

THE QUABBIN RESERVOIR

Boston's Drinking Water Supply Area

Aerial Google Earth Images



The Quabbin Reservoir is Surrounded by 58,000 Acres of Public Forest Which Protects the Drinking Water for Boston and 2.2 Million Massachusetts Residents

According to the Department of Conservation and Recreation

“The primary purpose of DCR water and surrounding lands is drinking water supply. Public access, therefore, is carefully regulated and controlled to protect over 2 million people’s source of drinking water. State regulations require all entry and exit through gates or other designated areas only. Anything that could pollute the water supply system, such as litter or refuse of any sort, is prohibited. Please observe restrictions on recreational activities.”

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/central/quabbin.htm>



Stream Entering the Quabbin Reservoir



BIG PROBLEMS IN WATERSHED PARADISE

Following are September 2010 Google Images of Clearcutting of the Quabbin Watershed, Including the Prescott Peninsula, Where Citizens are not Even Allowed to Walk.

While the State Says it Intends to Limit Clearcutting in the Future, the Current Forest Management Plan Allows Intense Logging of up to 25 % of any Sub-watershed Within a 10 Year Period. (Page 165: www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/documents/2007QuabbinLMP.pdf)

The Important Question is: Why Does the State Commercially Log Watershed Forests if Most of the Logs Go to Quebec, the Timber Program Loses Money, and State Watershed Lands Operate Under a Mandate to “Protect The Drinking Water Supply Watersheds”?

The Watershed Forest Managers Claim They Log the Forest to “Improve” The Forest and Water Quality Which Leads to the Question:

ARE FOXES GUARDING THE WATERSHED HENHOUSE?

The Following Clearcuts Have Been Defended by the Watershed Forest Managers as Being “Beneficial” for Forests and Water Quality. Please Judge for Yourself if this Forest Cutting is Truly Beneficial for Forests and Water Quality. Please Keep in Mind:

1. Watershed uses and activities prohibited (350 CMR 11.04(1)(a)):

“Any alteration which could degrade the quality of the water in the watersheds that lie within 400 feet of the Bank of a Reservoir”

2. Logging and the associated road building is well known to have the potential to degrade water quality. See: <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/czara/ch3-1.cfm>

“Local impacts of timber harvesting and road construction on water quality can be severe, especially in smaller headwater streams.” “These effects are of greatest concern where silvicultural activity occurs in high-quality watershed areas that provide municipal water supplies or support cold-water fisheries.”

3. These statements by Dr Foster and Dr Orwig at Harvard Forest:

http://harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/publications/pdfs/Foster_ConservationBio_2006.pdf

“All evidence suggests that harvesting exerts greater impacts on ecosystem processes than leaving disturbed or stressed forests intact. A conservative alternative hypothesis for the long-term management of watershed lands might be proposed: the elimination of harvesting and its associated impacts (e.g., soil compaction, road development and improvement) will yield forest and landscape conditions that maintain and improve water quality in the face of ongoing disturbances and stresses.”

“Although intuitive support exists for the development of “protection forests” through silvicultural approaches to increase the resistance and resilience of forests to pests, pathogens, and natural disturbances, empirical data to support the approach are lacking. Not only is there sparse evidence that such approaches achieve their goals of increasing resistance and resilience, little evidence suggests that natural disturbances yield negative functional consequences. Therefore, current management regimes aiming to increase long-term forest health and water quality are ongoing “experiments” lacking controls. In many situations good evidence from true experiments and “natural experiments” suggests that the best management approach is to do nothing.”

The Following Images Taken From Space by Google Earth Can Be Seen By Anyone With This Free Software Program: www.google.com/earth/index.html

Google Earth allows the user to see historical images for a particular location. The images shown are taken “before” and “after” cutting.

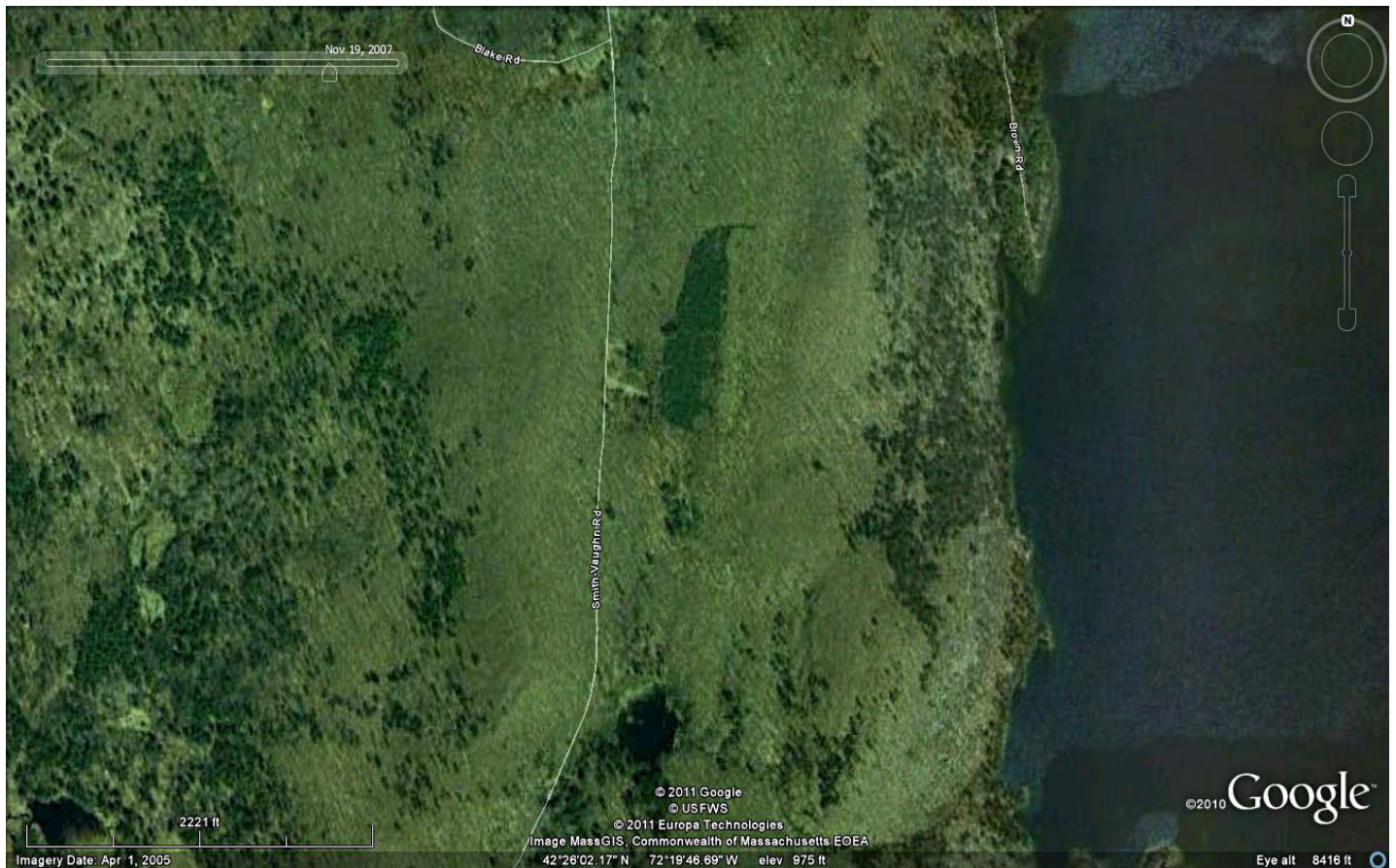
The April 1, 2005 images show intact forests before cutting, during the spring with the leaves off the trees, and the July 3, 2008 and September 21, 2010 images show clearcut areas, during the summer with leaves on the trees.

The images depict a typical commercial forestry clear-cut logging rotation pattern.

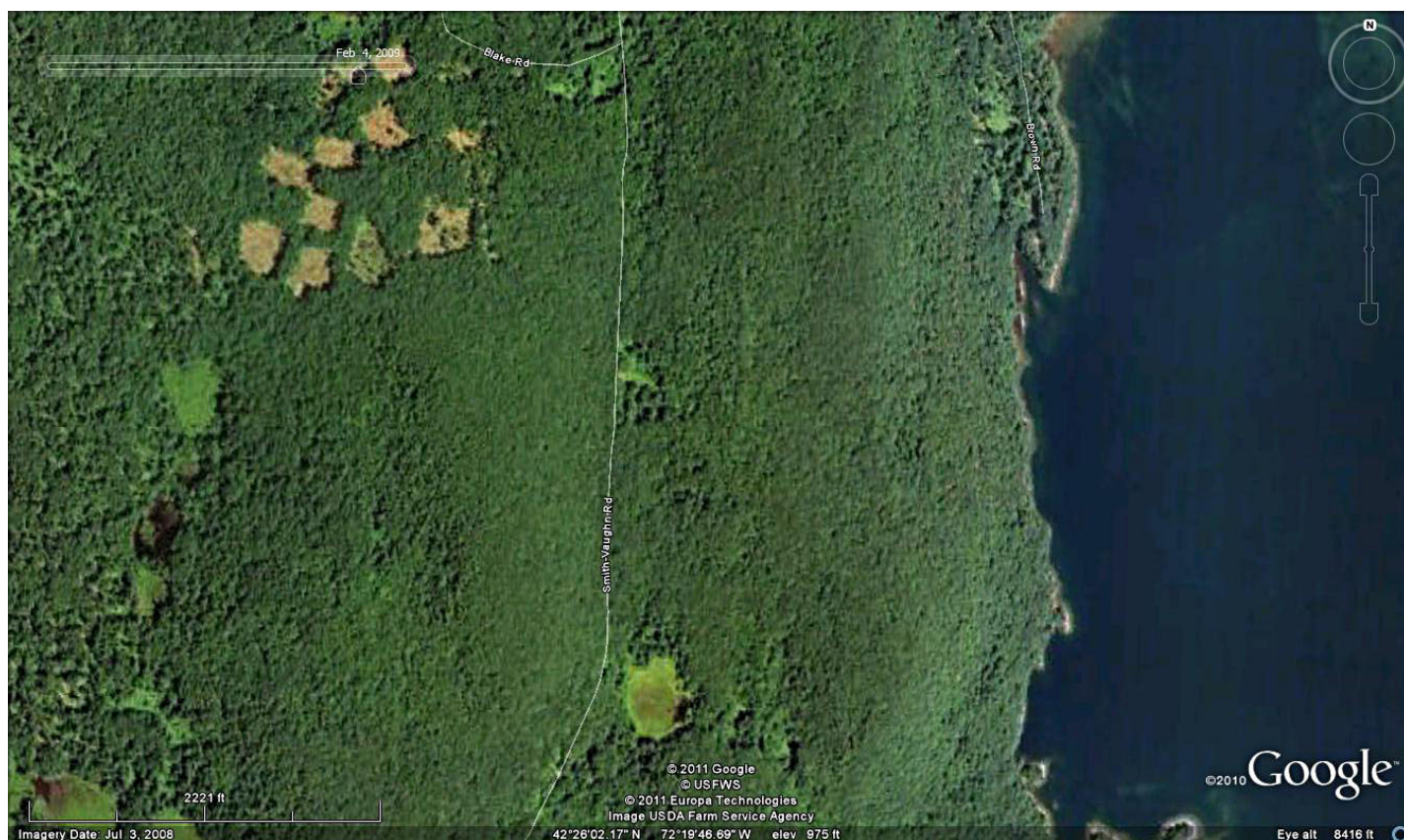
For Ground Level Images Of Quabbin Cutting, See:

<http://www.maforests.org/QUABBIN.pdf>

Northeast Prescott Peninsula, “Before” Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



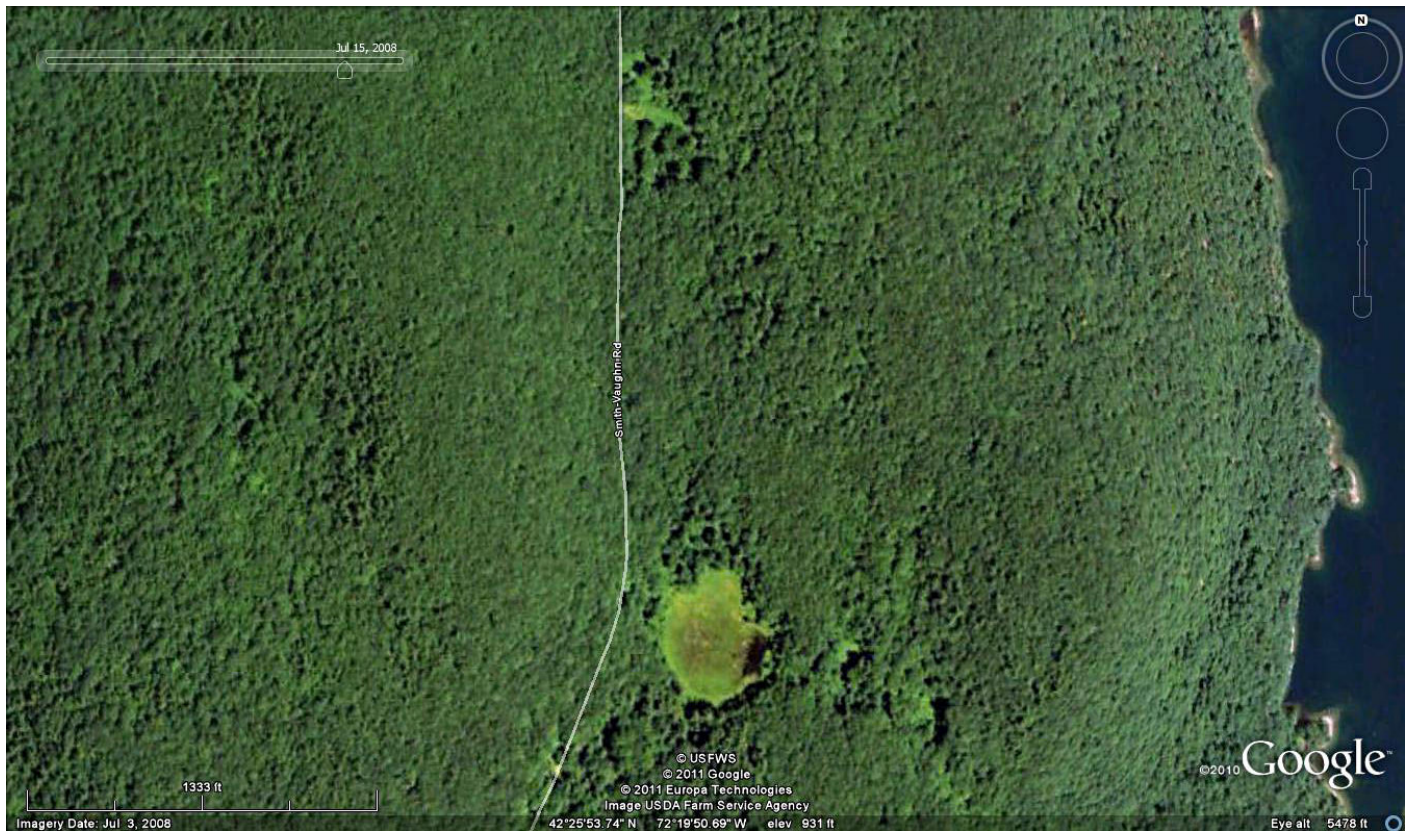
Northeast Prescott Peninsula, “After” Some Clear-Cutting, Image July 3, 2008



Northeast Prescott Peninsula, “After” More Clear-Cutting, Image Sept 21, 2010



Close-up Northeast Prescott Peninsula, “Before” Cutting, Image July 3, 2008



Close-up Northeast Prescott Peninsula, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image September 21, 2010



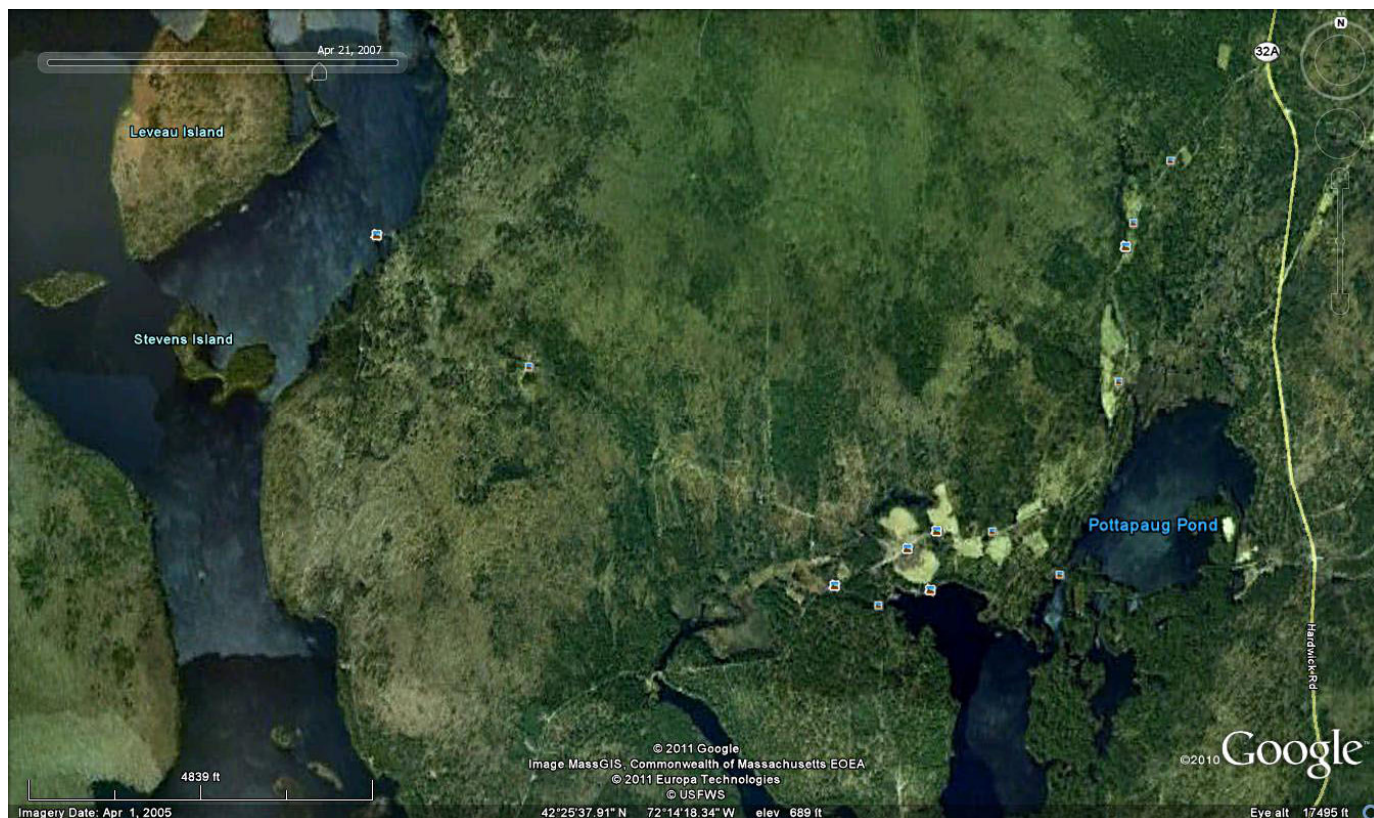
Southeast Prescott Peninsula, “Before” Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



Southeast Prescott Peninsula, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image July 3, 2008



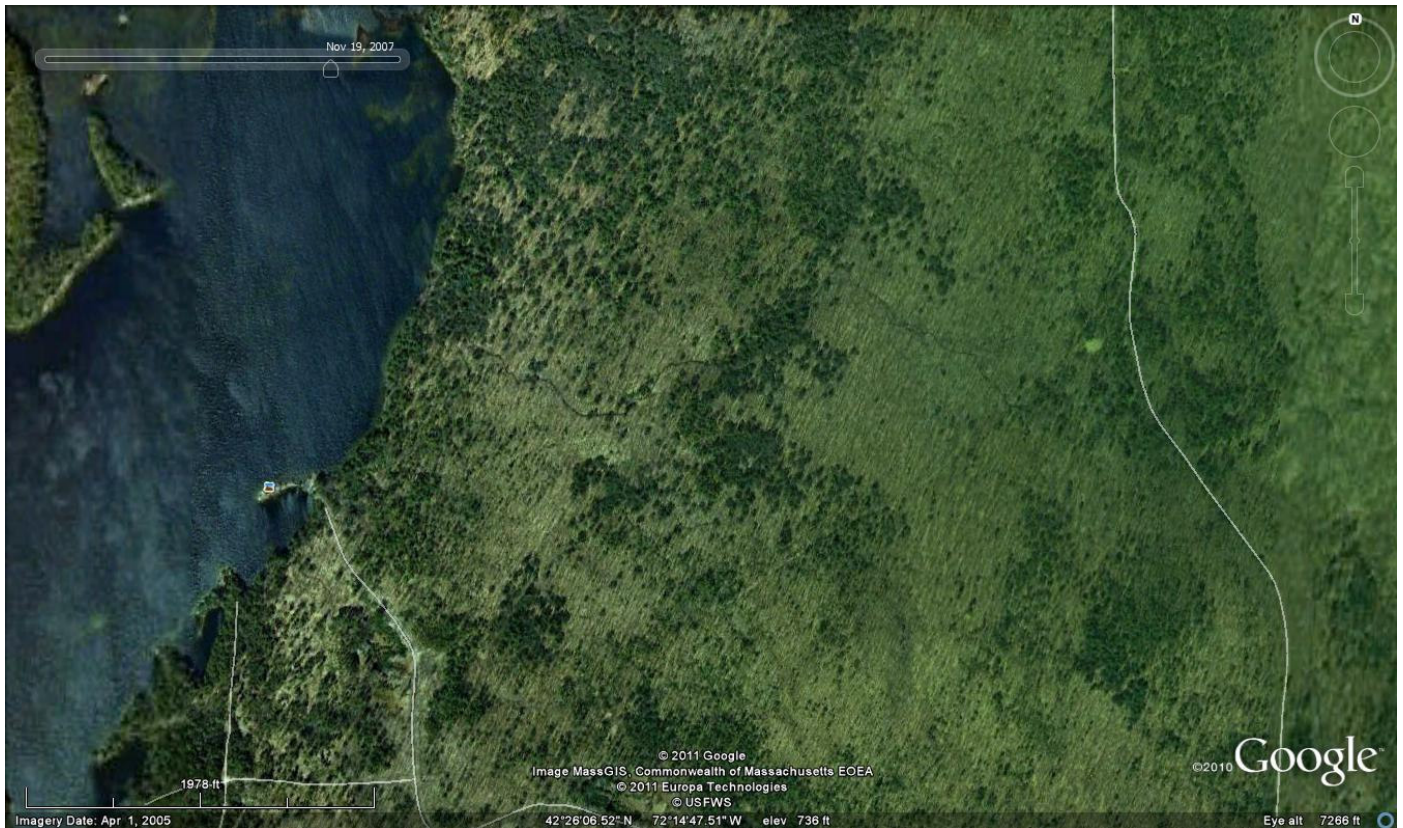
Gate 40 Overview, “Before” Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



Gate 40 Overview, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



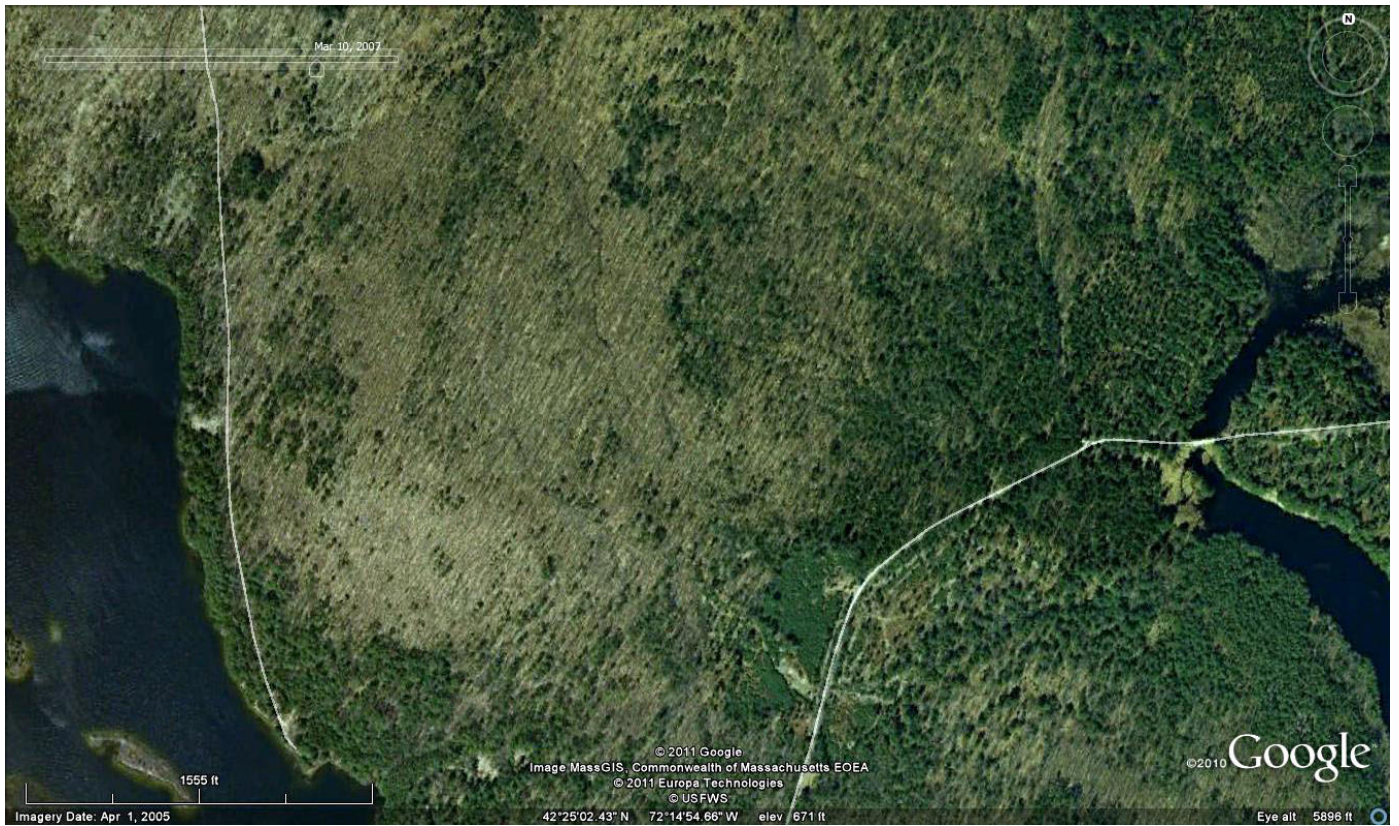
Graves Landing, “Before” Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



Graves Landing, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image July 3, 2008



Greenwich-Dana Road, “Before” Cutting, Image April 1, 2005



Greenwich-Dana Road, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image July 3, 2008



Greenwich-Dana Road, “After” Clear-Cutting, Image September 21, 2010



For Ground Level Images Of Quabbin Cutting, See: www.maforests.org/QUABBIN.pdf

Considering that:

1. The primary purpose of DCR watershed forests is protection of the drinking water supply.
2. Logging is well known to have the potential to degrade water quality and the EPA has accepted a filtration waiver worth \$200 million based on promises to protect the watershed.
3. More than 2 million Massachusetts residents depend on water coming from these watersheds.
4. The watershed timber program operates at a loss and thus is subsidized by MA citizens.
5. Most of the logs are sent to Quebec and 90% of Massachusetts logging occurs on private lands.
6. State owned watersheds forests represent only 2% of Massachusetts land area and 3% of its forests
7. These lands are the largest intact block of forest in Massachusetts and represent our best chance to preserve and protect wilderness areas, fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, clean air, tourism income, carbon sequestration, scenic beauty and recreational opportunities in this 3rd most densely populated state of 6,000,000 residents.
8. The public “overwhelmingly” prefers no commercial logging on public lands.

It is time to stop logging these public forests, with exceptions allowed for genuine and pressing public safety or other emergency reasons.

MASSACHUSETTS   FOREST WATCH

www.maforests.org

May 30, 2011