

## DCR Middlesex Fells Reservation - Resource Management Plan

### Initial Public Meeting – January 31, 2011

#### Comments Received

##### Comment Cards

- No one group is more entitled than any other to enjoy the precious, limited green space that is any state property. As a member of the Callahan Dog Owners Group I can attest to a special microcosm of camaraderie, mutual respect and selfless sharing of the acres and trails at Callahan. Most encounters are not just uneventful but are friendly, accommodating, lovely. The kinds of encounters that offer hope for all mankind. Having a dog owners group who help educate is an important part of our success. There will always be bad apples in every user group who will always make the majority of good users look bad. But the bad apples will continue to come and break the rules selfishly no matter what is decided. Most people, given the opportunity will do the right thing. Educate the uninformed.
- Re: mountain bikers, restrict, regulate, or not. PLEASE do not allow night riding – give the wildlife back their habitat for at least that part of the day. Night time is the only part of the day that they get a break from us. Give them back the night!
- I think there was a good shout from the audience at one point for more trash cans throughout the Fells – for dog waste, water bottles, and the like. – Dog Owner
- I would like to have addressed if it is a law to have a dog off a leash in a public place? If so, then why is it allowed in the Fells. If this is a Mass Law it should be enforced. – Sandra Doon
- Sometimes dogs are out of sight of their owners.
- Some thoughts: Unenforced rules undermining the value of rules in general. DCR should act as an [illegible] among FoF, NEMBA, dog groups, and others to air concerns, identify areas of cooperation, discuss getting the groups to promulgate rules, and to find room for compromise, especially given the DCR's limited resources.
- Dogs need to recreate. 2. Dogs need to socialize. 3. If we can't have off-leash recreation at the Fells we'll have nowhere to go. 4. Dedicating some trails will solve user conflicts. – Greg Penta, Melrose Dog Society President
- Thank you for this process. I thought the plan you put forth before was beautiful, hopeful, one I can absolutely abide by as a mountain biker, dog owner, runner, hiker, bird watcher. DCR sets a tone which is very important, whether you enforce it entirely or not. Please do not back away from this opportunity. Please take leadership and help set a tone of peace and well being and multiuse respect. You have the position and mandate to do so. Please do not make us wait 20 more years! – Alice Hunter

## Notes from the Public Input Session

- Policy review and improvement needed.
- Conflicts between trail users must be addressed via trails plan.
- Coordination between regulatory/enforcement agencies must be established.
- Improve responsible use habits, self policing.
- Avoid activities that degrade resources. Assess potential for impacts for all recreational activities.
- Achieve compliance with regulations and cooperation between groups A simple straightforward approach is advisable.
- Differing opinions on impacts of dogs on wildlife, ranging from 'no dogs should be allowed' thru 'there is no problem'.
- Coordination and cooperation among user groups needed to establish vision for the future of the Fells.
- There is a place for all users given common courtesy.
- Illegal uses at the Fells are linked to the sustainability of plans (or lack thereof).
- DCR should focus on the planning process/define process. Hopeful for 6 months completion of RMP. (One other similar comment)
- Monitoring of work being done at the Fells is needed.
- More consideration should be given to dog owners.
- On trail off leash dog walking needed. (two similar comments)
- Fells working ok as is – more rules complicate management and enjoyment. (two similar comments)
- Money to capital improvements, land acquisitions, etc., not enforcement.
- Access/enjoyment for all recreation. (two similar comments)
- There are only a small percentage of dog owners/mountain bikers who don't care.
- Potential vernal pools and certified vernal pools – consider both.
- Knowledge gap around insects.
- Dog walkers with vans of dogs are a problem. (one similar comment)
- Consideration of others on the trails, ski/dog/bike. Dogs being leashed and owners picking up waste are a concern. (two similar comments)
- Vandalism/fires in the Fells – partying a problem.
- Need to move forward on process – taken too long to get to where we are today.
- DCR lack of funding – can stakeholders organize and help?
- Minimize “reserving” of resources.
- Update winter trail closure on web.
- Dogs and wildlife – problem or not?
- Rules without enforcement (around recreation) leads to conflict. (one similar comment)
- How to involve new Fells users in RMP process?