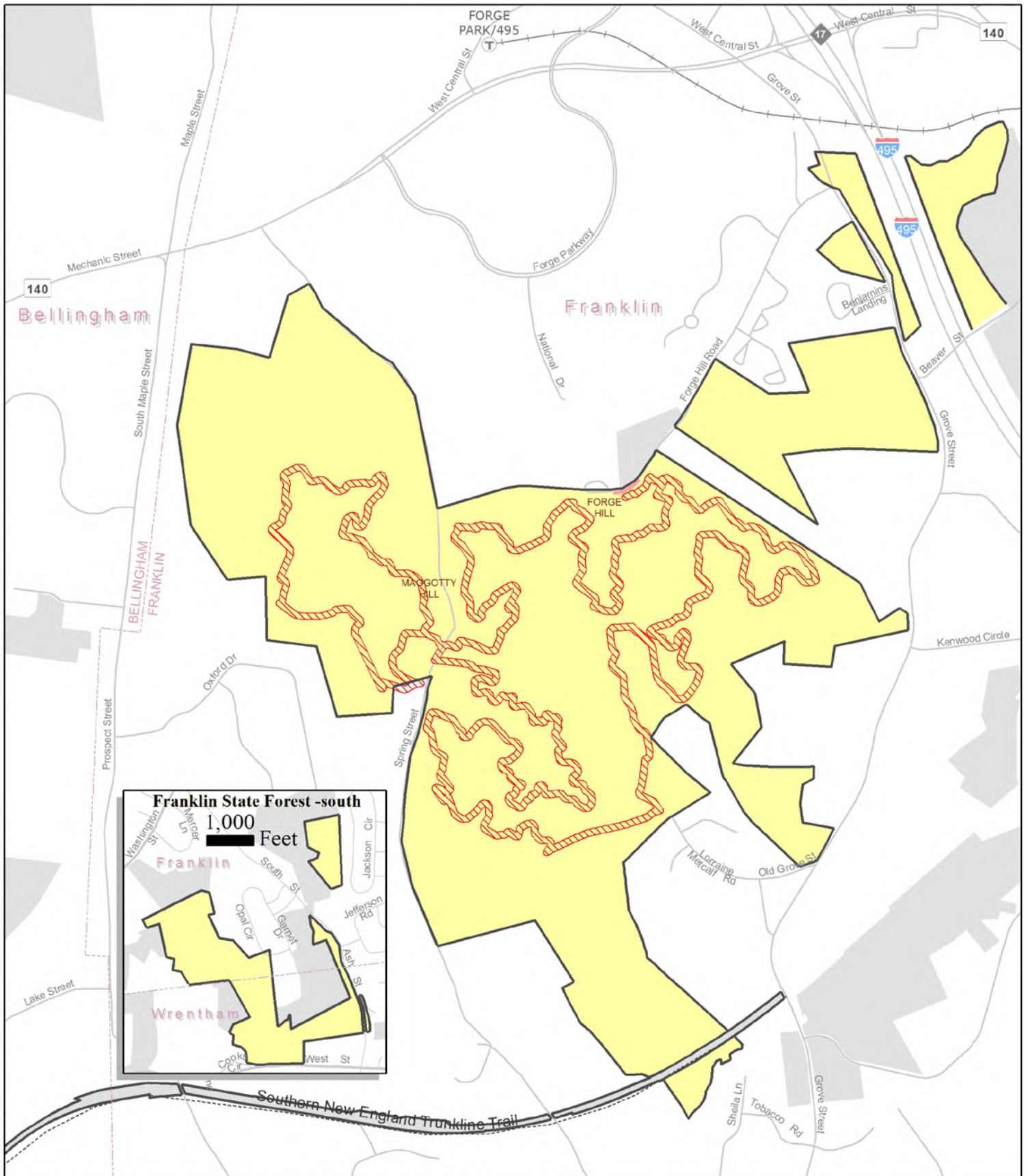
Management Recommendations

Three priority management recommendations were developed for Franklin State Forest. (Table 8.9.1) For a recommendation to be considered priority it must address one or more of the following criteria:

- Regulatory compliance or compliance with legal agreements.
- Threats to the health and safety of park visitors and employees.
- The imminent loss of a natural, cultural, or recreation resource.

Additional maintenance and management needs observed during the preparation of this RMP, but not meeting one or more of the above criteria, are not included in this plan.

All recommendations are of equal priority.



Legend

- Franklin State Forest
- Other Legal Interest - DCR
- Other Protected Open Space

Land Stewardship Zoning

- Zone 1
- Zone 2
- Zone 3
- OHV Significance Overlay

Scale

1,000 Feet

Franklin State Forest

Figure 8.9.1

Recommended Land Stewardship Zoning

Geographic information provided by MassGIS and DCR GIS, 2016

LOCUS

dcr
Massachusetts

Table 8.9.1. Priority recommendations for Franklin State Forest.

Recommendation	Implementation ^a
Implement recommendations identified in <i>Rapid Assessment and Trail System Recommendations</i> (DCR 20015).	P, R, V
Reopen main trails (i.e., fire roads) to emergency vehicles by clearing brush and repairing heavily eroded areas.	F, R
Establish an updated agreement with the King Philip Trail Riders for the use of off-road vehicles in F. Gilbert Hills, Franklin, and Wrentham State Forests.	L, R, V
<p>a. The following codes identify the party or parties responsible for implementing the recommendations: B = Bureau of Ranger Services; C = Contractor; D = Office of Dam Safety; E = Division of Engineering; F = Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry; L = Legal Services; O = Other; P = Bureau of Planning, Design & Resource Protection; R = Regional and district staff; S = Park Support Operations; U = Universal Access Program; V = Volunteer or partner; and X = Office of External Affairs and Partnerships.</p>	

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