



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
September 5, 2008  
Skinner Park, Hadley, Ma

Meeting Minutes

*Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:* Councilors, Henry Lee, Michael Dutton, John Natoli, Julian Agyeman, Laura Johnson, Dan Wolf, Christina Crowley and Whitney Hatch.

*Public Attendees:* Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry; Mark Mueller, Hull Forest Products, TNC; Elisa Campbell, Sierra Club; Joe Zorzin; Chris Matera, Citizen; Kathie Bruwninger, Feeding Hills; Mike Ryan, Friends of Fells; Bruce Bennett; Ray Weber, Citizen; Irina Kadis, Citizen; Alexy Zinovlev, Citizen; Robert E.W. Collins, MAPF; Ken Lynds, MWPS; David Gaffney, Citizen; Kevin Richardson, Ashfield Rod & Gun Club; Laura Marx, TNC Sierra, The Nature Conservancy; Gregory Cox, Hawley Fire Department; Joseph Larsen, Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife board; Cynthia P. Hartegen, Downtown Arboretum Project, Westfield; Harold Green, NEMBO; Steve Kaiser, Massachusetts Stewardship Initiative; Susan Heitan, Citizen; Matthew Jacobson, Citizen; Ellen Moyer, Citizen; Lucy Gionfriddo, Citizen; D. crane, Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association; Claudia Hurley, Citizen of Westfield, Paul Lyons, Citizen of Shutsbury; Alan Pug, Citizen of Belchertown; John Fellows, Citizen of Amherst; Joe Smith, MWPA; Mary Wigmore, City of Westfield; Alexandra Dawson, MACC.

*DCR Staff in Attendance:* Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Stephanie Cooper, Jeff Daley, Conrad Crawford, Patti Vantine, Gary Davis, Suzanne Wilson, Bob O'Conner, Marcelle Valentin, and Joe Rotondo.

I. Call To Order (1:15 p.m.)

- a. Councilor Henry Lee chaired the meeting
  - i. Discussed the mission of the Stewardship Council and DCR.
  - ii. Introduced Mike Smyth, Park Supervisor
    - Mr. Smyth gave an overview history of the Summit House and Skinner Park

II. Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Rick Sullivan

- a. Commissioner Sullivan
  - All DCR pools have closed with the exception of the indoor DCR Connell Memorial Pool in Weymouth due to close early October.
  - There was a 13% increase in camping at our DCR facilities this season. Our customer service line survey showed that criticism dropped and appraisal has increased.
  - In the last 48 hours at the Middlesex Fells Stoneham Labor Yard, metal pieces were taking from the yard. We have found out some of the missing metals were historical decorative pieces from the Longfellow Bridge. This is currently under investigation by the District Attorney's office and State Police. DCR is taking the issue very seriously.
  - Shawn Cameron, DCR Park Supervisor at Granville State Forest, was recently recognized nationally as a Silver Medal Award Winner in America's 2008 Ranger of the Year competition. DCR is fortunate to have a talented team of rangers throughout the State. This is the third year in a row that a DCR ranger has been acknowledged.
  - The Massachusetts Legislature wrapped up its FY09 budget deliberations with overall good news for DCR. The DCR FY09 Operating Budget totals \$101.7 million, which includes over \$7.7 million in earmarks, approximately \$3.9 million of which relate to DCR property.

- The Legislature overridden the veto of the Resource Management Plan and it is in the budget.
  - DCR has to proceed with caution due to the Governor's office has directed they must start the 9C cuts which may be implemented due to the concern of the revenue coming in and the increase of fuel, electricity and health care. If implemented it will affect our final budget numbers.
  - The Environmental bond bill passed.
  - Good news, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) officials today announced that effective immediately, both lanes of Boston-to-Cambridge traffic on the Longfellow Bridge will be open.
  - The Bowker ramp repairs and Storow Drive Tunnel are both under construction currently. Commissioner Sullivan thanked Suzanne Wilson, Director of External Affairs and her staff for keeping list serve updated to keep people in the loop in regards to the construction.
  - On August 15, at Kenneth Dubuque Memorial State Forest in Hawley, DCR celebrated the graduation of the members of the DCR-Student Conservation Association (SCA) Massachusetts Parks Ameri-Corps (MPA) 2008-2009 program.
  - On August 22, DCR celebrated the Park Fellows Class of 2008 at a graduation ceremony held at DCR's Lawrence Heritage State Park. The program had 10 students who are interested in coming back.
  - On Saturday, September 13, DCR will hold an event dedicating Sandy Beach within the Mystic River Reservation as the Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Memorial Beach.
  - On Wednesday, September 10, DCR will be holding a ribbon-cutting event to celebrate completion of a new beach services/lifeguard building and a shade shelter.
  - DCR'S Heritage Landscape Inventory meeting kicked off this morning at the Westfield Athenaeum, DCR staff held a kick-off meeting to introduce Connecticut River Valley residents and organizations to the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program (HLIP) and to distribute applications for the 2009 program.
- b. Asian Longhorned Beetle, *Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Analyst***
- i. DCR is working to support an aggressive response to the Asian longhorned beetle infestation in Worcester.
  - ii. DCR currently has people on the ground full time researching the beetle and doing surveys.
  - iii. The agency is supporting the City of Worcester and the U.S. Department of Agriculture by providing staff resources and technical assistance, including forest health experts and equipment, such as bucket trucks, and assisting in public education initiatives.
  - iv. Treating host trees after the 1<sup>st</sup> frost. There was an extensive measure of putting out chemicals injecting into the trees that will knock out many of the beetles, bring down infested trees and the military will test & research the trees.

### III. Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules

#### a. Finance Committee

- i. Budget Update – Councilor Whitney Hatch
  - i. Capital budget has not been released to DCR or the other agencies yet.
  - ii. Procedure for next year's budget is to must submit a spending proposal letter as soon as possible but it depends on the 9C cuts. The finance committee will review the proposal and see how it affects the agency.

- iii. Commissioner Sullivan agreed with Councilor Hatch, the Secretary will have two public hearing on the priorities for the budget.
  - b. **Resource Management Planning Committee**
    - i. Councilor Lee said the RMP committee did not meet last month. The committee will be meeting next week and one main discussion will be on the Forestry issues. Would like a briefing next month on the overall RMP process that was initiated last February.
      - i. Commissioner Sullivan said on two fronts there will be a redraft on the forestry RMP. There will be outreach to communities and to UMASS to the report RMP process. Forest Cutting Regulations will be brought to the committee, forestry and legal to review the regulations. There will be an update at the next meeting.
      - ii. Commissioner Sullivan also mentioned the Home Fuel program, bidding process. Explained the program which is available on the DCR website. It is only for private citizens not companies and private citizens can not turn around and sell it. There is a form to be filled out for the program. Commissioner Sullivan asking the Home Fuel Program to be exempt from the 90 day waiting period.
        - 1. Councilor Lee said the council has not made a decision in regards to the green certification, open to suggestions and recommendations; the council wants an end result that reflects the thoughts of the citizens.
        - 2. Resolution to exempt Home Fuel Program from the 90 day pause
          - i. All in favor for the home fuel program to be exempt
  - c. **Policy Committee**
    - i. Councilor Julian Agyeman said in discussion with Councilor Johnson and Councilor Crowley they are looking to merge the policies with RMP for better efficiency in regards to RMP and forestry.
      - i. Council feels it is a good idea to discuss.

IV. **Special Business**

- a. N/A

V. **Approval of Minutes from April 4, 2008; May 2, 2008 and Executive session, June 26, 2008**

- a. Approved August 7<sup>th</sup> minutes
  - i. All in favor to approve the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- b. Commissioner announced that we will have 2 or 3 new council members next month; the Governor is currently in the vetting process.

VI. **Public Comment**

- a. **John Fellows, Citizen of Amherst** - He thanked the Stewardship Council and Commissioner for placing the 90 moratorium on the timber cutting placed last month. Mr. Fellows read a letter and gave recommendations, such as a master plan prepared for land timber harvesting and a clear understanding of the legislative mandates of the state owned land. He also recommends that the council formally recognize the recreation land acquisition from the 1908 state legislation passed in 1958.
- b. **Chris Matera, Citizen** – Mr. Matera gave a statistical update in clear cutting, timber cutting and logging and how in short/long term will affect our forest. He feels clear cutting is for the Industrial cutting not for state. He feels very strongly about enhancing the integrity of the Forest Management plans and protecting the public parks and reserves. Request for western Massachusetts representation on the council.
- c. **Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry** – Mr. Leonard expressed his disagreement with the timber cutting guidelines and Forestry Management plans. Discussed his concerns on the enforcement of the Forestry laws.

- d. **Kevin Richardson, Ashfield Rod & Gun Club** – Mr. Richardson feels that the development enhancement of wildlife habitat is lacking in the Forestry resource management plans. Requested that there be a significant increase in the wildlife habitat enhancement/management, soil stabilization and long term cycles to maintain improvements. Make a financial commitment and incorporate changing cycles will help with the management of wildlife habitation.
- e. **Dicken Crane, Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association** – Discussed forest landscape and how state lands can play a role by encouraging private forest land owners to do the type of management on their land that will continue to provide public benefits, by leading by example the state will be serving the public. Encourage private forest land owners to follow the same plans with state so in line with one another, help continue the management of private lands, gave benefits of this and asked the goals of the management of DCR lands. He feels that DCR can help the private land owners to manage the forests instead of converting their lands to usage that does not have public benefit.
- f. **Laura Marx, TNC Sierra**– Thanked all for attention on forest cutting. TNC Sierra supports the 90 day restriction on timber cutting and limiting harvesting which gives them opportunity to review plans. Gave historical of where we were 5 years ago before green certification and now. Ms. Marx said we now have "a forest reserve system of at least 100,000 acres". The official announcement of the large forest reserves, totaling 50,000 acres, can be found at: [http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/092106\\_forest\\_reserves.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/092106_forest_reserves.pdf). The remaining 50,000 or more acres of small reserves are defined in each of the district Forest Resource Management plans. Maps of individual properties in the draft plans show both the large reserves and the proposed small reserves (in red on the maps), and can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/manage/planning.htm>. The small reserves, therefore, become official when the DCR Stewardship Council approves the Forest Resource Management Plans. The Western MA Plans are averaging over 25% as forest reserve (combining small and large reserves). For example the Northern Berkshire and W CT Valley Districts have both designated 29% as forest reserve. If this trend continues across the state, well over 100,000 acres of reserve would result.
- g. **Mark Mueller, Hull Forest Products** – Mr. Mueller, licensed forester noted the inclusive interest in the forests, recreation, wildlife, trails and parks. He mentioned that Forest Management, active timber cutting and harvesting is extremely important for this state to maintain, improve the health, prevent evasive species and improve the standards for our forests. Recommends that DCR and the Stewardship Council revisit the Forestry Management plans in areas appropriate to the species and climate, rotation schedules on wildlife inhabitants. Mr. Mueller is in favor of the Forestry Management Plans.
- h. **Gregory Cox, Hawley Fire Department** – Mr. Cox, Fire Chief expressed his concerns and frustrations with the roads in the state forest in Western, Ma, in particular Holyoke. He stated in the past twenty years the roads in the state forest are deteriorating and are getting worse. He requests that DCR invest more in the roads the constituents use. Mr. Cox mentioned that our state parks have a large usage like ATV, ORV, mountain bikers, snow mobiles, hiking, etc., which results in many injuries due to bad roads. He stated that it makes medical response difficult. He hopes there is funding for DCR to repair trails and roads to help reduce injuries.
- i. **Mike Ryan, Friends of Fells** – Shared cumulative on the ground data showing in last four years that the Green Certification Forestry Program has not been successful into protecting the forest and compliance needs to be improved. The Green Certification is inappropriate for the state and needs to be re-evaluated by the Stewardship Council. Gave brief information in the decline in wildlife and damage to forest and feels focus is on commercial forest cutting. Discussed the repercussions of bio-mass energy, gave quotes from various sources on the concerns on timber cutting. He also inquired about the public process and the moratorium of the Forest Plans.

- j. **Kathie Bruwinger, Feeding Hills** – Brought up a discussion from the June meeting in regards to the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 131A which justifies recreation on our state owned lands and also establishes nature reserves to the intent for licensed forester sign-off discussion with Commissioner Sullivan and the Stewardship Council. At that time Commissioner Sullivan was going to have Gary Davis, General Counsel look into the Massachusetts General 131Law and report back in July, but the July meeting was canceled. Stephanie Cooper, Chief of Staff said the information can be included in the agenda for the following month.
- k. **Ellen Moyer, Citizen and Registered Engineer** – Coming with the perspective of the Green Certification. She states that citizens are looking for a true sustainable wood to purchase but they are not getting what they pay for. Discussed values that need to be added to Forestry Plan. Also mentioned deforestation, not a good time to be cutting trees. Gave various facts on biomass plants and ethanol. Recommend an indefinite moratorium on all logging except for firewood and real cases of ecological emergencies until these issues are thoroughly researched. New aspect needs to be added which is climate change to the Green Certification.
- l. **Ray Weber, Citizen** - Passed out photos and discussed how moratorium is definitely needed until site specific plans are in place. The photos showed clear cuts done in various parks, some that were near the pond and another by a beaver dam. Gave history on the CCC plantations, Pine trees and areas that do not have regeneration after clear cuts.
- m. **Kenneth Lynds, Mass Wood Producers Association** – Informed all on Chapter 132. The suspension of cutting or the banning of cutting from state forest lands is in direct conflict with the policy of the Commonwealth as defined in statute at Chapter 132 Section 40 of the Massachusetts General Laws, which says: “It is hereby declared that the public welfare requires the rehabilitation, maintenance, and protection of forest lands for the purpose of conserving water, preventing floods and soil erosion, improving the conditions for wildlife and recreation, protecting and improving air and water quality, and providing a continuing and increasing supply of forest products for public consumption, farm use, and for the wood using industries of the commonwealth.” Chapter 132, section 40 was added as Chapter 539 of the Acts of 1943 and amended by Chapter 592 of the Acts 1982. Supports the Forestry Management Plans.
- n. **Joe Smith, MWPA** - He asked for individuals to take an opportunity to view the forestry on our lands. He feels it is important to have vigorous practices that will help overall. He feels the fears people have about clear cuts and green certification is not realistic. Clear cuts is needed, an ecological balance needed, urges all to look into the Forestry Management Plans. Supports the Forestry Plans.
- o. **Robert Collins, MAPF** - Passed out pictures showing the regeneration of the clear cuts sites. He advised to not take photos at 100% faith; the photos do not capture the regeneration. Clear cuts have their place in managing the forests. Mr. Collins mentioned the immense bird diversity we have. He reiterated that there were many public meetings that gave a lot of input for the green certification and forest management plans. He asked to keep in mind that they are not cutting all the forests and that 100 forest have been implemented. Supports the Forestry Management Plans.
- p. **Cynthia Hartdregen, Downtown Arboretum Project, Westfield** – Inquired on items that is not included in the moratorium. Stephanie Cooper, Chief of Staff mentioned that Home Fuel was an exception and that on the DCR website there is a list of activities within DCR forest lands that may qualify for exemption from the moratorium. Ms. Hartdregen also voiced her concern that we are taken precaution and being careful about evasive species before we do clear cutting.
- q. **Steve Kaiser, Massachusetts Stewardship Initiative** – Mr. Kaiser discussed the bridges at DCR. He mentioned that with the Longfellow Bridge, the Federal Highway is pleased with the DCR’s staff performance and work done on the bridges. Mr. Kaiser is happy about the change in the relationship between DCR and the Federal Highway. Mr. Kaiser expressed his gratitude that the parkways and bridges are protected and belongs to DCR. Mentioned there still an issue on private companies operating on public properties and will write Bob O’Conner. If we change use of forest lands for commercial purposes, it will change the use of the land and will bring us article 97 problems.

- r. **Claudia Hurley, Citizen of Westfield** – In regards to the green certification, Ms. Hurley met with Dave Wager from a company that does auditing on green certification to find out that there were five conditions in the 2007 green certification that is not in compliance. Asked the Stewardship Council to review the green certification to make sure there is not anything in compliance with the northeast. Sent email on the inquiry when the 2008 audit be completed. She was told that site specific plans are still being worked on which will delay the 2008 audit. Strong concerns on site specific plans, we need a clear understanding of the laws.
- s. **Mary Wigmore, City of Westfield** – Ms. Wigmore gave her opinion on the operational network at DCR and notices that the DCR staff is spread so thin, not enough staff. In support of the forest plans but not clear on what are the benefits. Asked for better clarification on what the benefits are.
- t. **Alexandra Dawson, MAACC** – MAACC would like to know whether a major rectangular clear cut covered with snow was it over 10 acres or under 10 acres and was it in compliance, can not tell from photos. Ms. Wigmore states it was 8.2 acres. Commissioner Sullivan advised Conrad Crawford, Director of Partnerships to provide her with the answer and information she is seeking.
- u. **Matthew Jacobson, Citizen of Amherst** – Stated that the FFC logging is not clear and not in compliance. Talked about efficiency and energy compliance. Does not feel the compliance of FFC logging need more research, has a report that he passed out to the council. He discussed the determination of FFC logging. There are no federal lands but our standards should not be less than there standards, public engagement needed.
- v. **Lucy Gionfriddo, Citizen of Agawam** – Feels that the moratorium is more important than ever have full compliment of members from the east and western areas. Inquired if the new appointees from western part of state.
- w. **David Gaffney, Citizen** – Mr. Gaffney used to be a forester consultant and is a lawyer. He discussed the thinning of the trees, clear cutting. Requested last month to look at Pilgrim Mountain State Forest property and see the devastation there. Correlation is in green certification but no comfort in it. Feels the GC has industrial style cutting. Inquired is there is any cost benefit analysis on green cert, how much is it costing the state. Wondering if there will be more management, more foresters to help staff. Asked the council to review the Forestry Management plan.
- x. **Irina Kadis, Citizen** – Ms. Kadis has a degree in agriculture and stated that cutting trees will grow back in 25- 50 years, 21<sup>st</sup> century, the forest will look different from when 1<sup>st</sup> cut. Currently our forests don't look the same as they did 100 years ago. During regeneration, alien plants and evasive species can come. Forest management plans needed but clear cuts are detrimental and will bring a different environment.

VII. **Meeting Schedule** – Next meeting will be Friday, October 3, 2008 at Fall River Heritage State Park, Fall River, Ma.

*Meeting adjourned 3:45 pm*