



Green Budget FY20

Department of Conservation and Recreation Watershed Management

Request

- Increase the DCR Watershed Management line-item (2800-0101) by \$400K to \$1.5M (from \$1.1M in FY19). Governor's proposed FY20 budget is \$1,123,447.

Overview

- This line-item funds the DCR Office of Water Resources, a 12 person office responsible for protecting our precious water resources by providing scientific information, policy guidance, technical assistance, and resource management through four program areas: the Flood Hazard Management Program, the Lakes and Ponds Program, the Water Resources Assessment and Planning Program, and the U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Program.
- This program conducts and helps fund critical research on water resources in Massachusetts, ensuring the protection of the drinking water supply for approximately 2.5 million residents in the Commonwealth.
- The program also protects and restores DCR's 300 lakes and 51 freshwater swimming beaches, enhancing both the ecological integrity and recreational opportunities of these resources.
- This program provides invaluable technical assistance to municipalities, working with over 336 Massachusetts communities to assist with floodplain management and ensuring compliance with program requirements for the National Flood Insurance Program. In FY18, the Office responded to more than 600 technical assistance requests to help 285 communities respond to concerns with floodplain development, flood insurance, flood mitigation, and flood mapping.
- The water research, drought and flood mapping, and water needs forecasting that this Office conducts is integral both to the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program and the 2018 Integrated State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.
- This program also staffs the Water Resources Commission which provides technical expertise and resources to the state's Drought Management Task Force. With the expected impacts of climate change generating periods of extreme drought and severe flooding, it is crucial that this agency is sufficiently funded to protect our rivers, lakes and water supplies.

Examples of Need

- Over the past few years, this office has lost four staff positions due to budget cuts. They have refilled one of these positions by borrowing money from other funding sources, but they are still short three critical staffing positions:
 - Flood Hazard Management Program Mapping Coordinator – (last filled in 2015). This individual would serve as the primary state-level liaison for flood hazard mapping for the Commonwealth. They would also be responsible for coordinating with FEMA's RiskMAP Program communities, state and federal agencies, and mapping contractors. Communities depend on this position to navigate FEMA maps and regulations.
 - Water Resources Scientist – (last filled in 2015). This individual would provide technical support for the state's Drought, Flood and Precipitation programs. Following the 2016 drought and with a greater emphasis in the state now on climate change preparedness and resiliency, these programs require a higher level of support from science staff that the Office currently does not have.
 - Outreach and Technical Assistance Director for the Lake & Ponds Program – (last filled in 2007). This individual would be responsible for running the Lakes and Ponds outreach and assistance program for state, municipal and lake association organizations. This individual would be responsible for leveraging partnerships between these entities to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Massachusetts. In comparison to other states that are of similar size and with comparable numbers of lakes and ponds, Massachusetts should have 8-12 Lake and Ponds Program staff but only have 4 currently.