

**A Chronology of Government Bodies
which Managed
the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State Forests & Parks System
and Water Resources**

- 1894: State Board of Agriculture reorganizes into Committees, one of which is the **Committee on Forestry, Roads and Roadside Improvements [1894-1904]** to oversee issues pertaining to forest fires, forest preservation, reforestation and forest public lands
- 1898: St 1898, c 543: Establishes the **Greylock Reservation Commission [1898-1966]** for the purpose of creating the Greylock State Reservation. “The commission shall have the same powers in acquiring land for the Greylock state reservation which are given to the metropolitan park commission.” (s 4). The Commonwealth owns the Greylock State Reservation, but is administered and operated by the Greylock Reservation Commission, a body of Berkshire County.
- 1899: St 1899, c 378: In the same manner as the Greylock Reservation Commission, this act establishes the **Wachusett Mountain State Reservation Commission [1899-1967]** for the purpose of creating the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Worcester County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1903: St 1903, c 264: Establishes the **Mount Tom State Reservation Commission [1903-1975/1990]**, for the purpose of creating the Mount Tom State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Commissioners of Hampshire and Hampden Counties through this Commission
- 1904: St 1904, c 409: Establishes the **Office of State Forester [1904-1919]** within the State Board of Agriculture “to promote the perpetuation, extension and proper management of the forest lands of the Commonwealth, both public and private”
- 1907: St 1907, c 540: Establishes the **Deer Hill State Reservation Commission [1907-1975]**, for the purpose of creating the Deer Hill State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Hampshire County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1907: St 1907, c 541: Establishes the **Mount Sugar Loaf State Reservation Commission [1907-1975]**, for the purpose of creating the Mount Sugar Loaf State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Franklin County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1908: St 1908, c 571: Establishes the **Mount Everett Reservation Commission [1908-1975]**, for the purpose of creating the Mount Everett State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Berkshire County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1909: St 1909, c 263: Transfers the **Office of the Superintendent for Suppressing the Gypsy and Brown Tail Moths [1905-1909; function dates to 1890]** to the Department of State Forester (clarified by St 1948, c 660)
- 1911: St 1911, c 722: Establishes the Bureau of Fire Control under the supervision of a State Fire Warden within the Office of State Forester
- 1914: St 1914, c 720: Establishes the **State Forest Commission [1914-1919]** consisting of three commissioners, one of whom shall be the State Forester
- 1919: St 1919, c 350, ss 39-44: Establishes the **Department of Conservation [1919-1953]**, and merged into one agency the **Office of the State Forester [1904-1919]**, the **State Forest Commission [1914-1919]**, the **Commission on Fisheries and Game [1902-1919; function dates to 1866]**, and the **Department of**

Animal Industry [1912-1919; function dates to 1860]. The Department of Conservation is organized into three divisions: Forestry, Fisheries and Game, and Animal Industry

- 1919: St 1919, c 327: Establishes the **Purgatory Chasm State Reservation Commission [1919-1975]**, for the purpose of creating the Purgatory Chasm State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Worcester County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1922: 1922, c 499: Establishes **Walden Pond State Reservation Commission, [1922-1975]**, for the purpose of creating the Walden Pond State Reservation, which will be owned by the Commonwealth but administered and operated by the Middlesex County Commissioners through this Commission
- 1929: St 1929, c 372: Establishes the Office of State Supervisor of Marine Fisheries in the Division of Fisheries and Game in the Department of Conservation
- 1931: St 1931, c 391: Establishes a Division of Parks within the Department of Conservation, as the department's fourth division. Designates the Department of Conservation "with the care and maintenance of any park or reservation owned by the commonwealth outside of the metropolitan parks district." (s 3)
- 1931-1941: The Boston Office of the Department of Conservation is located in the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) Boston Office Headquarters building, 20 Somerset Street
- 1933: St 1933, c 75: Division of Forestry is renamed the Division of Forestry and Parks
- 1934: St 1934, c 340: The Division of Animal Industry [1919-1934] is transferred to the Department of Agriculture
- 1935: A new position of State Ornithologist is created in the Division of Fisheries and Game
- 1939: St 1939, c 491: Reorganizes the Department of Conservation into five divisions: Division of Forestry; Division of Parks and Recreation; Division of Fisheries and Game; Division of Wildlife Research and Management; and Division of Marine Fisheries
- 1941: St 1941, c 599, s 3: Establishes a Bureau of Law Enforcement in the Division of Fisheries and Game in the Department of Conservation
- 1948: St 1948, c 651: Clarifies the functions and organization of the Department of Conservation; is organized into five divisions: Division of Forestry; Division of Parks and Recreation; Division of Marine Fisheries; and Division of Law Enforcement; a fifth division, Division of Fisheries and Game; shall exist with the Department but not under the supervision and control of it, but through a Fish and Game Board; reorganizes the Division of Wildlife Research and Management into a Bureau within the Division of Fisheries and Game, and within this bureau there shall be a State Ornithologist (s 7)
- 1948: St. 1948, c 660: Chief Moth Superintendent and the Bureau of Moth Work reorganized, and reporting directly to the Commissioner, and not to the Director of Division of Forestry; in effect, 1948-1953
- 1953: St 1953, c 631: **Department of Conservation [1919-1953]** renamed the **Department of Natural Resources [1953-1975]**; the Department of Natural Resources is organized into three divisions: Division of Forests and Parks; Division of Marine Fisheries; Division of Law Enforcement; a fourth division, Division of Fisheries and Game shall exist with the Department but not under the supervision and control of it, but through the Fish and Game Board (s 7); within the Division of Forests and Parks, there shall be a Bureau of Insect Pest Control (Chief Moth Superintendent); Bureau of Forest Fire Control (Chief Fire Warden); Bureau of Forest Development (Chief Forester); Bureau of Recreation (Chief of Recreation) (s 4B)
- 1953: St 1953, c 666: Establishes a Division of Public Beaches within the Department of Public Works, and transfers Salisbury Beach Reservation from the Department of Conservation to this new Division

- 1956: St 1956, c 620: Establishes a Division of Water Resources within the Department of Natural Resources, “under the control of a water resources commission which shall be the agent of the commonwealth in coordinating all activities of federal, state and other agencies in the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water for the purpose of preventing loss of life and damage to property by erosion, floodwater and sediment in the watersheds of the commonwealth”; the DNR Commissioner shall be the Chairman of the Water Resources Commission (s 9); the members of the Water Resources Commission include the Commissioners of Agriculture, Commerce, MDC, Natural Resources, Public Health, and Public Works (the Director of Fisheries and Game added in 1969)
- 1956: St 1956, c 657: increases function of Bureau and Insect Pest Control within Division of Forests and Parks; also removes the word ‘Moth’ from name of the Chief Superintendent
- 1962: St 1962, c 513: Requires that well diggers and drillers register with the Water Resources Commission, through its Division of Water Resources
- 1963: St 1963, c 664: Establishes a Division of Conservation Services within the Department of Natural Resources through abolishing the State Soil Conservation Committee in the Department of Agriculture; within this Division, there shall be a Committee for Conservation of Soil, Water and Related Resources
- 1966: St 1966, c 444: Abolishes the Greylock Reservation Commission of Berkshire County Commissioners and transfers the management and operation of Greylock State Reservation to the Department of Natural Resources
- 1966: St 1966, c 658: Abolishes the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation Commission of Worcester County Commissioners and transfers the management and operations of Wachusett Mountain State Reservation to the Department of Natural Resources (effective April 1, 1967)
- 1966: St 1966, c 685: Establishes a Division of Water Pollution Control in the Department of Natural Resources, under the control of the Water Resources Commission
- 1968: St 1968, c 501: All beaches and other recreational facilities under the control of the Division of Waterways in the Department of Public Works are transferred to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forests and Parks; the construction of these beaches and other recreational facilities were authorized by St 1966, c 632; the Division of Public Beaches had been previously transferred to the Division of Waterways by St 1958, c 640
- 1968: St 1968, c 736: Establishes a Division of Mineral Resources within the Department of Natural Resources; and establishes the Office of State Geologist in the Department of Public Works [by 1983 the Office of the State Geologist is within the Office of the Secretary of Environmental Affairs; see St 1983, c 289, s 62]
- 1974/75: St 1974, c 806, ss 7-8: **Department of Natural Resources [1953-1975]** renamed the **Department of Environmental Management [1975-2003]**; except that the DNR Division of Fisheries and Game, and Division of Marine Fisheries were transferred to the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreational Vehicles; the Water Resources Commission (but not its Division of Water Resources), the Division of Water Pollution Control, and the Division of Mineral Resources were transferred to the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering; the Division of Law Enforcement and the Division of Conservation Services were transferred to the Office of the Secretary of Environmental Affairs; the Bureau of Solid Waste Disposal was transferred from the Department of Public Works to DEM; subsequently, St 1983, c 289, c 60, and St 1983, c 589, s 18 transfers the Water Resources Commission to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs; St 1983, c 589, s 16 clarifies St 1974, c 806 as it relates to DEM
- 1974/75: St 1974, c 806, ss 15-19, 25: Abolishes the County Commissioner State Reservation Commissions of Mount Tom State Reservation, Deer Hill State Reservation, Mount Sugar Loaf State Reservation, Mount Everett State Reservation, Purgatory Chasm State Reservation and Walden Pond State Reservation, and transfers these State Reservations to the Department of Environmental Management, effective July 1, 1975 (St 1975, c 380 transferred Mount Tom State Reservation back to the Mount Tom State Reservation Commission under the County Commissioners of Hampden and Hampshire Counties; and remained so

through 1990, at which time Mount Tom State Reservation was transferred to DEM, per St 1990, c 150, s 154)

- 1980: St 1980, c 512: Establishes Urban Heritage State Parks within the Division of Forests and Parks (see also St 1979, c 798, s 2)
- 1983: St 1983, c 289, s 61: Transfers the construction and development function of the Division of Waterways in the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering to DEM, while the Division of Waterways in DEQE retains its licensing and regulatory functions. The DEM Division of Waterways includes the authority to construct projects and facilities, to dredge the waters of the Commonwealth, to manage the state piers, and to manage the dam and maintenance safety program. The DEQE Division of Waterways relates to the licensing and permitting structures or activities within the tidelands of the Commonwealth (see also St 1983, c 589, ss 16, 29)
- 1985: St 1985, c 765: Renames the Bureau of Insect Pest Control in the Division of Forests and Parks to Bureau of Shade Tree Management and Pest Control; function is also increased
- 1987: St 1987, c 584, ss 1, 2A: Transfers the DEM Bureau of Solid Waste Disposal to the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering
- 2003: St 2003, c 41: Merges the **Department of Environmental Management [1975-2003]** and the **Metropolitan District Commission [1919-2003]** into a new agency called the **Department of Conservation and Recreation [2003-present]**. DCR shall have three divisions: **Division of State Parks and Recreation [2003-present]** representing the DEM Division of Forests and Parks [dating from 1898]; the **Division of Urban Parks and Recreation [2003-2011]** representing the MDC Metropolitan Park System [dating from 1893]; and the **Division of Water Supply Protection [2003-present]** within which there are two bureaus: Bureau of Water Resources representing the **DEM Office of Water Resources [1956-2003]** and the Bureau of Watershed Management representing the **MDC Division of Watershed Management [1985-2003]** (see also St 2003, c 26, s 698, and many other sections)
- 2009: St 2009, c 4, s 4: Transfers the Well Driller Registration Program (St 1962, c 513) from the DCR Office of Water Resources, Division of Water Supply Protection, to the Department of Environmental Protection, effective October 1, 2009
- 2011: St 2011, c 68, various sections: Abolishes the **Division of Urban Parks and Recreation [2003-2011]**, and creates a “single state parks agency” within the **Department of Conservation and Recreation [2003-present]**, with the name of **Division of State Parks and Recreation** (see sections 20, 29-32, 78-80)

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 July 2021 Update