

## Summary of Public Comments

### Myles Standish State Forest Resource Management Plan

#### DCR Public Meeting - October 28, 2010

##### Natural Resources

- Need to consider natural and cultural resources outside of the park's boundaries.
- Need to provide specific management recommendations for each pond in the forest.
- Need more early successional habitat in the Wildlife Management Areas.
- Pond shore erosion needs to be addressed at College and Fearing Ponds.
- Erosion caused by ORVs needs to be restored so storm water does not widen the tracks.
- Forest health is the primary concern with sustainable recreation being secondary.
- Forest succession reduces habitat for some bird species. Need prescribed burns to maintain early successional habitat in the pine barrens.
- Management activities should leave nutrients in the soils (e.g. chip debris).
- Regional and long-term sole source aquifer considerations
- Are regional wells lowering the water table in the forest?
- Protection and maintenance of frost pockets
- Coordinated approach with conservation partners
- Need to reduce impact of storm water run-off from roads on ponds and wetlands.
- DCR, MAS, TNC etc. should develop a regional habitat management plan and share resources (e.g. prescribed burns) to achieve common goals.

##### Cultural Resources

- Renovate and reuse the Fearing Pond CCC log cabin bathhouse (e.g. interpretive center).

##### Recreational Resources

- Fearing Pond swimming beach should be re-opened to the public.
- Need more hiking and bike trails.
- Abutters enjoy daily quiet walks in the forest to enjoy the forest's natural beauty. Motor boats and ATVs disturb this peace and quiet.
- OHV use should be re-introduced to the forest.
- Sportsmen from Boston to Rhode Island use the forest for fishing and hunting.

- Need to maintain prime habitat for wildlife.
- Need to find ways to avoid user conflicts.
- Sportsmen groups teach environmental education during youth fishing derbies, and pheasant and turkey hunts held in the forest.
- Safety concerns during hunting season. Consider separating users by location and time.
- No jet skies
- Promote kayaking
- Permit peaceful recreation without internal combustion engines.
- Discourage illegal OHV use.
- Equestrian users enjoy the wonderful variety of riding trails and the equestrian camping area at Charge Pond.
- Use regional socio-economic data to forecast long-term recreational demand.
- Need a visitors center for orientation and environmental education.
- Need more beach recreation; open up closed areas.
- Encourage sustainable recreation
- Maintain recreation resource base from degradation.
- ORV's negatively impact natural resources (e.g. erosion)
- ORVs are in the forest all of the time. My son was almost killed by an ORV leaving the forest across our land.
- Provide a minimum of 10 acres for OHV's in a suitable location.
- Keep other users out during the hunting season.
- Recreation facilities should be provided for all user groups, including OHV users. DCR only provides 130 miles of OHV trails statewide. Each year, DCR has been reducing the length of trails available for OHV use.

### **Interpretive Services and Environmental Education**

- Sportsmen's youth programs provide an opportunity for environmental education.
- Reduce fear of forest and provide opportunities for peaceful recreation.
- Provide additional interpretive signage explaining significance of natural and cultural resources (e.g. rarity of the Pitch pine-scrub oak forest)
- Need year-round interpretive resources.
- Need a visitor Center.
- Use Fearing Pond bathhouse for interpretive services.
- Need to interpret significance of the pine barrens.
- Use vacant house near Headquarters as an interpretive center.

## **Operations and Management**

- DCR should review water quality data collected by cottage owners. DCR's certified well operator has been provided with this data for the past 10 years.
- Need to permit volunteer use of power tools during trail maintenance projects.
- Increase forest fire management.
- Reduce impact of traffic circulation.
- Consider abandoning redundant roads.
- Status of repairing Fearing Pond Road bridge.
- Need to document operational needs 25 and 50 years into the future.
- DCR cottage permits should encourage owners to properly maintain their cottages.
- DCR needs to remove safety and fire hazards created by abandoned cottages.
- Inadequate facilities for number of visitors. Need visitors center and larger check-in area for campers and visitors.
- Enforcement of park rules is lacking. DCR should consider establishing a Park Watch.
- DCR needs to provide a phone number so users and abutters can report violations.
- Need management capacity to restore existing OHV damage/scars.
- Need to gate all dirt roads.
- Remove unused or redundant paved roads.