



Subject: Update on EFUD Watershed Protection Policy Process

Date: July 2026

The Edward Farrar Utility District owns approximately 500 acres of undeveloped, forested land in Waterbury and Stowe, from which it collects both surface and ground water to serve users' demand for potable water. Roughly 90 percent of the waterworks property is in Stowe; approximately fifty acres are in Waterbury, along the town's northern border. This property has long been used for unsanctioned recreational activities, primarily hiking and hunting.

In December 2025, the District initiated an information-gathering process to underpin the development of a formal policy on the uses of the waterworks' lands. The need for such a policy arose from concerns about the potentially adverse impacts on water quality that the recent and significant increase in unsanctioned activities on the land, if allowed to continue unmanaged or not prohibited altogether, might have.

The aim of our process is to educate the district's commissioners, staff, ratepayers, and the public about the challenges that the watershed faces, the risks they create, and steps that can be taken to address them. We began in December with a session covering three topics: (1) the history and purpose of the district; (2) the law and regulation of public water systems; and (3) the challenges and means of source water quality protection. Presentations were given by local officials and state experts. This was followed in February 2026 with a session on (1) PFAS (forever chemicals) contamination of the Stowe Public Water System; (2) the natural resource value of the Waterbury Waterworks; and (3) an overview of how the Trescott watershed, which provides drinking water to Hanover, NH, manages its lands and their recreational uses. Both sessions had lively and elucidative public question-and-answer periods.

We are currently planning a third session for later in the summer, during which we hope to hear from conservation interests, Forest Parks & Recreation, local organizations that represent recreational users, EFUD ratepayers, and the public in general. We'll want to learn people's expectations for the use of the land; if there is science about watershed protection of which we are unaware; how recreational activities, if allowed, can be managed; and how such management might be funded.

After this third session, the commission will deliberate during its regular meetings and special meetings as needed on a policy regarding non-jurisdictional uses of the waterworks property. A draft policy will be issued and public comments on it will be solicited. After that, a formal policy will be adopted.

This process will take some time. We greatly appreciate the patience—and assistance—of the citizens of the EFUD municipality and the broader public. Stay tuned for announcements about scheduling. For further information, visit our website:

<https://www.waterburyvt.com/boards/utility>.