

Comments Received on the 2011 Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan Update

From: Diana Engelbart [<mailto:engelbrt@rcn.com>]
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2011 5:38 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir access plan

To my understanding, people who commented on the access plan had these priorities:

- public access for dog walking,
- bicycle riding,
- geocaching (GPS hide & seek)
- parking.
- establishing a visitors center,
- scenic overlook parking,
- maps of trails and access gates,
- weddings at the Old Stone Church
- hunting

I'd like to add my support for the above items. I'd also like to work with the DCR to provide downloadable trail maps to the West Boylston website. I would also like to explore the idea of the rangers taking elementary school children on nature/plant identification walks.

Sincerely,

Diana Engelbart
West Boylston Open Space Committee
West Boylston Town Wide Planning

From: Fallavollita, Lynn [<mailto:Lynn.Fallavollita@umassmemorial.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2011 10:07 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Cc: Erin Palumbo; Pat Pepi; Sighle Philbin; Fallavollita, Lynn; Frank Perla; Margaret Rotti
Subject: DCR PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

The West Boylston Agriculture Commission would like to offer the following response to the DCR Public Access Plan:

- We support open access for all equine recreational activity.
- We believe equine activity would have no impact to the watershed.
- There would not be an overabundance of equine activity in this area due to lack of available parking for horse trailers.
- So much of West Boylston is DCR Land yet the residence of the town have very limited use of this land.
- The best way to protect the watershed is with education. We should not keep people away but rather allow them to use, enjoy and learn to care for it. Lets teach our children to respect and protect their environment.

The West Boylston Agricultural Commission wishes to thank you to reconsidering equine activity on DCR Land.

Respectfully submitted,

West Boylston Agricultural Commission
Pat Pepi
Sighle Philbin
Erin Palumbo
Frank Perla
Peggy Rotti
Lynn Fallavollita

From: Kevin O'Loughlin [<mailto:oloughlink@clinton.k12.ma.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2011 10:55 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: "Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan"

The Wachsett Dam is a beautiful site. Built by immigrants, hard working people. Each shovel full of dirt that was removed from the site was an act of pride. The building of roads, dikes, removal of bodies from a cemetery was a testament to the strength of our country. Many towns like Clinton, Boylston West Boylston and Sterling had to give up part of their land. There were homes and businesses abandoned for this cause to give water to Boston. I feel that the people affected by this act would want their heirs to be able to appreciate the beauty of the area. I propose that the citizens be allowed to have access to the Wachsett Dam area. To be able to walk across, down and around the dam structure. It would foster an appreciation for the esthetic beauty of the grounds, teach the young about the sacrifices our fore fathers made, become a learning tool for the students of Clinton to learn about the importance of water and water conservation and for all to appreciate how we are intertwined with our ecology of our watershed. Thank you very much for your consideration,
Kevin O'Loughlin
May 17, 2011

From: Philip Philbin [<mailto:tiseyes@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2011 10:59 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Access by horse

To whom it may concern,

I believe it is very wrong to restrict the use of access by horse to lands of the taxpayers of mass. By the mass D C R.

Responsible use of these lands should be reinstated first to all abutters of these properties The very people that walk it and oversee it.

Ultimately a permitting process to all citizens interested.

I believe a small amount of people would be interested.

Be aware many people that live in the area are descendants of the very people that built this reservoir and have strong feeling about protecting it including me. I had an great uncle that was killed in that process of building the Wachusett reservoir also many others that worked it that did not die in the process but went on to enjoy the lands by walking and riding it on horseback. To me it's hallowed grounds And always needs protection, who better than the people that use it daily.

We would definitely like to be free again to use it responsibly

Sincerely,

Philip Philbin
French Hill Farm
West Boylston

From: Fallavollita, Lynn [<mailto:Lynn.Fallavollita@umassmemorial.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 3:36 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

I am a 25 year resident of West Boylston and am an abutter to the Wachusett Reservoir - in fact you can walk thru by back year and enter the Reservoir from there. My daughter at an early age became familiar with the many trails from behind our house. I have often felt it was a shame not to allow horseback riding in this area. I am a horse person and it would be magnificent to be able to ride thru the 100s of acres the Reservoir provides.

Below are a list of my reasons why horseback riding would be ok to do in these woods:

- o Horseback riding would no more effect watershed than the current deer/other wildlife population.
- o Fisherman create much more damage to DCR Land than horseback riders would - they leave their trash behind like styrofoam coolers, beer cans, fishing line to name a few.
- o Horseback riders could be the eyes and ears for the DCR and would be able to travel to more areas than DCR Vehicles.
- o DCR Vehicles - trucks/atvs - create road damage and threaten to pollute with fuel.
- o There are hundreds of acres of beautiful land ideal for horseback riding.
- o Could open it up on a trial bases.
- o If not for public - at least to town residents and/or abbutters.
- o Could create revenue by requiring license to ride.
- o Riding would be limited anyway because of lack of parking.

thank you.

Lynn Fallavollita
272 Lancaster St
West Boylston, Ma

From: peggy rotti [<mailto:pegrotti2000@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 11:21 AM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

In regards to the Public Access Plan:

As a long time resident of West Boylston and long time user of the Wachusett Reservoir property I have a few comments.

Horseback riding does not effect the watershed anymore then the thousands of deer / wildlife population. The state could collect revenue through licensing for permits for use age of the trails. In the Forty years I have used the trails for hiking, cross country skiing, fishing, and many years ago horseback riding I have never ran into anyone on horseback that there properties did not abut the Reservoir. Because of the lack of parking there would not be a problem of too many horses. Horse owners could be required to wear manure bags to prevent them from leaving any manure on the trails. Strict rules could be put in affect against horses being near the shore lines. There are hundreds of acres of beautiful land ideal for horseback riding. If not open for public-at least to town residents and/or abutters.

In the years since horseback riding has not been allowed the damages that had been done to the trails by the DCR vehicles -trucks/atvs and the vehicles in there cutting trees is a disgrace. The fuel that is spilled by the tree service is more of a pollutant then any horse.

I can't ride a pedal bike because I will erode the trails and the the DCR vehicles have done so much damage.

Fisherman pay for a license to fish and leave Styrofoam cooler, coffee cups, beer cans, fishing line to name a few. Myself and my friends that us the Reservoir has NEVER so much a left a tissue on the ground.

Best Regards:

Peggy Rotti

From: Erin Palumbo [<mailto:eafitz@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, May 09, 2011 11:49 AM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: comments regarding the watershed

I fully support increased access for the public. The quality of water in the watershed should be a top priority. However, the more people are restricted from using the land surrounding the watershed, the less respect and understanding they will have for the water. We must work to educate and use people as a resource rather than simply restrict them from going on the land. If

horses, dogs, mountain bikes were allowed, these groups would likely help maintain the trails and provide fundraisers to support the area. When all access is denied, it simply builds resentment toward the DCR. People must, as with all fragile environmental systems, work to cohabitate. There is a better answer than what we currently have.

From: Pat Pepi [<mailto:patpepi@charter.net>]
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2011 9:49 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

As a resident of West Boylston for over 50 years, I think it is appropriate to open the Wachusett watershed to horseback riding and driving in the watershed area.

Regards,

Patricia Pepi
181 Fairbanks Street
West Boylston, Ma 01583



Clinton Greenway
Conservation Trust

February 5, 2011

John Scannell, Regional Director
180 Beaman St.
West Boylston, MA 01583

Dear John,

The Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust (CGCT) is very interested in supporting your efforts to update the Wachusett Public Access Plan. Several of our members participated in the kickoff meeting on October 28, 2010. Since that initial meeting we have discussed a few ideas for inclusion in your plan.

The included document describes our ideas.

We reviewed the format of the Wachusett Reservoir Public Access Plan 2003 and have tried to mimic that format in our suggestions for the plan. We used a format that defines the goal and then lists specific actions to accomplish the goal.

We would be very happy to meet with DCR to discuss this so that any ideas that are not in line with DCR's overall goals and objectives can be refined.

We noticed that the 2003 plan describes your partnership with Wachusett Greenways. We would like to setup a similar partnership with the Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust.

Please let me know if there is a convenient time for you or your designate to meet with the CGCT.

Kind regards,

Frannie Hodge
Member, Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust Board of Directors

cc: Dianne Mather, President, Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust

PO Box 683 · Clinton, MA 01510 · 978.365.9377

www.clintongreenway.org

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan Update 2011

Input to Draft Plan from Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust

Overview of Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust (CGCT) and interest in Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan Update

The Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust is a land trust based in Clinton, Massachusetts, that is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of open space. The charter of the CGCT is to provide protection for, awareness of, and access to the open spaces in Clinton. The Wachusett Reservoir area represents the largest parcel of open space in Clinton. We are very interested in the continued protection of this precious resource balanced with public access to this beautiful parcel as appropriate.

Our current projects include the implementation of the Town of Clinton Open Space and Recreation Plan including development of trails and providing for the ongoing maintenance and protection of Rauscher Farm. Short term goals include developing trails on existing rail beds and other open areas.

One of our trail projects is the continuation of the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) through Clinton. The Wachusett Reservoir is one of the unique and appealing features of the MCRT. The section of the MCRT through the Wachusett Reservoir area provides the critical connection to the MCRT sections that have already been developed by Wachusett Greenways with the MCRT sections that the CGCT plans to develop. Continuing the MCRT through the DCR property seems to be the best and safest option. Users of the MCRT will be protected from vehicle traffic. The additional "eyes" on the reservoir provides protection for the water.

Trail sections immediately to the east of the Wachusett Reservoir will be developed by the CGCT and the Berlin Conservation Commission. Trail sections from Berlin and continuing to the East are currently controlled by the MBTA with a planned transfer to DCR. Trail sections west of the reservoir are under development by Wachusett Greenways. The section of the MCRT from South Meadow Road to Campground Road continues to be an active rail line.

We would like for you to consider a few goals and objectives for the update to the Wachusett Reservoir Public Access Plan that are aimed at continued development of the Mass Central Rail Trail.

I. Goal – Continue the development of the Mass Central Rail Trail

a. Actions to accomplish goal

- i. Continue the partnership that DCR has developed with Wachusett Greenways.
- ii. Initiate a partnership with the Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust for the Clinton sections of the trail.
- iii. Improve the trail surface between Gates 39 and 42 to better accommodate bicycle traffic
- iv. Determine options for extending bicycle traffic from gate 39 to Gate 33. Options may include:
 1. *Modify trail on the North Dike so that it slopes and drains away from the reservoir (to prevent dirt that kicks up from rolling toward the water).*
 2. *Develop a trail parallel to route 110 on the grassy section*
 3. *Build boardwalk or other protected access where the reservoir meets route 110. Gate 36 – Gate 35*
 4. *Determine best trail surface to protect the water.*
- v. Add Mass Central Rail Trail signs along this trail to make it clear to users that this is part of the larger MCRT trail.
- vi. Investigate Potential paths for multi-use between Gates 35 and 26

II. Goal – Additional multi-use recreational trail

a. Actions to accomplish Goal

- i. Investigate possibilities for a recreational trail that circles the reservoir
 1. *Complete a feasibility study on the potential path. This study would itemize the requirements to improve existing trail or create new trail that provides access while continuing to protect the water supply, wildlife, and any other sensitive areas. (Idea is to use the existing trails from Gate 42 to Gate 39, continue from Gate 39 to Gate 36 on the north dike if developed to an acceptable standard or on new trail from gate 39 to gate 36. Develop trail between Gate 36 and Gate 35. Use existing trail or develop new trail from Gate 35 to Gate 26. Follow road to Gate 25. Use existing trail or develop new trail from Gate 25 to Gate 18. Develop trail between gate 18 and 17. Continue trail from Gate 17 to Gate 1 and then around the base of the dam to gate 42 to complete the circle).*
 2. *Work with DCR Greenways and Trails program for funding of studies*
 3. *Work with DCR Greenways and Trails program for funding of trail development.*
 4. *Work with open space committees of Wachusett communities (Clinton, Sterling, West Boylston, and Boylston) and local land trusts, including CGCT on planning, development, and funding.*