



Watershed Action Alliance
of Southeastern Massachusetts
www.watershedaction.org

Top 5 Legislative Priorities FY23

The Watershed Action Alliance of Southeastern Massachusetts greatly appreciates your efforts to protect water resources in your district, and we want to help you! Our 14 member organizations are very knowledgeable about the environmental issues in your region, and we have subject matter expertise we want to share with you.

With our long histories of environmental success and our extensive local partnerships, we are uniquely positioned to help your constituents by efficiently using and leveraging the Commonwealth's financial investment in environmental protection. Please consider supporting these legislative priorities for FY23:

1. Prioritizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund investment in water infrastructure, wastewater treatment, and climate resiliency projects. This is a “once-in-a-generation” opportunity to protect the Commonwealth’s water resources for the benefit of decades to come.

2. Making non-profit organizations eligible for climate resiliency funding through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program (Energy and Environmental Affairs). Watershed associations are uniquely positioned to efficiently implement regional strategies for climate change adaptation and preparedness.

3. Supporting H.2198 An Act relative to the preservation of wetlands and water resources in Chapter 40B applications. This bill would eliminate the destructive circumvention by 40B projects of local wetlands regulations that are governed by municipal Conservation Commissions.

4. Supporting H.898/S.530 An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management. This bill would give the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs the authority to require uniform nonessential outdoor watering restrictions across a drought region during severe droughts, rather than the current less-effective municipal approach that allows unnecessary use.

5. Supporting the Green Budget FY23. Current environmental agency funding is insufficient to meet demands and growing responsibilities. The Green Budget would restore the state’s environmental investment to 1% of the state operating budget as it was in the early 2000’s (currently just .062%). Priority line items:

- **EEA:** Increase funding for Energy and Environmental Affairs - Climate Adaptation and Preparedness (Line Item 2000-0101) to \$5M (from \$2.2M in FY22). H2 is \$3.7M.
- **DEP:** Increase funding for the Department of Environmental Protection Administration (Line Item 2200-0100) by \$5 to \$45M (from \$40M in FY22 with pull through from FY21). H2 is \$36.2M.
- **DER:** Increase funding for the Department of Fish and Game – Division of Ecological Restoration (Line Item 2300-0101) by \$750K to \$4M (from \$3.25M in FY22). H2 is funded at \$3.16M.
- **EJ:** Increase the Governor’s funding of new Energy and Environmental Affairs Environmental Justice (EJ) initiatives (Line Item 2000-0102) by \$1M to \$1.3M. H2 is \$330K. (new line item).
- **DCR:** Increase funding for the Department of Conservation and Recreation (Line Item 2810-0100) by \$10M to \$60M (from \$50M in FY22). H2 is \$73.5M, but includes retained revenue, formerly line item (2810-2042).