



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
October 3, 2008  
Fall River Heritage State Park, Fall River, Ma

Meeting Minutes

*Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:* Councilors, Elisa Campbell, John Natoli, Dan Wolf, Frank Frey, Julian Agyeman, Whitney Hatch, Michael Dutton, Laura Johnson, and Henry Lee.

*Public Attendees:* Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon; Ray Webber, Friends of Robinson State Park; Paul A. Remington, New England Trail Riders Association; Jill A. Miller, Natick Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee; A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee; Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood; Carol Gilmour, Friends of Robinson State Park; Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells; James McCaffrey, Sierra Club

*DCR Staff in Attendance:* Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Stephanie Cooper, Patricia Vantine, Jeff Daley, Conrad Crawford, Suzanne Wilson, Andy Backman, Joe Orfant, Jim DiMaio, Jim Lindsey, Renee Tavares, Marcelle Valentin, Bob O'Connor and Joe Rotondo.

I. Call To Order (1:00 p.m.),

a. Councilor Henry Lee, Acting Chair informed all of that the Governor has appointed three new Stewardship Council members.

- i. Commissioner Sullivan introduced two of the council members, Elisa Campbell and Frank Frey. James Van Dyke the third member was not able to attend the meeting today. Commissioner Sullivan gave a brief biography on each member which can be found on the DCR website.
- ii. Councilor Lee asked each new member to say a few words.
  - Councilor Frank Frey noted his concerns on the state forest and policies, mentioned thesis on bio reserves.
  - Councilor Campbell gave her appreciation to be part of the council and her goal is to help improve the forests and parks.
  - Councilor Lee introduced Renee Dufour, District Manager for the South Coast District.
    - a. Renee Dufour gave a brief history of Fall River HP, facility information, highlighting city history and Battleship Cove.
  - Commissioner Sullivan noted the President of the Friends group of Fall River Heritage Park was in attendance and thanked him for all the activities they do at FRHP. He noted that one of DCR goals is strengthening relations with partners and friends.

II. Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Rick Sullivan

a. On October 1st, at the invitation of the Friends of Lynn and Nahant Beaches, Commissioner Sullivan attended a meeting to speak with community members about developments in the area. DCR staff, led by Nick Gove and his team, was recognized for their excellent work removing algae, installing new interpretive signs, and making other improvements during the recently completed summer recreational season.

- b.** Community feedback has been great and Commissioner Sullivan shared some of the exceptional DCR employee highlights.

  - i. A man from California wrote to DCR commending us on a “*great job*” for the web page information about Mt. Greylock State Reservation. He hikes all over the country, and was delighted to discover that our site includes maps and suggested routes with plenty of information – which, he informed us, is rare to find in other states. He wishes other states would follow DCR’s lead.
  - ii. The good news is even spreading into the papers. The Revere Journal reported that “*DCR did an outstanding job this summer of maintaining Revere Beach,*” stating that the beach was cleaner than it has been in years, and praising DCR staff. “*The thorough morning cleanings of the sand and the daily sweeping of the boulevard and emptying of barrels and cleanliness of the sitting areas was something to behold...*” Observing the clean beaches, the paper emphasized: “*It was noticeable. It was appreciated.*”
- c.** On September 26, Commissioner Sullivan had the honor in presenting Shawn Cameron, Park Supervisor at DCR’s Granville State Forest, with a Silver Medal Award from America’s 2008 Ranger of the Year competition. The annual award competition sponsored by ReserveAmerica, the campground reservation service that represents 3,000 state and federal parks across the nation. This is the third consecutive year that DCR staff has been honored in this national competition.
- d.** The DCR Partnerships Matching Funds Program kicked- off FY 2009 on September 15, 2008 and announced the availability of \$1.5 million in grant funding even though we are in budget turmoil. The applications deadline is October 17, 2008 and the decisions are expected to be announced in mid-November.
- e.** There have also been positive editorials in regards to how the Storrow Drive project is being handled. DCR continues to invite neighborhood residents, commuters, and other interested parties to comment on the closure by e-mail to: [dcr.updates@state.ma.us](mailto:dcr.updates@state.ma.us). Cost of the project, \$11.5 million is expected to remain the same on the new schedule. DCR has received only a handful of comments on the night-time closing, and all have been favorable. The work is expected to be completed next spring.
- f.** On September 25, DCR submitted additional information on the BU Bridge Rehabilitation project, as requested, to the Cambridge ConCom. DCR will be holding a public informational meeting about the project at Boston University on Thursday, October 16, from 6-8 p.m., and is announcing this meeting today through a press release and stakeholder communication.
- g.** DCR continues to plan and hold many community events showcasing the agency’s accomplishments and invites the council to attend these events.

  - i. DCR reopened the Plymouth Rock Portico in Plymouth yesterday, Oct. 1, as the repairs have been completed. A cutting-edge, solar-powered, cathode protection system (which halts rust through the application of a safe and mild electrical current) was installed in the Portico to protect against any future deterioration. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony in November and the Council will be invited.
- h.** On September 29, Commissioner Sullivan provided welcoming remarks at the National Association of State Foresters annual meeting in Hyannis. Attendees to this meeting, which runs from September 28 through October 2, include chief foresters from 48 states, Mark Rey, USDA Undersecretary of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment; Sally Collins, Associate Chief, USDA Forest Service; Arlen Lancaster, Chief, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; State Foresters; and NASF officers.

### III. Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules

#### a. **Finance Committee, Councilor Whitney Hatch**

- i. Councilor Hatch mentioned even with the tremendous progress this council, friends group and DCR had made in regards to the operating budget, now 9C cuts will affect the budget. All agencies were asked to do cut backs and DCR was asked to look into their agency to remove additional 10% from the budget if it was needed. The spending plans were just completed and submitted by the noon deadline to the Secretary. Councilor Hatch asked if the Commissioner and Patricia Vantine, Director of Administration and Finance could share the spending plans with the council so they can review and see as a committee that they can recommend to the Governor and Secretary as priorities for DCR. One priority is the RMP and hopefully can hire one person. The Finance committee has a phone conference next week and we will circulate a draft with defined plans of priority to the council to review and get email approval and send it out to the Secretary and Governor.
  - i. Commissioner Sullivan informed the council that backfilling is a priority on vacancies on the ground, holding onto the beaches positions, and we are trying to hold on to the Resource Management Plan positions, but we have been approved for one RMP position currently.
  - ii. Councilor Johnson hopes as a council they can help point out the disproportionate amount of lack of resources to make a case.
  - iii. Councilor Lee feels the Resource Management Plans are critical to the agency and it took five years to get support.

#### b. **Policy and Resource Management Plan Committee**

- i. Joe Orfant, Bureau Director of Planning gave a brief introduction of his job and bureau.
- ii. Informed the council that Andy Backman a program to integrate RMP plans in the DCR regions and districts.
- iii. Andy Backman, RMP Planner presented a power point presentation on the RMP statewide survey update.
  - i. The RMP statewide survey results identified 86 planning units within 18 districts; cultural resource assessment; Compilation of readily available resource data at the Statewide / District / Planning Unit / Property level; District Manager and Park Ranger input related to primary management concerns and responsibilities; Inventory of previous planning documents; Assessment of information for the purpose of prioritizing future RMPs.
  - ii. He reviewed data sources type of information that exists, new or no data.
  - iii. Discussed one of Paul Cavanaugh's roles as a Resource Management Planner to research the potential threats in various properties. A primary RMP concern across the state is working on a statewide survey that will help with planning resources.
  - iv. Councilor Wolf suggested there be an action plan for the RMPs. Joe Orfant feels it is more important to get the information from the District Managers and Regional Directors to create an action plan, accountability down up, up down. Timeline important and finance.
- iv. Councilor Lee introduced Stephanie Cooper, Chief of Staff to discuss RMP for Forestry.
  - i. Stephanie Cooper gave an update on the forest resource management plans. She noted that it is now 60 days into the 90-day temporary pause in timber harvesting implemented on August 7<sup>th</sup>. The Policy and Planning subcommittee has been closely overseeing and guiding DCR's staff work on the Forest RMPs for the Southern Berkshire, Western Connecticut Valley and the Northern

Berkshire districts. . . DCR has also reached out to the five largest environmental organizations for feedback on the FRMPs which was one of the items discussed in their June letter to Commissioner Sullivan and the Council (the Council endorsed this letter in the August 7<sup>th</sup> resolution). The inputs from the public and the environmental organizations as well as the hard work of the subcommittee have helped to greatly improve the Forestry Plans.

- ii. DCR posted details of the August 7<sup>th</sup> resolution on the DCR website and included a summary of the Council's discussions about it in the August minutes. Conrad Crawford received requests for a hard copy of the August 7<sup>th</sup> resolution and copies are available at today's meeting for distribution. Next month's meeting will mark the end of the 90 day pause. DCR will be bringing forth a proposal for future timber harvesting policy. We will also discuss next steps for the larger public process included in the August resolution.

IV. **Special Business, Asian Longhorn Beetle Update, Jeff Daley**

- a. On September 24, Senior Policy Advisor Jeff Daley met in Washington with representatives of the Massachusetts delegation (Congressman McGovern and staff from the offices of Senators Kennedy and Kerry) and USDA Undersecretary Bruce Knight. At this meeting, DCR received assurances from the USDA that they intend to cover the first-year cost of eradicating the beetle from the City of Worcester and other affected municipalities. DCR and the City of Worcester are putting together a state and local FY09 budget for the program to submit to the USDA next Monday. The plans are moving forward to cut down the infested trees and grind them up to stop the pest from spreading to the region's forests. On September 26<sup>th</sup>, the Commissioner participated in a press conference announcing the expansion of the regulated area which now encompasses all of Worcester and additional areas in Shrewsbury (as well as areas within West Boylston).

V. **Approval of Minutes from June 16, 2008**

- a. Councilor Laura Johnson made the motion and Councilor Michael Dutton 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, all in favor to approve the June 16, 2008 emergency minutes.
- b. September minutes will be reviewed for approval next month

VI. **Public Comment**

- a. **Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon** – Looking into the Forestry RMP, Ms. Ricci mentioned a few points and feels DCR have the key elements for the Forestry RMP. Observation on the drafts is important; clarification on the amount of harvesting compared to sustainability also needs to be reviewed.
- b. **A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee** – Inquired about what is going on at Cochituate SP aiming at the resources on the ground. Identify needs for stewardship.
- c. **Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood** – Mr. Kaiser had gone to a briefing yesterday on the dams and there is a chance that probably the dams will break downtown. DCR has good plan for the dams. BU bridge plan still needs work. People should not be using areas outside of state parks. Public trust lands, review legal aspects. Asked for consideration of request to extend the moratorium.
- d. **Ray Webber, Friends of Robinson State Park** – Advised to make sure Forestry RMP considers the 94 acre timber harvest and wants it closely reviewed. Inquired on the benefit of clear cuts. Very little data on evasive species. Says cutting should not be done until plants are identified.

- e. **Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park** – Asked in the process that we place the planning first and cutting second. Read a sentence from August 7<sup>th</sup> resolution she felt critical to her. Requested that the public is always aware of the plans and to find out too if we are making a profit from timber cutting, is it legal. Sustainability, make sure private citizens are not selling timber.
  - f. **Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells** - Asked how DCR supply support to the committee and what about the public's role. Green certification, mentioned letter sent to organization on forest certifications, is appropriate. Passed out letter, reassessment needed.
- VII. **Meeting Schedule** – Next meeting will be Friday, November 7, 2008 at Lawrence Heritage State Park.

*Meeting adjourned 3:09 pm*