



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
October 1, 2010  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turner Falls, MA

**Meeting Minutes**

**Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:** *Chairman, Henry Lee, Elisa Campbell, Christina Crowley, Frank Frey, Whitney Hatch, Laura Johnson, and James Van Dyke* **Excused:** Julian Agyeman, Richard Cross, Michael Dutton, and Daniel Wolf

**DCR Staff in Attendance:** *Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Lisa Bishop, Gary Briere, Stuart Conner, Stephanie Cooper, Gary Davis, Priscilla Geigis, Ken Gooch, Evelyn Jimenez, Jack Murray, Patti Vantine*

**Public Attendees:** Merle K. Buckhout, Mt. Holyoke Range Advisory Committee – Harold Green, New England Mountain Biking Association – Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park – Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry – Cynthia Watson, Mt. Holyoke Range Advisory Committee

**Attachments:** Submitted Letter to Governor & HW&M, Central Region Overview Presentation, Summit House Presentation, ALB-EAB Presentation.

**Chairman Henry Lee called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.**

**Commissioner's Report - Commissioner Rick Sullivan**

*Commissioner Sullivan informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- DCR and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has expanded the Asian Longhorned Beetle regulated area in Worcester County after the discovery of additional trees infested with the beetle in the towns of Boylston and Holden.
- The Merrimack River Dredging Project has commenced and that sand is being deployed onto Salisbury Beach as the first part of the project.
- Ken Foley, Deputy Director of the Division of State Parks and Recreation, retired from state service on September 30th after an illustrious 37-year career serving the Commonwealth. A retirement party is planned for October 21<sup>st</sup> at Devens Commons.
- On September 20, approximately 200 participants attended the public meeting in Medford to discuss the draft trail system plan for the Middlesex Fells Reservation.
- DCR has released its Mystic River Master Plan.
- Hub on Wheels was on September 26 with more than 4,000 riders, including a team of DCR employees, which explored many DCR properties along the route.
- Public events include: 1) Sunday, October 3, the celebration, dedication and unveiling of the entrance sign for Spaulding R. Aldrich Recreation area at the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Northbridge, 2) Wednesday, October 6, Representatives from Trust for Public Land, EEA, DCR, DAR, Town of Ipswich officials and residents, Essex County Greenbelt Association, Raymond family members, Essex County Trails Association, and state legislative officials will celebrate the protection of nearly 250 acres of land along scenic Route 133 (Essex Road) known as Maplecroft Farm, 3) Thursday, October 7, a ground breaking event at Nickerson State Park in Brewster celebrating the new playground, 4) Wednesday, October 20, DCR will celebrate a ribbon cutting ceremony at Connors Pool in Waltham, 5) Thursday, October 21, a groundbreaking event for the replacement of the Community Boating docks on the Charles River Esplanade, and 6) Tuesday, October 26 the celebration of the reopening of the Magazine Beach playing fields.

**Committee Updates**

**Policy and Planning Committee**

*Resource Management Planning – Councilor Laura Johnson*

*The following is the outcome of the Policy and Planning committee meeting:*

- The draft Blue Hills RMP will be released in a couple of weeks and should be ready for review at our January Stewardship meeting. Horseneck Beach RMP schedule is uncertain.
- Using an accelerated “in between” RMP process, the following RMP’s have a projected start and end date: Blue Hills, Horseneck Beach, Middlesex Fells, Walden Pond, Myles Standish, Freetown State Forest, Fort Phoenix, Great Brook Farm State Park, Neponset River and Harold Parker State Forest.
- A discussion was held about “how do demands, emergencies and opportunities DCR faces every day get sorted out and decided upon absent an RMP”.
- A brief conversation was held regarding the Volunteer Policy.
- Five public workshops for the FFVP Landscape Zoning process will be scheduled between Friday, November 5 and Saturday, November 20.

### **Finance Committee**

*Finance Report – Councilor Whitney Hatch*

*Councilor Hatch informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- A letter was drafted (from Councilor Hatch and Patti Vantine) for distribution to the Governor and Senate and House Ways and Means documenting the Stewardship Council’s perspective regarding the FY11 supplemental budget (restoring \$6m out of the \$8m that was cut from the budget). A brief discussion followed. A copy of the final letter as submitted is attached.

### **Special Business**

#### **Central Region Overview – Evelyn Jimenez, Regional Director**

- The Central Region consists of three districts: the Connecticut Valley District, Blackstone District and the Quabbin Highlands, which equals to 86,000 acres and 775 miles of roads/trails. (See attached Central Region Overview Presentation)

#### **Skinner Summit House Update - Priscilla Geigis, Director of State Parks**

- The Summit House, located in Hadley, is a unique piece of Massachusetts cultural history that serves as a living museum and gateway into the past. However, it is currently closed due to structural problems. The presentation outlined a plan to begin work on those problems. Councilor Campbell commented on the urgency of the repairs, and wondered whether there are funds to implement the plan, and whether it is possible to make the Summit House accessible to all without destroying its historical characteristics. (See attached Summit House Presentation)

#### **Forest Health Issues Briefing – Ken Gooch, Program Supervisor, Forest Health**

- Ken Gooch presented to the Council a brief history and update of the Asian Longhorned Beetle, in addition to the introduction of the Emerald Ash Borer. (See attached ALB-EAB Presentation)

### **Approval of Minutes**

- Motion by Councilor Frank Frey, seconded by Councilor Whitney Hatch to accept the August, 2010 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.
- Motion by Councilor Frank Frey, seconded by Councilor James Van Dyke to accept the September, 2010 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

### **New Business**

- No New Business

### **Public Comment**

**The following constituents expressed their opinions/issues/matters to the Council:**

*Submission by Members of the Public:* Forest Biomass by Mike Leonard

*Mike Leonard, North Quabbin Forestry*

- A schedule for Biomass Improvement Cutting Field Trips was distributed. Mr. Leonard spoke about the benefits of biomass timber harvesting. (See attached Forest Biomass by Mike Leonard)

*Harold Green, New England Mountain Biking Association*

- Regarding the DCR maps for the GPS Trail Project, Mr. Green requested a copy of these maps to eliminate duplication.
- Mr. Green expressed his satisfaction to the Fells Plan's progress.

*Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park*

- Ms. Hurley reported on her recent visit to Bash Bish Falls State Park, including suggestions for improvement from the park staff. She raised the question of whether communication between DCR upper management and field staff is adequate, and whether more communication would be helpful.

#### **Closing Comment**

- No Closing Comments

#### **Meeting Schedule**

- Next meeting will be held Friday, November 5 at Botume House in Stoneham. (Region Meeting)

*Motion to adjourn by Councilor Laura Johnson, seconded by Councilor Elisa Campbell at 3:04 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.*