



DCR Watershed Protection Program Updates

MWRA Advisory Board

February 15, 2024

John Scannell, Director

Division of Water Supply Protection



Watershed Protection Program

Watershed Activities guided by the 5- year Watershed Protection Plan

- **New Plan approved by DEP in June 2023**
- **Adopted July 2023**
- **Plan covers FY 24-28**



Watershed Control Programs

- ▶ **Land Acquisition**
- ▶ **Watershed Preservation Restrictions**
- ▶ **Land Management**
- ▶ **Wildlife Management**
- ▶ **Public Access Management**
- ▶ **Watershed Security**
- ▶ **Infrastructure**
- ▶ **Watershed Protection Act**
- ▶ **Education and Outreach**
- ▶ **Water Quality and Hydrologic Monitoring**
- ▶ **Watershed Monitoring and Assessment**
- ▶ **Aquatic Invasive Species**
- ▶ **Wastewater Management**
- ▶ **Stormwater Management**
- ▶ **Emergency Response**
- ▶ **GIS**



Recent and Ongoing Highlights\Updates

- Hiring
- Salt Program
- Public Access Plans
- Forestry
- GIS Accomplishments
- Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- Pottapaug Invasive Plant
- Quabbin Park Deer Hunt



Hiring Success

- Finally at a place where we are just backfilling vacancies as they arise.
- Thankful for all the support and to the amazing efforts of our hiring managers and EEA Human Resources staff
- FTE:
 - Full-staff = 151
 - Current = 148



Salt Reduction Program





Two New Videos on Making Salt Brine and Use of Salt

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/dcr-watershed-system-salt-reduction>

Lots of Media coverage

- **Globe**
- **Governor asked questions about use at her home**





Other Education and Training

- ▶ Concentrated effort on DCR educational programs to include additional messaging on the dangers of salt use and promote behavioral changes that would reduce use
- ▶ “Salt Smarter” information poster for kiosks and online
- ▶ Changing public expectations is a necessary component of long-term success
- ▶ Reducing salt does not mean reducing public safety!

dcrc
Massachusetts
**SALT SMARTER
NOT HARDER!**
WAYS TO REDUCE SALT USE

THE PROBLEM WITH ROAD SALT
When salt is put down on a road, it doesn't go away. It washes into waterways or seeps into the ground, contaminating reservoirs and underground wells.
Salt put down on the road today can be found in drinking water up to a decade later!

DID YOU KNOW? ABOUT 30% OF SALT USED IS WASTED
By using salt in a smarter way, we can stay safe and reduce the harm to our water, wildlife, and the environment.

MORE SALT DOESN'T MELT ICE FASTER
More isn't better. A 12 oz coffee mug full of rock salt is enough to treat a 20 foot driveway. Make sure there is space between the grains.

SAVE MONEY AND SWEEP UP EXTRA
Sweep up any leftover salt to use in the next storm.

USE BRINE
Try making a brine solution and use a sprayer to pretreat pavement. Liquid can melt ice faster than granular salt and it sticks instead of scatters. Lower salt concentrations are less damaging to fish, wildlife and drinking water.

STAY HOME DURING A STORM
This option, if possible, allows snow removal crews time and space to make the roads safer for you today and your drinking water ten years from now.

CHECK WITH YOUR TOWN
Has your town started to pretreat roads with brine? Pretreating can reduce salt use by 30%.
By Salting Smarter, Not Harder we can remain safe on the roads, save money, and improve our drinking water quality.

For more information, watch the Great Salt Reduction video: <https://youtu.be/5r9rE1kR9wI>

DCR, Division of Water Supply Protection



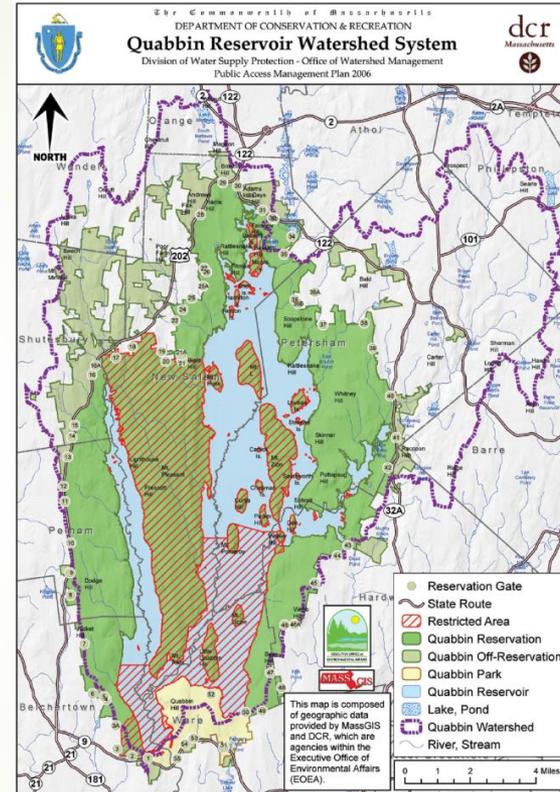
Salt Reduction Grant Program

- ▶ 4th year of grants aimed at Wachusett watershed towns
- ▶ Intent is to start towns on path to better practices
- ▶ Total grant distribution of \$199,000 on 12 grants to date.

Public Access Management Plans



- Each of the 4 watersheds has a Public Access Management Plan
- Plans are updated every 10 years
- Plans identify what activities recreational activities are allowed/not allowed on watershed lands, where each can occur, the threats from activities





Public Access Management Plan Updates

- Ware River Plan Update finally complete
 - Process began in summer 2018
 - Lots of work with stakeholder groups
 - Re-initiated in Fall 2022.
 - Plan finalized Fall 2023
- Wachusett Plan Update complete Spring 2023



Public Access Management Plan Updates

- Ware River Plan Improvements
 - Hours of Access: Watershed no longer open 24/7. Dawn to dusk
 - Trails consolidated to eliminate redundant trails and makes trails multi-use.
 - Only 2 group horse ride permits annually
 - Number of road miles open to vehicles reduced from 18 to 8.
 - Comet Pond swimming, including open water swimming, allowed from Beach only
 - Long Pond large motor permits reduced to 50



Forests as Climate Solutions Update

- Climate Forestry Committee issued Report in late December
- EEA and its Agencies are developing “response” to the recommendations
- DCR is reviewing paused projects for consistency and expects to move forward in early spring



GIS Project Highlights

- ▶ Two new public-facing applications:
 - ▶ Hunter App
 - ▶ Public Access App coming in Spring
 - ▶ EQA staff tools



DCR-DWSP Hunting Map

[Home](#)

[Hunting Information](#)

[Maps](#)

[Hunter Feedback](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Sunrise/Sunset Information](#)



[Get Hunt Info](#)

Hunting Info.

Review important hunting information before visiting.



[View Map](#)

Hunting Map

Interactive map of hunting opportunities on DWSP lands.



[View Map](#)

Harvest Map

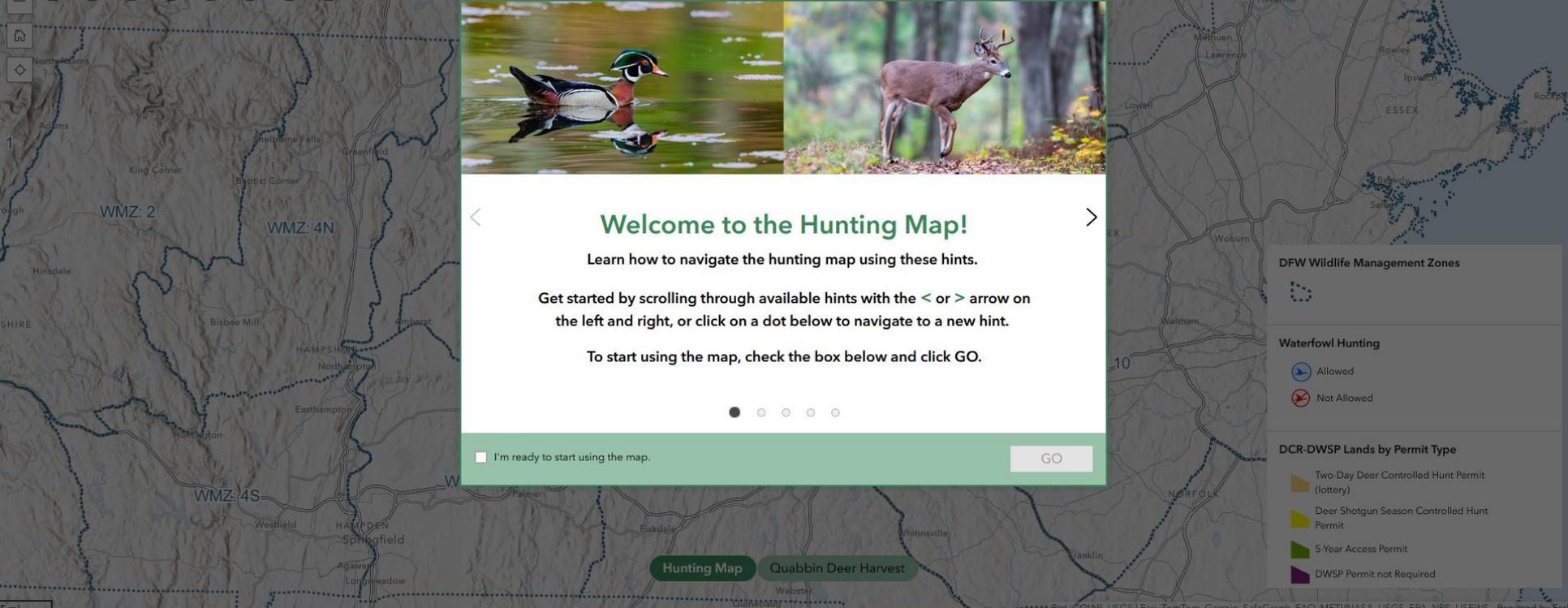
Interactive map of deer harvests from Quabbin Controlled Hunt.



[Feedback](#)

Hunter Feedback

Complete feedback form to provide info on activity and interests.



Welcome to the Hunting Map!

Learn how to navigate the hunting map using these hints.

Get started by scrolling through available hints with the < or > arrow on the left and right, or click on a dot below to navigate to a new hint.

To start using the map, check the box below and click GO.



I'm ready to start using the map.

GO

Find address or place

DFW Wildlife Management Zones



Waterfowl Hunting

- Allowed
- Not Allowed

DCR-DWSP Lands by Permit Type

-  Two Day Deer Controlled Hunt Permit (lottery)
-  Deer Shotgun Season Controlled Hunt Permit
-  5-Year Access Permit
-  DWSP Permit not Required

[Hunting Map](#)

[Quabbin Deer Harvest](#)



DCR-DWSP Hunting Map

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Thank you for your interest and participation in hunting/trapping on DWSP watersheds!

The **DCR - Division of Water Supply Protection** (DWSP) owns, protects and manages over 140,000 acres across the Quabbin, Ware River, Wachusett and Sudbury watersheds, with the goal of protecting the excellent source water that provides drinking water for over 3 million people in 51 communities across the Commonwealth.

Sports men and women play a significant role in helping to protect water quality on the watersheds, and hunting/trapping is important for the management and conservation of wildlife and natural resources. Of particular interest to the watersheds is deer management; deer hunting helps reduce impacts from over browsing of tree seedlings and saplings, which can impact the forests' ability to regenerate. Keeping the deer population at a sustainable level helps to **promote a healthy, resilient, and diverse forest** that continuously protects water quality by reducing erosion, and filtering sediments, nutrients and pollutants. While we put much of our focus on deer hunting, many other game species can be hunted/trapped in designated areas of the watersheds.

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) hunting regulations are in place on DWSP properties. Please refer to the [MassWildlife Hunting Regulations website](#) for [annual license requirements](#), bag limits, hunt dates and other pertinent information. **Additional rules are in place on DWSP lands to protect the watershed resources.** These DWSP rules may change over time to accommodate adjustments in [watershed access plans](#), [land management plans](#), and an adaptive wildlife management approach.

Waterfowl Hunting:

Due to 313 CMR 11.00 bodily contact with surface waters are prohibited in the watersheds. This restricts the ability of a hunter to retrieve his or her game. Therefore, in most cases, waterfowl hunting is not allowed on DWSP property. However, there are some limited opportunities to waterfowl hunt on DWSP property. Please visit the [Hunting Map](#) for these locations.

Please refer to the [DWSP hunt website](#) for the most up-to-date information about hunting, trapping, and the access permits required for these activities on DWSP lands. Some general information about permits is on the Permit Info tab.

Access Hours:

Access on DWSP property is one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. This will be strictly enforced.

Please be respectful of our neighbors while hunting on DWSP lands. Hunting setbacks are:

- 150 feet from any state or hard surfaced road
- 500 feet from any occupied dwelling
- or as designated on the [Hunting Map](#)

These setbacks are areas where possession of a loaded firearm or hunting by any means is prohibited, except as permitted by the owner or occupant of the dwelling.





DCR-DWSP Hunting Map

[Home](#)

[Hunting Information](#)

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[Hunter Feedback](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Thank you for providing feedback about the DCR Water Supply Hunts.

Please let us get some information about where and what you hunt. This information provides the DCR-DWSP Natural Resources section with information about [hunter activity](#) and interests in the watersheds.

Which watershed are you hunting in?*

Please select one option; if you hunt in multiple DCR Water Supply properties, please choose the one you visit most frequently, or please submit another survey for each watershed you hunt in.

-Please select-

Is this your first time hunting on DCR Water Supply property?*



Yes



No

What game do you hunt for on DCR Water Supply property?*

Please select all game species which you are targeting during your hunts on Water Supply property.

Click the check box to the left of the species to select it.

-Please select-

Do you have feedback for DCR-DWSP?*

If you are interested in providing feedback on this website, the maps, or any other aspect of



DCR-DWSP Public Access Maps

[Home](#)

[Important Information](#)

[Maps](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Sunrise/Sunset Information](#)



[Get Info](#)

Important Info.

Review important public access information before visiting.



[View Map](#)

Fishing Map

Interactive map of fishing opportunities on DWSP lands.



[View Map](#)

Access Map

Interactive map of public access opportunities on DWSP lands.



[View Site](#)

DCR Website

Return to the DCR-DWSP website on mass.gov.



DCR-DWSP Public Access Maps

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[Permit and License Info](#)

[Aquatic Invasive Species](#)

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Dogs:

There are **no dogs** allowed on most DWSP lands, however they are allowed in the Ware River Watershed. We have created a list of alternative dog-friendly locations to help you find somewhere to walk your canine friend, which you can find [here](#).

Access Hours:

Access on DWSP property is one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. This will be strictly enforced.

Winter Access:

Starting in late fall or early winter and running through early spring, some Quabbin Park and Ware River roads may be closed due to unsafe driving conditions or snow.

Please be respectful while visiting DWSP lands:

- Please respect our neighbors by not trespassing on private property.
- Please stay on trails and roads - **do not** create an illegal trail as this poses a risk to others getting lost, and negatively impacts water quality.

Hunting:

These maps do not include information on hunting or trapping; for more information about hunting or trapping on DWSP lands, please visit our [website](#) or the [Hunting Map](#) for more information.

NO Service, NO Problem - Take the DWSP Public Access Map and Fishing Map with you!

Using the free app - [ArcGIS Field Maps](#) - you can download a copy of the Public Access and/or Fishing Maps to take with you on your mobile device. This is great when you are planning to recreate somewhere remote that has **no cell service** (like the Quabbin or Ware River watersheds). [Click here to learn how!](#)

Disclaimer: *The data in this map is provided for informational and planning purposes only. It is not intended to be used for authoritative definition of legal boundaries, and the user should understand that parcel representations generally are not based on property surveys. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, DCR, and DWSP assume no responsibility for loss or damage incurred as a result of any user's reliance on this data; DWSP are not responsible for the misuse or misrepresentation of the data presented in these maps. Components of this map are amended regularly. All maps and other material provided herein are protected by copyright. Permission is granted to copy and use the materials herein.*





DCR-DWSP Public Access Maps

[Home](#)

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- Find Recreation Opportunities
- Walking and Hiking Trails
 - Major Trails and Rail Trails
 - Bicycling/Mountain Biking Trails
 - Equestrian Trails
 - Year-Round Vehicle Access Roads
 - Cross Country Skiing Trails
 - Snowmobile Trails



[Public Access Map](#)

[Fishing Map](#)

10 mi

Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS | MassGIS, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs | Massachusetts Department... Powered by Esri



DCR-DWSP Public Access Maps

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Map interface showing fishing opportunities in the DCR-DWSP region. The map displays various water bodies and public access points, color-coded according to fishing regulations. A sidebar on the left allows users to filter fishing opportunities by activity type and season. A legend on the right explains the color coding and symbols used on the map.

Find Fishing Opportunities

- Fishing Allowed
- Boats Allowed
- Shoreline Fishing Allowed
- Wading Allowed
- Night Fishing Allowed
- Ice Fishing Allowed
- Waterbodies by Season
 - Fishing is Allowed, AND
 - Season is:
 - Select an option from the list
- Shoreline/Rivers by Season
 - Fishing is Allowed, AND

Fishing Opportunities

- Fishing Allowed
 - Fishing Allowed
 - No Fishing Allowed

Shoreline and River Access

Allowed Activities

- Shoreline Fishing
- Fishing with Waders
- Canoe/Kayak Allowed
- Shoreline Fishing, Canoe/Kayak Allowed
- Fishing with Waders, Canoe/Kayak Allowed
- Shoreline Fishing, Fishing with Waders, Canoe/Kayak Allowed

5 mi

Public Access Map Fishing Map

Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS | MassGIS. Powered by Esri



dcr EQA Reporting Tools

Generate More EQA Tables

Step 2: District Attributes Analysis

Tools	History
District Attribute Table	
Select FILTERED Subbasins Layer (filtered by district) •	ⓘ
<input type="text" value="+ Layer"/>	
Select DCR-DWSP Property Layer •	ⓘ
<input type="text" value="+ Layer"/>	
Select Streams Layer for your Region •	ⓘ
<input type="text" value="+ Layer"/>	
Set an Output File Name •	ⓘ
<input type="text" value="DistrictAttributes_Table"/>	
<input type="button" value="Run"/>	

Legend:

- Watershed Boundaries (Blue outline)
- EQ Districts and Subbasins (Red outline)
- DCR-DWSP Property (Green fill)

10 mi

Powered by Esri



DWSP Climate Vulnerability Assessment





CCVA Project Objectives:

- Identify and assess the condition of DWSP forest and other natural assets.
 - ponds, rivers, streams, aquifers, and other associated upland features such as soils, watershed forests, and wetlands
- Evaluate the vulnerability of watershed forests and other natural assets in the context of the exposure to extreme weather and climate effects, and adaptive capacity.
- Develop a methodology(s) for analyzing the vulnerability of assets to risk projections.
 - *precipitation, temperature, extreme weather (snow, ice, wind), wildfire, drought, landslides, and other available projections.*

Based on the 2020 Asset Management Framework for Forested and Natural Assets report by the Water Research Foundation



Overall Goal: This project will proactively identify the vulnerability of forest and other natural assets at the sub-watershed scale under future climate scenarios.

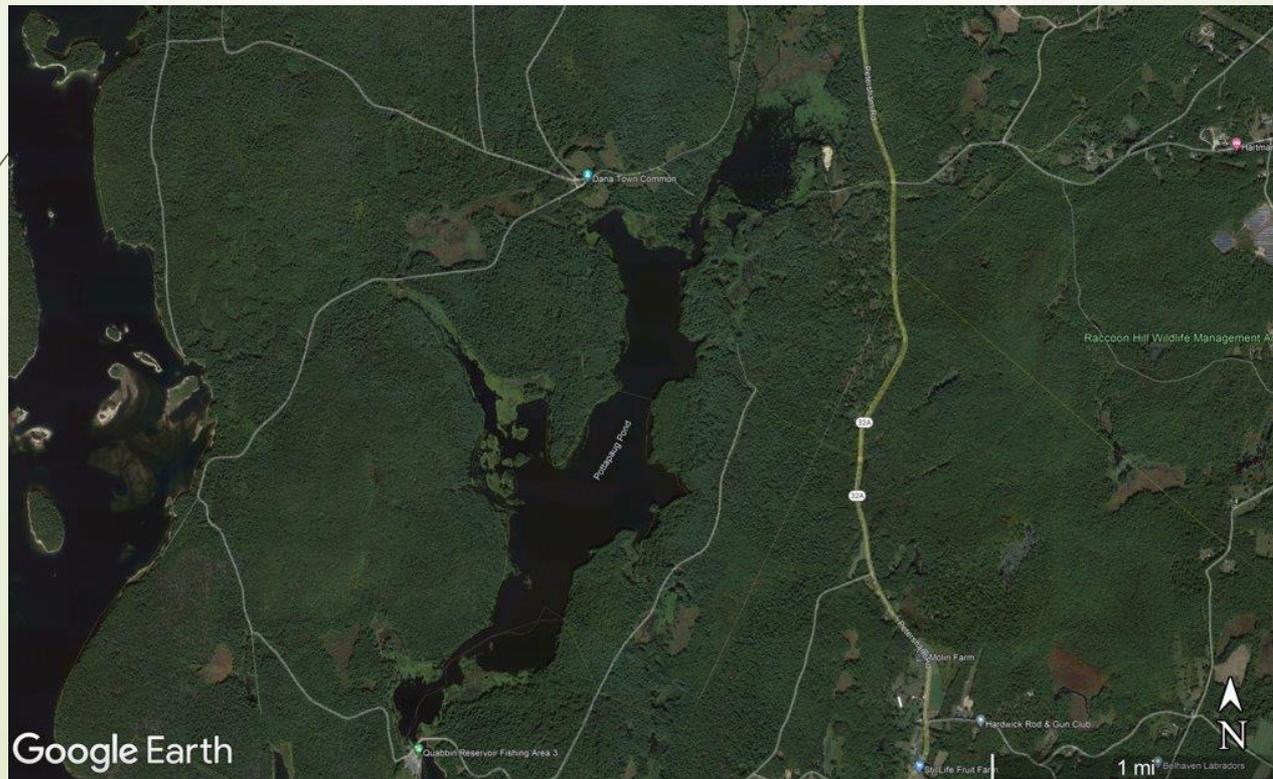
- The Division will implement a multi-phase asset management planning approach with the ultimate goal of finding opportunities to:
 - Enhance forest and other natural asset resilience.
 - Implement climate adaptation strategies.
 - Guide the prioritization of capital planning decisions and designs.

Timeline:

- Identify and assess the condition of DWSP forest and other natural assets (Phase 1). *Complete by June 30th 2024.*
- Model vulnerability and estimate costs and qualitative consequences of water quality under future conditions. (Phase 2) *Complete by June 30th 2025.*



Pottapaug Invasive Plant Discovery





Swollen Bladderwort discovered May 2023

- DCR biologists did some survey for plant followed by 2 days of hand-harvesting of plants
- Launching of private boats halted over concerns about spread of plant in June
- MWRA contractor came on board and did 2 days of hand harvesting
- Spring is best time to identify and pull plants
- DCR developing a plan over winter
- MWRA contract will return in Spring



Quabbin Park Deer Hunt

- Hunt needed to allow for forest regeneration in Park
- Deer estimates exceed 50 deer/sq mi. Desired is under 20 deer/ sq mi
- Proposed hunt in 2019. Halted due to legislative inquiry
- Finally held 2-day deer hunt in Quabbin Park in December.
- Hunt will be annual until number drop to reasonable levels
- Very successful:
 - 72 hunters
 - 37 deer taken (32 female)



Questions?