

December 11, 2025

Chairpersons and Ranking Members of the Energy and Technology Committee  
Chairpersons and Ranking Members of the Environment Committee  
Chairpersons and Ranking Members of the Planning and Development Committee  
Chairpersons and Ranking Members of the Public Health Committee

**Subject: Water Planning Council 2025 Annual Report on the Status of the State Water Plan**

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

Enclosed is the Connecticut Water Planning Council's (WPC) Annual Report on the Status of the State Water Plan pursuant to [Section 22a-352\(i\)](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The report, prepared in accordance with Section 11-4a of the Connecticut General Statutes, describes the accomplishments of the year; ongoing actions of the WPC's standing and topical workgroups' activities; and sets the WPC's 2026 goals and theme.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [Martin.Heft@ct.gov](mailto:Martin.Heft@ct.gov) or 860.418.6355.

Sincerely,



Martin L. Heft, Chairman

.....

**CT Water Planning Council**  
**Office of Policy and Management**  
**450 Capitol Avenue, MS #54SLP, Hartford CT 06106**  
<https://portal.ct.gov/water>



# **2025 Annual Report on the Status of the State Water Plan**

December 2, 2025



**PURA**

Submitted jointly by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, the Commissioners of Public Health and Energy and Environmental Protection, and the Chairman of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority in accordance with Section 22a-352 of the Connecticut General Statutes

## About the Connecticut Water Planning Council

The Connecticut Water Planning Council (WPC) was established in 2001 pursuant to Section 25-33o of the Connecticut General Statutes to address issues involving water companies, water resources, and the future of the state's drinking water supply. In furtherance of this mission, the General Assembly in 2014 directed the WPC to develop a State Water Plan for the management of the state's water resources, and in doing so, to balance the needs of public water supply, economic development, recreation, and ecological health. The General Assembly adopted the State Water Plan in June of 2019, after which the WPC began implementing the plan's recommendations.

An established Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG) and several administratively established workgroups assist the WPC in its efforts. While numerous state agency programs support objectives identified in the State Water Plan, the annual report summarizes specific initiatives of the WPC.

## Annual Report Introduction

Connecticut General Statutes [Section 22a-352\(i\)](#) requires the WPC to "oversee the implementation and periodic updates of the State Water Plan". The annual report summarizes the WPC's work on implementing the State Water Plan during the calendar year 2025.

Appendix A: WPCAG Representatives

Appendix B: Resources

Visit <https://portal.ct.gov/water> for further information and reports.

### Acronyms

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| • CGA   | Connecticut General Assembly                      |
| • CGS   | Connecticut General Statutes                      |
| • DEEP  | Department of Energy and Environmental Protection |
| • DPH   | Department of Public Health                       |
| • IDW   | Interagency Drought Workgroup                     |
| • OPM   | Office of Policy and Management                   |
| • PURA  | Public Utilities Regulatory Authority             |
| • WPC   | Water Planning Council                            |
| • WPCAG | Water Planning Council Advisory Group             |
| • WUCC  | Water Utility Coordinating Committees             |

## Water Planning Council Members



**Martin L. Heft**  
Council Chairman  
Office of Policy and Management

**David A. Arconti, Jr.**  
Public Utilities  
Regulatory Authority

**Christopher D. Roy**  
Department of  
Public Health

**Graham J. Stevens**  
Department of Energy and  
Environmental Protection

- Martin L. Heft (August 2019 – present), WPC Chair, Office of Policy and Management
- Graham J. Stevens (November 2020 – present), Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
- Christopher D. Roy (December 2024 – present), Department of Public Health
- David A. Arconti, Jr. (January 2025 – November 2025), Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
- Dr. Janice A. Beecher (November 2025 – present), Public Utilities Regulatory Authority



**Martin L. Heft**  
Council Chairman, Office  
of Policy & Management

**Janice A. Beecher**  
Public Utilities  
Regulatory Authority

**Christopher D. Roy**  
Department of  
Public Health

**Graham J. Stevens**  
Department of Energy &  
Environmental Protection

## 2025 In Review

The WPC started out 2025 with the retirement of Chairman John "Jack" W. Betoski (PURA) and turning the reins over to Martin Heft as Chairman. Jack served as Chairman since the inception of the WPC, except for one year. A proclamation from Governor Ned Lamont was presented recognizing Jack's years of service to the WPC, PURA and the State of Connecticut.

As part of the WPC's 2025 Work Plan, the WPC instructed the WPCAG in February to review the recommendations of Sec. 5.2, 5.3, and 5.5 of the State Water Plan, incorporating the survey being conducted by Outreach & Education Workgroup. Additionally, in May the WPCAG was tasked with exploring possible partnerships and contacting external agencies and educational institutions.

WPCAG membership was approved for Group A with a term on May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2028. A complete listing is in Appendix A. Additionally, the WPC appointed Alicea Charmut and Steve Vitko as WPCAG Co-Chairs. Dan Lawrence was thanked for his continued service and serving as a Co-Chair.

Chairman Heft was elected to a full term as Chair for the term July 1, 2025 – July 7, 2026.

In July the WPC took several actions to finalize several topical workgroups. The council voted to combine the Watershed Lands and Source Water Protection workgroups at the May 6th

meeting, upon completion of the Source Water Protection final report. The new standing combined group was named Watershed Protection Workgroup. Additionally, the council voted to disband the Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Workgroup and have the WPCAG contact the DPH Water Utility Coordinating Committees on this topic.

In September the WPC received final reports from the Source Water Protection Workgroup and the Watershed Lands Workgroup. Members of both were officially recognized and the recommendations in each will be reviewed by the Watershed Protection Workgroup.

The WPC was represented by Chairman Heft on panels at the CT Water Environmental Association annual meeting and the CT Council of Small Towns Conference. The panels discussed alternative state funding programs for protected sewer capacity and how they also tie into the State Water Plan and the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan.

In November, the WPC welcomed Dr. Janice A. Beecher representing PURA. She replaced David Arconti who filled the vacancy of John Betoski.

As the year ended, the WPC voted for the 2026 Goals, Outreach and Education Theme and meeting schedule.

## 2025 Standing and Topical Workgroup Reports

### ***Conservation Pricing & Rate Recovery Analysis Workgroup (topical)***

This workgroup identifies regulatory, operational, technological, and financial barriers that prevent utilities from taking advantage of conservation pricing programs with modern rate setting tools. Conservation pricing is an important contributor to climate resilience through incentives for reducing water use during times of drought. The work compliments the State Water Plan goal of drought resiliency and conservation that is being explored in the Water Utility Coordinating Committee implementation process.

#### 2025 Key Accomplishments:

- In July, the WPC voted to disband the Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Workgroup and have the WPCAG contact the DPH Water Utility Coordinating Committees (WUCC) on this topic.

Chair: Alicea Charamut, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut and WPCAG member

## ***Interagency Drought Workgroup (standing)***

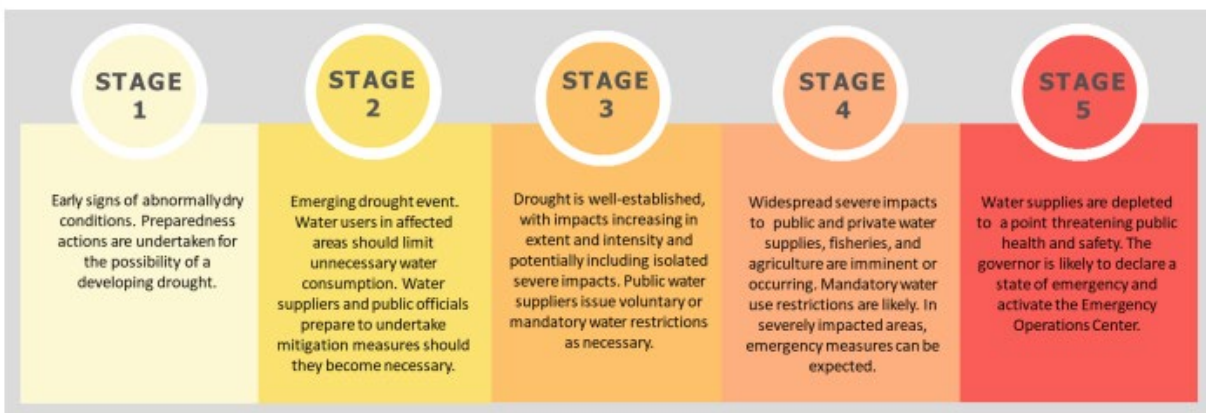
The Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW) is responsible for authoring, updating, and implementing the Connecticut Drought Preparedness and Response Plan (State Drought Plan) and regularly monitoring hydrologic conditions throughout the State. The IDW is charged with recommending drought mitigation actions to the Governor and implementing the recommendations of the State Drought Plan.

2025 Key Accomplishments:

- Remained in stage 2 drought advisory from the fall of 2024 until April 2025
- Activated stage 2 drought in October 2025
- Participated in development and implementation of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Statewide Emergency Planning and Preparedness Initiative

Chair: Martin L. Heft, Undersecretary, Intergovernmental Policy and Planning Division, Office of Policy and Management

Statewide Drought Coordinator: Becca Dahl, Office of Responsible Growth, Office of Policy and Management



## ***Outreach and Education Workgroup (standing)***

The Outreach and Education Workgroup works to increase stakeholder and public awareness of the Water Planning Council and the State Water Plan while increasing participation in water resource planning, management, and protection in Connecticut. The workgroup hosts workshops and webinars to educate and inform water resource leaders, stakeholders, and the public on what they can do to protect and enhance Connecticut's water resources.



## 2025 Key Accomplishments:

- Conducted four webinars in the Extreme Weather and our Watersheds Webinar Series:
  - [World Water Day Webinar](#) – March 25, 2025 focused on extreme weather and sea level rise monitoring
  - [Forests, Drought, and Wildfires](#)– May 29, 2025
  - [Impacts of Flooding on Water Quality](#) – September 30, 2025
  - [Impacts of Drought on Water Quality](#) – October 17, 2025
- Coordinated with the Connecticut Association of Flood Plain Managers to provide continuing education units as part of the webinar series
- Completed a survey of non-profits and local governments on their role in implementing the State Water Plan. The survey will be used to build out a State Water Plan "stewardship" program in 2026 aimed at increasing state-wide efforts to implement water resource management goals.
- Established a Water Planning Council YouTube Channel to provide better access to webinar videos. The workgroup will explore expanding use of YouTube in 2026 to increase awareness of the Water Planning Council and the State Water Plan through a series of short videos.

Chair: Denise Savageau, President, Connecticut Association of Conservation Districts, and WPCAG member

### Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds Webinar Series 2025: Forests, Droughts, and Wildfires

**May 29, 2025, Virtual 12-1PM**  
*Sponsored by the Connecticut Water Planning Council*

Connecticut's Water Planning Council presents it's second webinar on Forests, Droughts and Wildfires. Forests are essential to providing clean and abundant water in our state. Protecting forest health is important for healthy watersheds. The workshop will include the impacts of climate change, including drought, on forest health and will review last year's fire season and what we need to do to protect our forests and by extension, our watersheds. Discussion will include using prescribed burns as a forest management tool and the resource capacity of DEEP and local municipalities for monitoring and response.

**Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Christopher Martin, State Forester and Director of the Forestry Division for the Bureau of Natural Resources, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
- Question and Answer

The State Water Plan is developed by the Connecticut Water Planning Council (WPC). Workshop hosted by the WPC's Outreach and Education Workgroup.



**CONNECTICUT  
WATER  
PLANNING  
COUNCIL**

**REGISTER NOW** ➔

Scan or visit: [bit.ly/WPCworkshop](https://bit.ly/WPCworkshop)



# Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds Webinar Series 2025:

Sponsored by the Connecticut Water Planning Council

## Water Quality and the Impacts of Flooding

Sept 30, 2025, Virtual 12-1PM

## Water Quality and the Impacts of Drought

Oct 17, 2025, Virtual 12-1PM

Please join the Connecticut Water Planning Council's Outreach and Education Workgroup for a continuation of the Extreme Weather and Our Watershed Webinar Series 2025. The series will wrap up this fall with two workshops centered on the impacts of extreme weather on drinking water quality. The first workshop will cover flooding and the water quality impacts on both surface and groundwater supplies. The second workshop will focus on drought and impacts on water quality including challenges with algal blooms and cyanobacteria. Register at [bit.ly/WPCeducation](https://bit.ly/WPCeducation)

The State Water Plan is developed by the Connecticut Water Planning Council (WPC). Workshop hosted by the WPC's Outreach and Education Workgroup.




**REGISTER NOW**

Scan or visit: [bit.ly/WPCeducation](https://bit.ly/WPCeducation)



## Source Water Protection Workgroup (topical)

As the threats and costs of addressing water quality and quantity issues increase exponentially, protecting the sources of our drinking water is vital. This workgroup reviewed the status of source water protection measures in Connecticut, including the roles of state agencies, federal and state programs and regulations, and the report of the Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3). The group analyzed other ongoing efforts and identifying gaps in source water protection.

2025 Key Accomplishments:

- [Source Water Protection Workgroup Final Report](#) was submitted and accepted by the WPC on August 5, 2025.
- The report includes actionable recommendations to strengthen interagency coordination, integrate source water protection into state and local planning, increase



support for private wells and small systems, and expand public outreach and resiliency efforts.

- The WPC assigned the newly formed Watershed Protection Workgroup to review the recommendations.

Chair: Denise Savageau, President, Connecticut Association of Conservation Districts and WPCAG member

### ***Water Planning Council Advisory Group (standing)***

The WPCAG is established under CGS § 25-33o(c) to assist in researching and analyzing water resource issues and advise the WPC on matters of interest. The statute requires that the group's representation be balanced between consumptive and non-consumptive water interests. The WPCAG helps the WPC set priorities for implementing and/or updating the State Water Plan. Appendix A provides a full listing of WPCAG representation.

2025 Key Accomplishments:

- State Water Plan Implementation Support
  - Held discussions and educational presentations on:
    - State Water Plan Recommendations
    - State Water Plan Pathways Forward
    - State Water Plan Overcoming Future Challenges
  - The documents aim to guide future water resource management and policy decisions.
- Developed and distributed State Water Plan Section 5 recommendation survey.
- Held an in-person retreat to review recommendations for updating the State Water Plan. The retreat centered on analyzing survey results that were generated prior to the gathering and refining priorities to guide future actions.
  - Highlights included a presentation of key findings and a collaborative discussion that led to consensus on next steps and a follow-up timeline.

Co-Chairs: Alicea Charamut, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, and Steve Vitko, Regional Water Authority and both WPCAG members

### ***Watershed Lands Workgroup (standing)***

The Watershed Lands Workgroup reviews and comments on the adequacy of current statutory and regulatory provisions to protect public water supplies and maintain Class I and II lands ([CGS § 25-37c](#)), as well as comparable lands that are not owned by water companies. This group

also reviews controversial or environmentally sensitive land use proposals (both public and private) that could have detrimental effects on drinking water watersheds.

#### 2025 Key Accomplishments:

- [Watershed Lands Workgroup Final Report](#) was submitted and accepted by the WPC on August 5, 2025.
- Hosted educational presentations to enhance understanding of state water protection:
  - Kim Czapla (DEEP) on Aquifer Protection Area regulations.
  - Eric McPhee (DPH) on the Parcel Prioritization GIS tool for source water protection.
- Alignment with State Water Plan
  - Reviewed the Water Planning Council's work plan.
  - Aligned work group topics with Section 5 of the State Water Plan.
- Evaluated and proposed edits to the merged group's (Watershed Lands and Source Protection) title and purpose.
- Assessed mechanisms for water company land dispositions across public, private, and municipal sectors.
- Tracked and supported legislative bills relevant to watershed lands.

Chairs: Kathy Czepiel, Save the Sound, WPCAG member representing land protection, and Steve Vitko, South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, WPCAG member representing regional water utility

### ***Watershed Protection Workgroup (standing)***

The WPC established the Watershed Protection Workgroup in May 2025, through a merger of the Watershed Lands Workgroup and Source Water Protection Workgroup. The first meeting of the new workgroup was held in September.

The purpose of this workgroup is to review and determine the adequacy of current statutory and regulatory provisions to help water companies and municipalities protect public water supply lands and comparable lands that are not owned by water companies; to review and track source water and watershed land protection programs and the roles of state and federal agencies; and to review sensitive public and private land use proposals that could have detrimental effects on drinking water.

The newly formed Workgroup met on September 26, 2025, to review its approved purpose and name and to outline action items aligned with the Source Water Protection final report.

recommendations for watershed protection. The group also identified potential guest speakers to provide insight on statewide watershed protection initiatives.

A key focus of the Workgroup is addressing Section 5.2.3.1: *Reaffirm support for the protection of Class I and II lands, as well as watershed property protected for water supply*. This recommendation was ranked as the highest priority in Section 5 by the WPCAG survey. The Workgroup has been tasked with breaking down this recommendation into subtasks and determining which agencies may be best suited to manage each component.

Chairs: Currently a carryover of co-chairs, Kathy Czepiel, Save the Sound, WPCAG member representing land protection, and Steve Vitko, South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, WPCAG member representing regional water utility

## 2026 Goals

### Review of State Water Plan Recommendations

- Section 5.2 – Water Management Policies
- Section 5.3 – Pathway Forward Opportunities
- Section 5.5 – Water Management Structure and Decision Framework

Research opportunities through partnerships through state educational facilities (i.e.: CT Institute of Water Resources, UConn, Eastern CT)

### Explore funding for implementation and update of the State Water Plan

- MOU between the four agencies
- CT Institute of Water Resources (UConn)
- State budget inclusion

## 2026 Theme

### Realizing Resilient Watersheds

- Nonpoint source pollution 101
- Watershed Restoration thru Dam Removal
- Role of local government in source water protection
- Riparian buffers/nature-based solutions

## Appendix A: WPCAG Representatives

### WATER PLANNING COUNCIL ADVISORY WORKGROUP ADOPTED APRIL 5, 2025

Term: May 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>

Group A: 3 Non-Consumptive; 3 Consumptive; 1 Impartial (Term Expires April 2028)

Group B: 3 Non-Consumptive; 3 Consumptive; 1 Impartial (Term Expires April 2026)

Group C: 2 Non-Consumptive; 2 Consumptive; 2 Impartial (Term Expires April 2027)

In-stream (I) / Non-Consumptive

Out-of-Stream (O) / Consumptive

Neutral (N) / Impartial

Category	In-stream (I) Out-of-Stream (O) Neutral (N)	Representative	Alternate	Group and Term Expires
Business & Industry-Association	O	Greg Sweeney, CT Irrigation Contractors Association	Erica Fearn, CT Irrigation Contractors Association	A (2028)
Small Water Utility	O	Josh Cansler, SE CT Water Authority (SECWA)	Vacant	A (2028)
Water Resources Protection	I	Carol Haskins, Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition	Aimee Petras, Farmington River Watershed Association	A (2028)
Wastewater	I	Tom Tyler, Metropolitan District (MDC)	Vacant	A (2028)
Public health (local)	N	Sonia (Marino) Brinckwirth, Town of Guilford Health Dept	Vacant	A (2028)
Investor-owned Water Utility (large)	O	Dan Lawrence, Aquarion Water Co.	Lauren Bergman, CT Water Company	A (2028)

Fisheries	I	Alicea Charamut, Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC)	Vacant	A (2028)
Business & Industry- Water Intensive Business	O	Darryl Newman, CT Nursery and Landscaping Association (CNLA) / Planters Choice Nursery	Vacant	B (2026)
River Protection	I	Martha Smith, West River Watershed Coalition	Maggie Favretti, Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed	B (2026)
Recreation	I	Vacant	Vacant	B (2026)
Lakes and Ponds	I	Sean Hayden, Lake Waramaug Task Force	Kelsey Sudol, Lake Waramaug Task Force	B (2026)
Municipal Water Utility(med to large)	O	Patrick Kearney, Town of New Britain Water Dept	Ray Jarema, Town of Berlin Water Control	B (2026)
Electric Power	O	Len Greene, First Light Power	Vacant	B (2026)
Regional COGs	N	Aaron Budris, Naugatuck Valley COG (NVCOG)	Janice Erlemeyer - River COG	B (2026)
Agriculture	O	Bonnie Burr, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension	Vacant	C (2027)
Academia, public health, ecology	N	Vacant	Viriginia deLima, retired USGS	C (2027)
Regional Water Utility (large)	O	Steve Vitko, Regional Water Authority (RWA)	Nicoletta Blevins, (RWA) Government & Community Affairs Manager	C (2027)



Conservation	I	Denise Savageau, CT Association of Conservation Districts	Vacant	C (2027)
Land Protection	I	Kathy Czepiel, Land Protection Manager at Save the Sound	Chase Lindemann, Legal Fellow, Save the Sound	C (2027)
Consumer	N	Allison McHorney, Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC)	Brooke Parker, OCC	C (2027)

## Appendix B: Resources

### [State Water Plan](#)

### [Connecticut Drought Preparedness and Response Plan](#)

#### **Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds Webinar Series 2025**

- [Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds: Water Quality and the Impacts of Drought](#), October 17, 2025
- [Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds: Water Quality and the Impacts of Flooding](#), September 30, 2025
- [Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds: Forests, Droughts, and Wildfires](#), May 29, 2025
- [Extreme Weather and Our Watersheds: World Water Day Webinar](#), March 25, 2025

### [Source Water Protection Workgroup Final Report](#) September 2025

### [Watershed Lands Workgroup Final Report](#) September 2025

### [2024 Annual Report on the State Water Plan](#)

### [2024–2025 Drought After–Action Report & Improvement Plan](#)

