

From the forest to the faucet



The water we drink is our most direct and immediate connection to forests and watersheds. People do not realize that the faucet is often connected to the forest. More than 70 percent of residents, over 25 million people, in the Northeast depend on forest lands to provide clean water. Drinking water systems are threatened by urban encroachment and unhealthy forest and watershed conditions. Studies show that retaining and managing forests is one of the best ways to ensure protection of drinking water and to reduce the costs of water treatment over the long term.

Forests, water, and people

A new century of challenges and opportunities



A century ago, the loss of forests and pollution of streams affected people's lives in direct and substantial ways. At the

beginning of the 21st Century we face a new suite of challenges – population growth, urban sprawl, invasive species, atmospheric deposition, loss of biological diversity, and many conflicting demands on our forests and watersheds.

The WET Partnership

The Watershed Exchange and Technology Partnership is a joint venture of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area. It was established in 2001 to enhance the understanding and management of forests and water, with a principal focus on drinking water supplies. The primary goal of our work is to interpret and adapt scientific research to meet the needs of managers, decision-makers and the public.

www.wetpartnership.org



Protecting the Source



The Forest Service and WET Partnership are working with partners like the Trust for Public Lands to help communities and water providers identify forest lands that are a high priority for protecting water supplies. Projects evaluate threats to water quality and a GIS-based modeling approach is used to identify and rank priority forest areas for protection, restoration or management. In addition, research, experience and practical knowledge is shared through watershed exchanges, training and education programs,

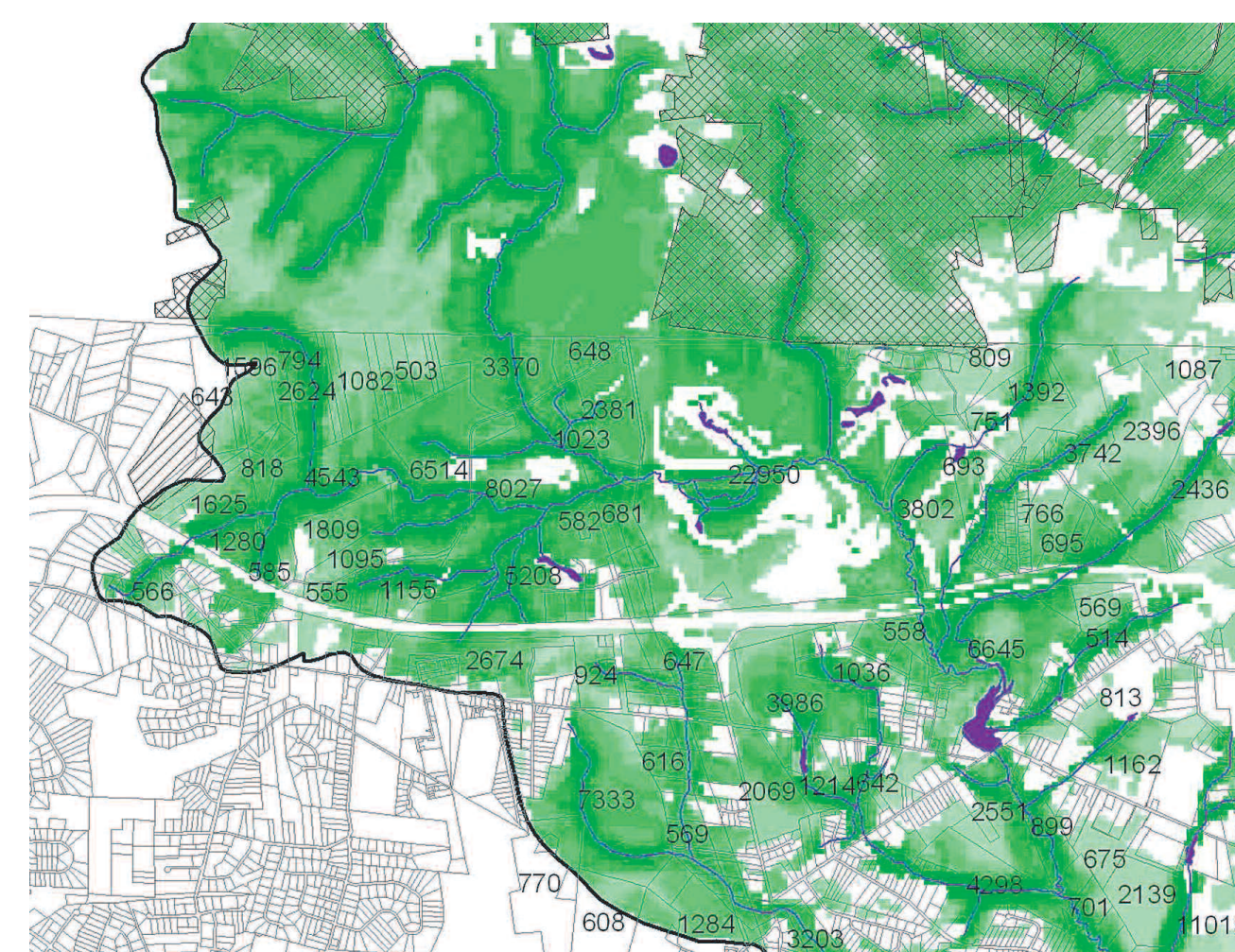
and science-based guides. Ultimately, protecting the source means implementing a plan to address key management problems and protect important areas. Demonstration projects in several watersheds have paid huge dividends for local forest conservation. More information can be found at www.tpl.org or www.wetpartnership.org.

Water Treatment costs based on % of watershed forested.

For each 10% decline in forest cover, treatment costs increase roughly

% of Watershed Forested	Treatment and Chemical Costs (per mil gallons)	Average Treatment Costs (per day)
10%	\$115	\$2,530
20%	\$93	\$2,046
30%	\$73	\$1,606
40%	\$58	\$1,276
50%	\$46	\$1,012
60%	\$37	\$814

Data provided by the Trust for Public Lands and the American Water Works Association.



Map of high priority forests for watershed protection in Metedeconk, NJ. High number represents highest priority forested parcel.

“The relationship of forest to river is like father to son.”

Gifford Pinchot, 1905