

# Place Making Essentials: Parks and Open Spaces

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# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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## **Governor**

Deval L. Patrick

## **Lieutenant Governor**

Timothy Murray

## **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary**

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.

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# Division of Conservation Services

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- ▶ Administer multiple grant programs for EEA
- ▶ Governor Patrick's commitment to land protection
  - 100,000 acres of land protected
  - Over 150 parks built or renovated



Community Path, Somerville

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# PARC Grant Program

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- ▶ Eligible projects:
  - Purchase parkland
  - Develop new public outdoor recreation facilities
  - Renovate existing municipal public parks



Jeep Jones Park, Boston

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# Secretary's Priorities

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- ▶ Projects in Environmental Justice neighborhoods
- ▶ Brownfield projects
- ▶ New parks that increase community's park equity
- ▶ Parks accessible by non-vehicular transportation



Cambridge Common



# PARC Program Requirements

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- ▶ Applicant must have an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan
- ▶ Must have an authorized park/recreation commission and conservation commission
- ▶ Land must be dedicated to public park purposes and under custody of Park or Recreation Commission or Park Department



Cushing Park, Framingham



# Important Program Facts

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- ▶ Public participation in project selection and design, including outreach to Environmental Justice neighborhoods
- ▶ State assistance ranges from 52 to 70% of total project cost
- ▶ Maximum grant award is \$400,000



# LAND Grant Program

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- ▶ Eligible projects:
  - Purchase conservation land
  - Fee simple or Conservation Restriction



Windrush Farm, North Andover





# Secretary's Priorities

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- ▶ Landscape level protection
- ▶ Ecological resources
- ▶ OSRP and SCORP goals
- ▶ Public outdoor passive recreation
- ▶ Working lands
- ▶ Undevelopment



Holland Glen Forest, Belchertown



# LAND Program Requirements

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- ▶ Applicant must have an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan
- ▶ Applicant is the conservation commission
- ▶ Land must be dedicated to conservation purposes and be under custody of Conservation Commission
- ▶ Appraisal(s) required



# Important Program Facts

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- ▶ State assistance ranges from 52 to 70% of total project cost
- ▶ Maximum grant award is \$400,000
- ▶ Land is for passive recreation purposes



Shrine of Our Lady of LaSalette, Attleboro



# Land and Water Conservation Fund

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- ▶ Federal money from the National Park Service
- ▶ DCS administers the program for Massachusetts
- ▶ Can fund both recreation and conservation projects



Oak Bluffs, Sea View Park



# Important LWCF Facts

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- ▶ Reimbursement rate is 50%
- ▶ Projects must also be approved by the NPS
- ▶ All other LAND/PARC facts apply to LWCF as well



Whispering Hill Woods, Woburn



# Conservation Partnership Grant Program

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- ▶ Eligible projects
  - Land acquisition for conservation and recreation
  - Due diligence expenses for gifts
  - Fee simple or Conservation Restriction projects are eligible
- ▶ Eligible entities are 501(c)(3) non-profits with environmental, conservation, or recreation purpose



Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Hoosac Range/Caffrey



# Conservation Partnership Program Facts

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- ▶ Maximum grant award: \$85,000
- ▶ Reimbursement: 50% of total cost
- ▶ Application requires:
  - Commitment from municipal or state government entity (DCR or DFG) to hold CR
  - Appraisal(s)



Dudley Conservation Land Trust, Leovitch Landing, Oxford



# Secretary's Priorities

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- ▶ Water Resource Protection
- ▶ Landscape Protection
- ▶ Biodiversity and Natural Resource Protection
- ▶ Working Farms and Forests
- ▶ Recreational Opportunities



Arlington Land Trust, Elizabeth Island





# Conservation Partnership Requirements

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- ▶ Convey a CR to town or state agency
- ▶ Must retain an interest in the property – applicant cannot be used as a pass through
- ▶ Land must have public access and benefit
- ▶ Conservation and recreational use only



Nantucket Land Council, Muskeget Island



# Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program

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- ▶ 3 project types:
  1. Protect existing wells/intakes
  2. Protect planned future wells/intakes
  3. Groundwater recharge sites
- ▶ Eligible applicants:
  - Municipalities
  - Public water systems
  - Established by a state legislative act to provide drinking water infrastructure & services to the public
    - e.g. Fire Districts
    - Water Districts



# DWSP Program Facts

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- ▶ Maximum award: \$350,000
- ▶ Reimbursement rate: 50%
- ▶ Purchase land for public water supply protection
  - Fee simple
  - Conservation Restriction



Muir Meadows, Worcester DPWP

# Evaluation Criteria

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- ▶ Current resource management (how well is PWS addressing demand?)
- ▶ Location in identified drinking water supply protection areas
- ▶ Zoning
- ▶ Property size
- ▶ Sustainable Water Management Initiative (SWMI)
- ▶ Public recreation



# Landscape Partnership Grant Program

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- ▶ 500+ contiguous acres
- ▶ 2+ applicants from the following:
  - Municipalities
  - Land trusts
  - State/federal land agency



Brushy Mountain, Leverett & Shutesbury

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# Landscape Partnership Program Facts

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- ▶ Eligible for funding:
  - Fee acquisition
  - CR/APR/WPR
- ▶ Maximum award: **\$2 million**
- ▶ 50% reimbursement



Sibley/Warner Farm, Spencer



# SCORP

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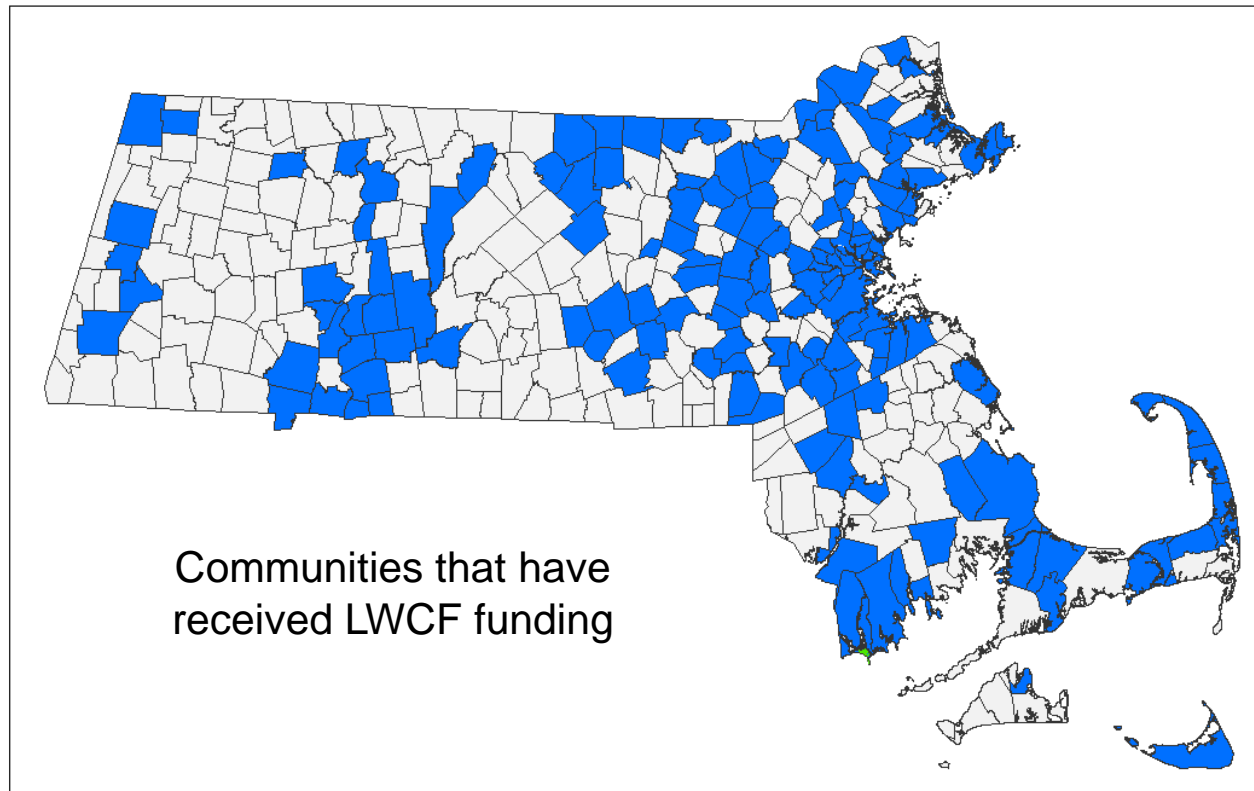
- ▶ Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a document that identifies the gaps between Massachusetts' existing recreation and conservation resources and the needs of its residents
- ▶ An up-to-date SCORP is required for Massachusetts to receive its Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) allotment
- ▶ It will help guide state outdoor recreation and conservation grants decisions



# Land and Water Conservation Fund

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- ▶ Massachusetts has received over \$98 million in funding, completing 495 projects, since its inception in 1964





# SCORP Public Input

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- ▶ SCORP Advisory Committee served an advisory role
- ▶ Committee includes representatives from:
  - Mass Audubon
  - The Trustees of Reservation
  - Mass Land Trust Coalition
  - National Park Service
  - Appalachian Mountain Club
  - Groundwork Lawrence
  - Mass Recreation and Park Asso.
  - Municipalities
  - State agencies



Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester



# SCORP Public Input

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- ▶ Survey Monkey
- ▶ Six meetings across the state
- ▶ Statistically-relevant phone survey



Minuteman Bikeway, Arlington



# Four SCORP Goals

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1. Increase the availability of all types of trails for recreation
2. Increase the availability of water-based recreation
3. Invest in recreation and conservation areas that are close to home for short visits
4. Invest in racially, economically, and age diverse neighborhoods given their projected increase in participation in outdoor recreation



# Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)

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- ▶ A document that describes a community's open space and recreation resources
- ▶ It is also a blueprint for action for open space and recreation decision-makers in a community
  - Conservation Commission
  - Parks Commission
  - Cemetery Commission
  - Planning Board
  - Local citizens



Flax Pond Park, Lynn



# Open Space

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- ▶ Conservation land, forest land, agricultural land, parks, green buffers along roadways, or any open area that is
- ▶ Also refers to undeveloped land with particular conservation or recreation interest, including vacant lots and brownfields that can be redeveloped into recreation areas, even community gardens
- ▶ Most of this land is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation or recreation, but not all open space is protected



# OSRP Requirements

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- ▶ Public participation process
  - Can take on many forms – survey, public meeting, workshop, etc.
  - Can combine different types – you know your community best
  - Helps to gather information on what community members feel is important to protect, what recreational activities they'd like to see, etc.
  - Also helps to inform the community about the importance of open space and recreation in their community



# OSRP Requirements

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- ▶ Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Report
  - Administrative requirements
  - Inventory of conservation and recreation properties only
  - Employment practices



Handcyclist, DCR



# Community Preservation Act

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- ▶ CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for four things:
  - ▶ Open space protection
  - ▶ Historic preservation
  - ▶ Affordable housing
  - ▶ Outdoor recreation
- ▶ Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum





# Community Preservation Act

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- ▶ CPA statute also creates a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue (DOR)
- ▶ Trust Funds distributes money each year to communities that have adopted CPA
- ▶ Since its inception, 5,767 affordable housing units have been created or supported, over 17,000 acres of open space have been preserved, over 800 outdoor recreation projects have been initiated



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