

From: Lynne Carr [REDACTED]

Sent: Wed 2/2/2011 12:44 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Off-Leash Recreation on the Trails at Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

I'm writing in support of allowing off-lease recreation at The Fells. For years, I have enjoyed hiking and running at The Fells with my dog. The whole area is an amazing natural resource that can remain welcoming to all while protecting flora and fauna.

Your kind consideration of this matter is greatly appreciated,
Lynne
Somerville, MA

From: Joan Weaver [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 5:17 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Comments on use of Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

I find it reprehensible that you would even consider allowing ANY mountain biking in Fells Forest Reservation Park!!

I have been a hiker and backpacker for many years. In my experience, mountain bikers care not about the quiet beauty of any place . . . they are after the challenge, and thrill. Too often, I have witnessed, that this thrill-seeking comes in the form of cutting down trees, laying them across trails, and creating a ramp/jump for more thrills. This is only one negative facet.

Mountain bikers very often come zooming down narrow, or single-track, trails which might be populated by people on foot, or wildlife, who have no time to move out of the way. A friend of mine was left with a broken collar bone, and the mountain biker apologized, saying "I thought you were a kid." She was at the back of the line of hikers, and couldn't jump out of the way fast enough.

The noise of these mechanical devices is enough to scare wildlife away from their own habitat! And, it is all too common that we see trails "cut" by bicycles, crossing the existing switchback trail in order to exaggerate the biker's downhill thrills – destroying vegetation and causing erosion.

Oh yes, erosion. As the mountain bikers careen around corners, the compacted soil becomes loose, and grooves form, making for certain erosion when the rains come. This also happens on up-hill and down-hill portions of trails because of the wheel-spinning and braking actions of the bikes.

Mountain bikers have the same rights to enter these pristine areas on foot, as the rest of us. I advocate for the plants, wildlife, and peace, and serenity of all.

Please ban mountain biking in ALL parks, and wilderness.

Thank you for your consideration,

Joan S Weaver

Chatsworth, CA 91311

From: Jean Batty [REDACTED]
To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP
Cc:
Subject: Please make the Fells Accessible to All
Attachments:

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 4:49 PM

[View As Web Page](#)

Can we please develop some ADA accessible paths so that ALL may enjoy this treasure?

Thank you!

Jean Batty
[REDACTED]

From: Michele Biscoe [REDACTED]
To: Paul Jahnige
MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fells RMP Workshops
Attachments:

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 6:19 PM

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Paul,

Several matters relating to the workshops for the Fells RMP cause me to be concerned about the fairness of the process we are entering into.

Two of the speakers on the agenda for the Flora and Fauna workshop are members of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Fells: Bryan Hamlin, Chair, and Walter Kittredge. Another presenter listed on the agenda is David Brown, who the Friends of the Fells cite as an authority in their Summer 2006 newsletter:

"Dogs in the Fells also wreak havoc with wild animals. David Brown points out that 'a dog off a leash will follow its nose to ground disturbing denning and nesting species of wildlife discouraging their presence in the park,' resulting in 'fewer and fewer places where wild animals can find refuge.' It is important that people who bring their dogs to the Fells obey the 'dog on leash' regulation because the wildness of the Fells and the safety of visitors is at stake."

http://www.fells.org/File/06_summer.pdf)

Since the Friends of the Fells are in an adversarial relationship with other stakeholder groups in this process and as many people feel that the Friends of the Fells are actively trying to keep them and their recreational activities out of the Fells, this is extremely problematic. It is simply unconscionable that you would provide them control over this forum at a public workshop in what is supposed to be an unbiased process.

Further, I see that the Recreation workshop is being co-hosted by Appalachian Mountain Club and the New England Mountain Bike Association. Have any off-leash recreation experts been invited to make presentations at these workshops?

Sincerely,

Michele Biscoe
Chairperson
Somerville Dog Owners Group (som|dog)
www.somdog.org

The Somerville Dog Owners Group promotes responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation, and open space for all in Somerville, MA

From: [Joel A Feingold](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 7:21 PM

To: [REDACTED] [Jahnige, Paul \(DCR\)](#)

Cc: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#); [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Fells RMP Workshops

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

I have John Goodrich's contact info. He was the first facilitator at the meeting Tuesday. What do you folks think about me forwarding this to him with a little cover letter explaining gently that this is a widely held belief, that the process is tainted, would his office be willing to use its authority to make the process more even handed? Thoughts?

Joel

On 2/3/11 7:13 PM, "Michele Biscoe" [REDACTED]

wrote:

Dear Paul,

Several matters relating to the workshops for the Fells RMP cause me to be concerned about the fairness of the process we are entering into.

Two of the speakers on the agenda for the Flora and Fauna workshop are members of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Fells: Bryan Hamlin, Chair, and Walter Kittredge. Another presenter listed on the agenda is David Brown, who the Friends of the Fells cite as an authority in their Summer 2006 newlsetter:

"Dogs in the Fells also wreak havoc with wild animals. David Brown points out that 'a dog off a leash will follow its nose to ground disturbing denning and nesting species of wildlife discouraging their presence in the park,' resulting in 'fewer and fewer places where wild animals can find refuge.' It is important that people who bring their dogs to the Fells obey the 'dog on leash' regulation because the wildness of the Fells and the safety of visitors is at stake." (http://www.fells.org/File/06_summer.pdf)

Since the Friends of the Fells are in an adversarial relationship with other stakeholder groups in this process and as many people feel that the Friends of the Fells are actively trying to keep them and their recreational activities out of the Fells, this is extremely problematic. It is simply unconscionable that you would provide them control over this forum at a public workshop in what is supposed to be an unbiased process.

Further, I see that the Recreation workshop is being co-hosted by Appalachian Mountain Club and the New England Mountain Bike Association. Have any off-leash recreation experts been invited to make presentations at these workshops?

Sincerely,

Michele Biscoe
Chairperson
Somerville Dog Owners Group (som|dog)
www.somdog.org <<http://www.somdog.org>>

The Somerville Dog Owners Group promotes responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation, and open space for all in Somerville, MA

From: Jahnige, Paul (DCR) [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 8:29 PM

To: Michele Biscoe; [REDACTED]

MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fells RMP Workshops

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Michele, et. al.

Thanks for your email. And for your concerns. We look forward to addressing them and working closely with you on that.

First with respect to the Recreational Workshop, we are still in the process of planning that, and I absolutely do intend to ask you all to participate as partners in that workshop. Please stay tuned on that.

With respect to the Flora and Fauna workshop, although it is true that Bryan Hamlin and Walter Kittredge are both affiliated with the FOF, they also happen to be botanists with expensive knowledge of the fells plants. They are presenting in that regard. David Brown is an independent wildlife tracker and naturalist who has conducted a mammal survey in the fells. They all bring important information to the process, however, these workshops are important fora for further exploring these complex issues. I hope you and other dog owners and dog owner groups will participate in a spirit of dialogue around these issues.

Finally, I want to thank you for the petition and comments that you submitted at the public meeting Monday. They are very helpful. And we look forward to continuing to work closely with you on these issues.

Sincerely, Paul Jahnige

From: Michele Biscoe [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, February 03, 2011 7:13 PM

To: Paul Jahnige

Cc: MiddlesexFellsRMP@umb.edu; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Fells RMP Workshops

Dear Paul,

Several matters relating to the workshops for the Fells RMP cause me to be concerned about the fairness of the process we are entering into.

Two of the speakers on the agenda for the Flora and Fauna workshop are members of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Fells: Bryan Hamlin, Chair, and Walter Kittredge. Another presenter listed on the agenda is David Brown, who the Friends of the Fells cite as an authority in their Summer 2006 newsletter:

"Dogs in the Fells also wreak havoc with wild animals. David Brown points out that 'a dog off a leash will follow its nose to ground disturbing denning and nesting species of wildlife discouraging their presence in the park,' resulting in 'fewer and fewer places where wild animals can find refuge.' It is important that people who bring their dogs to the Fells obey the 'dog on leash' regulation because the wildness of the Fells and the safety of visitors is at stake." (http://www.fells.org/File/06_summer.pdf)

Since the Friends of the Fells are in an adversarial relationship with other stakeholder groups in this process and as many people feel that the Friends of the Fells are actively trying to keep them and their recreational activities out of the Fells, this is extremely problematic. It is simply unconscionable that you would provide them control over this forum at a public workshop in what is supposed to be an unbiased process.

Further, I see that the Recreation workshop is being co-hosted by Appalachian Mountain Club and the New England Mountain Bike Association. Have any off-leash recreation experts been invited to make presentations at these workshops?

Sincerely,

Michele Biscoe
Chairperson
Somerville Dog Owners Group (som|dog)
www.somdog.org<<http://www.somdog.org>>

The Somerville Dog Owners Group promotes responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation, and open space for all in Somerville, MA

From: Jahnige, Paul (DCR) [REDACTED] Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 8:30 PM
To: Joel A Feingold; [REDACTED]
MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Fells RMP Workshops
Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Joel,

I would encourage you to do that. Paul

From: Joel A Feingold [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 03, 2011 7:21 PM
To: [REDACTED] Jahnige, Paul (DCR)
Cc: MiddlesexFellsRMP@umb.edu; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Fells RMP Workshops

I have John Goodrich's contact info. He was the first facilitator at the meeting Tuesday. What do you folks think about me forwarding this to him with a little cover letter explaining gently that this is a widely held belief, that the process is tainted, would his office be willing to use its authority to make the process more even handed? Thoughts?

Joel

From: [Jahnige, Paul \(DCR\)](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu 2/3/2011 8:33 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: FW: Middlesex Fells RMP Update - e-newsletter February 3, 2011

Attachments: [image001.png\(127KB\)](#) [image003.jpg\(23KB\)](#) [image004.png\(304KB\)](#) [image005.png\(12KB\)](#)

[View As Web Page](#)

From: Gail Littlefield [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, February 03, 2011 5:11 PM

To: Jahnige, Paul (DCR)

Subject: Re: Middlesex Fells RMP Update - e-newsletter February 3, 2011

Thank you for this walk through the history of our beautiful Massachusetts. It is of great interest to me as my forefathers were instrumental in the beginnings of Mass. and Maine. My great (+ times) grandfather, Ebenezer Wood (from Concord, Ma) made our first pencil. Other Littlefields and Woods came to Mass. with all the first persons and started Wells, Me. Love our history. Thanks for the wonderful update on "The Fells". Miss Mass., & yrs. in West Palm. FL, . Sorry, do not miss the blizzards. Gail Webster Littlefield

From: "Jahnige, Paul (DCR)" [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu, February 3, 2011 2:20:21 PM

Subject: Middlesex Fells RMP Update - e-newsletter February 3, 2011

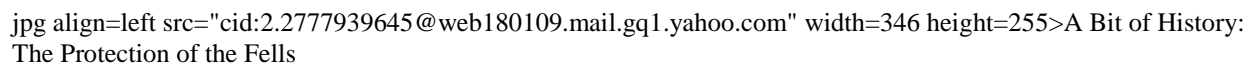
[cid:1.2777939645@web180109.mail.gq1.yahoo.com]

February 3, 2011

Something like five miles northerly from Boston lies a great tract of country, all stony hills and table-lands, almost uninhabited, and of wonderful picturesqueness, and wild rugged beauty.
- Sylvester Baxter, Boston Herald Supplement, December 6, 1879

What is this Newsletter?

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the state agency that manages the Middlesex Fells Reservation, has launched a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the reservation. As a part of this planning process, we hope to periodically update you – neighbors, users, stakeholders and people who care about the Fells reservation – about the RMP process and the special resources of the Fells. We hope that you find these updates interesting and useful. We encourage you to participate in the Fells RMP process. Please forward this to others who might be interested. Thank you for your interest in the Fells.

A Bit of History:
The Protection of the Fells

The Middlesex Fells played an important role in the very beginnings of the land conservation movement in the United States. Used for thousands of years by Native Americans as hunting and gathering grounds, tool sources and possibly habitation, the rocky landscape of the Fells region resisted heavy development by European settlers. Although the Fells were cleared, quarried, grazed, settled and in some places developed during the 1700 and 1800s, by the late 1800s the landscape was primarily still in a natural state.

Elizur Wright, an abolitionist who lived in Medford, was one of the early advocates for the protection of the Fells. For nearly 25 years, he advocated for the protection of the landscape from destruction and development, and the

creation of a regional parks agency that could acquire and set it aside for public use.

[cid:3.2777939645@web180109.mail.gq1.yahoo.com]Trees, that would go down to posterity, as the glorious patriarchs of many generations, are thus slaughtered in their teens, and the parched land knows them no more forever. The forests are of the air, and really belong to the whole people, to all who breathe, as the air does. Metes and bounds cannot confine the delicious odor of the pines and the hemlocks, nor the glorious autumnal colors of the maple and the birches. Surely at least some of the forests should be the common property of some power or authority that is likely to live as long as trees do and be made the most of, for the benefit of great cities and populous towns. And that brings me to the Middlesex Fells, and what can be done there to restore the pines, hemlocks, maples, beeches, oaks, ash and walnuts to their primeval glory, where they hid all the jagged rocks under their immense clouds of deep green foliage.”

- Elizur Wright, 1882; lecture delivered to The Women’s Club of East Boston

The first piece of the Fells to be protected as public open space was Virginia Wood, donated to the newly formed Trustees of Reservations in 1892. The following year, the Massachusetts Legislature established the Metropolitan Parks Commission (MPC), lead by Sylvester Baxter and Charles Eliot, with the authority to “acquire, maintain and make available to the inhabitants of said district open spaces for exercise and recreation.” In the MPC’s initial report of 1893, they highlighted the opportunity to protect the Middlesex Fells as part of a system to protect “the rock-hills, the stream banks, and the bay and the sea shores” of greater Boston.

One of the most celebrated tracts under consideration is the wild, rocky and woodland region known as “the Middlesex Fells,” ... This territory has been more prominently brought to the public attention as a place demanding reservation for the use of the people than any other landscape feature in the metropolitan district. (page 43)

Writing about both the Blue Hills and the Fells, the initial report noted:

Together these two open spaces include some five thousand acres... those dwelling in any part of the proposed metropolitan district can reach and enjoy one or the other. The whole, in its natural wild state, could now be secured and set aside as a public reservation, park and pleasure ground, secure to all future generations at a comparatively slight cost. Their artistic development might safely be left to the future. (page xiv)

By 1900, the new commission had acquired 1,881 acres in the Fells. Today, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (an agency created through a merger of the Metropolitan District Commission and the Department of Environmental Management) owns and manages 2,575 acres known as the Middlesex Fells Reservation as a part of our mission to “protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources.”

What is a DCR Resource Management Plan?

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are called for on DCR parks and forests by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 21, Section 2F. According to this legislation they shall include “guidelines for the operation and land stewardship of the aforementioned reservations, parks and forests, shall provide for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources and shall ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management.”

In practice, RMPs are working documents that describe and consider the past, present and future of a property, including available information on natural, cultural and recreational resources. They provide guidance on short- and long-term management of the properties under the stewardship of the DCR. They help set priorities for capital and operating budgets, and resource allocation. They serve to enhance communication and cooperation with visitors, partners and surrounding communities.

The Fells RMP will draw on existing and available information that has been verified by DCR or one of our sister agencies, such as the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. The process will also include some field reconnaissance, will actively seek out other existing data sources and may identify areas for additional study.

Tells us what you think about the Fells!

As DCR engages in the RMP process, we encourage all users, residents and other interested parties to come together in a spirit of collaboration to help us plan for the management of the Reservation and build common ground among all those who enjoy and care about the Middlesex Fells.

We encourage you to share your thoughts, comments, suggestions and solutions for the Fells. Emails or written comments should be sent to the process facilitators from the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC) at to:

MiddlesexFellsRMP@umb.edu<<mailto:MiddlesexFellsRMP@umb.edu>> or to:

Middlesex Fells RMP Comments
c/o MA Office of Public Collaboration
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd., M-1-627
Boston, MA 02125

Please be aware that all comments provided as a part of this process will become a part of the public record. As a part of the public process for this project, all comments will be posted on the DCR website as part of our effort to share comments provided with the public, after the redaction of personal contact information (such as email addresses, street addresses, etc.).

Updates, meeting notes, public comments and other materials concerning the Fells RMP process and upcoming meetings will be posted at
www.mass.gov/dcr/news/publicmeetings/rmp.htm<<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/publicmeetings/rmp.htm>>.

Links and Resources

The “Report of the Board of Metropolitan Park Commissioners, Volume 1, January 1893” is available on-line through Google Books at <http://books.google.com/books?id=mSRJAAAAMAAJ&pg>

The Friends of the Fells organization has produced a booklet of the “Creation of the Middlesex Fells,” available at www.fells.org/File/Creation_of_Fells.PDF<http://www.fells.org/File/Creation_of_Fells.PDF>.

On the Path Ahead

DCR, in partnership with several statewide organizations and agencies, is hosting a series of public information workshops to help explore topics related to the Middlesex Fells Resource Management Plan. The schedule for these workshops is:

Flora and Fauna

Co-hosted by Mass Audubon
Wednesday, February 9, 2011
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham

Speakers include Bryan Hamlin and Walter Kittredge (Botanists), David Brown (Wildlife Naturalist), Wayne Petersen (Mass Audubon Important Bird Areas Program), and Lynn Harper (Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program).

Wetlands and Water Resources Workshop

Co-hosted by Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and Environmental League of Massachusetts
Thursday, February 17, 2011
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham

Speakers include David Gilmartin (Massachusetts Water Resources Authority), Matthew Burne (Vernal Pool Association), Ken Pruitt (Environmental League of Massachusetts), and Steve Swymer (Town of Winchester Water Department).

Cultural Resources

Wednesday, February 23, 2011
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham

Speakers may include representatives from DCR Cultural Resources and Operations Staff, Friends of the Fells and local historians.

Recreation

Co-hosted by Appalachian Mountain Club and the New England Mountain Bike Association

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

McGlynn School Cafeteria, 3002 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford

This workshop will engage the public in further discussing recreational uses and needs at the Middlesex Fells.

Education and Interpretation

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham

Speakers may include representatives from DCR Bureau of Ranger and Interpretive Services staff and partners.

Enforcement

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham

Speakers may include representatives from DCR Bureau of Ranger and Interpretive Services Staff and State and local police.

Please forward to others who might be interested in the Middlesex Fells Reservation.

To unsubscribe from this list, simply email [REDACTED] with your email address and type "unsubscribe" in the subject or body.

To subscribe, please email your contact information to [REDACTED]

dcr-logocolor align=left src="cid:4.2777939645@web180109.mail.gq1.yahoo.com" width=109 height=130>This Middlesex Fells update is an electronic newsletter from the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Resource Management Planning Program, in the Bureau of Planning and Resource Protection

Deval Patrick, Governor

Tim Murray, Lieutenant Governor

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Secretary, Energy and Environmental Affairs

John P. Murray, Acting Commissioner, Department of Conservation and Recreation

DCR Greenways

<<image001.png>> <<image003.jpg>> <<image004.png>> <<image005.png>>

From: Michele Biscoe [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 7:22 AM

To: [Jahnige, Paul \(DCR\)](#)

[MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#); [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Fells RMP Workshops

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Paul,

Dog-owner groups' track record as far as our spirit of dialog goes is unblemished.

If the Flora and Fauna "workshop" turns out to be a soapbox for the Friends of the Fells to promulgate their anti-recreation rhetoric, it will be understandable that people loose faith in the process.

It's one thing for individuals to share publicly their personal opinions about recreation in the Fells; it's another thing entirely if the panelists engaged by the DCR to educate the public in this process present biased material that disenfranchises groups of Fells users.

I find it curious that you do not appear to get my point. Panel members are given authority by being on the panel: They control the terms of the conversation around that topic. By creating a panel comprising speakers who come from a perspective that is known to be hostile to other user groups, the DCR certainly looks as though it is complicit in that hostility.

Surely the DCR knows that these panelists, who may be highly-regarded in their field, have closely and publicly aligned themselves with a group that has taken an adversarial role toward other stakeholder groups that are participating in the RMP process. That these men are recognized as representatives of an organization that advocates further restricting public access to public land renders the panel illegitimate, putting the value of the workshop into question and damaging the legitimacy of this process. Quite frankly, I don't trust this panel will present the issues fairly or accurately, and I don't trust that it will contribute to an honest discussion.

It is the DCR's responsibility to ensure that the public process is fair and seen to be fair.

Cheers,
Michele

On Feb 3, 2011, at 8:29 PM, Jahnige, Paul (DCR) wrote:

> Dear Michele, et. al.

>

> Thanks for your email. And for your concerns. We look forward to addressing them and working closely with you on that.

> First with respect to the Recreational Workshop, we are still in the process of planning that, and I absolutely do intend to ask you all to participate as partners in that workshop. Please stay tuned on that.

>

> With respect to the Flora and Fauna workshop, although it is true that Bryan Hamlin and Walter Kittredge are both affiliated with the FOF, they also happen to be botanists with expensive knowledge of the fells plants. They are presenting in that regard. David Brown is an independent wildlife tracker and naturalist who has conducted a mammal survey in the fells. They all bring important information to the process, however, these workshops are important fora for further exploring these complex issues. I hope you and other dog owners and dog owner groups will participate in a spirit of dialogue around these issues.

>

> Finally, I want to thank you for the petition and comments that you submitted at the public meeting Monday. They are very helpful. And we look forward to continuing to work closely with you on these issues.
>
> Sincerely, Paul Jahnige

From: Mike Coyne [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 7:47 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

I feel folks should be able to mountain bike in the Fells.
Michael Coyne, M.D.

From: Elizabeth Stacey [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 8:26 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Feedback on email

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Altho I live on the south shore,ak I love the fells and try to get there when I can, also belong to Friends of fells. I would like to see more organized walks/hikes for adults only. Thanks.
Elizabeth Stacey

Sent from my iPad

From: Elizabeth Stacey [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 8:23 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Feedback on email

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Altho I live

Sent from my iPad

From: Tony Lee [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 9:26 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: DCR Resource Management Plan

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Thanks for the recent e-newsletter where you suggested "Tell us what you think about the Fells." I love the Fells. I love to hike there and I love to mountain bike there. There is room for both and I wish you'd make the Fells more accessible for mountain biking.

Tony Lee

From: Michele Biscoe [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/4/2011 11:22 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Fells RMP Comments: Legal Options for Off-Leash On-Trail Recreation

Attachments:  [110204FellsRMPCComments-DocumentImage.pdf\(147KB\)](#)

[View As Web Page](#)

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan. Attached please find my comments regarding recreational resources at the Fells for families with dogs.

Sincerely,
Michele Biscoe

<<110204FellsRMPCComments-DocumentImage.pdf>>

[REDACTED]
Somerville, MA 02143

4 February 2011

Middlesex Fells RMP Comments
c/o MA Office of Public Collaboration
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd., M-1-627
Boston, MA 02125

Re: Legal Off-Leash Options on the Trails of the Fells

To whom it may concern,

I strongly encourage the Department of Conservation and Recreation, in defining its Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation to prioritize the empowering of a variety of resource users to effectively engage in responsible use and preservation of the park.

Better enforcement of rules that do not accommodate the needs of responsible users will not reduce conflict in the Middlesex Fells. What is needed is for the DCR regulations and the specific policies at the Reservation to better reflect and respect the diverse recreational activities that people enjoy in Fells.

The regulation that dogs must be on leash¹ does not reflect or respect the recreational activities of a significant number of users at the Fells. Many people enjoy the trails with off-leash dogs, most in a respectful and responsible way. Most people who engage in off-leash recreation appreciate that it is our responsibility to control our pets, to prevent our pets from running up to and jumping up on other people, and to prevent our pets from disturbing wildlife and damaging plants and the environment. Most of us voluntarily leash our pets when we are not otherwise able to fulfill these responsibilities. Most bring with us no more than two or three dogs. It goes without saying that it is our responsibility to clean up our pets' waste and dispose of it properly, whether our pets are off or on leash.

What I heard over and over again in the public comments on Monday evening was "if it's not broken, don't fix it". Many people feel that their recreational needs--including off-leash recreation and mountain biking--are adequately addressed at the Fells. These people specifically said that they did not want additional rules or enforcement.

What is needed is clarity in the informational materials that are available to users both on the DCR's website and at the Reservation. Just because most people are responsible dog owners, for example, does not mean that DCR can avoid specifying

¹ 350 CMR 2.01 (2) (g)

what behavior is expected and what all park users can expect of visitors with off-leash dogs.

I would like to return to the words of Elizur Wright in 1882, which I find very poignant:

"The forests are of the air, and **really belong to the whole people**, to all who breathe, as the air does."


"Surely at least some of the forests should be the common property of some power or authority that is likely to live as long as trees do and be made the most of, **for the benefit of great cities and populous towns.**"

These sentiments reverberate in the initial report of the Metropolitan Parks Commission a decade later:

"The whole, in its natural wild state, could now be secured and set aside as a **public reservation, park and pleasure ground, secure to all future generations** at a comparatively slight cost."

Thank you for this opportunity to comment with regard to the recreational resources available for families with dogs on the Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Biscoe". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michele Biscoe

Cc: Senator Patricia Jehlen

From: [john thomas](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat 2/5/2011 1:40 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: re : bikes on hike trails

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Please do not allow bike usage to expand in the Fells area , thank you , John Thomas Boston , MAps the bikers wear knee pads and arm pads like Mad Max in the fells ...

From: [Emily Neumann](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat 2/5/2011 7:48 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Bicycles in the Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Hi,

I'd hear that there was discussion of whether or not to allow bicycles on all trails in the Middlesex Fells. As an avid hiker (I've snowshoed in the Fells and plan on hiking in them, now that I know that there is such a fantastic resource so close to home), I find myself a little nervous at the idea that bicycles would be allowed on all trails. While I recognize that bicycles are a great way to enjoy the outdoors (I cycle a lot too-but not mountain bike), I find myself worried at the shared trail space. I've hiked the entire Appalachian trail and there were places where (even though it was technically not allowed) there were clearly ATVs and bicyclists using the trail. These places were in considerably worse off condition, harder to hike over and clearly would need to be repaired/rerouted much more often than the areas that were not.

As such, I would please ask you to limit bike access on at least a trail or two so that hikers can enjoy a trail that is not so quickly destroyed. Not to mention, not having to worry about a cyclist come out of nowhere and having to leap out of the way. (Yes, I can imagine this happening-I'm a klutz and sometimes people don't hear bikes coming. Nature of the beast).

I hope this helps in your decision making process.

Emily Neumann

From: Monika Raesch [REDACTED]

Sent: Sun 2/6/2011 8:50 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject:

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

I was unable to attend the evening meeting, but wanted to provide my view on the matter re: biking on more trails. I am a regular hiker/walker and trail runner in the Fells. I belong to various meetup groups that frequent the area. I have to say that I already encounter bikers on various trails regularly, even though it is not permitted.

While I do NOT mind meeting bikers on the Skyline trail (or other trails), I have noticed a pattern that deters me from giving support for bikers to be officially permitted to use the trails. NOT ONCE has a biker stopped to let a walker/hiker/runner pass. It is always I/the hiking/walking/running group who has to step aside to let the biker pass. I find this rather rude behavior. When one is running (regardless of timed or un-timed run), having to stop breaks the rhythm. I am more than happy to do so if it is an equal share/give-and-take between people, but bikers seem to view themselves as being the ones in the right to go first at all times.

I might have been unlucky in always meeting bikers who will not stop or maneuver their bike to the side of the trails, but this is what my experience has been.

Given also that rules are not enforced in the Fells (i.e. only using the bike trail with a bike and leashing once dogs (I do not know how many dogs have chased me on a jog and bit me with owners not even apologizing), I am AGAINST opening up the trails. If people were to respect rules that are set in the area and if those rules would be enforced, I would have no problem with making the Fells more biker friendly. Given my experience, as outlined above, however, at this time, I am AGAINST any changes to the official rules.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Best,
Monica

--

Neu: GMX De-Mail - Einfach wie E-Mail, sicher wie ein Brief!

Jetzt De-Mail-Adresse reservieren: [REDACTED]

From: Tara Mitchell [REDACTED]

Sent: Mon 2/7/2011 7:23 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Fells: Bikes on hiking trails

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

As a regular walker in the Fells, I am writing in protest of allowing bikers to access more or all of the walking trails in the Fells for the following reasons:

- Quite simply, it disrupts the quiet enjoyment of a walk in the woods. Considering there are few places to "walk in the woods" and observe and view nature at a slow pace in Boston and its suburbs, this is a disappointment and a loss of what's becoming a rare experience for urban dwelling humans.
- It creates potentially unsafe situations where all walkers, but especially young children, elderly, and those with dogs, have to be on the constant look-out for moving vehicles. This also takes away from the leisure and enjoyment of a walk in "nature".
- Groups of walkers - of which there are many in the Fells - have to stop walking and step aside for bikes to pass by creating a more irritating experience.
- When walking alone in the woods, particularly in locations or moments when others are not around, the sudden noise and rush of a bike or bikers coming up behind you or toward you can be alarming.
- The Fells is not only a place to walk, but a place to catch glimpses of wildlife. The noise and speed of bikes will scare these creatures away. Those who walk in the Fells to observe nature and hope to see wildlife will lose that opportunity. What wildlife exists in the Fells will suffer greater habitat disturbance.
- Biking is more destructive to soil and vegetation, causing more soil compaction and root damage than walking will. This will result in an impact to existing native species, loss of micro-habitats, and potentially contribute to the spread of invasive plants throughout the Fells.

Please preserve the Fells as they are - one of the few remaining "forested" areas left to observe, listen, and enjoy what's left of "nature" in an increasingly urban area.

Thank you,
Tara Mitchell

From: Carl [REDACTED]

Sent: Mon 2/7/2011 12:49 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: biking at the fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Hello,

I was unable to attend the event on Monday regarding the usage of bikes on the trail, but I wanted to let you know that I am in favor of riding on the trails, providing it is done so respectfully. Since I have ridden there for several years now, I have seen only this being the case anyways. Most who love the outdoors respect the outdoors.

NEMBA has done a tremendous job w/ preventing soil erosion by diverting trails every once in while, building bridges, etc.

Thanks,

~ Carl Puglisi

Malden, MA

I know that many of us were not able to make it to the DCR meeting on Monday to discuss the usage of the trails in the Fells, and the possibility of opening all of them to biking. But they are currently accepting peoples' comments by e-mail. If you would like to chime in, the e-mail address is:

Process facilitators from the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC):

From: Carol W. [REDACTED]

Sent: Mon 2/7/2011 12:54 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Middlesex Fells Comment

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Please keep the Middlesex Fells protected as a refuge for animals and a quiet and safe nature experience for children and adults.

The Blue Hills has regular walking/hiking events, for example, hundreds of people turn out for the First Day Hike. It would be great if the Fells did the same. Also, if we had a email address or number to report any problems or issues in the Fells. For example, trees across trails or any other serious problems.

As someone who lives near the Middlesex Fells and loves it, I would like to see it protected and preserved. I have been hiking up a steep part of the Alpine (white) trail, only to be frightened by the sudden appearance of mountain bikers barreling over the top. (Please note that it is a hiking only trail but that doesn't stop them.)

Also, as a resident of Winchester, I am careful about not walking on the trails near the reservoirs that are clearly marked as prohibited. That does not stop the many bikers (and walkers) that I can see in there from a distance.

Since there is apparently not enough money for rangers to patrol, there appears to be no way of stopping the bikers from damaging the trails in the early Spring. And I fear there is no way to preserve the quiet, wonderful experience of those of us who enjoy a peaceful walk in the Fells. Unfortunately, it makes me want to go less.

My walking in the Fells does not impinge on anyone else's enjoyment of the Fells but mountain bikers do take away from other people's enjoyment. As a society, we have realized that smoking is your choice but only up until it harms other people and we have therefore set limits on its uses. Why not biking?

Thank you,

Carol Wilkinson

From: Tim and Andrea [REDACTED]

Sent: Tue 2/8/2011 1:51 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Supporting off-leash recreation on the trails at MFR

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear MiddlesexFellsRMP,

As a responsible dog owner, I support off-leash recreation on the trails at the Middlesex Fells Reservation and participate in the Fells Resource Management Plan (RMP). Dogs tend to do much better socially when off-leash and I always pick up after my dog. I even pick up after other dogs whose owners may not be aware of them relieving themselves, and every opportunity I get, I remind other dog owners to be responsible.

Please allow off-leash dog recreation at the Fells.

Sincerely,
Timothy Niu
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wed 2/9/2011 5:08 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Not opening more trails to bikes or off-leash dogs

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear MiddlesexFellsRMP:

1. I would prefer that none of the currently bike-less trails be opened to bikes. My experience is that when bikers do ride on them (as they shouldn't), there is no room for safe passing. Also, when I am concentrating on my footing among the rocks, I do not want a bike zooming around me (and they do zoom), distracting me.

2. I would prefer that except maybe on the fire-roads and wherever now permitted off-leash, no dogs be off-leash on the hiking trails.

Sincerely,

One who has spent a lot of time on virtually all the Fells trails...