



**SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 995, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Springfield Water and Sewer Commission Invites Public to
Guided Forest Walk on December 8**

Will Educate Public on Upcoming Forest Management Activities at Ludlow Reservoir

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) invites members of the public to its Ludlow Reservoir watershed forest for a guided walk to learn about upcoming forest management activities, including tree harvesting due to damage from gypsy moth infestations.

The walk will begin at the Ludlow Reservoir main entrance at 1149 Center Street, Ludlow, Massachusetts at 9 AM on Saturday, December 8, 2018.

Participants will be guided by Commission staff and a consulting Massachusetts Licensed Forester to view areas that have been impacted by gypsy moths, and to learn about the importance of forest management in a watershed to a public drinking water reservoir.

About the Gypsy Moth Infestation

The life cycle of gypsy moths include consuming leaves of healthy deciduous trees, disabling the trees' ability to photosynthesize and produce energy for maintenance and growth. Successive defoliations can kill trees or leave them susceptible to secondary pests and pathogens. Recent gypsy moth defoliation at the Ludlow Reservoir began in 2016 with defoliation continuing in 2017 and 2018.

There is no known large-scale eradication or remediation method for gypsy moth infestations. This past July many trees in the Ludlow Reservoir watershed forest did not grow significant sets of new leaves due to the repeated infestations, indicating that a large-scale mortality of mostly oak trees is imminent in the watershed forest. The Commission plans to move forward with forest management activities that include tree harvesting in order to promote a full spectrum of tree and shrub diversity, including trees and shrubs that need to grow in full sun.



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Tree Harvesting Plans

Tree harvesting will be coordinated based on forest management and forest cutting plans recently approved by the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Preparations include careful selection and detailed marking of trees in order to clearly identify those to be removed and to remain during harvesting. Not all trees affected by gypsy moth will be removed. Affected trees in areas not suitable for logging will be left to die. Trees that are already dead may be left in place, or removed if they pose a public safety hazard.

Tree harvesting may begin as early as December 2018 and occur throughout 2019 and into 2020. Due to the truck traffic associated with harvesting activities, and to protect public safety, recreational areas around Ludlow Reservoir will be closed to the public for extended periods throughout 2019.

More information about the Ludlow Reservoir watershed management activities can be found at <http://waterandsewer.org/ludlow-reservoir-forest-management/>.

About the Ludlow Reservoir Watershed Forest

The Ludlow Reservoir, often referred to as the Springfield Reservoir, was built in the 1870s to supply the City of Springfield and Town of Ludlow with drinking water, and today serves as an emergency water supply surrounded by The primary role of the watershed forest land is to protect water quality by serving as a natural buffer to surrounding development. Active forest management plans and activities, including tree harvesting when necessary, are designed to maximize water quality protection by promoting a structurally diverse forest, made up of many different species, that is capable of regenerating itself over time.

Additional Details

Participants are asked to wear sturdy shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. Participants should be prepared to walk approximately 2.5 miles and in forested areas after a brief presentation at the parking area. Restrooms are not available.

Parking is available at the main entrance gate at 1149 Center Street, Ludlow, Massachusetts. Participants that may need mobility assistance to reach the edge of the forest areas are asked to contact the Commission by Wednesday, December 5, 2018 by emailing Jaimye.bartak@waterandsewer.org or calling 413-452-1302.

About the Attached Image: The attached image shows defoliation among oak trees along the recreational path within Ludlow Reservoir in August 2018.

END