



# Freshwater Ponds District of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC)



STRATEGY SCALE

**THREATS ADDRESSED**

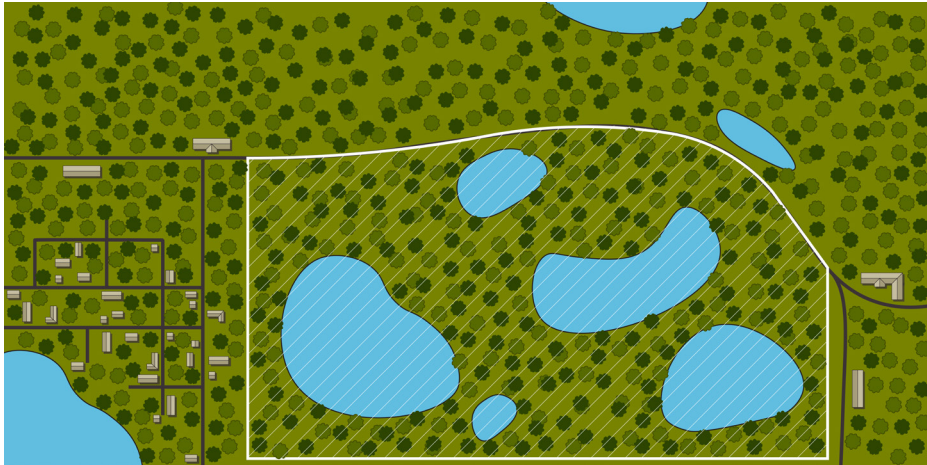
- Excess Nutrients
- Pollutant Inputs
- Algal Blooms
- Erosion
- Invasive/Nuisance Species

**STRATEGY GOALS**

- Protect
- Manage
- Rehabilitate

**STRATEGY CO-BENEFITS**

- Habitat (Neutral)
- Aesthetics (Neutral)
- Recreation (Neutral)



- Permittable in Massachusetts**  
Requires votes of Cape Cod Commission, Assembly of Delegates, and County Commissioners. List of potential permits available [here](#).
- Implemented on Cape Cod**  
See examples of pond projects implemented on Cape Cod [here](#).
- Listed in 208 Plan Technologies Matrix**  
Learn more about the nutrient management strategies in the Tech Matrix [here](#).
- Can be Performed at Homeowner Scale**
- Nature-based Solution**

**DURATION OF BENEFITS**

- Less than one month
- One season or year
- Multiple seasons or years

**MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS**

- Monthly
- Annually
- Infrequent

## DESCRIPTION

A District of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC) is a planning and regulatory tool available to a town or group of towns, which allows for the designation of a district for a defined purpose and to allow time, through a limited moratorium, to conduct planning studies and adopt regulations to address a specific problem. Districts of Critical Planning Concern are generally nominated by a town or several towns, although they may also be nominated by the Cape Cod Commission and by two bodies of Barnstable County regional government: the Barnstable County Commissioners (the executive branch) and the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates (the legislative branch). The objective of a DCPC focused on freshwater ponds would be to protect ponds and the areas surrounding them through nominating these areas as a DCPC and creating implementing regulations to govern development in the designated area and promote best management practices.

## ADVANTAGES





- A DCPC allows communities time to address a planning issue of concern during a finite “time-out” during which development may not proceed
- A DCPC allows for the application of regulations to a defined area based on a common resource concern or economic interest, and across towns
- The regulations adopted through a DCPC may eliminate some protections that would otherwise be afforded through zoning
- A DCPC allows for a comprehensive approach to regulatory changes, allowing for coordinated changes to zoning, Board of Health regulations, wetlands bylaws, etc.

## CONSTRAINTS

- Requires a town(s) or Cape Cod Commission to nominate an area.
- Requires support from the local community and approval by the County Assembly of Delegates
- The moratorium can burden private property owners or projects about to start the permitting process
- It is an intensive planning process which requires advanced planning and ongoing coordination to result in regulations accepted and adopted at town meeting

## IMPLEMENTATION

### POTENTIAL ACTORS

-  **Towns:** A town (or group of towns) proposes a DCPC
-  **Pond Groups:** May support a DCPC and provide a supportive role through education
-  **Private Landowners:** May support a DCPC
-  **Land Trusts:** May support a DCPC and provide a supportive role through education

### SITING REQUIREMENTS

- All ponds within an area, town, or region

### INFORMATION NEEDS

- Pond and watershed delineations
- Pond buffers (e.g., 100', 300')
- Pond and pond buffer characterizations
- Characterization of pond resources and values
- Planning studies, public engagement

### IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES

The [Three Ponds DCPC \(Sandwich\)](#) was designated in February 2000 to protect water quality, preserve open space, and maintain the character of nearly 700 acres of land and more than 300 acres of water in southeastern Sandwich.



The [Six Ponds DCPC \(Harwich\)](#) was designated in May 2000 to protect the water and natural resources and to manage growth over more than 1,200 acres of land and 110 acres of water in northeastern Harwich.

### RESOURCES

- The Cape Cod Commission's [Districts of Critical Planning Concern](#) webpage has information on the DCPC process and designated DCPCs.

### COST ESTIMATE

# Variable

Variable depending on scope




### ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

**Assessment:** Planning and information gathering including researching and mapping DCPC characteristics

**Implementation:** Public process including presenting at meetings, developing and posting informational materials, and developing and implementing DCPC regulations

**Maintenance:** Information will need to be kept up-to-date and regulations enforced

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

-  Community Preservation Act
-  Capital Budget
-  Grants

Additional information regarding potential funding sources is available [here](#).