



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

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May 25, 2021

Senate President Karen E. Spilka  
State House-Room 332  
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Michael Rodrigues  
State House-Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

Subject: DCR Division of Watershed Protection, Staffing Levels

Dear Senate President Spilka and Chairman Rodrigues,

The Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee (WSCAC) reviews MWRA water programs, policies and projects, and also monitors activities in the Department of Conservation & Recreation-Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR-DWSP) watersheds. Our primary concern is the protection of MWRA water quality and quantity. We therefore provide comments, when appropriate, on DWSP's Quarterly Progress Reports to MWRA, DWSP Work Plans and Annual Reports.

The Water Supply Protection Trust was created in 2004 to provide oversight on DCR-DWSP's annual budget and work plan. The partnership between MWRA and DCR-DWSP, funded by MWRA ratepayers, provides a very efficient and timely mechanism for ensuring that DWSP has the personnel necessary to address the large variety of responsibilities required to maintain the watersheds as a public drinking water source.

In May 2019, the management staff of the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection's Office of Watershed Management (OWM) took a fresh look at the staff resources needed to fulfill DCR's responsibilities with respect to watershed protection. An assessment was done to define the most efficient organizational structure to accomplish this work. The conclusion to this study was that 150 full time positions would meet this goal.

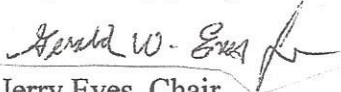
It is now May 2021 and this goal has yet to be realized. DCR continues to be unable to adequately post vacancies and hire critical personnel. Over the past two years, four managers and other long-term employees have retired. Remaining employees are required to take on additional responsibilities to cover for these vacancies. This is not due to budget constraints. The Water Supply Protection Trust has repeatedly supported the hiring for these positions with funds already available in DCR-DWSP's budget. However, the Executive Office of Administration and Finance has imposed caps on DCR hiring, thus the vacancies continue. This situation is exactly why the Trust was formed--to insulate DCR-DWSP from the uncertainties of state finances.

Senator Gobi has introduced amendment 294 to the FY22 State Budget in section 2, item 2800-0101 which would enable the 5-member Water Supply Protection Trust to fulfill its statutory role by exempting it from unwarranted funding constraints as follows:

“; provided further, that in accordance with an annual staffing plan, the staffing levels, hiring, and promotions at the division of water supply protection, as granted under section 75 of chapter 10 of the General Laws, shall not be subject to any restrictions, limitations, or caps imposed by any executive office or department of the commonwealth”

WSCAC firmly believes that Senator Gobi’s amendment 294 is necessary to ensure responsible stewardship of the watersheds through adequate staffing of the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection, paid for with MWRA funds already set aside and available for this purpose.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Eves", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jerry Eves, Chair  
Lexi Dewey, Executive Director, WSCAC