RECEIVED
By Town Clerk/ss 10:40 am, Dec 19, 2025

Southborough Trails Committee
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: *Wednesday, Dec 10, 2025*
Meeting Time: *5:30 PM*
Meeting Location: *Virtual Meeting, https://www.southboroughtown.com/remotemeetings*

Meeting Called by: Kathryn McKee
Note Taker: Satyendra Sharma
Attendees: Kathryn McKee, Satyendra Sharma, William Warren, Tom Marcoulier
Absent: None
Visitors: Travis Farley

1. **Call the meeting to order -** Meeting started at 5:34- PM

   Roll call - Satyendra Sharma –present, William Warren-present and Kathryn McKee – present. (Tom Marcoulier joined after roll call)

2. **Approve Minutes from 11/20/2025**
   - Will take up during next meeting.
3. **Peninsula Trail Phase I, MassTrails grant, project update: signage**
   - Signage document was shared by Kathryn with the Committee for approval
   - Vote – Motion to approve Signage document as presented was moved by Tom Marcoulier, Will Warren, seconded. Vote – Satyendra -yes, Tom Marcoulier – yes, Will Warren – yes and Kathryn McKee -yes. Motion approved – 4-0
4. **Peninsula Trail Phase II, next steps project**
   - Bids are coming in on 12/15/2025
   - Committee will be in the Town office at 11:00 AM for the bid opening
5. **Committee business related to maintenance, trail abutters, website, policies**
   - No updates
6. **Schedule next meeting**
   - Monday, Dec 15, 2025 at 11:00 AM at the Town Office.
   - Thursday, Dec 18, 2025 at 7:00
7. **Adjournment**

   Motion to adjourn meeting -moved the motion by Satyendra Sharma– Will Warren seconded. Roll Call – Tom Marcoulier – yes, Will Warren -yes, Satyendra Sharma – yes and Kathryn McKee – yes. Motion approved 4-0.

   Meeting adjourned at 6:33 PM

Documents Shared During the Meeting:

Draft Signage

LAYOUT PROOF
PLEASE SIGN & RETURN

FOSSIL INDUSTRIES, INC.
44 Jefryn Boulevard
Deer Park, NY 11729
800-244-9809 631-254-9200
Fax: 631-254-4172
www.FossilGraphics.com

Production cannot begin until we receive your signed approval.

To: Kathryn McKee
Southboro Trails Committee
17 Common St.
Southborough , MA 01772

Phone#: 508-479-0971 Fax#:

Tag: Panels For F92189 - Po# 5069

Order #: F108804

Artist: Mike Cali
Project Manager: Jeannine Willms
ID #: 1110091.01

Carefully examine all areas of the pdf at full scale or larger. Many mistakes and imperfections can only be detected when the image is magnified. If you are unable to clearly see and evaluate the Layout Proof, contact us to receive a higher resolution proof. The order of the PDF's are in the same order as shown on the Layout Proof form. It's also important to confirm that the size, thickness and quantity is accurate. If a panel is used in a mural, the description will include "mural". Report inaccuracies. FOSSIL WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ERRORS. Layout Approvals are for content only. Colors shown are approximations. FOSSIL offers Color Samples to confirm actual color and image resolution.

If everything looks good, email or fax the signed approval. You will receive an email confirmation within 48 hours.

Signature: _____ Print: _____ Date: _____

Qty	Description	
1	**F108804-01** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 36"H x 48"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *udge4	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
1	**F108804-02** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 36"H x 48"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *udge4	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
1	**F108804-03** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 24"H x 36"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *cdg224	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
1	**F108804-04** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 24"H x 36"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *cdg224	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
1	**F108804-05** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 24"H x 36"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *spg1212	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
1	**F108804-06** 1/2" Exterior CHPL Graphic. Panel Size: 18"H x 24"W 4 Threaded Inserts w/ Tamper Resistant Bolts. *spg1212	☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.
		☐ Approved ☐ Not Put into production as is. Make Changes noted & send new proof.

Before The Water

Land, People, and Change in Southborough

Nipmuc Homelands

This landscape sits within Nipmuc homelands, shaped for thousands of years by forests, wetlands, and waterways. The Nipmuc people—or "People of the Freshwater"—relied on rivers, meadows, and forests for food, materials, and seasonal activities. Their villages and seasonal camps were connected by well-worn footpaths and trade routes that linked communities across central Massachusetts.

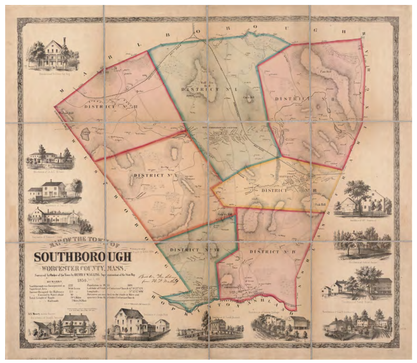
Early Relations with Settlers

At first, there were friendly relations between the Nipmuc and the early English settlers. The Nipmuc people offered assistance, including supplying corn to the colonists in Boston during a time of need. However, as European settlement expanded, the Nipmuc and other Indigenous communities faced increasing pressure, disruption, and land loss.

The Changing Landscape

Colonial Settlement and Transformation

The arrival of settlers, disease, forced relocations, and conflict like King Philip's War (1675–1676) severely impacted the Nipmuc way of life. As settlers expanded, fields, homesteads, and winding roads began to shape the valley's landscape. The stone walls that can still be seen along the reservoir's edge or in surrounding areas are remnants of the farms and homesteads that once dotted the valley. These markers not only tell the story of the families who lived and worked here but also symbolize the displacement and transformation that occurred with European settlement and the creation of the reservoir.



Map of the town of Southborough Worcester County, Mass : surveyed by order of the town. ca. 1856

Sudbury Reservoir, construction, stripping north side hill, Southborough, Mass., ca. 1894

Sudbury Reservoir, Southborough, Mass., Down stream face of dam, May 31, 1898

Transformation and Displacement

A New Era

In the 1890s, the valley changed again. Land was acquired to create the Sudbury Reservoir and its dam, part of Greater Boston's regional water system.

The reservoir permanently altered the landscape, but it also became a crucial part of the region's drinking water system, providing clean, reliable water to the growing city of Boston and surrounding areas.

Families who had settled here in the centuries after European arrival were displaced. Some properties were purchased; others were taken by eminent domain under state authority. Homes and roads were removed or rerouted, and families were displaced to make way for the reservoir.

This sign honors the people whose land formed the foundation of the reservoir's creation—and acknowledges the profound change that occurred before the valley was flooded.

A Landscape Shaped by Water

Before 1600s	1600s–1670s	1675–1676	1890S	TODAY
Nipmuc Homelands Seasonal travel, fishing, and hunting along rivers, meadows, and forests.	**Colonial Expansion** Disease and settlement pressures disrupted Indigenous life and land control.	**King Philip's War** Conflict and forced relocation caused major upheaval for Nipmuc communities.	**Sudbury Reservoir Built** Conflict and forced relocation caused major upheaval for Nipmuc communities.	**Protected Watershed** This area remains a protected watershed, carefully managed to preserve water quality and support local ecosystems. Public access is limited to ensure the integrity of the region's natural resources, while trails offer opportunities for recreation and stewardship of the land.

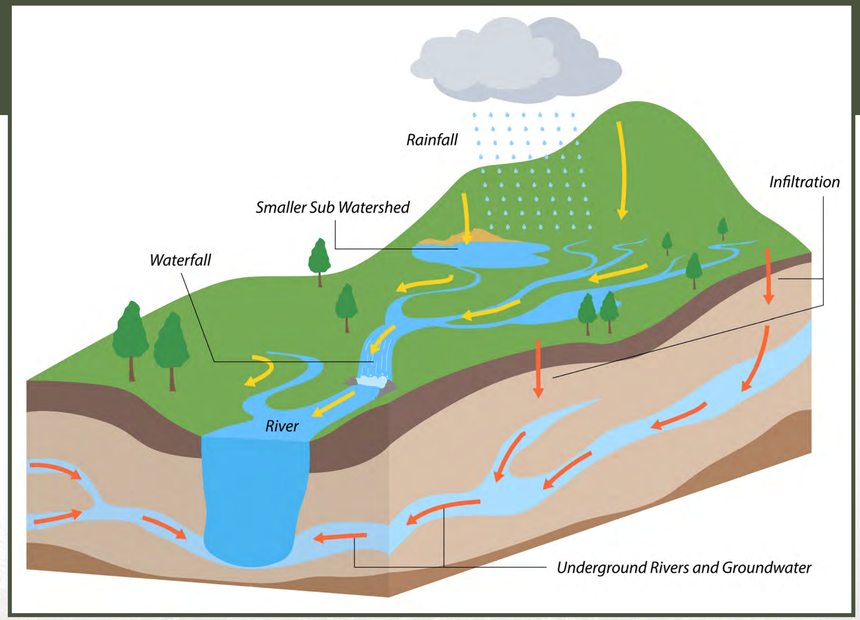
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that this place is within **Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band homelands**. Nipmuc communities have longstanding connections to these lands and waterways, and those connections continue today.

This project, led by the Southborough Trails Committee, is funded in part by MassTrails (administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and by the citizens of Southborough through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

From Rain to Reservoir

Understanding the Sudbury Watershed



A watershed is the entire area of land that collects rain, melting snow, and groundwater and sends it into a shared water body. Here in Southborough, the surrounding forests, wetlands, and hills all drain into the Sudbury Reservoir. Every drop that lands on this landscape eventually finds its way downhill through soils, streams, and marshes before entering the reservoir. That's why land use, soils, forests, and wetlands in this area matter so much: they shape the quality of the water we all depend on.

Why This Watershed Matters

The Sudbury Reservoir is one of Massachusetts' backup drinking-water supplies. Although it isn't used every day, it is kept ready for emergencies and can serve millions of people if primary sources need support. Because of this important role, the land around the reservoir is carefully protected. Clean land leads to clean water — and protected forests and wetlands help keep water safe long before it ever reaches a treatment plant.

Nature's Built-In Protection System

Healthy ecosystems do a lot of work for us:

- Forests slow runoff and hold soil in place.
- Soils filter pollutants as water moves underground.
- Wetlands trap sediment, absorb floodwaters, and help remove nutrients before they reach open water.

Together, these natural features form a quiet, reliable system that improves water quality every day.

Monarch on golden rod

Red-winged blackbird

Beaver

Mallard

Wetlands: Lifelines for Wildlife

Wetlands are some of the most biologically rich places in Massachusetts. Along the Sudbury Reservoir, wetlands provide food, shelter, and safe breeding areas for countless species. Their mix of shallow water, plants, and protected edges creates ideal habitat for wildlife that depend on both land and water.

Why Wetlands Matter for Animals

- **Birds:** Herons, egrets, ducks, red-winged blackbirds, and migrating songbirds rely on wetlands for nesting, feeding, and resting during long journeys.
- **Amphibians & Reptiles:** Frogs, salamanders, turtles, and snakes use wetlands for breeding and as safe nurseries for young. Many species—like wood frogs and spotted salamanders—cannot survive without them.
- **Mammals:** Beavers, muskrats, otters, raccoons, deer, and foxes forage and shelter along wetland edges.
- **Insects & Pollinators:** Dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, bees, and countless aquatic insects thrive here, forming the foundation of the food web.

Why This Matters for the Reservoir

Healthy wetlands support healthy wildlife — but they also help protect drinking water. When wetlands thrive:

- Animals have the habitat they need
- Plants trap sediment and pollutants
- Water arrives at the reservoir cleaner and clearer

By protecting wetlands, we protect both wildlife habitat and the Sudbury Reservoir's water quality.

This project, led by the Southborough Trails Committee, is funded in part by MassTrails (administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and by the citizens of Southborough through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Building the Sudbury Reservoir Dam (1894–1898)

Innovation, Ingenuity, and the Workforce Who Shaped the Valley

From 1894 to 1898, engineers, surveyors, stonecutters, teamsters, and hundreds of laborers transformed this valley to build the Sudbury Reservoir Dam, a project undertaken to meet the region's growing need for clean drinking water. Working with hand tools, horse teams, and early machinery, crews excavated and moved vast quantities of earth and stone to form the embankment, spillway, and control structures still visible today.

Work crews—reflecting the diverse labor forces commonly employed on major public-works projects in New England at the time—lived in temporary camps near the site. Archival photographs show men cutting stone, hauling timber, and guiding horse-drawn carts piled with earth. Their collective effort shaped the landscape that became the reservoir.

Who Built the Dam?

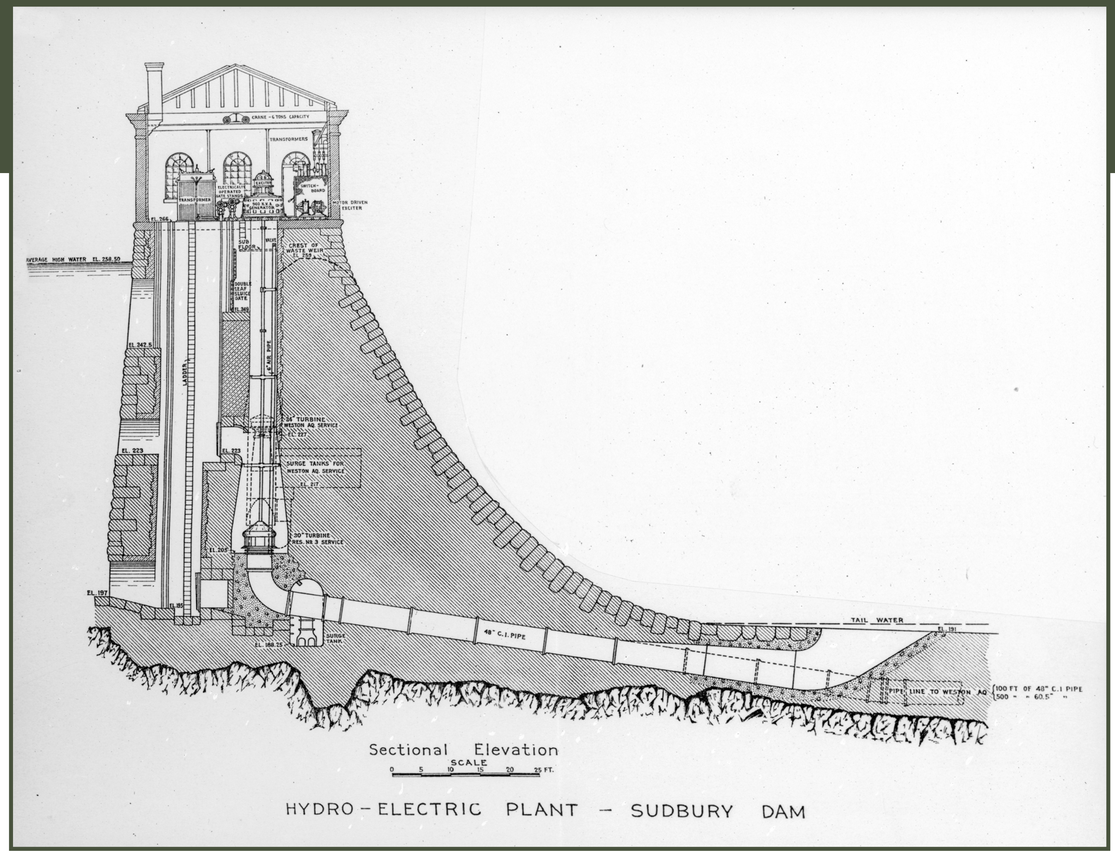
The Sudbury Dam was designed and overseen by engineers of the Metropolitan Water Board, who applied the most advanced methods available in the late 19th century. Construction relied on hundreds of laborers, similar to the multi-ethnic crews documented across other Metropolitan Water Works projects of this era. Most lived in simple camps near the site, performing the demanding manual work—digging, hauling, shaping stone, and compacting earth—that made the dam possible.

Sudbury Department, Sudbury Dam, downstream face of overfall, looking south, Southborough, Mass., May 1896

Sudbury Reservoir, plastering face of concrete core wall on north end of Sudbury Dam, from the west, Southborough, Mass., Sep. 26, 1896

Sudbury Reservoir, stonework near north end of overflow, Sudbury Dam, from the south, Southborough, Mass., Sep. 26, 1896

Sudbury Department, Sudbury Dam and Gatehouse, general view, with Meter Chamber and Headhouse, Southborough, Mass., Apr. 28, 1910



Sudbury Department, Sudbury Dam Hydroelectric Power Station, plan of hydroelectric plant, sectional elevation, Southborough, Mass., 1915

Engineering a Landmark

The Sudbury Reservoir Dam embodied state-of-the-art engineering for its time. Key innovations included:

- A reinforced earthen embankment designed for impermeability and long-term stability
- A carefully engineered masonry spillway to safely direct overflow down river
- An Italianate gatehouse, designed by Wheelwright & Haven, that blended architectural craftsmanship with function
- Early hydrological modeling to understand rainfall, watershed inflow, and storage capacity
- Advanced surveying methods to map the valley and guide precise construction

Together, these engineering advances—and the labor of the workers who built them—created a resilient water system that has served Greater Boston for more than 125 years.

Before the reservoir was built, this valley held farms, homesteads, and narrow country roads. As construction began, homes were moved or removed, and the landscape was reshaped. Today, only scattered stone walls and the occasional foundation remain as quiet reminders of what once stood here.

This project, led by the Southborough Trails Committee, is funded in part by MassTrails (administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and by the citizens of Southborough through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Welcome to the PENINSULA TRAIL

Please enjoy a quiet walk along a protected reservoir—please follow posted rules to help keep the watershed clean.

The Peninsula Trail is a key connector linking the Boroughs Loop Trail, the Aqueduct Trail, and the Bay Circuit Trail. It follows protected Sudbury Reservoir watershed lands managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management (DWSP) and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA).

The first 0.4 miles of the Peninsula Trail meet accessibility standards, with smooth grades and a paved surface suitable for visitors of all abilities. This segment is the first accessible trail section in Southborough, expanding opportunities for everyone to experience the Sudbury Reservoir landscape.

The Boroughs Loop Trail spans 33 miles through Marlborough, Southborough, Westborough, and Northborough, linking local trails into one continuous journey. The route blends forest paths, bikeways, aqueduct corridors, and sidewalks—inviting visitors to explore the area's connected landscapes and neighborhoods.

The Aqueduct Trails are public walking routes along MWRA aqueduct rights-of-way. In Southborough, the Aqueduct Trail overlaps portions of the Sudbury Reservoir Trail and the Boroughs Loop Trail—"three trails in one"—connecting west toward Marlborough along the open channel.

The Bay Circuit Trail is a regional hiking route of about 230 miles that links parks and open spaces around Greater Boston.

What to Expect Along the Trail— Interpretive signs along the route explore:

- **People & Place:** Nipmuc homelands, early settlement, and the valley's transformation during reservoir creation
- **Watersheds & Wetlands:** How water moves across the land—and how wetlands help filter water and support wildlife.
- **Building the Dam (1894–1898):** The workforce and engineering that reshaped the valley into a reservoir system.

As you continue east, the trail connects with the Bay Circuit Trail, extending your route through additional protected watershed lands. A bridge and boardwalk improve access across wet areas—please stay on the marked trail and watch your footing in seasonal conditions.

Permitted Uses:

These watershed lands have specific rules because they protect a backup public drinking-water supply for the MWRA. These watershed lands are also managed for forest and wildlife improvements. You are near MWRA headquarters and operational areas. Areas beyond fences, gates, and posted signs are **closed to the public.** Follow trail markers and use the designated route shown on the map.

Permitted Uses *(some may require a permit)*

- Fishing (shoreline only-requires a MA State Fishing license)
- Hunting (allowed during specific seasons in designated areas and requires a DCR permit)
- Hiking/Walking on designated trails

See posted DCR General Rules and Regulations for the Protection of Watersheds CMR 313 11.09

Prohibited Uses

- No dogs/pets
- No bodily contact with the water, swimming, or bathing
- No boating
- No bicycling
- No smoking, fires, metal detectors, or drones
- No disposing of human waste, trash, or litter

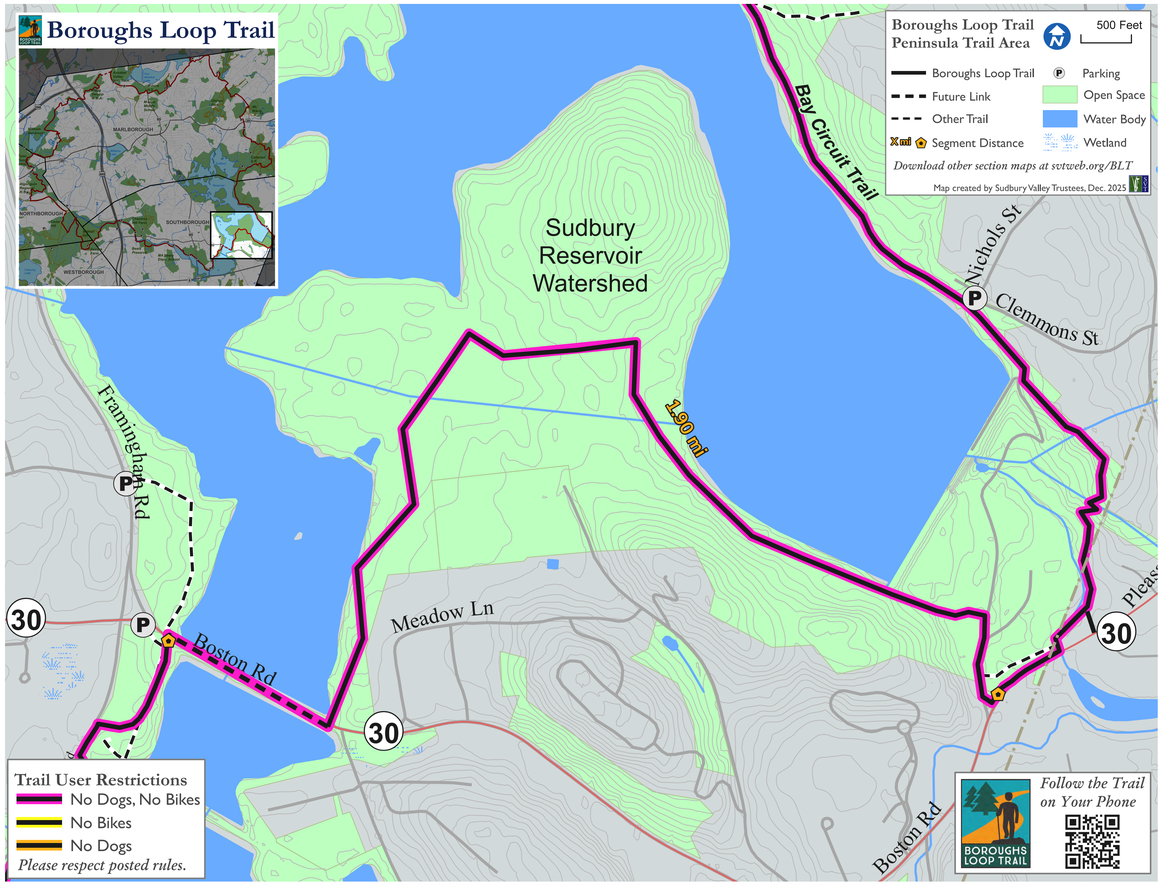
Protecting the Trail, Protecting the Water

The Peninsula Trail passes through the Sudbury Reservoir watershed—a protected landscape that helps keep drinking water clean for Massachusetts residents. Every visitor can help protect this resource through small, mindful choices..

Leave No Trace and Be a Good Trail Neighbor

- Help us respect our neighbors: please use designated parking and keep noise down
- Stay on marked trails to protect sensitive vegetation and prevent erosion.
- Carry out everything you carry in (even biodegradable items can harm water quality)
- Respect wildlife: observe from a distance; never feed animals
- Leave what you find: plants, rocks, and historic features belong here
- Report trail issues to local stewards—caring for these lands is a community effort

The Peninsula Trail is maintained by the Southborough Trails Committee with support from local volunteers. The property is owned and managed by the DWSP and MWRA.



Trailhead Safety & Etiquette

Emergency: Dial 911
Location: Peninsula Trail (42.30237, -71.50980), 130 Boston Road, Southborough MA
Southborough police (non-emergency): 508-485-2121
DCR Watershed Rangers: (via MEMA 24-hour Dispatch): 508-820-1428
MWRA Water Operations Command Center: (617) 305-5950
Questions? trails@southboroughma.gov

This project, led by the Southborough Trails Committee, is funded in part by MassTrails (administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and by the citizens of Southborough through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

SUDBURY RESERVOIR *A Protected Water-Supply Landscape*

As Greater Boston grew in the late 1800s, new water sources were developed farther west to meet rising demand. The Sudbury system expanded with the Sudbury Aqueduct (1878) and the completion of the Sudbury Dam and the Sudbury Reservoir by 1898. Today, these surrounding lands are managed to protect water quality, so public access is limited and rules are strictly enforced.

Did You Know?

- **Big footprint:** Sudbury Reservoir covers about 1,240 acres—nearly 2 square miles of water and shoreline.
- **Depth in context:** The reservoir averages about 12 feet deep, with a maximum depth of 60 feet.
- **Backup supply:** Sudbury Reservoir is the backup water supply for Boston and 50 other cities and towns.
- **Part of a larger system:** MWRA's primary reservoirs are far larger—Quabbin (412 billion gallons) and Wachusett (65 billion gallons).
- **Why protection matters:** Managing the surrounding land is one of the most effective ways to safeguard reservoir water quality.

1906 Map of the Metropolitan Water Works System, at the conclusion of the major construction phase, 1895-1905
Photo Courtesy Massachusetts State Archives.

Largemouth Bass

Life In The Reservoir

- **Fish in the reservoir:** Largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, yellow perch, black crappie, yellow bullhead, white perch, pumpkinseed, bluegill, and redbreast sunfish.
- **Fishing access:** Shore fishing is allowed from dawn to dusk, with a closed/no-access area near the dam (from the Rt. 30 causeway past the dam to Clemmons Street).

Wildlife depends on clean water and healthy shoreline habitat.

This project, led by the Southborough Trails Committee, is funded in part by MassTrails (administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation) and by the citizens of Southborough through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).