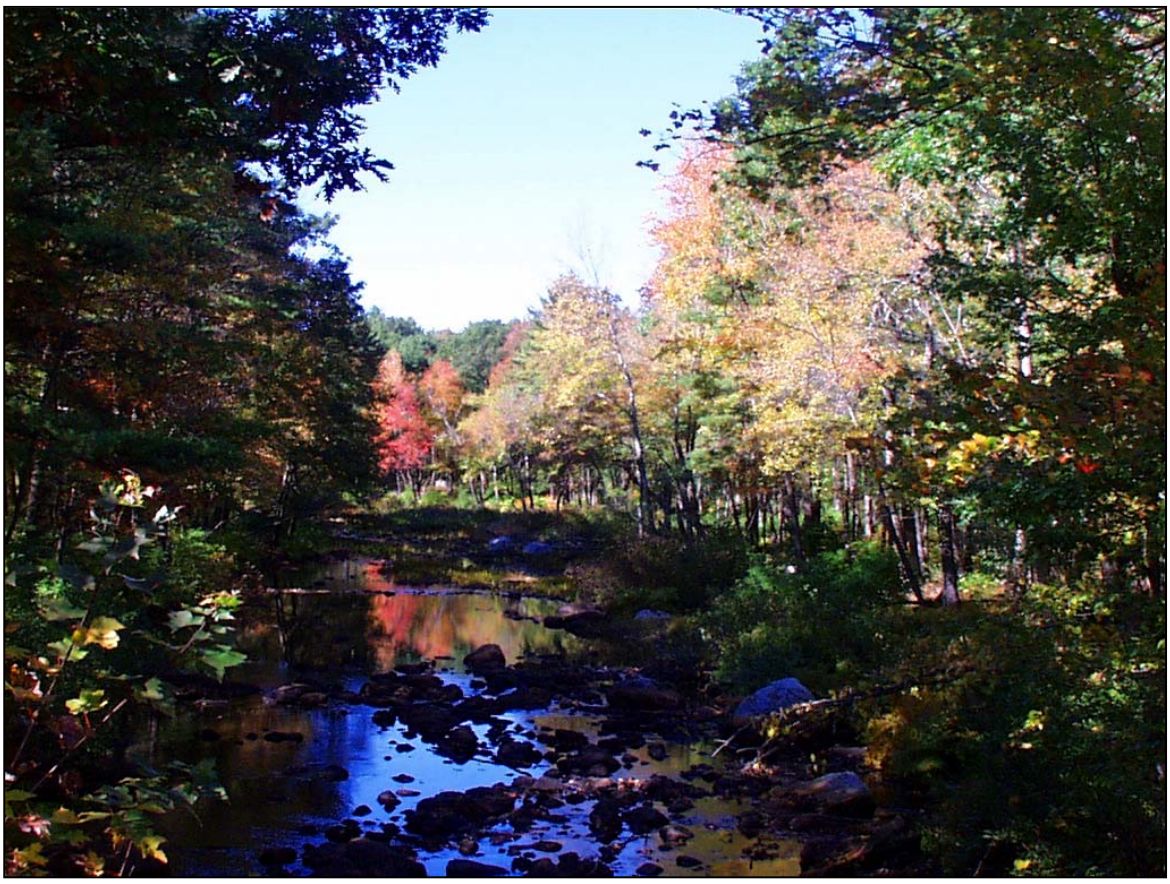
Ware River Watershed
Land Management Plan 2003-2012

Prepared by

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection



November 10, 2003

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Mitt Romney, Governor

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Ellen Roy Herzfelder, Secretary

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Katherine Abbott, Commissioner

Division of Water Supply Protection
Joseph M. McGinn, Esq., Acting Director

Dedication

Stephen L. Drawbridge
1947-2002

Stephen Drawbridge, better known as Steve, was the MDC Forester on the Ware River Watershed from 1978 to 2002, a total of 24 years. Steve was a perfect match for the Ware River and it seemed that other forces were at work to make this happen. Steve grew up in nearby Holden and was familiar with these lands due to his hunting and fishing interests.

Prior to 1978, there had been several MDC Foresters at the Ware River, but none had stayed more then a few years. The Ware River forest consisted largely of low grade pasture pine stands and hardwood stands growing generally on low production, washed till soils. All the roads were open to the public and most were in poor condition. Illegal dumping was commonplace. Managing the Ware River Watershed was a challenging job.

When interviewing for the Ware River Forester's position in 1978, Steve stood out because of his excellent qualifications and his abundant enthusiasm and energy. I did not know Steve well, so I asked Roger Lonergan, the MDC engineer in charge at the Ware River, what he thought about Steve. Roger was a quiet Yankee who seldom offered an opinion on anything except perhaps bird hunting, fishing, or diverting water from the Ware River. Roger was familiar with Steve's family background and his interest in becoming the Ware River forester and without hesitation, Roger strongly suggested that we hire Steve.

Steve loved every aspect of his work and continued to be a student of forestry, wildlife, recreation, cultural resources, aesthetics and the social aspects of natural resources so that his management strategies were comprehensive. It was my pleasure to travel about the Ware River lands to view Steve's work. Steve's forestry and landscape architecture were both bold and discrete but fit on the land as a tailored suit.

Steve orchestrated an annual Ware River hunt for white-tailed deer. He patiently gave his friends knowledge of every topographic and cover feature that we would encounter in the hunt. This physical knowledge plus his uncanny knowledge of the ways of deer made each hunt memorable.

Most of all Steve was a true friend, someone I could talk to, on any subject, without concern. We had endless conversations about forestry, hunting, logging, watershed management, sports (hockey and basketball), and family. Although we did not always agree, we led each other on challenging topics as our thinking evolved.

Steve spent several years on this plan and was working on the final draft when he passed away. But a final draft for Steve was almost an impossible thought, simply because his inquiring mind was constantly finding new information that he wanted to incorporate. Steve's thoughts and convictions are as much a part of this plan as is his work on the ground throughout the Ware River Watershed. As you read this plan, you will come to understand how lucky we were to have known and worked alongside Steve Drawbridge for the past 24 years. We are privileged to have had the opportunity to finish a plan he started, and we dedicate this 2003-2012 Ware River Watershed Land Management Plan to Steve's memory.

Bruce A. Spencer
Chief Forester
2/10/03

Acknowledgements

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This plan was distributed in draft form, for review and comment, to approximately 75 individuals, agencies, and organizations outside the Division. This list included the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the Water Supply Citizen's Advisory Committee, the Ware River Advisory Committee, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Massachusetts Division of State Parks and Recreation, the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the University of Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources Conservation, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the USDA Forest Service, the Conservation Commissions and public libraries in area towns, District Representatives and State Senators, and a wide variety of other interested individuals. Comments received in writing and at a public meeting on September 23, 2003, have been incorporated in this final version of the plan.

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ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS

BMP: Best Management Practices

CMP: Conservation Management Practices

CR: Conservation Restriction

CVA: Chicopee Valley Aqueduct

DCR: Department of Conservation and Recreation

DEM: Department of Environmental Management

DEP: Department of Environmental Protection

DFWELE: Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Environmental Law Enforcement

DFW: Division of Fish and Wildlife

DPW: Department of Public Works

DSPR: Division of State Parks and Recreation

DUPR: Division of Urban Parks and Recreation

DWM: Division of Watershed Management

DWSP: Division of Water Supply Protection

EOEA: Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

GIS: Geographic Information System

MDC: Metropolitan District Commission

M.G.L.: Massachusetts General Law

MWRA: Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

PILOT: Payments In Lieu of Taxes

QSTAC: Quabbin Science and Technical Advisory Committee

WRAC: Ware River Advisory Committee