



## 2011-2012 STATE CONSERVATION LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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### Stewardship through Public Investments in the Commonwealth

Ensure spending cap in annual capital budget for:

- *Land conservation*: land protection programs including Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities, Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, Urban and State Parks and Forests, MassWildlife including Wildlife Management Areas, Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program acquisitions, and Watershed Protection.
- *Aquatic habitat protection*: wetlands and riverine system restoration.

Increase appropriations in annual operating budget for:

- *Division of Fisheries & Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program*
- *Division of Ecological Restoration's Riverways Program*
- *Executive Office of Administration and Finance Office of Geographic Information Systems*
- *Department of Environmental Protection's Wetlands Protection Program*
- *Department of Conservation & Recreation's forests, parks, and public watersheds*
- *Mass Audubon/Department of Conservation & Recreation's Blue Hills Trailside Museum*

### Stewardship of Land and Water through Zoning Reform, updates to the Community Preservation Act, Riverine Habitat Protection through better Water Management, and protection of Old Growth Forests

- *An Act to Sustain Community Preservation (SB 1841, Sen. Creem; HB 765 Rep. Kulik)* allows for capital improvements to existing open space, housing, parks and recreational facilities not purchased with CPA funds; create a new CPA exemption for non-residential uses; allow the use of up to 3% of CPA funds annually to pay for a city or town's CPA-related administrative expenses; allow cities and towns to delegate ownership of real property interests (land or buildings) acquired with CPA funds to town boards and commissions, certain non profit organizations, or in the case of housing, housing authorities, community development corporations, regional housing non-profits and other special purpose housing entities; create incentives for city adoption.
- *Bottle Bill (SB 1650, Sen. Creem; HB 890 Rep. Wolf)* expands the bottle bill refund to include non-carbonated beverages such as sports drinks, bottled water, and iced tea.
- *An Act Relative to Sustainable Water Resources (SB 349, Sen. Eldridge, HB 255, Rep. Smizik)* amends the Water Management Act to ensure adequate water flow and water levels for community water suppliers and fish and other species as developed by the Department of Fish and Game; authorizes water suppliers to implement "waterbanking" under which they could charge a small fee to residents and businesses for any new water withdrawal capacity to offset and remedy ecological impacts of water withdrawals, such as: land acquisition for wellhead protection, local recharge of storm/waste water, reuse of water, retrofitting existing development with low impact development methods or water saving devices; and augments the options offered to dam owners by the Office of Dam Safety within the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to include dam removal. DCR's existing authority currently only extends to repair of failing dams.
- *An Act Relative to Comprehensive Land Use Reform and Partnership (SB 1019, Sen. Eldridge)* makes major structural changes to the enabling laws (M.G.L. chapters 40A and 41) governing local zoning and subdivision review to improve communities' ability to guide development by reforming loopholes, including approval not required measures, and grandfathering provisions, and by requiring consistency between local zoning and master planning efforts.
- *An Act Relative to the Protection of Old Growth Forests (HB 236, Rep. Kulik)* calls on the state to identify and provide permanent statutory protection for the remaining old growth forests on state lands, protecting them from development of roads and timber harvesting and requires the development and implementation of management plans for these unique stands of ancient trees.