

As part of the Middlesex Fells Resource Management Plan Process, the public has been provided the opportunity to submit comments via email to an email address established by the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration. Below are comments received from the public between February 24 and March 2, 2011, in the order received. Email addresses and contact information has been redacted to prevent unsolicited email contact. We encourage the public to review these comments to gain a better understanding of different information and points of view on the management of the Fells.

We encourage you to submit your own thoughts, ideas and experiences but ask you to refrain from responding directly to another person's comments.

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)  
Cc:  
Subject: Comments re RMP Cultural Resources Workshop  
Attachments:

Sent: Thu 2/24/2011 10:34 AM

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## Comments re RMP Cultural Resources Workshop

Held on February 23, 2011 At the Botume House

DCR should plan on restoring the Botume House totally to its Victorian appearance. As with other properties, the Botume could produce enough revenue to pay for itself while adding a significant asset to the Fells and the surrounding communities.

Vandalism was mentioned. There needs to be effective watchfulness of the Botume, the Tudor Barn and the towers. Wright's tower especially needs watch. It is a challenge to the locals who want access for drinking or whatever, and who seem to be successful in breaching DCR's good attempts at protection.

If vandalism continues at Wrights Tower, there needs to be an effort with the MSP to apprehend/prosecute. Just to let it continue to be assaulted would be neglectful.

The trestle near Dark Hollow is slowly deteriorating. There are shrubs and small trees growing on the road bed. The structure should be examined and some preventive maintenance attempted.

The archeological efforts discussed should be continued. Significant sites should be protected.

I am aware of a person who in the past has mapped some of the stone walls in the Fells. After contacting him, I will suggest that he contact the archeological presenter.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/25/2011 10:51 AM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Middlesex Fells RMP Comments

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

February-March 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

To whom it may concern,

I am one of many visitors to the Middlesex Fells Reservation who enjoys using the trails with my dog off leash. I control my dog; I do not allow my dog to run up to or jump up on other people; I do not allow my dog to disturb wildlife or damage plants and the environment. I use a leash when necessary to maintain control over my dog. I pick up my dog's swaste and dispose of it properly.

For the most part, I feel that my recreational interests are served at the Fells.

The regulation that dogs must be on leash at the Fells is inconsistent with the recreational usage of a significant number of people.

I strongly encourage the Department of Conservation and Recreation, in defining its Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan, to allow for people to continue enjoying the trails with off-leash dogs.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Mathews \_\_\_\_\_

name

[REDACTED]

number and street

Somerville, MA, 02145 \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip

[REDACTED]

e-mail (optional)

Cc: Fells Dog Owner Group

From: Jennifer Rousseau [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/25/2011 11:25 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Fells Trail Plan Should Include Off-Leash Options

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

To whom it may concern:

As a dog owner and frequenter of the Fells, I am writing to express my support for off-leash trail opportunities as part of the new Fells Trail Plan. It has been brought to my attention that only "approximately seven individuals requested consideration of off-leash trail opportunities" and that off-leash options on the trails of the Fells are not included in the draft trail plan. On December 4, 2009, I wrote to Paul Jahnige in response to a request for public input, explaining how important I think it is to have an off-leash area in Sheepfold, but I in no way meant to limit my support for off-leash recreation in the Fells to that single area. I enjoy the Fells trails with my dog off-leash equally, if not more often, than I do Sheepfold.

In the urban area where we live, off-leash options in such natural areas like the Fells are few and far between and I've always cherished having the Fells so close by. While preserving the flora and fauna of the Fells is important, preserving public access to the recreation offered by the Fells is equally important. Some balance must be struck, perhaps by limiting off-leash recreation to certain trails. Prohibiting all off-leash trail use in the Fells would have the effect of precluding an entire segment of the community from enjoying the Fells and would truly be a shame and a disappointment.

Regards,

Jennifer Rousseau  
Somerville

From: Nell Porter Brown [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri 2/25/2011 2:42 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: FW: Regarding off-leash rules at the Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Sir and/or Madam,

I am in support of off-leash dogs being allowed at the Fells because, as a dog owner, I feel there are few places to take dogs to let them run off energy and play and be dogs, which they desperately need. Our dog is well-behaved, comes when called, and plays well with other dogs and is respectful of people.

I understand concerns about threats to the wildlife in the Fells, which I share. But I have never seen my dog or any others kill, maim, or destroy any wildlife. Primarily, dogs' interest is in other dogs.

Please continue to allow dogs to be off leash in the Fells, but be clear about and enforce rules regarding dog and owner behavior, such as: clean up dog feces at ALL times, and any dogs that bite or attack, or do not come when called are NOT allowed off-leash.

I think the Fells offer plenty of space to SHARE with bird-watchers, dog lovers, wildlife lovers, hikers, and bicyclists. It is a beautiful place that should be preserved for everyone to courteously enjoy together.

Thank you,

Nell Brown

[REDACTED]  
Medford, MA 02155

[REDACTED]  
  
----- End of Forwarded Message

From: Alison Hickey [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat 2/26/2011 3:40 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Off-leash dogs at Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

February 26, 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

To whom it may concern:

I write in favor of a policy allowing well-controlled off-leash dogs at the Middlesex Fells Reservation. A resident of North Cambridge, I have visited the Fells many times with my children since they were toddlers. My children have also participated in class trips and extracurricular group field trips to the Reservation. Although I am not a current dog-owner, I support the many visitors who enjoy using the trails with their dogs off leash. The vast majority of dog owners who let their dogs go off leash are responsible people who know how to control their dogs: they do not allow the animals to run up to or jump up on other people. They do not allow them to disturb wildlife or damage plants and the environment. They use leashes when necessary to maintain control over their dogs. They pick up their dogs' waste and dispose of it properly. These responsible dog-owners are to be distinguished from the few irresponsible ones who let their animals compromise the safety and well-being of others. In fact, dog-owners who abide by the regulations are the strongest critics of owners who fail to train and control their animals. I would argue that the dependable presence of people with their well-trained dogs likely makes the Fells a safer and less scary place. I think it is ill-advised and wrong to discourage these visitors from returning.

Although I am not a dog-owner myself, I feel strongly that the regulation that dogs must be on leash at the Fells is inconsistent with the recreational use of the Reservation by a significant number of people. This was the original goal and should continue to be the purpose of the Reservation. I urge the Department of Conservation and Recreation, in defining its Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan, to allow for people to continue enjoying the trails with off-leash dogs.

Sincerely yours,

Alison Hickey  
[REDACTED]

Cambridge, MA 02140

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat 2/26/2011 4:23 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Middlesex Fells RMP Comments

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

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

To whom it may concern,

I am one of many visitors to the Middlesex Fells Reservation who enjoys using the trails with my dog off leash. I control my dog; I do not allow my dog to run up to or jump up on other people; I do not allow my dog to disturb wildlife or damage plants and the environment. I use a leash when necessary to maintain control over my dog. I pick up my dog's waste and dispose of it properly.

For the most part, I feel that my recreational interests are served at the Fells.

The regulation that dogs must be on leash at the Fells is inconsistent with the recreational usage of a significant number of people.

I strongly encourage the Department of Conservation and Recreation, in defining its Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan, to allow for people to continue enjoying the trails with off-leash dogs.

Sincerely yours,

Khalid Shakir

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Somerville, MA 02143

From: Melissa Bennett [REDACTED]

Sent: Sun 2/27/2011 6:34 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Incompatible uses

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

February 27, 2011

To the DCR:

I would like to express my concern, year round but most especially in the summer time, about the great number of men meeting for sex in the woods of the Middlesex Fells. On any given day there are a dozen men waiting to be picked up in the picnic area by the parking lot or sitting in their cars. They are quite brazen about remaining in their cars despite the signs. It is awkward and uncomfortable to find men in the woods while hiking. The bicyclists and dog walkers now know which areas to avoid – unfortunately by firsthand experience, but for infrequent users it must come as a great shock to find bare rumps and inappropriate noises, especially for families!

Why is the DCR focusing on bikers, dog walkers, and hikers use of the park, when this is clearly your biggest enforcement issue, and one that has been complained about for decades?

Sincerely,

Melissa Bennett

From: Melissa Bennett [REDACTED]

Sent: Sun 2/27/2011 6:28 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Compatible Uses at the Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

February 27, 2011

To the DCR:

The Middlesex Fells was created in 1894 as a public park for the enjoyment of the residents of Boston and nearby suburban communities. As was noted at the February 9<sup>th</sup> public meeting, the original flora and fauna of the Fells has been maintained 100%, as well as expanded, debunking the notion that users of the park - hikers, off road bicyclists, cross-country skiers, families sledding on the hill, and dogs - were destroying the habitat.

I spent a lovely snowy afternoon at the Fells today, in the Sheepfold and on a few trails, with about 50 responsible dog owners - including a group of dog-sledders with about 15 huskies. Most dog owners have their dogs off leash despite the DCR regulations. Everyone had full control of their dogs while they hiked, chased balls and Frisbees, sledded or just played together. For a year and a half I have used the Fells every day. This is the atmosphere about 98% of the time I have been there in the past 2 years since I rescued my dog. The off-times where when there were some irresponsible owners who were then coached by the regulars on what the rules were to make it enjoyable for everyone - kind of like self-policing. If the dogs did not come when called they were told to keep their dogs on leash. There are several dog walkers there a day with up to 8 dogs apiece, and I have to say I have yet to find one of them with unruly dogs. The rules governing off leash dogs in the park have been tightened over the years due to a few incidents a year, even though on any given day dog owners are one of the best, and least disruptive, users.

I am writing to voice my opinion about allowing dog owners – individuals and families – to enjoy the Fells while they hike or play with their dogs off leash. I also feel that anyone who wants to use the park (without committing a crime) be allowed to enjoy it. This includes off road bicyclists, most of whom are polite about using the trail, hikers, skiers, sledders, and others.

Thank you.

Melissa B. Bennett

[REDACTED]

Medford, MA 02155

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Robert Ide [REDACTED]  
To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP  
Cc:  
Subject: Suggested Improvement - North of Sheep Fold  
Attachments:

Sent: Mon 2/28/2011 1:58 PM

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Middlesex Fells RMP,

I know there has been a desire to reduce the amount of unwanted prowling that goes on the the are North of the Sheep Fold. One possible solution to the problem is to increase general purpose foot and mountain bike traffic in this area. Currently most people on foot avoid this area unless they are looking for sex and most mountain bikers role though quickly hoping to avoid any contact.

The solution I am proposing is to build a mountain bike terrain park, most of the trails for coming and going are already in place and the terrain is well suited for the activity. The general activity of building out the location would deter unwanted activities and long term usage patterns would insure greater safety for everyone using that area of park.

The New England Mountain Bike Association has an excellent benchmark for this type program and a terrain park built in Milford.

<http://www.nemba.org/Articles/VietnamFAQs.html>

I hope this suggestion is well received and If there interest I would be glad to socialize the idea with other NEMBA members.

Rob Ide

[REDACTED]

From: Tim and Andrea [REDACTED]

Sent: Mon 2/28/2011 2:32 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: We support off-leash dogs on trails at Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Hello,

We support off-leash dogs on trails at Middlesex Fells. Our dog loves to socialize and run around with other dogs (something that's impossible on leash). We ALWAYS pick up after our dog and even help other owners pick up after their dogs in the cases when they forget. Please allow off-leash dogs at the Fells.

Sincerely,  
Tim and Andrea Niu  
[REDACTED]

From: Kristen Cox [REDACTED]

Sent: Tue 3/1/2011 9:58 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Off leash dogs at the Sheepfold and Fells Trails

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Hello,

I am the owner of a 2 1/2 year old mixed breed rescue dog, Bailey (Collie, Husky, Australian Shepherd is our best guess). We've been taking her to the Sheepfold for about a year and a half now after we got fed up with the tiny dirty dog park in Somerville. Though it's a 15 minute drive each way and difficult to make it there in daylight hours in the winter, we make a point to visit at least 3 or 4 times a week because it is the only place we have that she can get the socialization and exercise she needs.

Being an active mix of dogs, I can walk her on the leash for hours around our neighborhood and when we get back to the house she looks at the car as if to say, "When are we going to the Sheepfold so I can get some actual exercise?" I just can't walk her on the leash with as much vigor as she needs and, believe me, I walk a lot faster than most people.

I've been attending meetings and I realize the different parties involved but (with the exception of the Friends of the Fells from what I can see) I think most of the others groups are happy to play along nicely with the others. I've taught my dog good trail manners and she knows to steer

clear of mountain bikers, skiers and others without dogs. We've also had run ins with dogs who aren't as well behaved and one thing I don't feel has been pointed out in the meetings is that if any group has reason to care about aggressive dogs, it's the dog owners, because an aggressive dog is more likely to hurt our dogs than anything else. But I feel that dog owners police their own group and owners whose dogs continually cause problems are told as much.

And though I'd love to see rules about the dogs that I feel cause the bulk of these problems (unfixed male dogs and pitbulls) but I think, as others have stated, that ADDING more rules isn't going to solve the problem as there are always exceptions and everyone has a right to the Fells.

I do think covered trash cans at large intersections of the trails would help with the trash and dog poop issues.

If you have any follow up questions, please don't hesitate to ask. I just can't imagine what it would be like NOT to have the Fells as an off leash dog area (Sheepfold and trails).

Thank you  
Kristen Cox

--  


From: [Michelle Li](#) [REDACTED]  
To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Fwd: Middlesex Fells RMP Update 2.28.11  
Attachments:

Sent: Tue 3/1/2011 9:58 AM

[View As Web Page](#)

Per Paul Jahige's suggestion, I am forwarding this e-mail to be included in the public record.  
Thank you!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michelle Li** [REDACTED]  
Date: Mon, Feb 28, 2011 at 7:03 PM  
Subject: Re: Middlesex Fells RMP Update 2.28.11  
To: "Jahnige, Paul (DCR)" [REDACTED]

Dear Paul,

Thanks for your e-mail update on the Fells RMP 2.28.11. I have a few concerns I'm hoping you can help me understand better.

1) Regarding your statement below:

On Mon, Feb 28, 2011 at 12:23 PM, Jahnige, Paul (DCR) <[REDACTED]> wrote:

The three primary causes of impacts to drinking water from public access at the Fells are:

- Active erosion and sedimentation into water resources
- Animal waste
- Body contact with water

To protect drinking water in the Fells, certain restrictions exist. The lands around the Winchester Reservoirs are posted "No Public Access" to protect these active drinking water supplies. All dog-waste should be picked up and disposed of properly to help reduce bacteria in the water supply. Swimming, by either dogs or people, is not allowed anywhere in the Fells.

It seems that the jump from "animal waste" to proper disposal of dog waste inaccurately targets dogs as the main source of animal waste in the reservoirs of the Fells. First off, none of the presentations in the Water and Wetlands workshop mentioned dogs until someone in the

audience brought it up. When questioned about the impact of dogs in the reservoirs, here are two important pieces of information to consider (taken directly from the workshop 2 notes):

Q: How much of a problem are dogs swimming in the reservoirs? I've seen dog walkers let groups of dogs loose near the water.

A: MWRA for example had the Weston Reservoir in use and had to put a fence around it per the

DEP/EPA due solely to dogs. There is an issue with **horses** too. We have problems in the Wachusett Reservoir too – it's the cleanest – but **geese** or **ducks** coming in for a night or even to nest can cause major problems. Since these reserves could go live overnight, we're very wary of dogs swimming. State Police in the summer will be stern with people about this, but MWRA staff tries not to get into confrontations.

As stated about, dogs are certainly not the ONLY or MAIN source of animal waste. Further, from the same Q. and A. session, I remind you that Mr. Guilmartin, when asked, replied:

Q: Before treatment, do we know the top contaminants in the water [of the Fells Reservoirs]?

A: We have not put water in the Fells in a long time (10-12 years) – **so we do test it but not as often**. Some water is put into Spot Pond from time to time to replenish and to check pipes.

I wonder why you decided to single out dogs as a source of animal waste in your e-mail summary of the Water and Wetlands resource?

2) I'm very confused by your decision to include the dog waste pamphlet below. As I read it, the pamphlet below addresses the Wachusett Watershed, not the Fells. Why did you put a pamphlet on dog waste in the Wachusett Watershed in an announcement about the Fells? Incidentally, in Guilmartin's comment above, he points out that the Wachusett Reservoir is the CLEANEST, and as I recall from the workshop, the Quabbin Reservoir water does not even undergo filtration-- which puts us in a super PURE category nationwide for water quality. Seems like the fence he mentioned as well as the other systems already in place already do a GREAT job of keeping the water supply pure not just by our standards but by nationwide ones. So why the tone on excluding dogs? As a responsible dog owner, I certainly agree and believe that proper removal of dog waste is essential. However, the information that the DCR offers on the impact of dog waste on Wachusett in a Fells RMP e-mail just confuses me. Why did you include that link?

## Links and Resources

The DCR has produced a pamphlet on dog waste and surface water quality at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/documents/wachdogwaste.pdf>.

3) I'm concerned that by including your comments about dog waste and a link to a pamphlet about an entire different location in the same e-mail in which you invite participants to attend the session this week on Recreation, you are sending a clear message that the DCR intends to exclude an entire user group based on inaccurate information. If the DCR's format for the Recreation workshop is to "break into small groups to explore ideas and solutions for balancing all of these interests at the Middlesex Fells in an effort to provide input into the RMP," as a participant I would expect that our voices do matter and will be considered. When I read the information about Water and Wetlands and dog waste in the same e-mail as the invitation to the next workshop, I perceive the message from DCR to be that the decision to exclude dogs has already been made. Can you help me understand this better?

### **On the Path Ahead**

DCR is hosting a series of public information workshops to help explore topics related to the Middlesex Fells Resource Management Plan. Upcoming workshops include:

#### **Recreation**

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.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Li

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tue 3/1/2011 10:31 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Additional comments regarding the Cultural Wokshop

Attachments:

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To the RMP team,

I would like to include, as part of the RMP record, a number of details listed below, concerning the Friends of the Middlesex Fells involvement with cultural resources in the Middlesex Fells Reservation

I wish to do so as perhaps some of the RMP team may be unaware of these facts, but knowing of them, may, in their decisions, give proper weight to the suggestions of the Friends.

While I am currently a volunteer for the Friends, and a former president, I am making these comments privately and on my own initiative.

Hubert E. Holley  
Malden MA

\*\*\*\*\*

**Historic Parkways:**

Played a significant role to include in the nomination process, the parkways of the Middlesex Fells Reservation in the National Register of Historic Places, and worked with Fells district state house delegation to secure \$100,000 in funding allocated to DCR to ensure completion of Historic Parkways Preservation Treatment Guidelines.

**Wrights Tower**

Worked with Fells district state house delegation to acquire \$100,000 allocation to DCR for restoration of Wrights Tower

Located direct descendent of Elizur Wright (the Father of the Fells) who attended the Rededication ceremony of the tower.

**Tudor Barn**

Created community fundraising campaign to raise funds which, added to MWRA and DCR funds, enabled restoration of Tudor Barn on Spot Pond

**Survey**

2004 Survey results provided to the agency found that 75% of responders (299 of 397) thought there were problems with the towers/structures.

**Visitors Center**

Provided free standing display panels and other articles to the Botume House Visitors Center upon its opening.

**Spot Pond Brook Historic District**

Prints self-guided tour guide which is also offered as a free download at

<http://www.fells.org/support/merchandise.cfm>

Contributed funds for the construction of the Pond Street parking area Haywardville kiosk

**Middlesex Fells Reservation Map**

Friends of Fells has distributed Fells Reservation map, which includes cultural history, to thousands of

individuals.

### **Long Pond Trail**

Worked with Eagle Scout who created way signs for Long Pond Trail

### **MIT Site**

Documented history of creation of MIT observatory which led to Scout troop installing on-site information kiosk.

### **History lectures**

Friends of the Fells executive director presents Fells history slide shows to adjoining cities historical societies and civic organizations.

Presents free lectures on Fells history to the public.

### **Healthy Melrose**

Friends of the Fells table at yearly Healthy Melrose event, presenting residents with natural and cultural background on Fells Reservation

### **Quarterly Newsletter and Calendar of events**

Friends of the Fells presents written accounts of Fells cultural history and significance and sponsors free hikes which include cultural history, for example, the Virginia Wood Spot Pond Brook/Haywardville hike

### **Website**

Friends of the Fells website includes Fells History/Cultural Information page:

<http://www.fells.org/thefells/history.cfm>

### **Jerry Jingle Park**

Opposed creation of Jerry Jingle Park generally felt as a conflict of interest and giveaway/accommodation to an adjacent restaurant.

Opposed modification of Lynn Fells Parkway to facilitate a new Dunkin Donut shop.

From: [Stephanie Leonard Bennett](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Tue 3/1/2011 5:44 PM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Conservation and Recreation in the Middlesex Fells Reservation

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

I'm frustrated that I've been able to attend only one of the RMP meetings -- so far -- and hope this note serves to share my views in absentia. It seems to me that DCR's name aptly describes its oxymoronic mission of providing both conservation and recreation on the lands it controls. It may have been only an alphabetical choice, but to me it is significant that 'Conservation' comes first. There is so much private and public property in this state devoted to outdoor recreation: sports fields, downhill and cross country ski resorts, golf courses, rail trails, and beaches and boating opportunities on lakes, rivers, and the ocean. In most of these places, nature is made completely subordinate to recreation. If conserving natural resources isn't of primary importance in state-owned properties called 'Reservations,' then there is no chance for conservation in our state.

I live near, and frequently walk in, the Middlesex Fells. Even when my arthritic hip complains about the unevenness of the trails, I'd rather walk in the woods than on city sidewalks because I love being surrounded by nature. I feel refreshed and rejuvenated after an hour in the woods. I always find some new aspect of nature to wonder at and be inspired by -- a new flower, fern, moss, or bird I've never seen or heard before, or a scenic view of rock, tree, and sky revealed at the top of a hill. I feel sorry for children -- and adults -- who spend their whole lives in man-made environments, even when they're outside on playing fields and golf courses. I've read a little bit about nature deprivation, and believe its a real affliction in our society.

Others who wish to recreate in state reservations are probably responding to the same, I believe innate, human instinct to connect with nature. But I have to wonder at how much real connection there can be riding a bike at breakneck speed. I've seen enough bikers bouncing over rock and log hurdles built on non-biking trails in the Fells to believe that the thrill of mountain biking is more about athletic challenge than love of nature. And I can't even imagine why people who love nature think their dogs should be allowed to roam free in the woods. They were domesticated generations ago, and are no friends to the plants and animals of the forest. Recreation in the Fells should be limited to those activities which aren't impactful to its natural resources or to others: hikers and runners should stay on marked paths, bikers should stay on bike paths, and dogs should stay on leash. And, from what I learned at the Flora and Fauna Workshop, there should be fewer paths and more areas where the rare and sensitive natural resources of the reservation are protected from all of us.

I'm so far impressed by DCR's effort at Resource Management, and hope that the end result is guided by the spirit of Elizur Wright and Charles Eliot, those forward thinking men who created this precious natural resource so close to our cities and neighborhoods. But, as the native Americans say, "We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors; we borrow it from our Children." Let's not squander this loan from them on our own selfish pleasures.

Good luck, DCR, with your important work.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Leonard Bennett

██████████  
Medford, MA 02155

From: Melissa Dreyer ██████████

Sent: Tue 3/1/2011 7:02 PM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Pro Off-leash at the Fells!

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Hello there,

I am in support of off-leash dogs being allowed at the Fells because, as a dog owner, I feel there are few places to take dogs to let them run off energy and play and be dogs, which they desperately need. Our dog is well-behaved, comes when called, and plays well with other dogs and is respectful of people.

I understand concerns about threats to the wildlife in the Fells, which I share. But I have never seen my dog or any others kill, maim, or destroy any wildlife. Primarily, dogs' interest is in other dogs.

Please continue to allow dogs to be off leash in the Fells, but be clear

about and enforce rules regarding dog and owner behavior, such as: clean up dog feces at ALL times, and any dogs that bite or attack, or do not come when called are NOT allowed off-leash.

I think the Fells offer plenty of space to SHARE with bird-watchers, dog lovers, wildlife lovers, hikers, and bicyclists. It is a beautiful place that should be preserved for everyone to courteously enjoy together.

Thank you,  
Melissa Dreyer

Melissa Dreyer

████████████████████  
██████████

From: Margarita Collado-Aleman [REDACTED]

Sent: Wed 3/2/2011 9:05 AM

To: MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP

Cc:

Subject: Sheepfolds

Attachments:

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Hello,

I am a west end Malden resident and I purchased my home 2 years ago because of the proximity to the Fells. I love the trails, the views, the fresh air and I absolutely would not enjoy all that as much if it weren't for sharing it with my two dogs.

I have heard that this year, you are considering creating Sheepfolds as an off leash area and I wanted to let you know that my family would love and support that move. As responsible pet owners, I believe we should all pick up after our pet, control/monitor our animals and create a safe and fun environment for all. I know that as a pet community, there are hundreds that feel like I do in this respect, so please consider making an area around Sheepfolds off leash--its great for their exercise and you know what they say, a tired dog is a happy dog!

Margarita Collado-Aleman

From: [diane mutchler](#) [REDACTED]

Sent: Wed 3/2/2011 11:18 AM

To: [MOPC Middlesex Fells RMP](#)

Cc:

Subject: Dogs and Dog Droppings in the Middlesex Fells

Attachments:

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Hello,

Mike Ryan of the Friends of the Middlesex Fells has asked me to forward my email I sent to him yesterday to you. Here it is:

Recently I moved back to Malden, after living in West Roxbury for over 7 years. I rent a studio apartment right near the Malden T station, and how grateful I am to have the Fells as "my backyard." A brisk walk of less than 15 minutes, and I'm stepping into the Fells. This winter I've enjoyed cross country skiing in the Fells. Several weeks ago the conditions were absolutely ideal for this beautiful activity.

I have a huge complaint, however, and it seems to be getting worse and worse. There are dog droppings all over the paths. Oh! How can a dog owner allow his or her dog to make their "mess" right in the pathway and sight of the rest of us. All of these acres, and they can't "nudge" their dog(s) off of the path to a spot away from our eyes. And - most of the dogs are not on leashes.

How many times I've been walking along (or skiing), and a big dog comes charging at me. I always stop and turn my body away from the dog, (I don't like being jumped on by dogs), and I wait for the owner to get their dog(s) under control. I've never been hurt by a dog, but all of this is just plain wrong. The Fells is NOT a latrine for dogs!, nor is it a playground for dogs.

This past Sunday afternoon I entered the Gerry Jingle pathway right off of E. Border right, and right there, on top of the beautiful new white snow, right in the center of the pathway as you first enter, was a big pile of dog mess. So, that was my greeting to the beautiful Fells! Each person entering had to carefully step around the dog mess.

When I was cross country skiing many times a week for a couple of weeks last month, how many times I had to suddenly lift up my ski to miss a big pile of dog mess. The Fells is such a beautiful place. I just love it up there. I have my favorite trails to hike (one is the Rock Circuit Trail), but, I'm getting so tired and disgusted by all of the dog mess. And, it has been so obvious during all of the snow storms. Beautiful white snow, and then all of the dog mess - and most often right on the trail where we are walking / hiking / skiing.

It looks like next to no effort is being made by the dog owners to skoot their dogs away from the paths so the mess is out of sight / out of our foot path / out of our ski path.

When I was skiing, I fell down a couple of times (it doesn't hurt) and one time I almost fell right onto a pile of dog mess.

When I hike up to the top of the rocks to sit down and enjoy the views, the wonderful air, the quiet, I've often been surrounded by piles of dog mess.

Perhaps clear signs can be tastefully posted. Perhaps pets should not be allowed? I just don't know what the solution is to this terrible issue in the Fells. It wasn't as bad as this a number of years ago when I lived in Malden (approx. 8 years ag). It is definitely getting worse. Also, last summer as I was sitting along the water's edge, a woman let her huge dog run up to me, and there was dog drool all over the back of my long hair. I wasn't "ready" for this and couldn't hop up quickly enough to keep this from happening. The owner laughed and said the dog was friendly. I was so angry inside, but I said very little. I was pretty much shocked and disgusted and therefore became speechless.

Thank you for listening and for anything you can do to help. And, thank you for the beautiful Middlesex Fells. I am seriously thinking of becoming a member of "The Friends."

Sincerely,

Diane Mutchler

████████████████████  
Malden, MA 02148 ██████████  
████████████████████

February-March 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

To whom it may concern,

I am one of many visitors to the Middlesex Fells Reservation who enjoys using the trails with my dog off leash. I control my dog; I do not allow my dog to run up to or jump up on other people; I do not allow my dog to disturb wildlife or damage plants and the environment. I use a leash when necessary to maintain control over my dog. I pick up my dog's waste and dispose of it properly.

For the most part, I feel that my recreational interests are served at the Fells.

The regulation that dogs must be on leash at the Fells does not accord with the recreational usage of a significant number of people.

I strongly encourage the Department of Conservation and Recreation, in defining its Management Principle and Goals for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Resource Management Plan, to allow for people to continue enjoying the trails with off-leash dogs.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN JACOBSON

name

[REDACTED] and street

MEDFORD MA 02155

city, state, zip

e- [REDACTED]

Cc: Fells Dog Owner Group

2/23/11

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

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to ask that you allow dogs to accompany their human companions on walks through the trails of the Middlesex Fells. I enjoy the Fells and feel it improves the quality of my life when I use it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lorraine Parker-Hartigan".

Lorraine Parker- Hartigan

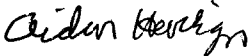
2/23/11

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

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to ask that you allow dogs to walk with their owners through the trails of the Middlesex Fells. I enjoy the Fells and feel it improves the quality of my life when I use it.

Sincerely,

  
Aidan Hartigan

2/24/11

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: Off Leash Dogs on Trails

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to share my hope that dogs be allowed to accompany their human companions on walks on the Middlesex Fells trails. Whether walking the trails as individual or with friends and family I consider such excursions to be important for my health. The beauty of the Fells and the fresh air are something that one cannot get at a gym or even walking suburban streets and so it has become a reason I cite for improving my health.

Although I do not personally ride a bike I think the trails should also be made available to them. Every encounter I have had with cyclist has been positive and if every someone were to become injured while walking the trails it is nice to know that cyclist may be by soon to help.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,



William J. Hartigan Jr

██████████  
Arlington, MA 02474