

W&S Commission Statement, 8/28/20:

During last Monday's meeting, the impact related to the current water source was raised. To clarify, right from the beginning, the W&S and Conservation Committee have expressed concerns regarding the impact that GURR's development plans will have on the current water supply.

Our initial filing to the DPU last year (July 29, 2019) clearly states this concern as the main objection.

The Board of Selectmen's filing (August 1, 2019) reiterates this point - "risk to the current, and possibly future, water supply for the Town as the Property to be acquired is within the watershed which feeds the Town's water supply."

The W&S supplemental filing (August 30, 2019) explains this in great detail.

Questions were raised regarding the future water source in that area which lead to another supplemental filing (Sept 27, 2019). This is where GURR has obtained the information regarding the potential sites for future wells. But by no means did addressing questions related to a potential future water source eliminate the primary concerns related to the impact on current water source.

On August 5th of this year, as part of the W&S meeting focusing on the GURR plans, "Why this land is important" was the first topic, presented by Tim Watson. Tim states the importance to the current water supply.

The record clearly shows the W&S, and BOS, have documented concerns regarding the impact to the current water source right from the onset of this property issue. Below are the links and snippets from the DPU filings, and link to the W&S meeting video.

Property Brief Description:

This large undeveloped area is an extensive wetlands system, hydrologically connected to Hopedale's existing water supply. Located in the Northern section of Hopedale, surrounding the Mill River, directly adjacent to the Zone II protected area, it essentially bridges the Upton State Forest to the Hopedale Parklands.

DPU Filing

<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber>

File number 19-39

July 29, 2019, W&S initial filing states:

Of concern is that the land acquisition falls within the watershed area which contributes to the Town's drinking water source and Zone II. The Board is also seeking and awaiting guidance from other State and Federal agencies to help with the Boards oversight responsibilities on current Railroad properties that fall within the Town's Zone II water protection Zone. Additionally, the proposed land acquisition is within an area previously identified to be a viable site for future water sourcing.

August 1, 2019 Board of Selectmen's initial filing states:

13. Lastly, the proposed railroad operations may pose risks to the current, and possibly future, water supply for the Town as the Property to be acquired is within the watershed which feeds the Town's water supply. Accordingly, the Town's water supply is at risk of being adversely affected by the proposed railroad operations.

August 30, 2019 – W&S detailed filing; HBWSC_Filing_letter_8-30-19.pdf

B. The Property

7. The Property is part of a large swath of undeveloped land located in the northern section of the Town of Hopedale.

8. The Property GURR wants to take by eminent domain is hydrologically connected to existing public water supply resources because the extensive wetland system on the Property is directly adjacent to the Zone II for Hopedale's current public water supply.¹

¹ The Zone II wellhead protection area is "[t]hat area of an aquifer which contributes water to a well under the most severe pumping and recharge conditions that can be realistically anticipated (180 days of pumping at safe yield, with no recharge from precipitation)." 310 CMR 22.02.

9. In addition to the impacts on Hopedale's existing public water supply resources, the proposed taking by eminent domain by GURR, will have an impact on the limited area where the HBWSC has targeted the most viable future public water supply resources.

Sept 27, 2019

Because the documentation supporting the future source was last done around 15 years ago, the W&S contracted for an updated "Fracture Trace Analysis" to update the viability of this area as a future source. The results of this study was filed as supplemental information on Sept 27, 2019. Supplement_to_HBWS_Motion_9-27-19.pdf

Water and Sewer Meeting, August 5, 2020

https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=56&id=31294