



Protecting & Improving Westford's Water Resources

How Westford manages stormwater runoff impacts the water quality of our lakes and streams and affects our ability to provide adequate clean water for residential and business use. Westford has three closely connected initiatives that will impact residents and future development in our town; the state's proposed **Sustainable Water Management Initiative (SWMI)** and our community's **Stormwater Management Master Plan (SMMP)** and **Healthy Lakes & Ponds Initiative**.

What are the benefits of Water Resources Management?

By integrating these three programs, the Town is able to align goals and coordinate approaches to maximize the overall effectiveness and efficiency of water resources management. Through water resources management, the Town seeks to:

- Preserve the water quality of lakes and streams for public health, recreation, and wildlife habitat;
- Provide a sustainable high quality drinking water source for residents and industry;
- Protect health and property of residents by proactively identifying and addressing drainage infrastructure needs; and
- Comply with Federal and State environmental regulations.



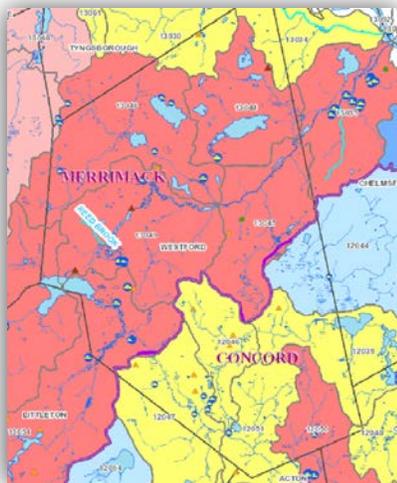
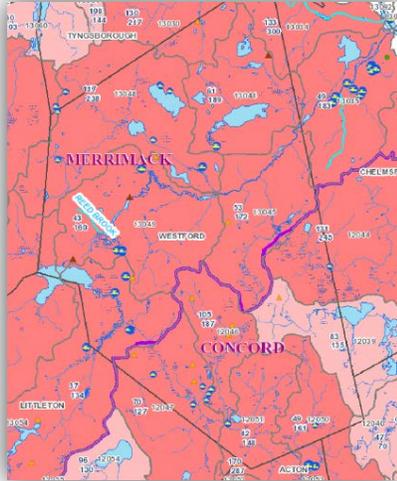
The coordination of these three initiatives will help Westford achieve these benefits while minimizing the financial impacts to its residents and businesses to the extent possible.

How will the Stormwater Management Master Plan help Westford?

The SMMP is a forward-thinking planning effort that integrates both the water quality and water quantity aspects of stormwater management. Westford currently operates and maintains a vast drainage system that includes 52 miles of drain pipes, approximately 5,160 drainage structures (like catch basins and manholes), more than 600 outfalls, over 150 miles of publicly maintained roadways plus culverts, dams, and stormwater treatment facilities as well as natural drainage conveyances. This plan, which incorporates a robust public education and outreach component, will establish a strategic action plan to proactively address the Town's needs now and in the future. Part of this study is the assessment of a long-term funding mechanism that is adequate and equitable.



What is SWMI and how will it impact Westford?



The sub-basins from which Westford is withdrawing water are mapped as **Category 5 (highest impact)** for both **Biological Category** (top) and **Groundwater Level** (bottom). The presence of Reed Brook coldwater fishery will also be factored into the permitting process.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) developed the Sustainable Water Management Initiative Framework as a comprehensive approach to balancing water supply needs with environmental sustainability of the Commonwealth's freshwater resources. The Framework lays out a holistic approach to permitting water withdrawals under the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's (MassDEP) Water Management Act (WMA). These withdrawals provide water for drinking, fire protection and other uses. The Framework is based on an evaluation of how much water can safely be withdrawn from surface and groundwater sources. It combines this information with measures to reduce demand and return water to aquifers (groundwater) with measures such as using stormwater runoff to recharge groundwater. It also manages water supply and wastewater within communities and between watersheds to minimize impacts to water resources, habitat and aquatic life.ⁱ

SWMI will protect water resources that the community values highly, but it does not come without costs. Drinking water used in homes and businesses will likely cost more to consume and there could be less available in the future due to limits on how much can be withdrawn. This will affect economic growth, as businesses weigh the benefits of moving to or expanding in Westford with the cost of doing business here versus other communities.

How does Westford's Healthy Lakes & Ponds Initiative fit in?

The Healthy Lakes & Ponds Collaborative is implementing the Town's Healthy Lakes & Ponds Initiative. The Initiative's goals are to improve and maintain the health and quality of the Town's lakes and ponds; the freshwater sources that SWMI and the SMMP also aim to protect. Nutrients are of particular concern. They can reach lakes and ponds in a number of ways, including through stormwater runoff that carries fertilizers.



Where can I find more information?

Stormwater Management Master Plan

For more information about Stormwater Management in Westford, including the FY14-FY18 Capital Budget Request for Stormwater Management, please visit the following website: www.westfordma.gov/stormwater

Massachusetts Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/watersheds/nonpoint-source-pollution.html#6>

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Sustainable Watershed Management Initiative (SWMI)

More information is available at the following websites.

Massachusetts Water Management Act. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/watersheds/water-management-act-program.html>

MassDEP Presentation at the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting, January 2013. http://www.mma.org/resources-mainmenu-182/doc_view/782-overview-of-the-sustainable-water-management-initiative

SWMI Framework Summary. November 2012. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/water/swmi-framework-nov-2012.pdf>

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Healthy Lakes & Ponds Initiative

More information is available at the following websites or at the [nearby Healthy Lakes & Ponds table display](#).

Healthy Lakes & Ponds Collaborative. http://www.westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/WestfordMA_healthcare/hlpc

Town Manager's Newsletter. http://www.westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/WestfordMA_healthcare/documents/tmnewsFeb14.pdf

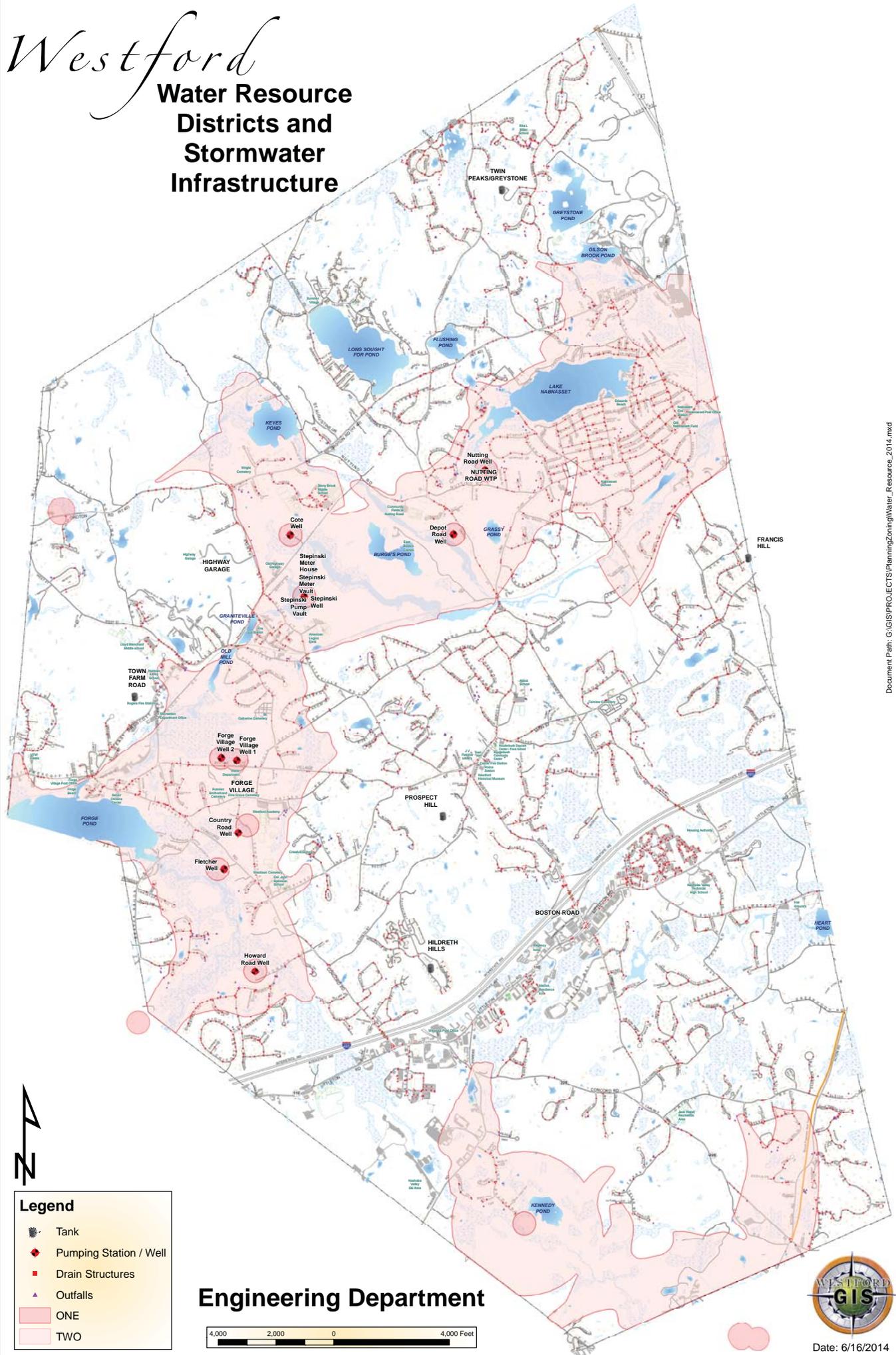
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ⁱ This SWMI summary was paraphrased from Comprehensive Environmental, Inc. and Tighe & Bond's December 2013 report for MassDEP, *Sustainable Water Management Initiative Pilot Project Phase 2*, available at MassDEP's website. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/water/resources/n-thru-y/swmi213.pdf>.

Westford

Water Resource Districts and Stormwater Infrastructure



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Legend

- Tank
- Pumping Station / Well
- Drain Structures
- Outfalls
- ONE
- TWO

Engineering Department



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