



**WATER SUPPLY CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
to the Mass. Water Resources Authority

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WSCAC June 10th, 2025 In-person Meeting Minutes

Meeting time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Location: Blue Meadow Conference Center, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

WSCAC Members in Attendance in Bold:

- **Christine Bennett**, MWRA Advisory Board
- William Copithorne, Town of Arlington
- Steven Daunais, Tata & Howard
- Bill Fadden, OARS
- **Bill Kiley**, BWSC
- **Paul Lauenstein**, Neponset (Chair)
- **Paul Rybicki**, Partially Supplied Community
- **Martin Pillsbury**, MAPC
- **Janet Rothrock**, League of Women Voters
- Bill Merriam, Framingham resident, Foss reservoir abutter
- Erin Bonney Casey, Ipswich River Watershed Association
- Ralph Abele, Charles River Watershed Association
- Matt Brown, OARS
- **Warren Kimball**, Nashua River Watershed Association

Non-Members in Attendance:

- **Michael O’Keefe**, MWRA
- **John Scannell**, DCR
- **Dan Clark**, DCR
- **Ken MacKenzie**, DCR
- **Ken Canfield**, DCR
- **Brian Keegan**, DCR
- **Andreae Downs**, WAC
- **Lydia Olson**, Mass Rivers Alliance
- **Heather Clish**, Mass Rivers Alliance
- **Bill Pula**, QWAC
- **Marie Siri**, Belchertown
- **Moussa Siri**, WSCAC Executive Director

I. Introduction (Moussa Siri, WSCAC) (5 minutes)

Moussa Siri, at the beginning, indicated that the meeting was being recorded for meeting minutes and thanked all participants for attending the meeting. He indicated that this meeting was an opportunity to discuss with DCR and learn from their work. Moussa encouraged a collaborative work between WSCAC and DCR, as working together is preferable to being in a conflictual situation.

Moussa also introduced the agenda, indicated that the WSCAC Water Conservation Subcommittee was working on a comments letter on the Drought Bill, and the report about the subcommittee meeting from Paul Rybicki, the subcommittee chair. Attendees introduced themselves, and Moussa then passed it on to Paul Lauenstein, the WSCAC Chair, to lead the vote to approve the May 13th Meeting Minutes..

II. WSCAC Businesses (20 minutes)

- a. Votes to approve May 13th Meeting Minutes and other (Paul Lauenstein, WSCAC Chair)

Paul Lauenstein checked the quorum during the attendees' introduction, then called for a motion to approve the May 13th meeting minutes.

Christine Bennett made a motion to approve the meeting minutes

Bill Kiley seconded the motion

No further discussion, and the meeting minutes were approved unanimously by those present and voting.

Paul Lauenstein called Paul Rybicki to provide a quick summary of the Water Conservation Subcommittee, including the letter of support to the Drought Bill H.1003/S.586.

- b. Water Conservation Subcommittee Updates

Paul Rybicki, Chair of WSCAC Water Conservation Subcommittee, invited all attendees to bring anyone they may know to this effort, energy, and brainstorm, not to reinvent anything because many efforts have already been undertaken in water conservation, but to try to maximize, work with, and collaborate with the right people to try to get the daily use down and be better adapted for the highly variable future that we know is the reality of climate change, and precipitation swings are going to be bigger.

He also added that people are billed in most cases using cubic feet. For him, people who are getting billed in 100 cubic feet don't necessarily know what is happening. He suggested using units like gallons, providing more real-time information, and better flow, without the confusion of large dollar amounts.

In the effort of improving water, Paul Rybicki also indicated that WSCAC will be working on a presentation to suggest the best ideas WSCAC can bring to the Water Conservation Meeting sometime in the late fall. He added that the goal is not just to have endless meetings to discuss water conservation, but to come up with the best, easiest, economical, and smart ways to save millions of

gallons of water without much pain. It has been successful in the past, and he is convinced there are numerous opportunities there.

After Paul Rybicki's summary of a part of the subcommittee meeting exchanges, Paul Lauenstein took over to lead the letter of support to the Drought Bill H.1003/S.586.

From his notes, Paul Lauenstein stated that on May 28th, at the meeting of WSCAC's Water Conservation Subcommittee, we discussed the drought bill filed in the state legislature. The Drought Bill, Bill H.1003/S.586, is an Act Relative to Maintaining Adequate Water Supplies through Effective Drought Management. This drought bill would empower the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs to require towns to limit non-essential outdoor water use based on drought levels determined by the Drought Management Task Force.

Paul added that currently, the Secretary can only make non-binding recommendations that towns limit non-essential outdoor water use during a drought. On June 3rd, the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources held a hearing on the drought bill and allowed two more weeks for written comments. Two letters have been drafted by different members of WSCAC's Water Conservation Subcommittee for approval at the WSCAC meeting today, one supporting the bill and one recommending significant changes to the bill.

Paul indicated that the Water Conservation Subcommittee has not yet had an opportunity to meet to discuss these two letters and recommend one or the other to WSCAC for approval, or some hybrid of the two. As WSCAC Chair, I would entertain a motion to postpone a vote today to submit one or the other of these two letters to the Joint Committee until the Water Conservation Subcommittee has made a recommendation to WSCAC as a whole.

Paul Lauenstein, after his comments, asked for a motion and a second, to allow a period for discussion and then a vote on the motion to table the letter, so members can have the opportunity to discuss and maybe air out a few ideas. Paul suggested that most of the work on the letter would be done out in the subcommittee, and then a recommendation would be made to WSCAC. Warren Kimball made the motion that the committee table the letter for now for further discussion. Bill Kiley seconded the motion.

Now's the time for further discussion. Paul indicated that Heather and Lydia from the Mass Rivers Alliance were present, and Christine Bennett had also contributed significantly to the project. He asked them to briefly share their perspective on this, explaining where they're coming from.

Christine Bennett was the first one to jump in. After thanking Lydia for offering to draft a letter at the subcommittee level, Christine discussed the tight time frame for meeting the testimony window, given that the hearing was held on the 3rd, and this was greatly appreciated.

Christine added that when she read the draft, she hadn't had the opportunity prior to that meeting to really read the legislation and also read the background and put it into context with other recent changes to water management at the state level, primarily through the Water Management Act and DEP, which is very specific, has specific guidelines about drought management for MWA communities. So, within that context, Christine indicated that she didn't see any recognition of the

larger legislative context we're working under, so she tried to draft a letter that addressed it. And in so doing, she examined a bill that, despite its simplicity, contained some oversights.

One, it did not allow for any changes to the composition of the committee that would be on the drought management task force. That can be particularly dangerous in a world where divisions can be consolidated at the state level, allowing non-profits to combine efforts or change their name. It had no flexibility written into that.

That was a very good suggestion to add to what was a very supportive letter for this creation and formalizing a drought management task force at the state level under the offices of the Secretary. The other part was pointing out that legislators had already passed a significant update to the Water Management Act not too long ago.

Christine concluded by emphasizing the need for caution and awareness, noting that the state has a variety of water supplies that shouldn't be evaluated solely on their merits or the science behind them. Not all of them respond the same way to a drought. Not all of them have. Does water use during a drought affect the ecology around it? Christine wanted the letter to be put into a little deeper context and provide some nuance in addition to strong support for the actual bill.

Heather Clish, after introducing herself as the new Policy Director at Mass Rivers Alliance, explained that a number of supportive and wonderful testimonies were given in person at the hearing on June 3rd. She also wanted to clarify that the bill currently being heard is the same version that was passed by the Senate last year.

Heather added that the bill included a new clause that allows the Secretary flexibility to, if the Drought Management Task Force declares a drought, actually pare down and hone in on that drought region. In their opinion, the MWRA in particular allows tremendous flexibility to partner with the state and align its drought management plan with state requirements. That is specifically in there, so it actually becomes not a one-size-fits-all in the context of creating more uniformity, consistency, and understandability for everybody across the state.

That's an interesting point. The Drought Management Task Force codifies its membership, ensuring it's grounded in science and the agencies. The DCR Stewardship Council is another example where membership is consecrated in law. I participated for 12 years. Heather added that it never became a problem, even as organizational leadership changed and agencies changed. She thought that it makes great sense to codify the Drought Management Task Force into law so that there is predictability in the body of knowledge that is coming to advise on drought, especially when we get to the time when and the times when recommendations and actually then with the Secretary, the requirements for reductions in non-essential outdoor water use continue.

Heather added that, in her understanding, the Water Management Act's regulations were updated, but the Act itself remained unchanged since the last version of this bill. She hoped that WICAC could support the bill in the same manner as last session.

She added that the bill has been refined; it includes some compromise language, and she thinks it brings it much closer to something that should work well for everybody, especially given the context that WSCAC supported it last time around.

Regarding the deadline for submitting the letter, Heather noted that if it cannot be sent by next Tuesday, it can still be sent to all committee members, and it would still be beneficial to have it on record.

Moussa noted that the previous year, an option to comment was not provided. Instead, it was required to sign jointly to approve or support the bill. The signature was provided after not hearing any opposition from members.

After the discussion was completed, five out of six voted to postpone the letter to the subcommittee, and the votes would be provided by email. There was one opposition to postponing the discussion. The final letter was adopted by the majority and sent out to the Committee.

III. Briefings (30 minutes)

a. WSCAC Briefing (Moussa Siri)

Moussa Siri provided a quick update on the 2026 fiscal year meeting agenda, reminded people about the Advisory Board field tour and the September 18, 2025, joint meeting. Moussa added that the plan is to have the Water Resources Commission from the state come and talk about the stormwater management, water conservation standards, etc., at the state level. He also called members for input on topics they would like to hear about in FY26.

He also indicated that the November meeting will be an in-person meeting instead of virtual, because the committee needs to vote on the executive committee members. We need to review the membership slots to clarify who the WSCAC should recruit to join the committee. The current list is a bit confusing, and as Abele would say, it's an educational institution, but who should I look for there? You have some titles, but you're unsure what specific person WSCAC should be looking for in that institution.

Moussa also talked about the bylaws. He reminded members that they need to review the WSCAC bylaws regularly, as new information is often discovered during these reviews.

The bylaws require the Executive Committee (ExCom) to be renewed annually in November. Moussa noted that the decline in both WSCAC membership and executive committee members has reduced the capacity to achieve a quorum in emergency meetings (especially for the ExCom). He added that the WSCAC chair is automatically an ExCom member, and the current members are Paul Lauenstein (WSCAC Chair), Bill Fadden (who was not at the meeting), Janet Rothrock, Warren Campbell (who was appointed last year), and Jerry Eves (who we heard later had passed away).

Moussa called members to join the ExCom. Moussa indicated that, based on the MWRA-WSCAC agreement, all vacancy that occurs shall be filled in the same manner and in accordance with the MWRA-WSCAC agreement, which requires joint work with WSCAC and MWRA. WSCAC cannot go alone and decide.

Moussa also reminded members to pay attention to the violation of the open meeting law by avoiding sharing opinions through emails.

b. Wastewater Advisory Committee (WAC) Briefing (Andreae Downs)

Andreae indicated that they have just finished their planning meeting, setting their schedule along with the joint meeting, and discussed priorities for next year. Her updates included:

- The news on our side is that Stephen Green has retired. Stephen was a member of WAC and the chair of WAC for over 20 years, so it's a big loss of institutional memory for them.
- Looking at a number of things, and they may do a tour, there are two options for our May tour, one is Chelsea Creek, and also looking at some of the equipment that's used to maintain interceptors, and cyclones, interceptors are the big pipes that go along the river to intercept sewage that otherwise would be, and traditionally was, dumped into the river, or into a body of water, siphons.
- Continuing to work on getting a wipes labeling bill passed on Beacon Hill, they're one of the biggest clogs we have, rule of thumb, three things in the pipes besides water, poo, pee, and toilet paper (for details about this, please get in touch with Moussa). Her comments included clogging of pipelines due to non-flushable wipes and also brought up PFAS as part of the problem.

c. Advisory Board Briefing (Christine Bennett, Advisory Board)

- Christine Bennett stated that the Advisory Board (AB) just completed its statutorily required analysis, review, and recommendations of the MWRA budget, which is a role they play as the constructive critic for the MWRA:
 - Catch on with it in terms of suggestions, observations, and recommendations.
 - Comment on this year was watershed forest management, and reiterated even more strongly than in the past, our deep support and commitment to the active forest management of the watershed lands, because of the role that it plays in maintaining the forest filter that allows the MWRA to avoid a mechanical filtration system
 - If the filtration waiver is lost, it would not only be a large monetary impact for the rate payers, but it would also have a very large climate impact, as well as building a plant, we would be powering it with energy and emitting carbon.
 - One of the first recommendations being made is that MWRA speak to DCR about working with a science communicator because we recognize that this work is long-term. It often elicits a visceral emotional response within the community from those unfamiliar with the biology, ecology, and mechanics of active forest management, let alone the specific goal.
 - The second one was that we felt that, likewise, DCR could help to facilitate an independent assessment of your progress towards the long-term objective of a resilient,

multi-age, multi-species forest. That's something that benefits this region in the long term, as it has one of the most robust data sets in continuous forest inventory, which could be utilized by a graduate student at nearby Amherst or UMass Amherst. There's a great wealth of knowledge, expertise, and metadata that could help bring a rational assessment to this conversation happening in the public sphere, in the papers, and in conversations.

- AB's concern is that if these objections, these emotional responses, these complaints, aren't actually met with a response, they gain momentum, in the old adage that, don't ever underestimate the small group of people to change the world, because that's the only way it has happened. They use the AB new multimedia tool, which we call ABTV, which is a podcasting, both audio and video, to communicate these ideas (already launched two episodes of ABTV, one of which is a 17-minute actual video piece that chronicles the DASH, the Diver-Assisted Suction Harvesting, that's happening in the Wachusett Reservoir, etc.). For any details related to Christine Bennett's briefing, please get in touch with Moussa Siri.

d. MWRA Briefing (Michael O'Keefe, MWRA) (10 minutes)

Michael O'Keefe indicated that the MWRA, on climate change, is in the middle of a series of presentations to the board on its sustainability efforts. This included:

- A presentation in April on our greenhouse reduction work we've done. MWRA has reduced its greenhouse gases by 41%.
- Michael's was scheduled to present the next week from the meeting day on our resiliency efforts. His presentation would focus on the MWRA's efforts to protect its coastal facilities from sea level rise, as well as its strategies for safeguarding the water supply and outlining plans.
- Another presentation later this summer, to talk about the MWRA's whole energy management program and how that fits in with its greenhouse gas reduction plans.

Michael added a few other things, which are:

- The completion of the consumer confidence reports, of course, the water quality reports were all completed, which reports should be mailed out in the next few weeks, but they will also be available on the MWRA website in the next few days.
- The start of the Quabbin to the Wachusett water transfer, the day before the WSCAC meeting, at a rate of 220 million gallons a day.
- In addition to the water quality benefits, the Oakdale hydro turbine is running again, so it is producing renewable energy that we put back into the grid.

- Then lastly, to address the question on the fluoride, “What will we do if the CDC stops recommending the use of the fluoride?” Michael O’Keefe indicated that MWRA takes its guidance from the State Department of Health and DEP. They actually had an update last week, earlier in June, that reiterated that the use of fluoride at a 0.7 milligrams per liter, which is what we aim for, really promotes dental health in the state. It's nowhere near the levels that some of the people are talking about, where there's a negative effect. So we go by state recommendations. He added that in the past, there was a vote where all of our customer communities voted on using fluoride. So if that were to change sometime in the future, where all of the MWRA communities come together and decide not to use fluoride, then they can address that. For questions and answers, please get in touch with the WSCAC office if any details are needed.

IV. Presentation: Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)/Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) Forest Management Update

a. DWSP Invasive Plant Management (graph below)

Ken Mackenzie

Ken, from DCR, introduced the presentation, noting that they had combined the invasive species briefing from the briefings into the presentation, as invasive species would be part of the DCR forest management program.

- Not a ton to give on invasive species, but a couple of slides here to provide some background.
- Working on a plan right now called the Invasive Plant Strategy that was formalized in 2001.
- Highlight this picture here to keep this in the back of your mind. This is from the Sudbury Reservoir from last year. It's an area where the ash trees have all died.



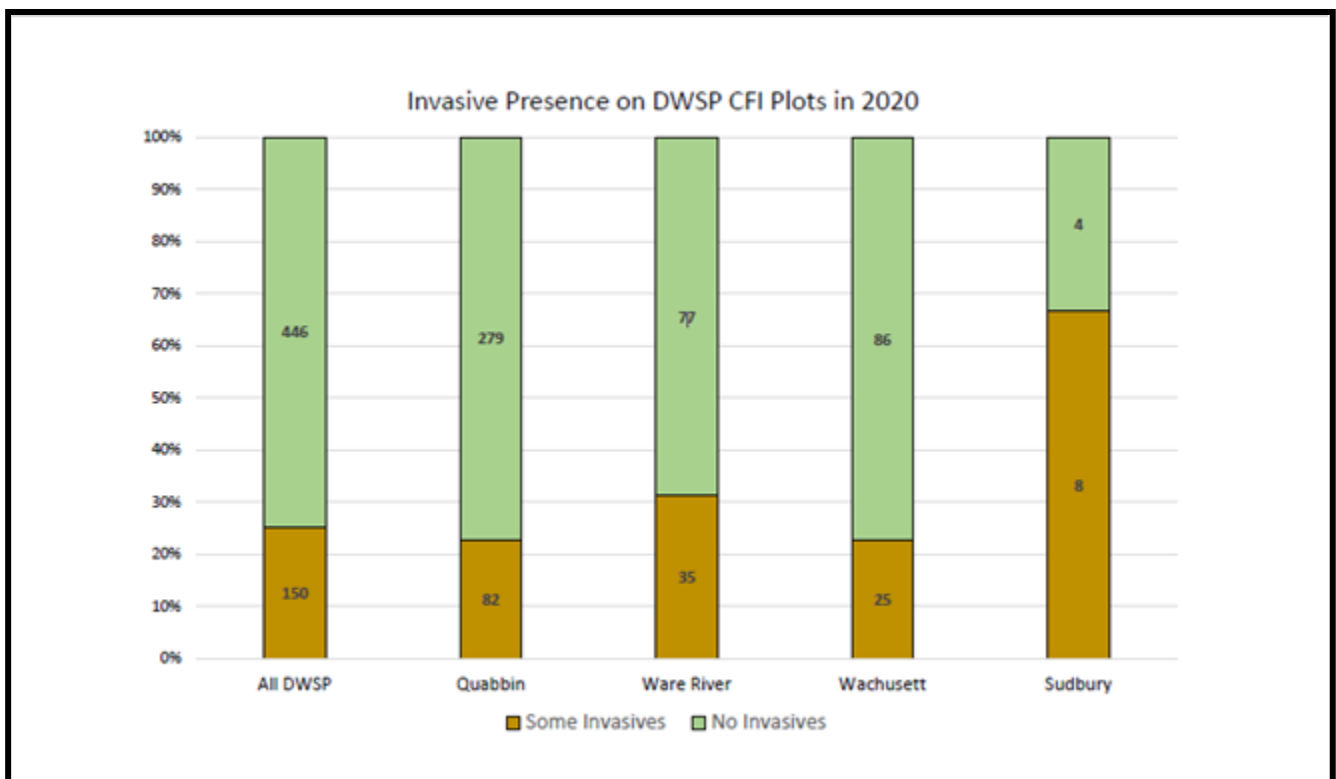
- Some spongy moths were previously noticed, gypsy moth mortality was there too, and invasive species were underneath (just a visualization of an actual water supply property).
- This visualization is in the East, in Sudbury, which needs a lot of help: bittersweet had grown up in the trees so much that looking at the LIDAR, it looks like a closed canopy.

1. 2011 Terrestrial Invasive Plant Management Strategy

- a. **Outlines the pervasive issue of terrestrial invasive plants** across its water supply watersheds.
- b. **Defines invasive species**, details **federal and state mandates** for their control, and **analyzes the environmental problems** they cause, such as inhibiting native plant regeneration and impacting biodiversity.
- c. Explores various **management principles**, including mechanical, chemical, and biological control methods, and discusses their **relative costs and efficacy** through past pilot programs.
- d. **Establishes priorities for invasive plant management on DWSP lands**,

2. 2025 DWSP Invasive Plant Management

- a. Updated strategy for managing terrestrial invasive and interfering plants emphasizing watershed resiliency and drinking water quality.
 - i. Challenges of climate change and the critical long-term need to maintain the forest filter
- b. It builds upon the 2011 Strategy: focusing on integrated vegetation management:
- c. Risks posed by invasive plants and establishes priorities for future actions: Data-driven management
 - i. Protect: promptly identifying and eliminating newly detected invasive species.
 - ii. Control: established invasive and interfering plants effectively enough to allow for species-diverse forest regeneration



- b. DWSP Forest Management

Brian Keevan

- Before we were talking about climate change, before we were talking about the risks and things that will happen from a changing climate, there was Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest that was already doing this sort of stuff in the 1960s, where they looked at watershed management from a water supply perspective.
- They did a paired watershed study where they cut and cleared 100% of 100 acres in a watershed that flowed. You can actually see the stream that flows down in. And they conducted side-by-side experiments, clearing 100 acres and leaving 100 acres untouched.
- They looked at the differences between those two

Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest (HBEF) (see study site below)

Key Implications for Forest-Filtered Water Supplies: *Healthy, diverse, and structurally complex forests are essential for safeguarding drinking water, and proactive, adaptive forest management will be increasingly necessary to protect water supplies in a changing climate.*

Experimentally cleared forest (100+ acres) in 1965-66

- Saw dramatic increases in **nutrient export**, particularly calcium and nitrate, into streams.
- Nitrate concentration levels are **over 50 times higher** than in undisturbed watersheds.
- **Without regen, recovery can take decades**
- Emphasized how forest vegetation is crucial for **maintaining water quality**, preventing **soil erosion**, and regulating **stream hydrology**.
- Forests regulate water quality and quantity. Forest management should prioritize **resilience-based silviculture** to maintain both ecological function and water supply protection under future conditions.

c. DWSP Land Management Plan (LMP) Overview

Ken Mackenzie

- Use of a multifaceted approach to the management of forested areas to ensure long-term resilience
 - The primary goal of this management is the protection of the forest-filter in perpetuity.
- DWSP watershed forests are generally healthy, but are routinely threatened by physical disturbances (ice, strong winds, fire, insects, diseases, invasive plants, and herbivore browsing, etc.).
- To combat these threats, DWSP has developed watershed forest management goals within the LMP that focus on creating and maintaining a watershed protection forest that is resistant to and resilient from disturbance.

Goal: The desired condition for the watershed protection forest is **a mosaic of managed and unmanaged areas incorporating both planned and inherent diversity**. Together, this enhances long-term forest stability, ensures the continued production of high-quality drinking water, and promotes and maintains regional biodiversity (**overall forest health, diversity of native species, diversity of forest structure, etc.**)

Rationale: Building Resiliency with two pillars of diversity

1. A forest with **many age and height classes** is less likely to be impacted by a catastrophic weather-related disturbance
2. A forest with a **variety of species** is less susceptible to disease and insect outbreaks.

Overall, the DWSP employs an **adaptive management approach** to its Land Management Plan.

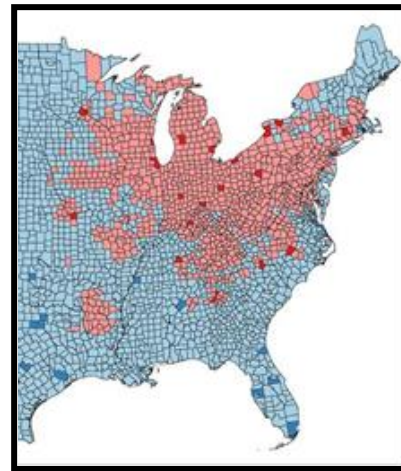
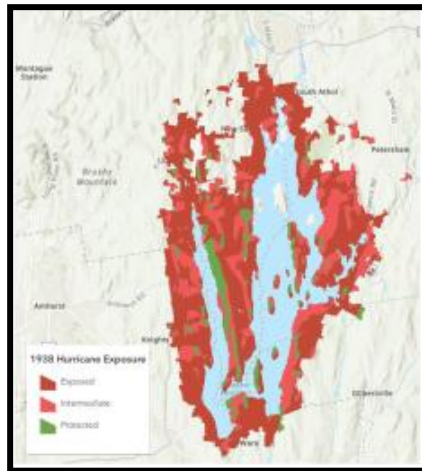
Hurricane of 1938 and its effects on Massachusetts

Widespread blowdown, increase salvage logging, shift in forest composition, and long-term legacy



Remembering the Hurricane of 1938 and Forecasting in the Future

- MAP: Quabbin's physical exposure to a wind event similar to that of the hurricane of 1938.
- Based on Daniel Ottenheimer's thesis, greater than 95% of the current Quabbin forest exceeds the height projected to be damaged to a certain extent.
- MAP: Quabbin's physical exposure to a wind event similar to that of the hurricane of 1938.



Legend

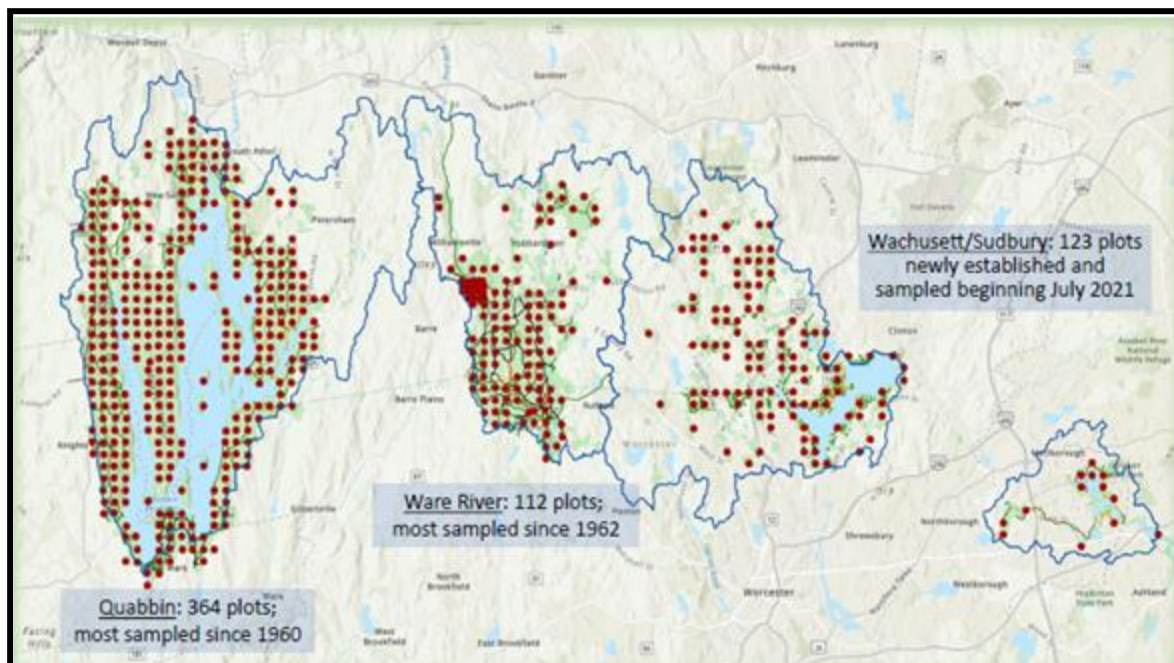
- No tree death, non-urban
- No tree death, urban
- Likely tree death, non-urban
- Likely tree death, urban

d. DWSP Continuous Forest Inventory

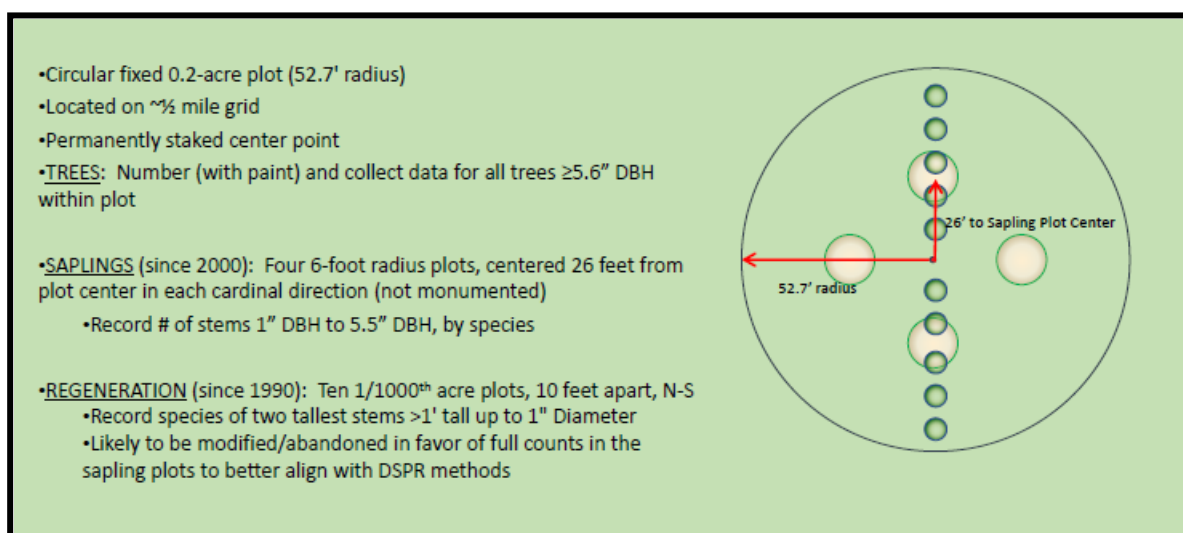
"Forest Resources on Metropolitan District Commission Lands Surrounding Quabbin Reservoir"

- Masters Thesis, UMass 1961, Fred Hunt
- Established CFI based on State/USFS model; ½ mile grid spacing
- Each 1/5-acre plot 'represents' 160 acres (giving a sampling rate of 1/800 or 0.00125)
- Re-measurement interval = 10 years





Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) Plot Design Details



CFI Plot Level Data

1. Static Information: Plot Number, Location (Long, Lat); Slope/Aspect; and Terrain Position.
2. Dynamic Information: Browse; Cover Type; Disturbance; Land use; Interfering plants; Invasive plants; Non-forest Area.
3. Future updates: Herbaceous vegetation; Leaf litter; Woody debris.

CFI Tree Level Data

1. Static Information: Tree Number; Location (Azimuth and Distance from center); Species.
2. Dynamic Information: Live/Death/Cut status; Diameter; Tree Class; Height; Sawlogs; Crown Position; Live Crown Ratio; Cavities.

Trees are assigned permanent numbers, which are marked with 'tube paint'.

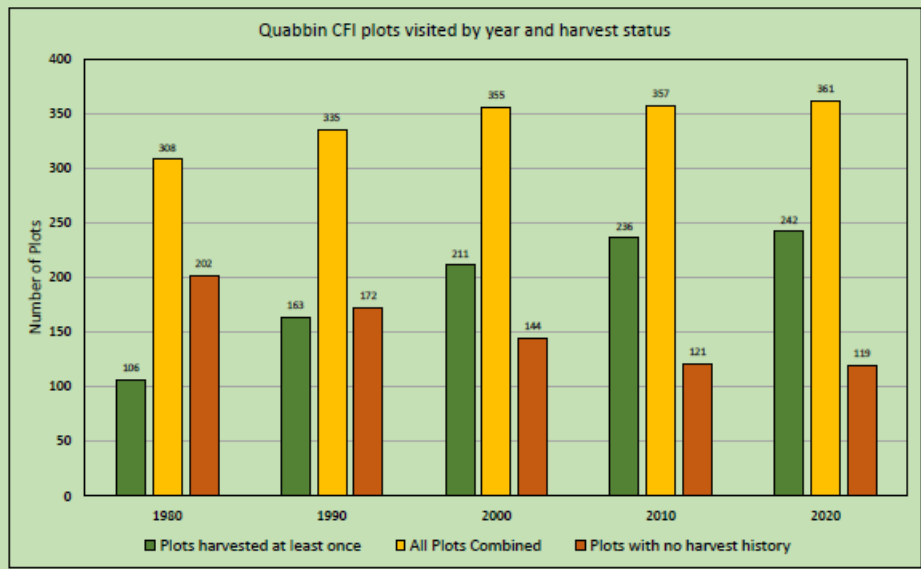
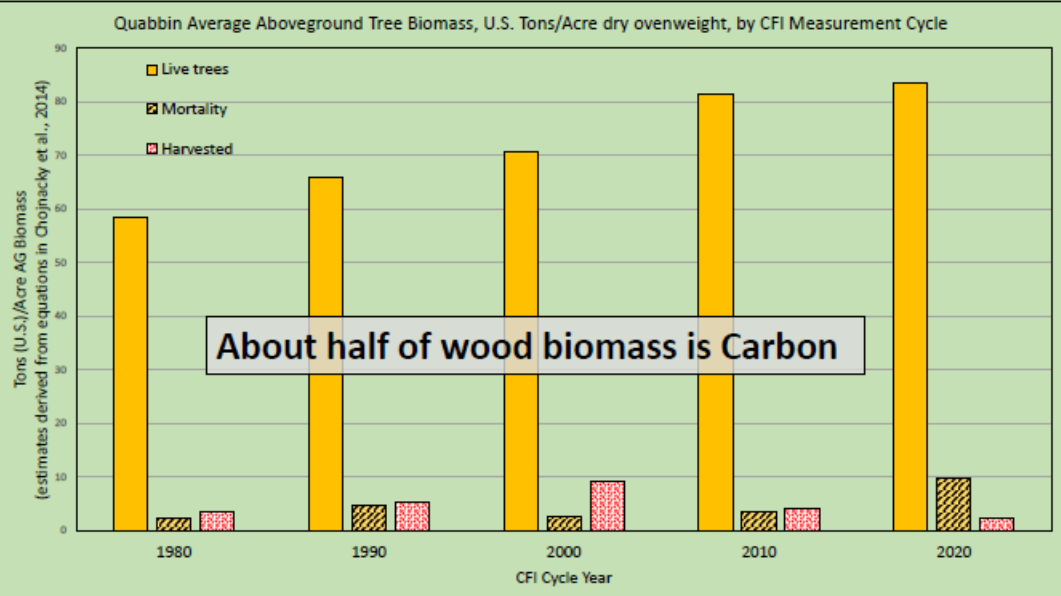


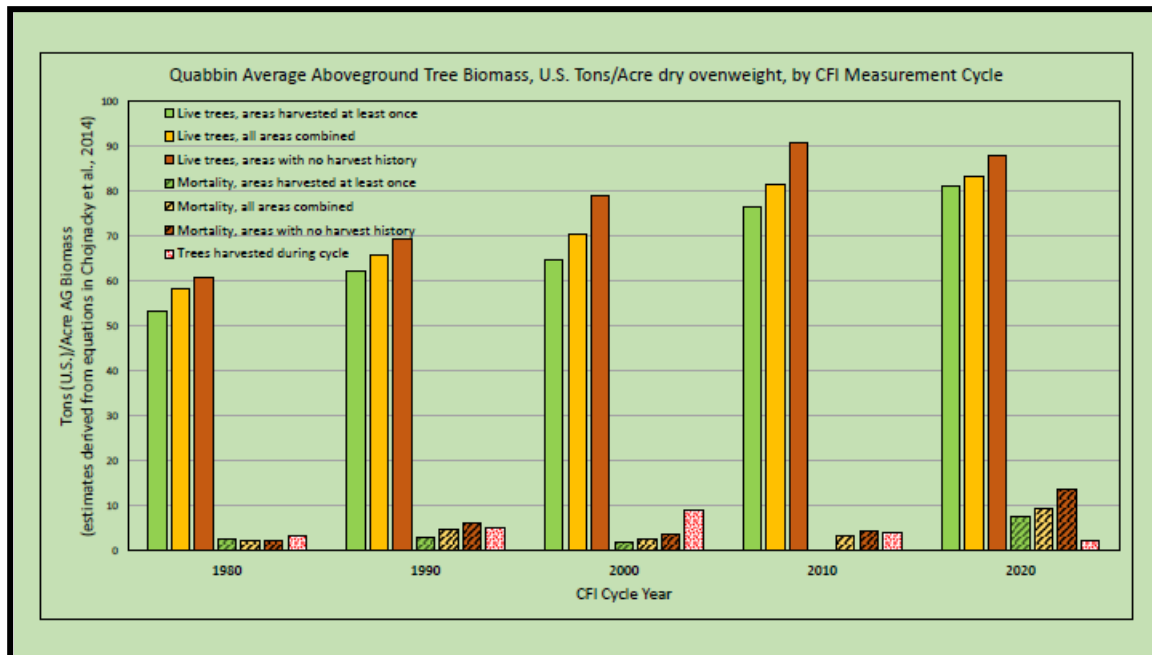
These two trees tell a long story of *competition* and growth response to *silviculture*

	DBH Tree 1	DBH Tree 2
1960	5.3	5.6
→ 1965	6.5	6.5
→ 1970	7.3	6.8
→ 1980	11.4	7
→ 1990	15.2	7.4
→ 2000	18.5	7.5
2010	22.0	8.5
2020	24.4	8.8



Records show harvesting between 1965 and 1970, again in 1970's, and again in 1994





A few questions and answers (email me if interested in seeing more exchanges)

Question: Why is Sudbury so much worse than the others?

I think it's a lot more residential, with many more escapes from the residences. It is smaller, but it's been heavily populated for a much longer time. The deer pressure is much, much greater out there.

Question: Could you speak to the role of deer control as a component in this? Deer distort the biodiversity. The population in Middlesex County is approaching 35 to 40 per square mile. It's extremely intense.

Answer: There was hunting allowed at some point, I don't remember when, on the Quabbin. I'm involved in a regional deer initiative; we're working to establish a regional deer management program for the Western Metro area of Boston.

Question: I mentioned support at the QAC meetings, but we have a concern about the widespread use of herbicides. We haven't used them on Quabbin, however. To this point, they haven't done it during my whole career here.

Answer: We've tried mechanical, different kinds of things, and we did different projects with it.

Comments: I think that, especially when using it on something like ferns or native plants, it seems like the wrong approach. Just like the PFAS types, when you're now testing detection limits, they go down to parts per trillion, and below that, using chemicals is the wrong way to go.

The amount you'd have to do to affect things on a landscape level would be a lot. Just would be. PFAS itself is a concern in Pelham, a small town where almost everybody relies on private wells, with some areas in western Pelham serviced by Amherst.

We tested 38 wells for PFAS, and six came back contaminated. No obvious source. Six out of 38.

Answer: I do, I want to caution against comparing it to PFAS. PFAS has a long-term residency in the soil, and herbicides don't. Well, all of them? Well, we wouldn't use the herbicides with restricted use.

Comments: They still do. So it's still there.

Answer: Well, I think back to Ken's point, we are not talking about trying to control all the invasive species in our watershed. We're using multiple methods, and to say don't consider chemicals is saying don't control invasive species. We need to establish a level of control, and our goal is to develop a plan that incorporates multiple methods to manage the invasive species, allowing the forest to thrive and protect our natural resources. We also have support for this initiative through EDA, specifically through the Forests of Climate Solutions.

It's all been identified as a growing need that requires action, especially in the face of climate change. We had already identified it as a need because we rely heavily on the forest for our activities here. So it's one of those things where you're just trying to mitigate your risks.

Question: Is climate change also changing what you decide to plant or what you decide to reforest with?

Answer: We don't do much planting, as I mentioned before, but it is starting to creep into our forest management, which is what we're trying to manage. We're trying to manage, overall, for the greatest amount of diversity we can based on site conditions. We're not at the point yet where we're looking at a list and saying these are the winter trees and these are the loser trees based on climate considerations that might happen, because a lot of those probably won't happen for another 100 years or so, hopefully.

Question: So the trees that are being managed for now should still be there in 100 years.

Answer: So, we haven't gone that far yet, but it is on our foresters' minds as they start conditioning the forest. This is because some of the trees that are supposed to thrive in hotter, drier climates, like oaks, are actually in the mix. And at Quabbin, especially, we struggle to regenerate oak.

So some of that is from that legacy of deer, or lack of a deer hunt. It's one of the first things that goes in high deer densities; they love oak. So, some of it is some of our silviculture practices.

We may need to employ different, diverse silviculture styles to regenerate oak. Prescribed fire might be another thing that we use to regenerate oak. I'm getting ahead of myself in the forest discussion.

Question: Where are the nitrates coming from? It says over 50 times higher when you clear-cut, but where is it coming from?

Answer: Everything's been taken away. All the vegetation is gone. Not all the vegetation or trees have been taken away.

Question: How does that explain a 50 times increase?

Answer: Because it's rushing right off. So, everything that's there, with a slope, a hill, everything is rushing into the streams.

Note: There was a lot of exchange and great questions and answers, but I couldn't add much. Please get in touch with the WSCAC office if you want to learn more about the exchange.

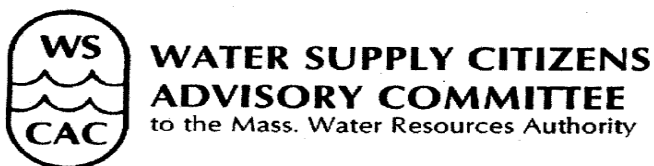
Please check the link for slides if you want to learn more: <https://www.mwra.com/about-mwra/advisory-groups/water-supply-citizens-advisory-committee-wscac/wscac-presentations-0>.

V. Lot Tour (DCR)

- a. Field tour of a harvested lot off 202 North at the end of the meeting

For information about the site, check with me or DCR. The tour was very instructive.

End of the field tour around 2:00 PM



485 Ware Road
Belchertown MA 01007
(413) 213-0454
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June 30, 2025
The Honorable Rebecca Rausch, Senate Chair
The Honorable Christine Barber, House Chair
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 20133

Submitted by email to JointCommittee.Environment@malegislature.gov

Re: Support for H.1003/S.586, *An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management*

Dear Chair Rausch, Chair Barber, and members of the Committee,

The Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee (WSCAC) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments in support of H.1003/S.586, *An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management*, as well as recommendations for further refinements.

WSCAC is an independent committee formed in 1978 that provides public input to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and other state agencies on the drinking water supply system, including water conservation, drinking water quality and reliability, water supply protection, etc. WSCAC has been a long-time advocate of consistent and frequent messaging about the importance of water conservation.

WSCAC supports the Drought Bill's goal of creating a coordinated and consistent approach to drought declaration and management. As a member of the current Drought Management Task Force (DMTF), WSCAC strongly supports formalizing the DMTF as a permanent office within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), defining its composition and responsibility to maintain and regularly update a statewide Drought Management Plan. These measures will prepare the state to respond more quickly to droughts, which are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change.

A frequently identified shortcoming in drought response is that not all communities and water districts have enacted local authority to enforce drought restrictions if and when they are required. This proposed bill could be used as an avenue to provide uniform statewide enforcement authority to all municipal water departments or districts for enforcing restrictions when required. This would avoid the need for local action to create local bylaws or ordinances, which can be particularly difficult or untimely for communities in towns with infrequent town meetings.

WSCAC appreciates your consideration of our comments. Please contact us if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Moussa Siri
Executive Director/WSCAC

Paul Lauenstein
Chairman/WSCAC