

# TITLE 46

## Waters and Navigation

### CHAPTER 46-15.3

### Public Drinking Water Supply System Protection

#### SECTION 46-15.3-1.1

§ 46-15.3-1.1 Legislative findings. – (a) The general assembly hereby recognizes and declares that:

(1) Water is vital to life and comprises an invaluable natural resource which is not to be abused by any segment of the state's population or its economy. It is the policy of this state to restore, enhance, and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of its waters to protect public health;

(2) That Rhode Island has abundant supplies of surface and groundwater and an average level of precipitation adequate to replenish these supplies under normal conditions, and that these supplies are sufficient in quantity and quality to meet the present needs of the people and economy of this state, but that sources of drinking water are not always located where they are needed, are subject to contamination making them unfit for drinking purposes, may be used for purposes not requiring water suitable for drinking, and may not be adequate to meet all future needs;

(3) The waters of this state are a critical renewable resource which must be protected to insure the availability of safe and potable drinking water for present and future needs;

(4) That systematic management of the state's drinking water supplies is essential to the proper conservation, development, utilization, and protection of this finite natural resource, if the present and future needs of the state are to be met on a continuing and sustainable basis;

(5) It is a paramount policy of the state to protect the purity of present and future drinking water supplies by protecting aquifers, recharge areas, and watersheds;

(6) It is the policy of the state to restore and maintain the quality of its waters to a quality consistent with its use for drinking supplies and other designated beneficial uses without treatment as feasible;

(7) Development of land areas near to supplies of drinking water and related construction can threaten the quality of those supplies and, therefore, can endanger public health; thus it is necessary to take immediate and continuing steps to protect the watersheds of surface waters and the reservoirs and recharge areas of ground waters from land uses and activities which may degrade the quality of public drinking water;

(8) Protection of water quality is necessary from the collection source through the point of delivery to the ultimate consumer;

(b) That the objectives of this chapter are:

(1) To insure that water supply system management plans are prepared, maintained, and carried out by

each municipality and by each municipal department, agency, district, authority, or other entity engaged in or authorized to engage in the supply, treatment, transmission, or distribution of drinking water, and

(2) That the said plans and their execution achieve the effective and efficient conservation, development, utilization, and protection of this finite natural resource in ways that meet the present and future needs of the state and its people.

# TITLE 46

## Waters and Navigation

### CHAPTER 46-15.3

### Public Drinking Water Supply System Protection

#### SECTION 46-15.3-5.1

**§ 46-15.3-5.1 Water supply systems management plans.** – (a) All parties involved in the supply, transmission, and/or distribution of drinking water shall prepare, maintain, and carry out a water supply system management plan as described by this chapter. This requirement applies, without limitations, to:

(1) All municipalities subject to chapter 22.2 of title 45, the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. The water supply management plan shall be part of the Services and Facilities Element required by § 45-22.2-6(6);

(2) All municipalities, municipal departments and agencies, districts, authorities or other entities engaged in or authorized to engage in the supply, treatment, transmission, or distribution of drinking water on a wholesale or retail basis, referred to herein as "water suppliers", which obtain, transport, purchase, or sell more than fifty million (50,000,000) gallons of water per year.

(b) A water supply system management plan shall be prepared in the format, and shall address each of the topics, listed in this section, to the extent that each is relevant to the municipality or water supplier, the water source(s), the water system(s), and the area served or eligible to be served. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, water supply management plans shall be in conformity with all applicable provisions of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. § 300f et seq.], chapter 13 of this title, Public Drinking Water Supply, and chapter 14 of this title, Contamination of Drinking Water, as administered by the department of health. Any other topic of interest may be included.

(c) A water supply system management plan shall include, without limitation, the following components:

(1) The water supply management component of the water supply system management plan shall include, without limitation:

(i) A statement of the goals that the plan is designed to achieve;

(ii) A description of the water system(s) covered, including sources of water, the service area, present and anticipated future users, and other important characteristics;

(iii) Data collection in a form that can be accepted directly into the Rhode Island Geographic Information System. Monitoring of system operations shall be performed at intervals approved by the director of the department of environmental management in coordination with the office of strategic planning of the division of planning so as to evaluate all critical aspects of the system, compare performance with capabilities and expectations, and provide a basis for continuing water supply planning at the system, municipal, regional, and state levels;

(iv) Demand management measures that will achieve a high level of efficiency in the use of a limited resource, through the application of metering of one hundred percent (100%) of the water used; sanitary device retrofit; technical assistance to and performance of water use audits for major industrial, commercial, institutional, government, and agricultural and other outdoor water users; education and information; and use of appropriate fees, rates, and charges to influence use;

(v) System management measures to insure that the following elements are optimally operated and maintained, including: leak detection and repair; meter installation and replacement; and frequency of reading meters. Maintenance or reduction of non-account water to stated goals shall be considered an essential component of system management;

(vi) Supply management measures to insure present and future availability of drinking water in adequate quantity and quality, including protection of the capacity and quality of drinking water sources; retaining water sources for standby or future use that are or can be improved to drinking water quality; reactivation of any water sources not in use; interconnection of systems for ongoing, standby, or emergency use; supply augmentation;

(vii) Emergency management, including risk assessment; responses to temporary or permanent loss of supplies due to natural or manmade causes; extraordinary treatment processes; interruptions in the delivery system; and contamination of water sources or delivery systems;

(viii) The water supply system management plans of water suppliers shall document that coordination has been accomplished with those plans of other suppliers in the vicinity and with operators of wastewater treatment and disposal facilities serving all or part of the same area or that a good faith effort to do so has been made. Plans shall be consistent with applicable local comprehensive plans and shall be integrated into the water supply plans of the municipality or municipalities in which the service area is or is planned to be located. Conversely, the local comprehensive plans shall be consistent with water supply plans;

(ix) Water supply system management plans shall designate the person or organization responsible for taking each action, others who must participate, and the time period in which each action is to be taken. The capital, operating, and maintenance cost (if any) of each action shall be estimated and the anticipated source of funds shall be identified;

(x) Water suppliers subject to this chapter shall utilize methods to implement management measures necessary to achieve the findings, intent, and objectives of this chapter. The water supplier may be required to document the validity or effectiveness of any management measure, implementation method, or other provision or action included in its plan.

(2) The water quality protection component of the water supply system management plan shall include, without limitations, those items enumerated in § 46-15.3-7.

(3) The leak detection and repair component of the water supply system management plan shall include, without limitation:

(i) Methodology for leak detection;

(ii) Detailed program for the conducting of required repairs to the water supply system;

(iii) Impact assessment studies on the ability of the supplier to provide for peak demand services;

(iv) A priority list of actions for implementing these management measures;

(v) Every supplier of public water encompassed under this section shall conduct periodic leak detection consistent with stated goals for non-account water, however no less frequently than once every ten (10) years.

# TITLE 46

## Waters and Navigation

### CHAPTER 46-15.3

### Public Drinking Water Supply System Protection

#### SECTION 46-15.3-7

§ 46-15.3-7 **Water quality protection component.** – (a) Every supplier of public water eligible for trust fund proceeds under this chapter shall, by July 1, 1988, complete a water quality protection component which shall at a minimum include:

(1) Determination of the boundaries of the watersheds of reservoirs serving the supplier or of the aquifers serving public wells.

(2) Identification of sources of contamination of each reservoir or well field.

(3) Identification of measures needed to protect each reservoir or well field from sources of contamination, including acquisition of buffer zones, diversion of storm water or spills, and desirable land use control regulations.

(4) A priority list of actions for implementing these protection measures.

(b) This component shall be adopted by the governing board of each water supplier following a public hearing. Notice of the public hearing shall be published once by the supplier at least twenty (20) days before the date set thereof, in a newspaper of general circulation in the State of Rhode Island. The notice shall set forth the date, time, and place of the hearing and shall include a brief description of the matter to be considered at the hearing. The component shall be updated at least once every five (5) years. Proceeds from the watershed protection fund shall be usable for reimbursement of suppliers for preparation of water quality protection plans.

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*"The health of our waters  
is the principal measure of  
how we live on the land."*

LAND CONSERVATION AND THE  
FUTURE OF AMERICA'S DRINKING WATER

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PROTECTING THE SOURCE



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND  
CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE

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for  
PUBLIC  
LAND



CONSERVING LAND  
FOR PEOPLE

*The Trust for Public Land conserves land  
for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other  
natural places, ensuring livable communities  
for generations to come.*



American Water Works  
Association

*AWWA is the authoritative resource  
for knowledge, information, and advocacy to  
improve the quality and supply of drinking water  
in North America and beyond. AWWA is the  
largest organization of water professionals in  
the world. AWWA advances public health, safety,  
and welfare by uniting the efforts of the full  
spectrum of the drinking water community.  
Through our collective strength we become  
better stewards of water for the greatest good  
of the people and the environment.*

Written by Caryn Ernst  
Edited by Kim Hopper and David Summers

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Quotation on front cover by Luna Leopold,  
professor emeritus, Department of Landscape Architecture,  
University of California, Berkeley

LEFT COVER PHOTO:

*Protecting watershed land has many benefits. In Ohio,  
just south of Lake Erie, Edison Woods offers public access  
to 1,300 acres of woods, wetlands, and meadows.*

RIGHT COVER PHOTO:

*More than half a million people receive  
their drinking water from Mountain Island Lake  
near Charlotte, North Carolina.*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1896, shortly after constructing its first public water supply system, Seattle leaders agreed on a long-term plan to eventually own the entire Cedar River Watershed, thus permanently protecting and securing Seattle's drinking water source. With a 100,000-acre watershed, it was a bold vision.

One hundred years later, Seattle's original vision had finally been achieved. By taking advantage of opportunities, creating dedicated local funding, and patiently sticking to a long-term vision, the City of Seattle has permanently protected one of the most pristine sources of drinking water in the country. Seattle made a cost-effective investment in clean source waters that will never be threatened by pollution from roads, sewers, or urban runoff. It is an investment that will continue to pay off many times over through reduced treatment costs and a safe supply of water for generations to come.

Unfortunately, watersheds in many other fast-growing communities remain unprotected and threatened by development. New roads, homes, and commercial development can abruptly alter a landscape and generate nonpoint source pollution that contaminates drinking water supplies. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the leading cause of water quality degradation is nonpoint source pollution (NPS)—over 60 percent of pollution in U.S. waterways comes from runoff from lawns, farms, cities, and highways, as well as leachate from rural septic systems and landfills. While point sources of pollution—which emit from pipes, canals, or municipal wastewater treatment plants and industrial facilities—have been closely monitored and regulated since the 1970s, the management of nonpoint sources of pollution has only recently become a national priority.

Advances in treatment technologies allow most suppliers to meet current drinking water standards, yet the constantly expanding diversity of contaminants, coupled with greater pollutant loads and fewer natural barriers, has made treatment more difficult and expensive, and it has in-

creased the chances that contaminants will reach our tap. Some of the treatment challenges faced by suppliers drawing from intensively used source lands include:

1. The emergence of new contaminants that suppliers may not be prepared to test or treat
2. Spikes in contaminant loads due to storms and flooding that make treatment more challenging
3. Constantly changing standards and regulations regarding new contaminants, which are present in the water long before they are identified as threats to public health
4. Increased treatment and capital costs due to higher pollutant loads and changing water quality standards

The loss of natural lands to development impacts not only the quality of our drinking water, and therefore the cost of treating it, but also the quantity. That's because development increases demand for drinking water while decreasing the ability of water to infiltrate the ground and recharge water supplies. Sprawling suburban-style development contributes even more to water scarcity than does compact development, as it promotes more lawn areas and larger lots planted with turf grass, requiring significantly more water than homes with smaller lots.

## *Watershed Management— The First Barrier in a Multiple-Barrier Approach to Source Water Protection*

The considerable threats to our drinking water require an integrated and comprehensive response. Governments and water suppliers are tasked with protecting each droplet of water. Starting in the watershed or aquifer recharge areas, continuing through the treatment process, and extending to the distribution system, suppli-

*Water is the most  
critical resource issue  
of our lifetime and  
our children's lifetime.  
The health of our waters  
is the principal measure of  
how we live on the land.*

—LUNA LEOPOLD



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ers must safeguard the water from contamination, erecting multiple barriers of protection at every stage from source to tap. It is a *multiple-barrier approach*; each method of protection acts as a barrier safeguarding water from contamination.

Watershed protection is the first and most fundamental step in a multiple-barrier approach to protecting drinking water. Healthy, functioning watersheds naturally filter pollutants and moderate water quantity by slowing surface runoff and increasing the infiltration of water into the soil. The result is less flooding and soil erosion, cleaner water downstream, and greater groundwater reserves.

When communities invest in land protection as a way to protect their drinking water, they are investing in the long-term health and quality of life of their citizens—guiding growth away from sensitive water resources, providing new park and recreational opportunities, protecting farmland and natural habitats, and preserving historic landscapes. Many communities don't realize the cost-saving benefit of source protection and the poten-

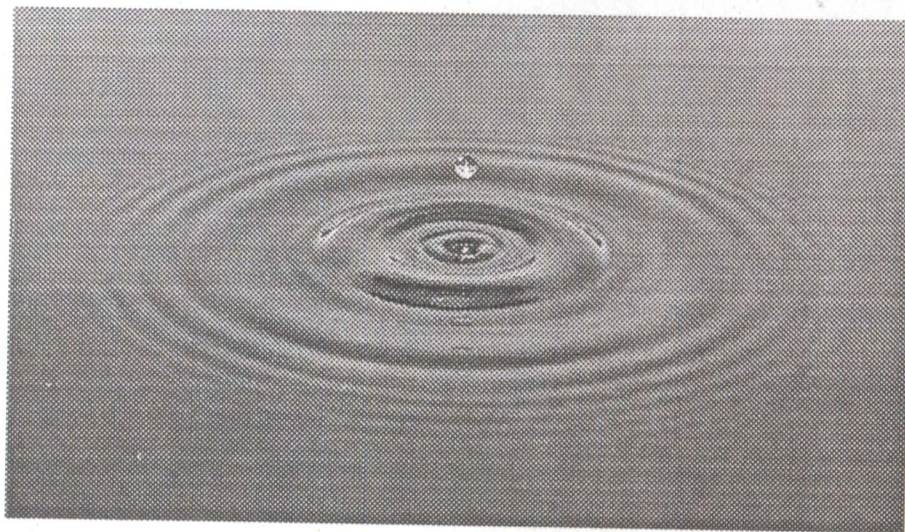
tially dramatic increase in treatment costs that can result from the loss of forests, grasslands, and wetlands, and the natural filtration these landscapes provide. A study of 27 water suppliers conducted by the Trust for Public Land and the American Water Works Association in 2002 found that more forest cover in a watershed results in lower treatment costs. According to the study, for every 10 percent increase in forest cover in the source area, treatment and chemical costs decreased approximately 20 percent, and approximately 50 to 55 percent of the variation in treatment costs can be explained by the percentage of forest cover in the source area.<sup>2</sup>

This report presents a series of best practices to guide communities' source protection efforts and to showcase those communities that are already linking land and water protection effectively. *Protecting the Source* serves as a reference and resource for those seeking best practices in developing and maintaining the highest level of water quality and, at the same time, preserving our limited natural land resources.

*The Geauga Park District acquired 574-acre Bass Lake Preserve at the headwaters of the Chagrin River, 25 miles east of Cleveland, Ohio, in 2003 to help protect regional water quality. Watershed protection funds from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency made the transaction possible.*

# SMART GROWTH FOR CLEAN WATER

Helping Communities Address  
the Water Quality Impacts of Sprawl



National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals  
Trust for Public Land  
ERG

# Introduction

**C**ommunities across America are coping with the results of poorly planned, scattered, high-impact development – or sprawl. When she was Governor of New Jersey, EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman put it succinctly: “Suburban sprawl is eating up open space, creating mind-boggling traffic jams, bestowing on us endless strip malls and housing developments, and consuming an ever-increasing share of our resources.”

**Sprawling growth can also cause the degradation of water quality in our rivers, streams, lakes, shores, and groundwater.** As stated by Luna Leopold, former Chief Hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey, “the health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land.” Despite progress in improving the nation’s waters under the Clean Water Act, nearly 45 percent of water bodies remain polluted, due in large part to “nonpoint source” runoff pollution. Poor land use management is a chief cause of nonpoint pollution.

The need to address urban and suburban runoff has led to new Clean Water Act requirements for localities, like EPA’s Phase I and Phase II stormwater requirements, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) restrictions. As a result, communities are struggling to find cost-effective solutions to meet the new requirements and local clean water goals. There is clearly a need for new approaches that can help communities address the land-water connection.

**Smart growth is emerging as a key strategy for clean water.** Across America, examples are emerging where communities are utilizing “smart growth” tools like land conservation, greenway buffers, the creation of park and recreational areas, natural and constructed wetlands, urban and community forestry, waterfront brownfields revitalization, low impact development, watershed-based management, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and other tools to reduce nonpoint source pollution, control stormwater, and improve water quality. These smart growth for clean water approaches are often more cost-effective than traditional structural solutions like building new wastewater plants or stormwater collection facilities. Moreover, these smart growth tools not only enable localities to achieve clean water goals, but they also help attain other community objectives such as preservation of open space and parks, cleanup of environmental contamination and community eyesores, creation of sustainable economic development, saving tax dollars through efficient use of infrastructure, and the improvement of overall quality of life.

**Local communities facing sprawling development are turning to smart growth to protect their rivers, lakes, streams, and oceans.** For example, the City of Chicago has launched an ambitious project to use brownfields cleanup, land conservation, wetlands protection, and urban forestry to

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“The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land.”

Luna Leopold  
Former Chief Hydrologist, USGS

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improve water quality and create new jobs and sustainable industry in the Lake Calumet area. A coalition of communities in the Denver metropolitan area is working to establish a continuous natural greenway and innovative green infrastructure enhancements to protect the water quality and the public enjoyment of the Cherry Creek and its tributaries. In North Carolina, the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County are using low impact development and working with the Trust for Public Land to purchase and preserve hundreds of stream-side properties and thousands of acres of waterfront property around Mountain Island Lake, the area's primary drinking water source. Iowa is one of a handful of states that has authorized its Clean Water State Revolving Fund to provide funding for smart growth tools including waterfront brownfields redevelopment, riparian land conservation, watershed management, constructed wetlands, and agricultural best management practices. In the fast-growing areas of the Merrimack River watershed, northwest of Boston, four towns are integrating their land use planning with water protection goals through innovative, GIS-based mapping techniques to form a blueprint for smart growth. Fayetteville, Arkansas has determined that, by increasing its tree canopy from 27 percent to 40 percent, this fast-growing city could save up to \$135 million on stormwater benefits alone (American Forests, 2003).

**The connection between land use and water quality has long been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Agency has recently taken several steps to help localities and states develop and implement new smart growth approaches to protect water resources.** In early 2002, EPA Administrator Whitman announced a new Watershed Initiative that will provide \$15 million in Fiscal Year 2003 to help local entities protect and restore their local watersheds. The Watershed Initiative is focused on promoting a more comprehensive approach to protecting water quality – “one that recognizes that the health of aquatic resources is affected by what happens on the land that drains into a water body.” On December 3, 2002, the **Office of Water** renewed its commitment to watershed management. A new Watershed Management Council will evaluate the potential for further integration of water programs, recommend strategies for funding local watershed initiatives, increase training and technical assistance opportunities, continue to work with states and tribes to build strong watershed programs, and encourage innovation.

The Office of Water has also been collaborating with the **EPA Division of Community and Economic Development (DCED)** on several smart growth/clean water projects. In addition to working with the Office of Water on how to credit smart growth approaches in TMDL and stormwater plans, DCED is perfecting a modeling tool that will help communities assess the water quality impacts associated with different types of development patterns.

The **EPA Brownfields Program** has provided numerous grants to help communities clean up and revitalize brownfields along waterfronts in

urban areas. From its inception, the EPA Brownfields Program has embodied a new model of environmental management through its innovative partnerships and market-based approach. This was re-emphasized on January 11, 2002 when President Bush signed the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. The redevelopment of brownfields is a critical smart growth tool that helps to revitalize communities and alleviate development pressure on farmland and open space. In addition, the Brownfields Program is encouraging brownfield developers to use innovative stormwater controls, such as low-impact development techniques, to further protect water quality when they revitalize these waterfront properties.

The EPA Brownfields Program has also partnered with the Office of Water to promote the use of Clean Water State Revolving Fund resources for the cleanup of waterfront brownfields contamination.

The U.S. Forest Service is also working to develop smart growth tools to help communities meet their water quality goals. Specifically, the Forest Service has partnered with American Forests to demonstrate how urban forestry (strategic planting of trees) can help protect water quality by preventing stormwater runoff, promoting groundwater recharge, and lessening the impacts of drought. According to American Forests, "trees slow stormwater flow, reducing the volume of water in urban areas and decreasing the amount of runoff that containment facilities must store." Moreover, this forestry strategy can save communities millions of dollars in capital improvement costs.



### Sprawl Happens Even with No Population Growth

Between 1970 and 1990, the Cleveland metropolitan area lost 11 percent of its population but consumed more than 33 percent in developed land.

(Earth Day Coalition, 2001).

# An Ounce of Prevention

*Land Conservation and the  
Protection of Connecticut's Water Quality*

1998

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **An Ounce of Prevention**

#### *Land Conservation and the Protection of Connecticut's Water Quality*

Connecticut residents cannot take our clean water and scenic open space for granted. As the pace of development increases, the purity of the state's water and many of its pristine lands are threatened as never before.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, Connecticut water companies have acquired more than 130,000 acres of land around drinking water supplies. This simple act of land protection drastically reduced the opportunity for contaminants to enter water sources, contributing to decades of safe, clean water supplies for Connecticut residents and businesses. It also resulted in the protection of significant wildlife habitat and recreation land. As development has changed the Connecticut landscape, the significance of water company-owned lands to the public has grown enormously. These lands now represent some of the best and most scenic wildlife habitat and public recreation areas left in the state.

Unlike many states, Connecticut does not draw its drinking water from one or two isolated reservoirs, but from dozens of sources in rural and suburban communities. More than 16 percent of the state's total area drains into drinking water supplies; what happens on that land directly affects water quality and public health. Today changing trends in water supply law and economics, combined with increased development pressures, create a dual threat to Connecticut's water quality and natural environment:

Water companies are capitalizing on rising land prices and selling off land holdings they no longer consider necessary to provide drinking water to their customers. Water companies have designated 21,000 acres of their holdings around the state as Class III, which means these lands can be sold with little regulatory oversight. Since 1991, the companies have sold or contracted to sell nearly 2,000 acres of this land, and plan to sell more than 2,200 additional acres in the next three years. Much of it is being sold for development as housing, roads, and commercial or industrial parks.

At the same time, development is encroaching on critical drinking watershed lands that are not owned by water companies. Even the largest water companies own, on average, only 25 percent of their watersheds. The remaining 75 percent of watershed lands that drain into drinking water supplies are largely unprotected and are being increasingly developed.

Compounding the problem, state and federal funds for land protection have declined over the past two decades. Connecticut spends less on open space than most other states in the Northeast. In recent years, New Jersey has spent an average of \$2.82 per person on land conversion annually; New York, \$1.83 per person; Vermont, \$5.13 per person; and Massachusetts, \$7.09 per person. By contrast, Connecticut has spent an average of only 41 cents per person per year.

The federal government has eliminated allocations to states from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, once a primary source of grants for state and local open space protection. While funding has declined, the pace of development has increased. As a result, the significance of water company-owned lands has grown enormously; at more than 130,000 acres, these cover an area equivalent to more than half the state's open space holdings. They also provide some of the most pristine wildlife habitat and recreation areas in the state.

Most water companies do not have land conservation missions. Their main responsibilities are to their ratepayers and, in the case of private companies, to their stockholders. As a result, they often consider selling surplus land to be the best way to maximize profits and cut costs to their customers. Some companies also point out that it is unfair to force their urban ratepayers to subsidize open space in distant suburban or rural communities, when those lands are no longer used for water supply.

Nevertheless, public officials and residents must consider the long-term impact these sales may have on the limited number of high-quality rivers, streams, and lakes left in the state; the purity of water drawn from nearby wells; the uncertain future of statewide water supply and demand; and the cost to the public and to the economy if water quality is compromised. Many of the Class III lands contain water sources that could provide drinking water in the future, providing a safeguard against increased demand caused



by population growth and the potential contamination of other drinking water sources. However, because of economic pressures and recent trends in water use, many water companies are opting to abandon portions of their water supplies rather than upgrade them to meet current filtration standards. Moreover, the fate of water company lands will directly affect not only water quality, but also wildlife habitat, public recreation, flood control, and Connecticut's tourism industry, which generates \$4 billion a year.

At the same time that water companies are selling land *outside* their active water supply watersheds, there is an increasing need to protect additional lands *within* them. As development brings roads, houses, and other human activities into watersheds, more pollutants are washing into the water supply. Yet in recent years, Connecticut's largest 11 water companies have invested very little to protect additional watershed land. By contrast, they have been required by federal law to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on filtration and treatment plants. This is especially distressing since filtration and treatment can only reduce existing pollution levels, while watershed protection can actually prevent contamination.

Regulation alone is not enough to safeguard Connecticut's long-term water quality and open space needs. To achieve this, regulation must be accompanied by strategic investments in permanent land conservation. Today, insufficient funding is the single largest obstacle to open space and watershed protection. Therefore, the Trust for Public Land, a national land conservation organization, recommends that:

1. Connecticut increase funding for its existing state open space programs, but it should also establish a program specifically to conserve lands already owned by water companies and unprotected land in drinking watersheds. To encourage broad participation and leverage this funding, the water quality protection program should provide competitive matching grants to qualifying public and private conservation projects.
2. Connecticut establish a funding source dedicated to financing matching grants for land protection. Given the mounting development pressures facing Connecticut, the state should do this immediately. There are many ways that other states have chosen to provide such funding, and many of these are described in Figure 6 on page 17. Whatever the source, when used to provide matching grants, the fund could leverage millions of public and private dollars for land conservation and water quality protection. To ensure an equitable distribution of program benefits, state funds should also be available for open space protection in urban areas, especially along urban waterfronts and rivers.
3. Connecticut encourage wider public participation in watershed decisions. According to a 1997 poll conducted by Quinnipiac College, Connecticut residents are extremely concerned about protecting land. However, they often have no opportunity to participate in decisions about watershed protection, one of the most critical issues affecting the state's land and water.

Sustaining high-quality land and water resources ensures that clean drinking water and a healthy natural environment will be Connecticut's permanent legacy. With so much at stake, public investment and participation is essential to preserve Connecticut's most valuable natural resource: open land and clean water.

## Protecting Our Land, Protecting Our Water

Connecticut is blessed with an abundance of water. But the presence of so many lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams -- many of which supply public drinking water -- in such a small geographic area creates some unique problems. The state's drinking water supply is not tucked away in a far corner; it is part and parcel of dozens of rural and suburban communities, making it extremely vulnerable to human activities. More than 530,000 acres of land -- 16.5 percent of the state's total area -- drain into drinking water supply watersheds, and 128 of the state's 169 towns have some lands associated with a water supply watershed. How that land is managed directly affects public drinking water supplies -- and public health.

More than 100 years ago, Connecticut water companies and the state government had the foresight to acquire and protect land around existing and potential drinking water sources. This simple act of prevention drastically reduced the opportunity for contaminants to enter water sources, contributing to decades of high-quality drinking water for state residents. It also resulted in the protection of more than 130,000 acres of forested lands that provide habitat for wildlife and opportunities for recreation.

But Connecticut is now faced with a dual threat to its water quality and natural environment.

# **Providence Water**

## **General Policy**

### **Providence Water Property Interests**

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the Board of Directors of Providence Water to acquire and to retain property for the safe and efficient production and distribution of potable water consistent with the Board's mission, policies and procedures. It is not the Board's policy to dispose of any Water Supply Board watershed property. Other properties may be considered, only if the transfer of the property is of significant benefit to the mission of Providence Water as determined by the Board.

**GOAL:** To ensure the enforcement of this policy through practices and procedures which enhance the acquisition and retention of property.

**STRATEGY:** Implement procedures and practices to monitor its property, identify strategic parcels, review land disposal requests, report findings and recommendations to the Board, and any and all other activities to enforce this policy.

**AUTHORITY:** The General Manager and Chief Engineer shall ensure the implementation of practices and procedures consistent with this policy, as empowered by the Board of Directors on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, 2004.

The Directors of Water Supply and Engineering shall administer the day-to-day programs and report periodically on conditions thereof.

**Note:** The adoption of this policy hereby rescinds the existing land disposal policy passed by the Board on June 30, 1993.

**Attested by:** Carissa R. Richard  
Secretary of the Board

**Modified:** February 21, 2007