

From: David Harris [<mailto:dkharris@mac.com>]
Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 9:41 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Here are some of my concerns regarding Scusset Beach State Reservation that i would like to see addressed in the [Myles Standish Complex RMP](#)

- Upgraded electrical service — 50-30-20 amp service, not shared between two campers, and in close proximity to the camper's pad. A reliable electric supply line from the reservation entrance to the campground.
- Water spigots, not shared between campers , that are in close proximity to the camper's pad.
- More lifeguards on the beach.
- 24 hour security during the camping season.
- Repairs need to be made to the fish pier. This is a well used attraction to people of all ages.
- The beach bath house has undergone some cosmetic improvements, but needs to be totally refurbished and modernized. (not like the last time when work began on July 1 during the height of the beach usage season)
- Reinststitute winter camping with the bathrooms available and the dump station open.
- Provide the staff with the equipment (reasonable age and working condition) that is needed to maintain the buildings and grounds.
- Improvements to the entrance and exit so that campers can enter and leave the reservation during peak beach usage and the traffic backups occur.(similar to Salisbury State Park)
- Improvements in drainage, both within campsites and and the roadways.
- Many of the camper parking pads need to have the ground surrounding them brought up to grade with the pad and leveled.
- Improved beach parking with better traffic control (use of islands & speed bumps)
- paving the jetty parking lot
- water spigots for the tent sites (campfires are allowed with no readily accessible water – plus the convenience for cooking purposes)
- the fees charged to out-of-state users needs to be addressed; they should be higher in keeping with what other states charge MA residents to use facilities in their state.

I thank you for including the public input in developing a resource management plan. As secretary for the Friends Of Scusset Beach Reservation I applaud the working relationship we have with DCR. I also recognize the need to keep our facility attractive and safe for all to enjoy; a facility one would expect in the 21st Century. The plan is a start and it will take time and money to successfully implement it.

Thank you
Dave Harris
Hanson, MA

From: ednafaria [<mailto:ednafaria@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 9:47 AM
To: David Harris; Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: RE: Myles Standish Complex RMP

I like it.

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S@4 Active™, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: David Harris <dkharris@mac.com>
Date: 01/02/2014 9:41 AM (GMT-05:00)
To: dcr.updates@state.ma.us
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

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Thank you
Dave Harris
Hanson, MA

From: Wgmstr@aol.com [<mailto:Wgmstr@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 8:42 AM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Myles Standish Complex RPM

Dear DCR,

Some additional areas to help improve and promote Scusset Beach Reservation and improve safety.

I know I brought up the need for additional life guards at Scusset Beach (7-9) there is also a need for additional guard stands.

Improve: camp ground electric needs to be updated and upgraded

Jetty parking lot paved

Re paving of main road from entrance to beach

Promote: Winterize camp ground bathrooms

Dump station open year round - even if fee charge

Safety: 24 hour staff on duty in season

Redesign of beach parking lot

increase of lifeguards

Possible places to look for lifeguards: Sandwich High School, Duxbury's Percy Walker Pool, Colleges, and American Red Cross.

Thank you for involving everyone in your process. The ideas above come from many different people as they talk to me when I am at the park. As president of the Friends of Scusset Beach I try to look at all areas of the park as it is so multi-dimensional. We try hard as a group to make our projects reach to all areas of the park. Items I have listed above are really not projects we can do but need to be looked at and addressed.

Elise Smith

From: Linda Porazzo [<mailto:porazzo@comcast.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 01, 2014 2:27 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

As per attached

To: dcr.updates@state.ma.us
From: Linda Robbins Porazzo
Pembroke, Ma.

Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP's

As per your letter dated December 11, 2013 regarding the new RMP's these are my concerns and ideas about priority management issues related to recreation, stewardship of resources, and park facilities within the Myles Standish Complex. I understand that this will be my only chance to voice my opinion and can help you see things from a different set of eyes. When you start your process for this policy and planning document for the DCR's management of Myles Standish Complex please take some of these into consideration. After serving 38 years as a government official I realize it all comes down to cost but, we need to give a little to make things safer for all and enjoy our beautiful resources. The opinions within this document are solely my opinions only and I thank you for allowing me to address my concerns.

Scusset Beach State Reservation

As a member of the Friends group we can only do so much to help Scusset and these are major projects. We cannot control or help with these issues but I am pleased to have been part of what this Friends group has done to make this park more enjoyable to all who use it.

Current Electrical system within the campground needs to be brought up to code with today's standards. I know there have been studies done regarding the electrical system within the park, but nothing has been done in many years.

1. Electrical Boxes need to be replaced. They shouldn't fall over when you try to plug in, plus the plugs inside the boxes were installed upside down.
2. The need for the electric boxes closer to the parking site so you don't have to run extension cords.
3. The wiring to the boxes needs to be replaced to adequately supply the correct voltage to each site. The boxes should house 50/30/20 amp plugs in each box.
4. It would be nice that you don't have to share a box with your camping neighbor.

Life Guards

In the wake of what has happened in the DCR swimming pools, it is a lot more area for Scusset's lifeguards to cover for public safety. They need more life guards and life guard stands, two stands are not enough to cover such a large area. Also they need a dedicated ATV "that runs properly all the time" for just lifeguards to transport for first aid and patrols

Water system

Scusset needs more water stations to hook into. This is another issue that should be close to where you park so you don't have to run miles of water hoses. I have seen in the summer water hoses bursting because people have to run so much hose to reach their faucets. All the water and electrical boxes should be next to each other and near the parking area so you don't need to go searching thru brush looking for them.

Campground Security

There is a need for campground security especially after dark. Not only for security but medical reasons. One reason is due to the location of being next to canal, which is open to fisherman and the public after dark. Also that most of the campers are an older base and that is when most medical needs happen.

Fish Pier

This fish pier is a safety hazard. It is a major attraction for young and old alike but it is in desperate need of attention. Much of the decking material needs to be replaced and it is a tripping hazard just walking on it.

Beach Building

Cement was falling out of the ceilings and roofs. It was repainted by the prisoners this year and masonry repairs done only addressed part of the issues in this area. Much of the concrete walkways are uneven or broken and also a huge tripping hazard. I think this building was built right after I was born and I am getting old and it is in need of attention.

Winter Camping

I see no reason why Scusset cannot keep the campground bathrooms opened in the winter. This could be a real *money maker* for the State as a lot of people like to camp at Scusset in the winter. A lot of RV units are winterized in the winter they need toilet facilities plus only a few of the RV people have places to dump in the winter having the dump station opened would help also.

Campground Equipment

As I stated having worked for a government agency for 38 years, we buy things and build things but never put in place a fund to do the upkeep on these projects. It is not fair to ask your employees to operate any equipment that is not safe or buildings which could be a hazard waiting to happen. I have seen the equipment they have to use and someone could get hurt.

Entrance to Campground

It should have a double driveway coming into the guard shack like Salisbury Beach. If you leave the campground just for an errand and try to come back in the summer you better pack a lunch because you are in line forever waiting to get in especially on a hot beach day.

Myles Standish State Park

Bring Myles Standish's policy guide *up to date*. Also they need more lighting during the evening hours especially when holding meetings in their buildings. I know there are motion lights but they should be able to stay on until after the public has left the meetings.

From: Reed250684@aol.com [<mailto:Reed250684@aol.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, January 08, 2014 12:04 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP"

- Upgraded electrical service --- 50-30-20 amp service, not shared between two campers, and in close proximity to the camper's pad. A reliable electric supply line from the reservation entrance to the campground. There are many times the power drops to 110 volts and below which can damage some Motor Home appliances.

- Institute winter camping with the bathrooms available and the dump station open.
-
- Water spigots, not shared between campers, that are in close proximity to the camper's pad.
- More lifeguards on the beach.
- 24 hour security during the camping season.

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Friends of Scusset Beach
Ray Reed

Plymouth County League of Sportsmen's

Clubs

John P. Murray
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Public Outreach
251 Causeway Street 1, Suite 600
Boston, MA 02114

RECEIVED

DEJ

Per _____

December 22, 2013

Dear Mr. Murray,

On behalf of the membership of the Plymouth County League of Sportsmen I write to provide testimony regarding the Resource Management Plan for the Myles Standish Complex.

The Plymouth County League of Sportsmen represents the following 13 member organizations, Hanson Rod and Gun, Carver Sportsmen's Club, Fin Fur and Feather of Mattapoisett, Holbrook Sportsmen's Club, Marshfield Rod and Gun, Old Colony Sportsmen's Club, Plymouth Rod and Gun Club, Sagamore Rifle Club, Samoset Rod and Gun Club, Scituate Rod and Gun Club, Standish Sportmen's Association, Upland Sportsmen's Club and Wankinquoah Rod and Gun. Collectively the Plymouth County League of Sportsmen represent several thousand area sportsmen who utilize these facilities regularly and all of whom have an active interest in the resource management plan under consideration by your agency. The league members support the suggestions contained herein by unanimous vote at our December meeting.

We support strengthening the plans hunting, trapping and fishing provisions. We suggest changing the existing language pertaining to hunting in Myles Standish State Forest as follows

Change Paragraph 3 on page 50 to read

The entire forest is open for hunting and trapping except the area near the prison camp, park headquarters and Barrett Pond. Hunting, Trapping and Fishing seasons and lawful methods are regulated by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Ref MGL Chapter 131 and 131A & 321 CMR 1:00 -10.0 and the Federal and Massachusetts Migratory Game Bird regulations. No discharge of firearms, bow and arrows or other weapons, is allowed outside the seasons and restrictions of the above laws and regulations without special permit.

Change Paragraph 4 on page 50 to read

MSSF contains two Wildlife Management Areas that are managed by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The pheasant and quail areas are stocked with game birds from mid-October through November. MSSF is also popular for deer hunting during the deer seasons which run from Mid October through late December. Turkey hunters utilize the forest during the Spring Turkey season which run late April through late May. Rabbitt, Coyote and small game hunters utilize MSSF from Mid October until early March. The above general seasons are not meant to be exhaustive. A complete listing of legal seasons is available in the Annual Guide to hunting, freshwater fishing and trapping published by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Youth Turkey Hunt. Youth hunting programs of the Division of Fish and Wildlife are allowed during the May Youth Turkey season. Generally the Saturday prior to the start of the Regular spring turkey season.

Youth Pheasant Hunt. Youth Hunting programs of the Division of Fish and Wildlife are allowed during the Youth Pheasant Program time slot determined by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Generally the 6 weeks prior to October 15.

Add to the Other Partnerships section on page 69 Local sportsmen's clubs in cooperation with the Division of Fish and Wildlife conduct youth hunts within MSSF for the purposes of hunter recruitment and retention.

Add to table 5.4.1 Provide signage and educational materials designed to publicize and encourage the use of hunter orange garments for all visitors during hunting seasons.

We believe it's the proper role of the DCR to insure that these lands remain open to public hunting as a way to effectively manage Myles Standish State Forest and associated areas. These suggestions strengthen the management plan for the forest and associated properties and recognize the unique and important role of sportsmen in the future management of the forest.

Sincerely,

John Fabroski
President Plymouth County League of Sportsmen
For The membership

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Fabroski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "J".

From: Mark Gately [<mailto:mark.gately@bc.edu>]
Sent: Thursday, January 09, 2014 3:52 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

My name is Mark Gately and I am a Duxbury resident. I'm confining my comments and a request to the Myles Standish Monument State Reservation. The reservation is nearly always closed. As one of the jewels of the new Myles Standish Complex for Resource Management, I feel compelled to insist that funding be appropriated to maintain the park open daily, at least during the summer season. It's an excellent opportunity for a couple of (work/study) college students to function as docents for this beautiful resource. If funding is too tight for this reasonable request, simply open the gates and the monument tower unattended in daylight hours with periodic police patrols...



Mark J. Gately
Senior Technical Support Advisor
Boston College CTRC
gatelym@bc.edu, 617-552-2492

"Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present and bring about conformity *or* it becomes the practice of freedom; the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality to discover how to participate in transforming the world." ~ Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

From: Dean Phaneuf [<mailto:deano1720@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2014 12:41 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: "myles standish complex rmp"

I was wondering if replacing small firepits back to each campsite could be addressed?

My family and I camped out at scussett beach in 2012 and loved it here but really missed the campfire feel at night.

Thanks sincerely
Dean Phaneuf and family

From: amason9443@aol.com [<mailto:amason9443@aol.com>]

Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2014 5:19 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

To Whom it may Concern,

The following are my comments on the Myles Standish Complex RMP:

I have been made aware that the Myles Standish State Forest has been zoned as Reserve under this planning system. This means that no forest management can be done in this DCR facility. There are a number of white pine plantations that were planted in the 1930s and the 1960s that have had a substantial amount of silvicultural activities done to get them to their present condition. These forest stands should continue to be managed both for aesthetic reasons and for forest products. The nursery stock that was used to plant these stands came from seed that did not originate from Southeastern Massachusetts. They were planted in areas that used to be pine barrens and have been an item of discussion as far as being intrusive to this ecosystem. If the white pine plantations are going to remain, they should continue to be managed and possibly be converted to pine barrens over time. These stands have been regenerating into the barrens and some areas are reverting to white pine. The rare species will benefit from these plantations eventually being phased out. The main reason that the forest has been zoned reserve is to protect and manage the pine barrens for its rare plant and animal species.

On the west side of the forest, there is an area that was always called the "Ryan Lot." This area has a native mature stand of white pine where there has been shelterwood cutting done in the past. There are sections of the area that need to have some silvicultural activities done to better space the trees and remove poor quality individuals. The reserve zone does not allow for any more activity to take place here. Even if a light amount of cutting is done, it would improve this area aesthetically. If it is the desire of DCR to expand the pine barrens into this area, trees will eventually have to be cut.

Please consider these as my comments to the Myles Standish Complex RMP.
Austin B. Mason.

From: wrvick@aol.com [<mailto:wrvick@aol.com>]
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 11:03 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Attached are my observations from time spent at all 9 properties in the Myles Standish Complex.

Regards,
Bill Vickstrom

Myles Standish Complex Planning Suggestions

Myles Standish State forest

Preserving fragile environment

- **Pond protection** - Boat owners should be made aware that invasive or unwanted plant life can be transported from hull bottoms from pond to pond. Certain ponds areas should be restricted to protect rare and endangered species.
- **Removal of invasive species** - Spotted knapweed is very prevalent in the Cutterfield area and has been identified in many other locations throughout the forest. Knapweed Weevils have been introduced in several selected areas and hopefully more can be released in the future to control this aggressive plant. Carolina Fanwort has heavily infested the East Head Reservoir and nearby Federal Pond. Group outings could be arranged to assist with removing certain invasive species.
- **Protecting frost pockets** – Maybe having signs posted around these fragile area might be helpful. I'm sure many visitors have no idea what a frost pocket is.
- **Education** - Many users of forest are unaware of the fragile nature of pine barrens. Having educational displays might help making people more aware of the environment they are in. Posting more information at kiosks and at campgrounds would be helpful.

Roads and signage / Parking lots

- **Build bridge.** Tens of thousand of extra miles are driven each year on detour around a windy poorly conditioned road around East Head Reservoir. Find a way to settle landowner differences and get the bridge rebuilt. It was usable once and certainly could and should be rebuilt.
- **Continue with better signage.** Myles Standish is a very large and at times confusing park, even for those familiar with it. Improved road signage including mileage to key locations would be very helpful. Recent new signs have been helpful, but more are needed.
- **Improve condition of roads.** Roads other than main entrances from Carver and Long Pond Road are showing major signs of wear and tear and should be improved when possible. Sections near East Head Reservoir, Barret Pond and Fearing Pond are in rough shape.
- **Kiosks at PL#2, East Entrance and Campgrounds.** Display more information at key park areas. Additional information at the existing kiosks would be helpful. New

ones at the campgrounds would be worthy. Education of the people is very important for park preservation and awareness. I was encouraged to see the kiosk building program in the maintenance building and hopefully more will be built for Myles Standish.

- **Improve parking situation at East Entrance.** A major entry area with a very poor parking situation. The whole East entrance area could use much improvement as it is one of the two major park entrances.

Landscaping

- **Continue with projects around park HQ.** Friends groups have had some involvement. There should be numerous opportunities for Service Projects for Scouting and other organizations. Improved landscaping at HQ would be a worthy project
- **Improve area around East Entrance** - Recent landscaping done to improve this area has been damaged at least once by park employees and again recently by winter users. Money should be set aside to protect and upgrade this area.

Trails

- **Better trail signs** - Many other state parks have wooden signs at entrances and key intersections along trails. More signs on the East Head Reservoir and the Friends trails would be very helpful to the average hiker. This would also make a good Eagle Scout project. Borderland State park is good example of a park with good trail signage. MSSF should follow their lead. Also enclosed maps within the park with a "you are here" arrow would be very useful. Many other parks have this including the Blue Hills. This has been done recently on the Bentley Loop and has been a major improvement.
- **Improve maps and add additional trails.** Currently the Friends trail is not on the map, despite being tagged with trail markers. Hopefully this will become approved to be an official trail. MSSF is different in that it is intersected with many fire roads which can be excellent for walking. A few selected hiking routes could certainly be added as suggested routes and trail signs added to guide walkers on selected forest road routes. A hiking only map with description of each trail or loop could be added. Nickerson and Borderland parks have trail descriptions in their brochures. If people had a better idea of the trails, they might get more use.

Recreation

- **Bike paths.** A grant for trail repair was given , but the money allocated for another use. The trails are still in fair shape but have signs of wear after 40 years of use. The bike paths are a great resource and certainly could be utilized more. The trails do need more maintenance and many areas last summer were covered with pine needles. There are also a few windy and hilly areas where trail signs would be very helpful and signs near approaching roadways and gates should be added where needed.
- **Fishing** – Encourage fishermen to be more environmentally conscious. Too often fishing litter is left behind, including fishing line that can strangle wildlife. Maybe more receptacles and “No littering” notices to encourage keeping park clean.
- **Firing range** – not a very favorable idea that was presented at one hearing. People don’t come to park to hear guns being fired. Hunting season is an exception.
- **Hunting** - signs up at entrances when seasons in progress. Also maybe notices in kiosks encouraging non-hunters to wear orange when deer season is in progress.
- **Equestrian** – The park has many miles of wonderful equestrian trails. However many have been ruined by ORV use. More funding should be provided for trails in disrepair and also money for improved parking and better signage. Many equestrian trails are wooded paths and better signage would be a welcome addition.

Camping

- More yurts
- Keep on improving bathroom facilities
- Longer season if there is demand.
- Keep fixing erosion areas around other ponds. Recent work done at Fearing Pond was a good improvement.

Park Entrance / Visitors Center

- **Displays for educational purposes.**
- **Gift store for additional revenues.** This would also keep traffic down a bit if visitors don’t have to drive out of park to receive services that could be offered at a park store. Private campgrounds offer this, why not a State park?
- **Improve check in process during busy times.** Campers should not have to endure long wait times when entering park. Increased staffing during busy check in

times certainly would help this. I was surprised to hear the front desk can only handle one car at a time.

Care of Forest

- **Future plantation management** - Have plan to manage plantation areas for future and convert back to pine barrens habitat when possible. Recent plans for removal of diseased red pines plantations will be a major step for pine barrens restoration.

Ponds

- **Allow greater access.** Charge and Fearing Ponds could be used by general public to take pressure of College Pond. Add gates with fees for parking such as at Borderland SP. Continue erosion prevention projects.
- **Encourage more fishing and better cleanup by fishermen.** Many fishermen are sloppy and leave litter behind. Better education and maybe more trash containers would help. A few more signs to keep park clean and no littering might help.
- **Bath house facilities.** Fix, preserve and open the bath house at Fearing and improve the situation at Charge Pond.
- **Protect environmentally sensitive areas.** Some areas with rare plant and wildlife species should be restricted at certain times of the year. People need to be better educated and maybe more informational kiosks at recreational areas would help.
- **Vernal Pools** Track areas of this type habitat and maybe open several for nature trail/educational purposes. How many city visitors are aware of what a vernal pool is?

Misuse of forest

- **A better effort to prevent ATV and ORV use.** Would bold warning signs at key entry points have any affect? There is still very heavy use in the forest with very little enforcement.
- **More effective prosecution of offenders with stricter penalties.** Hopefully after May 1st, the laws will have teeth to them. Repeat offenders should encounter much stricter penalties and all offenders should be kept in a database for future reference. This is a public resource and all that abuse park property should be penalized accordingly.
- **Educate park visitors of Park Watch.** The more awareness made the better. The more violations reported, the better our chances to cutting down future park abuse.

- **Educate visitors of major OTV damage.** Displays of damage and why ORV are prohibited here should be displayed.
- **Add stiff fines for littering and enforce those fines.** Maybe having more “Keep Park Clean” and “No littering” signs would help. Lots of litter such as coffee cups and water and juice bottles carelessly discarded.
- **Illegal dumping** – Stiff fines for anyone caught doing illegal dumping of appliance or other items. A boat was recently left in forest near Mast Road.

Expanding Park Property

- **Expand park boundaries when possible with new acquisitions.** This has been done for several small parcels in last three years.
- **Add existing adjacent conservation land to park.** With the ever increasing population growth in Plymouth County, any opportunity to permanently preserve land should be taken.

Going Green

- **Recycling** – There should be a way to encourage recycling in a park as there is certainly lots of waste generated. All bottles and cans should be recycled. There should also be a method for capturing all types of paper products. Recycling containers should be set up in key park area with heavy usage.
- **Composting toilets at selected park locations.**
- **Renewable energy sources.** Explore opportunities for solar and small scale wind opportunities if there is grant money for this. MCI property might be an area for this possibility. Solar panels are appearing in more areas and are accepted. With the ever increasing cost of oil, and with green technologies becoming more efficient and affordable, this should be an option in all future planning.

Myles Standish Monument – Duxbury

- This is a great property that is greatly underutilized and neglected.
- Entrance gate is usually closed and locked. When is this property open?
- A kiosk at entrance with reservation hours and information would be helpful.
- There was lots of litter in woods surrounding fields near monument.
- A bonfire with burnt wood was scattered on lawn near monument base. Charred remains damaged the cement near entrance.
- Lots of downed trees along side of road leading to monument. One fallen tree was actually taking up two parking spaces.
- An old formerly used hiking trail was overgrown and fallen trees blocked the path in several places. A restored hiking trail would add to the experience.
- Grounds did not receive fall landscaping and lots of leaves on grassy areas.
- This property could use the TLC a Friends group could offer.
- What are future plans? A nominal admission charge might help improve this facility.

Bay Farm – Duxbury

- A beautiful and well used property, run by the town of Duxbury.
- A kiosk at parking lot with trail maps and other information would be helpful.
- Numerous doggie litter bags left along trails. A sign at a kiosk educating users to properly dispose of dog waste in trash barrels would be appreciated by other users. This seems to be a common problem at many properties.
- Some dogs left loose to roam despite signs stating that dogs should be leashed.
- A kiosk along an inner trail needs a badly fading an peeling map to be replaced.
- This beautiful location could have some educational signage in key areas along bay.

Mulliken's Landing – Kingston

- A small property with access to Jones River.
- Trail was extremely muddy near stream bank. A dock and improved walkway or boardwalk near river would improve accessibility.

Scusset Beach Reservation

- A great scenic property with very good facilities .
- One area for improvement was the Sagamore Hill Trail which could use better trail signage. The Marsh trail was not marked. It was a beautiful loop and could be improved upon and made an official trail.

Ellisville Harbor State Park

- A beautiful property with a great marsh area, scenic overlooks and interesting unspoiled beach areas.
- Upland grounds are totally overrun with spotted knapweed, and aggressive invasive species.
- Driveway into main parking area has a huge dip that was water filled and needs to be regraded.

Kingston State Forest

- A large forested area that has been greatly altered from its original state by the relocation of Route 44 which bisects the middle of the property. Beautiful wooded areas, ponds, kettle holes and vernal pools and rolling undulating terrain make this property an interesting place to explore. My visit was when the ground was snow covered, but it appears that heavy ORV, dirt bike and trail bike usage occurs here. This is good terrain to offer this type of activity because the one drawback to this property is the constant highway noise that detracts from a quiet woods experience. It would still be a fine place to offer a defined network of hiking trails and there is an underpass under Route 44 that connects the two parcels. There are some attractive ponds for fishing opportunities and also good terrain for hunting. I found very limited parking areas and wonder what the state has planned for this property?

Pilgrim Memorial State Park

- A heavily visited historic tourist area in Plymouth Harbor area. Some effort has been made recently to improve the waterfront area, with extensive renovations of the Plymouth Rock area and new informational signage and flower plantings. The rocky shore area is unattractive and is also an area that collects litter. This area could be made much more attractive than it is now, considering the large volume of traffic it receives. The Town of Plymouth has greatly improved the Brewster Gardens across the street. DCR should take the lead from these changes and continue to improve their prized parcel. The town of Plymouth has very extensive renovations planned before the year 2020, the 400th anniversary of Pilgrims landing. Hopefully the state will do their part to improve the waterfront area.

Forefathers Monument

- This is a prized property with a very historic granite monument that is one of the largest in the country. This property is greatly underutilized and under publicized. It also could use a facelift and preserved better for the future. The grounds are OK, but could use more attractive landscaping and some TLC. Any tourist visiting the area should also include this stop as part of their visit.

From: Sharl Heller [<mailto:slheller@comcast.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2014 12:31 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Cc: Carolyn Gould
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP Comments

Attached are comments from the Southeastern Massachusetts Pine Barrens Alliance regarding the Myles Standish Complex Resource Management Plan for your consideration.

Thank you,

Carolyn Gould
Sharl Heller



14 January 2014

Commissioner Jack Murray
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Public Outreach
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Sent via email:

Re: "Myles Standish Complex RMP"

Dear Commissioner Murray:

We are submitting the following comments as representatives of the Southeastern Massachusetts Pine Barrens Alliance (SEMPBA) to your request for public response to the drafting of Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR's) properties in what is being called the Myles Standish Complex.

We applaud the DCR's effort to extend the RMP process to all of its properties. A number of the members of our newly forming alliance played an integral role in developing the RMP for the Myles Standish State Forest as members of the Friends of Myles Standish State Forest (MSSF). Now that DCR has instituted a new management structure, it needs to adapt the RMPs to this Parks Unification program. We wish, first of all, to re-emphasize our backing of the original MSSF RMP and, secondly, to provide a few brief observations about the RMP process as it moves forward and about the Myles Standish Complex in particular.

The need for balance

As you have stated, by statute, RMPs must:

- Be prepared for all "reservations, parks, and forests" under DCR management;
- "include guidelines for the operation and land stewardship of... reservations, parks and forests";
- "provide for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources"; and
- ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection and sustainable forest management." (M.G.L. Chapter 21; Section 2F).

These statements clearly call for a balance between stewardship, resource protection, sustainable forest protection, on the one hand, and recreation, on the other. Unfortunately, it is our belief that the public contribution process can often result in statements that more heavily concentrate on recreational use than on public lands stewardship. Recent moves on the part of the DCR to help restore the rare ecosystem of the scrub oak/pine barrens community by removing red pine plantations from MSSF have helped to fulfill in part some of its environmental protection and management mandate. But it is not enough.

We are calling for increased forest management practices, which, for example, can help reduce the fuel load building up in MSSF and other forests within this Complex while helping to maintain the natural beauty of this, the world's second largest Atlantic Coastal Pine Barrens region. These efforts—and many more that we

have not addressed—will not only help maintain the natural beauty of the forest properties, they will also increase public safety.

Staffing

We are also concerned that the Parks Unification program, which places the management of cultural resources—like the Myles Standish Monument State Reservation and the Pilgrim Memorial State Park—alongside the management of natural resources—like MSSP, Ellisville Harbor State Park, and Scusset Beach—is putting undue stress and an increased workload on an already beleaguered staff. Currently, the staff is hard pressed to maintain properties, let alone invest in their active management and restoration, not to mention the enforcement of existing laws affecting recreational use, particularly the monitoring of illegal ORV use.

Building “Complexes” of RMPs may look on paper as if the DCR has the facilities under its care adequately staffed, but visitors are quick to notice when parks are understaffed. Well-maintained parks generate tourism and increase revenue. In an area known as a mecca for tourists, skimping on park staffing will exacerbate the degradation of our heavily visited parks and eventually result reduced tourism, an important economic factor in southeastern Massachusetts. We suggest that the RMP Draft include a section regarding tourism enhancement for every park in the southeast region’s RMP Complexes.

Properties vs. the Region

We understand the need for a property-based approach to developing RMPs, to ensure that the effective management of any single property does not get overlooked. We also believe that, in the RMP process, regional issues also need to be addressed. The newly formed Myles Standish and Nickerson Complexes comprise an area we call the Greater Pine Barrens Region of Southeastern Massachusetts. We hope to gain local, state, and federal recognition of this valuable regional resource and rare ecosystem and would encourage the DCR to consider the needs of the region, as well as individual properties, in its planning process.

Some issues, like illegal ORV use, may affect only large forested areas, but other issues, like invasive plants, are endemic to the entire region and must be addressed accordingly. We have found that the public responds more positively when its regional identity and narrative are addressed alongside the local parks’ needs. The naming of DCR complexes should come from ecological and geographical features, not from the existing names of the largest properties. Such a shift in naming reflects a more park user-friendly approach rather than an expedient, DCR-centric way of property management.

Ellisville Harbor State Park

We believe that the upland area of Ellisville State Park would best be managed as a sandplain grassland community (see <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dfg/nhosp/natural-communities-facts/sandplain-grassland.pdf>). Less frequent mowing by the DCR last fall resulted in a wonderful meadow, much like the meadow in the Frances Crane Wildlife Refuge. In previous years the fields received frequent mowing and appeared more like pastureland than meadowland. This year we observed milkweed plants that had sprung up among the tall grasses and shrubs. The pods were allowed to reach maturity and reseed themselves. The numbers of butterflies and birds seemed to have increased significantly and the field was much more varied, interesting and beautiful. If the community type is sandplain grassland, then the fields would benefit from a carefully developed management plan aimed at improving habitat for the twenty-two rare animals associated with this habitat. Invasive plants are a huge concern all through the park. We trust that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) will evaluate the Ellisville fields as part of the RMP process. We would support a management plan that includes prescribed fire for the control of exotic plants, as recommended by the NHESP for sandplain grasslands.

The field station at Ellisville sits atop a hillside overlooking Ellisville Marsh to the south and Cape Cod Bay to the east and north, which is arguably one of the loveliest views on public lands in southeastern Massachusetts.

Please consider opening the view for greater public enjoyment and adding a few park amenities, such as picnic tables, viewing benches and interpretive signs highlighting the park's natural and cultural resources at this site. Finding a reuse for the recently abandoned field station would help make the park feel safer to visitors and signify that the State understands the importance the park to the local community and its geological and ecological significance on the global scale.

Ellisville comprises several natural communities, including a salt marsh, which requires active management. It is comprised of a number of natural communities, providing breeding grounds for several rare and endangered species. The site contains a building, which is in the Historical Curatorship program, and has a rich history that is fading from knowledge. This richly diverse property deserves a full inventory and a carefully crafted management plan.

Our concern is that with the DCR's limited resources, it will not be able to develop a thorough inventory in the time frame of the current RMP process. We suggest that the DCR acknowledge the need for ongoing monitoring and research of this complex property and include a program for ongoing assessments and consequent updates to the Ellisville Harbor State Park management regime.

Kingston State Forest

It is our understanding that Kingston State Forest does not contain priority habitat or any significant cultural or natural features. Because it is known to be an area of heavy illegal ORV use and is fragmented by roadways and highways, we suggest creating a destination ORV DCR-run facility at this site. We realize that the property may not pass the "fine filter" test for the development of an ORV site, but those criteria are outdated and need to be reevaluated. Registration increases the revenue earmarked for ORV education, enforcement and trails development. We believe that providing riding opportunities will encourage registration and lessen illegal riding on more sensitive and significant properties.

The DCR should acknowledge that the Kingston State Forest is a hot bed of ORV activity. Investment in an ORV facility at this site would improve DCR's credibility with the ORV community that has been promised more riding areas. Opening a new ORV site may encourage greater cooperation and involvement of riders and (hopefully) reduce illegal riding in the area. The DCR manages golf courses, swimming pools, ski areas and skating arenas. It seems fair that the DCR would provide recreational facilities for ORV enthusiasts as well. Simply opening an area to riding is no more reasonable than opening an area for golfing without the appropriate infrastructure applicable to the sport and constant supervision and maintenance of the facility. Just as any other sport's field, ORV facilities require development and management. A first-class ORV facility in Kingston might prove self-supporting through the collection of user fees. A new ORV facility may also help move the ORV culture, which seems to sanction illegal riding under the excuse that too few legal riding areas exist, towards a more compliant and cooperative user group.

We can no longer afford to ignore the ORV problem. The degradation to our conservation lands grows worse every year. We must decide whether to provide sustainable recreational opportunities for ORVs or ban them from Massachusetts, as has been done recently in some of our neighboring states. It is time for the DCR to become proactive in building cooperation among the riding community or else work for the banishment of ORVs. Developing an ORV recreational facility in the Kingston State Forest would provide a good testing ground for informing that decision.

National Monument to the Forefathers

The Forefather's Monument is the largest solid granite monument in the United States but it is tucked away on a side street making it difficult to find. For this reason the park has far fewer visitors than one would expect for a monument of such significance. We applaud DCR's partnership with the *Doors to History* initiative that resulted in a tour of the Monument in September 2013. We suggest that the DCR continue to develop partnerships to increase visitation to the site, conduct frequent tours and publish a guidebook for sale explaining the history and meaning of the Monument.

In 2012, we received a report that while the property has some wonderful native eastern red cedar trees growing near one side of the Monument, an invasive plant, oriental bittersweet, was found running all the way up the trunks, endangering the trees. The DCR might consider a plan to enlist volunteers to help control invasive plants on smaller properties where control is relatively easy. It was suggested that planting more eastern red cedar on the opposite side of the hill would add balance to the scenery.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to reviewing the Draft.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Gould
Shari Heller



The Northern red-bellied cooter found only in ponds in Plymouth County

From: Heidi Ricci [<mailto:hricci@massaudubon.org>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 3:41 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Cc: Silva, Jason (DCR); Orfant, Joe (DCR); friend@networkingofriends.net
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Attached for your consideration are Mass Audubon's comments regarding management planning for the Myles Standish Complex of DCR properties in and around the South Shore.

Thank you

Heidi

E. Heidi Ricci
Senior Policy Analyst
Mass Audubon
208 South Great Road
Lincoln, MA 01773
781-259-2172
hricci@massaudubon.org
Shaping the Future of Your Community Program - www.massaudubon.org/shapingthefuture

Visit www.massaudubon.org to learn more about our conservation, education, and advocacy work.

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Advocacy Department

208 South Great Road • Lincoln, Massachusetts 01773
tel 781-259-2172 • email hricc@massaudubon.org

January 14, 2014

Jack Murray, Commissioner
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Via Email: DCR.Updates@state.ma.us

Re: **Myles Standish Complex Resource Management Plan (RMP)**

Dear Commissioner Murray:

On behalf of Mass Audubon, I submit the following comments in relation to drafting of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) properties in and around the South Shore. Mass Audubon supports the development of RMPs based on unit complexes of properties located in the same geographic region and managed as a unit, provided those RMPs address the property-specific resources, trails, and management needs.

RMP Title: We recommend that the title for this RMP reflect the general geographic scope of the RMP, i.e. "Myles Standish and South Shore RMP" or something similar. We understand that Myles Standish State Forest is the staffing unit that will coordinate management of the other properties in the complex. However, the title of the document should reflect the geographic scope so that it is easily understandable to the public what areas this RMP encompasses. Properties covered by this RMP include Bay Farm, Ellisville Harbor State Park, Kingston State Forest, Mulliken's Landing, Myles Standish Monument State Reservation, Myles Standish State Forest, National Monument to the Forefathers, Pilgrim Memorial State Park, and Scusset Beach State Reservation.

Resource Protection and Management Challenges: The properties covered by this RMP include important and sensitive natural resources including habitat for many rare species including birds, reptiles, amphibians, butterflies and moths, dragonflies, beetles, and plants as well as rare natural communities and high quality examples of more common natural habitats. Myles Standish State Forest contains globally rare pine barrens habitat, and this is recognized in the existing RMP for that property. These properties are also heavily utilized for recreation, particularly during the summer months. It is important that the RMP recognize and provide for protection of rare species as well as more common natural habitats that may be damaged by inappropriate use, as well as protection of fresh and salt water quality. The RMP should also recognize the impacts of climate change on both coastal and inland properties and should include appropriate plans for adaptation to anticipated impacts such as sea level rise, increasing storm intensities, and more frequent droughts.

Mass Audubon works cooperatively with DCR to monitor and protect rare coastal waterbirds including Piping Plovers that breed on several DCR beaches. We annually provide recommendations to DCR regarding refinements to the monitoring and management programs and look forward to continuing these cooperative efforts to protect rare and endangered birds.

We also note that some DCR properties including Bay Farm in Duxbury and Kingston (contiguous with other conservation property owned and managed by the two towns) include fields that provide breeding habitat for grassland birds e.g. Bobolinks. As documented in Mass Audubon's *State of the Birds* report (www.massaudubon.org/stateofthebirds), birds dependent on early successional habitat such as

grasslands and shrublands are declining, and management of remaining habitat is important. We recommend that fields not be mowed before August 1 in order to enable birds to fledge. Off-leash dogs are also a concern at Bay Farm and other sites including coastal waterbird breeding beaches and even in forests where ground and shrub-nesting birds are easily disturbed. DCR regulations require dogs to be leashed, but there is inadequate staff capacity to enforce the regulations. Additional educational signage and materials would be helpful to inform the public of the problems unleashed dogs create for birds and other wildlife.

DCR's staffing and budgetary shortages create significant challenges for providing a safe and enjoyable recreational experience for the public at all of its sites while protecting myriad and often sensitive natural and cultural resources. This challenge is particularly acute at unstaffed locations, but is an issue throughout the entire DCR park system. It is important that the RMP adequately document and acknowledge these problems, and prioritize action recommendations to address the most serious issues. Commonly encountered problems include: off-leash dogs, illegal or unauthorized uses such as party spots, ATVs, dumping and litter. These issues exist at many locations throughout the park system.

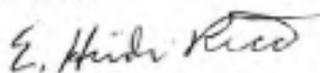
The recently updated DCR Volunteer Policy positions DCR to work more extensively with Friends groups and other volunteers. It is important that specific staff be assigned within each Complex to facilitate partnerships and projects with volunteers.

The RMP should clearly identify (with maps) trails that are open to the public and the associated allowed uses. Unauthorized trails that pass through environmentally sensitive areas should be prioritized for closure. Unpaved roads or paths that facilitate access by vehicles or ATVs to unsupervised locations should be gated. Every site should have signage that identifies the property as DCR property, provides basic rules and regulations, and DCR contact information.

Mass Audubon will continue to advocate for an adequate budget for DCR to manage its properties and ensure proper stewardship. RMPs play a key role in documenting unmet needs as well as prioritizing allocation of limited agency resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



E. Heidi Ricci

cc: Jason Silva, Director of Policy, DCR
Joe Orfant, Bureau of Planning and Resource Protection
Forest and Parks Friends Network

Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 35,000 acres of conservation land, provide school, camp, and other educational programs for 225,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at local, state, and federal levels. Founded in 1896 by two inspirational women who were committed to the protection of birds, Mass Audubon is now one of the largest and most prominent conservation organizations in New England. Today we are respected for our sound science, successful advocacy, and innovative approaches to connecting people and nature. Each year, our statewide network of wildlife sanctuaries welcomes nearly half a million visitors of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds and serves as the base for our work. To support these important efforts, call 800-AUDUBON (800-283-8266) or visit www.massaudubon.org.

Protecting the Nature of Massachusetts

From: Tom Broadrick [<mailto:broadrick@town.duxbury.ma.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 3:58 PM
To: Tom Broadrick; Updates, DCR (DCR)
Cc: Rene Read
Subject: RE: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Oops! Forgot to include the attachments! Here they are.

Tom

Thomas A Broadrick, AICP
Duxbury Planning Director
781-934-1100 x 5475

You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.
- Jon Kabat-Zinn

From: Tom Broadrick
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 3:50 PM
To: 'dcr.updates@state.ma.us'
Cc: Rene Read
Subject: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Mr. John P. Murray
DCR Commissioner

RE: Myles Standish Complex RMP

Hello Mr. Murray,

As the Planning Director for the Town of Duxbury I attended the information session held December 10, 2013 regarding the RMP for the new Myles Standish Complex.

Of important interest to the Town of Duxbury are the Myles Standish Monument and the Bay Farm Conservation Area. As I am sure you are aware Duxbury was settled by Myles Standish along with John Alden and others and Captain Standish's original homestead is located on Standish Shore.

We are very concerned about the status and future plans for the Myles Standish Monument Recreation Area as it has limited opening on weekends during the months of July and August and yet is a treasured resource year round...it is visible from Plymouth, Kingston, Duxbury and even Marshfield. We would be very interested in participating in discussions of the site's future management.

Bay Farm is "managed" more by the Duxbury Bay Farm Management Committee than any other group I am aware of and as such we encourage DCR to contact the Town with regard to future management of this treasured tract of open space.

I've included two links here to the Town of Duxbury Website and the Bay Farm Conservation Area webpage.

http://www.town.duxbury.ma.us/Public_Documents/DuxburyMA_WebDocs/about

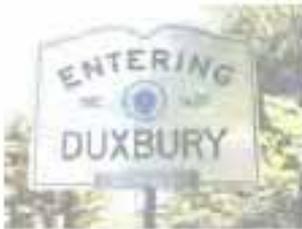
http://www.town.duxbury.ma.us/Public_Documents/DuxburyMA_Conservation/ConAreas/bayfarm

In addition I have attached Chapter 3 "Natural and Cultural Resources" from the Town of Duxbury 1999 Comprehensive Plan which further explores the uniqueness of Duxbury's natural and cultural heritage.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and participate in the Myles Standish Complex RMP.

Tom

*Thomas A. Broadrick, AICP
Planning Office
Town of Duxbury
878 Tremont Street
Duxbury, MA 02332
781-934-1100 ext 5475
www.town.duxbury.ma.us*



**Section 3:
NATURAL & CULTURAL
RESOURCES**

Section 3: NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Duxbury's attractive landscape of forests, beaches, fields, wetlands, homes, and small village-like commercial nodes gives the town a unique semi-rural character and distinguishes it from many of its more-developed South Shore neighbors. While some of Duxbury's special places and important natural and cultural resources are protected, many are subject to suburban development pressures. These pressures are likely to intensify as the new MBTA Old Colony Railroad facilitates daily commuting from the South Shore to Boston and makes Duxbury a more attractive place to live.

The 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan outlines an ambitious five-year course of action to protect the town's special places and natural resources. This Plan addresses four goals shared by Duxbury's citizens and town officers: protection of Duxbury's drinking water supply; protection and enhancement of natural resources and ecosystems; improvement of recreational opportunities; and preservation of Duxbury's character. To meet these goals, the action plan recommends specific programs of land acquisition, resource assessment and monitoring, public education, and other programs.

The Natural and Cultural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan uses the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan both as a resource for information and as starting-point for conservation goals, strategies, and recommendations. In its recommendations, this section of the Comprehensive Plan pursues the goal expressed in the Comprehensive Plan Scope: "to insure that new development takes place in an ecologically sound manner and that environmentally sensitive areas and cultural and historical areas will be protected."

3.1 EXISTING NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND PROVISIONS FOR THEIR PROTECTION

This sub-section identifies Duxbury's natural and cultural resources, using information from the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan, MassGIS, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program, interviews with town officers, and other sources. The Geographic Information System (GIS) maps which supplement this section display the spatial extent of each resource. This section also examines the existing provisions for resource protection, such as conservation lands, conservation easements, and environmental laws.

Open Space

Public and private owners maintain almost 40% of Duxbury's land area as open space: forests, farms, cranberry bogs, wetlands, beaches, parks, and riparian corridors. The Conservation Commission currently owns about 12.6% of the town's land, held in perpetuity for conservation purposes. Much of this land was acquired under the recommendation of the 1969 Duxbury Comprehensive Plan, which suggested that the town acquire large amounts of open space, including cranberry bogs and the Duxbury Salt Marsh, to protect against overdevelopment. Land acquisition virtually ceased in the early 1980s, as new state and local laws limited taxes and spending.

In the last few years, the Conservation Commission has begun a second wave of land acquisition, as recommended in the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan, which outlines goals and criteria to guide this acquisition. In 1998 the Town acquired 373 acres of conservation land, including 354 acres of the Camp Wing property. The Town allocates an annual budget of approximately \$100,000 to a Conservation Fund that may be used to purchase land or land options, seek property appraisals, and manage existing conservation land. The Conservation Fund is an important complement to Town Meeting-approved property purchases because it may be used at short notice to take advantage of time-sensitive conservation opportunities.

Most of Duxbury's open space is not protected specifically for conservation purposes, but remains undeveloped for other reasons. This includes land owned by the Duxbury Water Department, other town departments, and non-profit and church organizations, as well as "inholdings," or parcels surrounded on all sides by open space. In addition, almost one-third of Duxbury's open space is temporarily protected under Chapters 61, 61A or 61B of the Massachusetts General Laws. Under these laws, property owners receive tax credits for retaining their land in forestry, agricultural or recreational uses, respectively, rather than selling or developing this land.

Chapter 61 is designed to keep forested land under productive forest management. Owners with more than 10 acres of forest are eligible for enrollment. They must submit a Department of Environmental Management (DEM) approved forest management plan and a management certificate to the town assessor for a new tax classification to begin. The assessment of land classified under Chapter 61 is reduced by 95%. The loss of taxes to the town is partially offset by a yield tax of 8% that the owner pays on the value of wood harvested from the land annually.

Chapter 61 classifications run for ten year periods. An owner who wishes to sell land classified under Chapter 61 for a different use during the first ten years of certification must repay all back taxes to the town, plus interest, minus payments made for the 8% yield tax. The town has a 120-day right of first refusal to purchase the land if it can match the price offered to the landowner. The town may also transfer the right of first refusal to a non-profit conservation organization.

Chapter 61A is most commonly applied to agricultural or horticultural land but can be used for the forested portions of a farm, provided a forest management plan is approved by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management. To qualify for Chapter 61A, a farm owner must have five or more contiguous acres being used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. This land must produce annual gross sales of not less than \$500.00. For each additional acre over five, the minimum produce value is \$5.00. There is no product value for woodlands and wetlands, for which the added value is \$0.50 per acre. Property under Chapter 61A is assessed at rates that vary for different agricultural uses. Generally, classification will result in a reduction of 80% in assessed value.

Chapter 61B is similar to 61A, but applies to lands designated for recreational use, containing at least five contiguous acres. The land must be retained in a natural state to preserve wildlife and natural resources, must be devoted primarily to recreational use, and must provide a public benefit. Recreational uses eligible for Chapter 61B include hiking, camping, nature study, shooting/target practice, hunting, and skiing. The assessed valuation of Chapter 61B land is reduced by approximately 75%.

Towns often have difficulty taking advantage of the right of first refusal, because they must have available a large cash reserve to buy the land, as well as a political structure that can quickly approve the purchase.

The Duxbury Conservation Commission is responsible for implementing and enforcing local and state environmental regulations, and may use these laws as an effective and inexpensive tool to preserve wetlands, floodplains, rare species' habitat, and areas with porous soils or high groundwater. Though inexpensive, this form of open space protection is less certain than acquisition in the long term, since environmental laws are subject to change.

Table 3-1 summarizes open space holdings in Duxbury according to ownership and degree of protection. Appendix 3-1, an index of conservation lands from the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan, itemizes this information by parcel, address, and acreage. Figure 3-1, *Existing Open Space* classifies Duxbury's open space according to degree of protection. Classification of open space lands on this map is as follows:

- **Protected in Perpetuity:** This category includes Town lands designated for conservation, State lands designated for conservation, and lands held by non-profit conservation organizations.
- **Protected Temporarily:** This category includes Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B lands, and certain Town lands not designated for conservation.
- **Limited Protection:** This category includes most Town lands not designated for conservation (e.g. School Department and DPW lands), and certain lands held by non-profit organizations other than conservation organizations.
- **No Protection:** This category includes inholdings and certain lands held by non-profit organizations other than conservation organizations.
- **Unknown:** This category includes certain Town-owned lands (such as tax title properties) and certain lands held by non-profit organizations other than conservation organizations.

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- **No Protection:** This category includes inholdings and certain lands held by non-profit organizations other than conservation organizations.
- **Unknown:** This category includes certain Town-owned lands (such as tax title properties) and certain lands held by non-profit organizations other than conservation organizations.

Table 3-1
Open Space in Duxbury, Classified According to Ownership and Degree of Protection.

Ownership	Acres (% of town)	Protection Status
Duxbury Conservation Commission	1,945 (12.6%)	Protected
Non-profit land preservation organizations	457 (3.0%)	Protected
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	29 (0.2%)	Protected
Duxbury Water Department	193 (1.2%)	Protected
Duxbury Rural & Historical Society	146 (0.9%)	Protected
Other town land (School Dept., Recreation Dept., others)	1,037 (6.7%)	Limited protection: public ownership, but no legal restrictions on land use.
Church & Non-profit organizations (excluding non-profit land preservation organizations)	321 (2.1%)	Not protected
Private: held in Chapter 61 for forestry	801 (5.2%)	Temporarily protected
Private: held in Chapter 61A for agriculture	965 (6.2%)	Temporarily protected
Private: held in Chapter 61B for recreation	200 (1.3%)	Temporarily protected
Total	6,094 (39.4%)	17.9% protected 21.5% unprotected or semi-protected

Sources: MassGIS; 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan; Duxbury Planning Department.

Groundwater Resources

Duxbury contains two main types of geological deposits. Stratified drift deposits are porous, transmit groundwater, and comprise Duxbury's several thin aquifers. Till deposits are relatively packed, transmit groundwater poorly, and serve as the boundaries between aquifers. Groundwater recharge occurs primarily through stratified drift formations and through freshwater wetlands.

Duxbury's groundwater is the sole public source of drinking water in the town, and is supplied by ten drinking water wells, shown on Figure 3-3, *Water Resources*. Duxbury's largest aquifer underlies North Hill Marsh in north-central Duxbury. Since this primary aquifer is wholly confined within the town, any groundwater pollution resulting from unwise land use in Duxbury will directly impact drinking water quality. The porous nature of the overlying soils makes the town's aquifers especially susceptible to pollution, drought, and saltwater intrusion. In Duxbury, nonpoint-source pollutants, such as road salt, septic wastes, lawn and garden chemicals, and household chemicals, pose the greatest threat to groundwater quality.

The Massachusetts State Environmental Code, Title "5", and the Duxbury Supplementary Rules and Regulations, control the placement of on-site sewage disposal systems for new development. Soils that are too porous or too impermeable are unsuitable for septic tanks, as are areas of high groundwater. One or more of these conditions occur on much of Duxbury's undeveloped land, essentially limiting where new development may occur. Figure 3-2, *Constraints on Development*, Title "5" (310 CMR State Environmental Code), identifies areas of severe and very severe septic limitation due to unsuitable soils.

The Duxbury Zoning Bylaws (see Duxbury Zoning Bylaws, Article 406, 1997) regulate activity in Zone II Aquifer Protection Districts, shown on Figure 3-3. (Zone II districts are the areas of

land determined to recharge directly into aquifers used for drinking water supply.) These laws prohibit noxious uses, limit residential dwellings to one unit per acre, and prohibit golf courses, cluster developments, and the use of hazardous materials, except by special permit.

Freshwater Rivers, Ponds, and Watersheds,

The 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan groups Duxbury's ponds and rivers into six watershed systems: the South River, Green Harbor River, Back River, Island Creek, Jones River, and Bluefish River watersheds. A watershed is defined as the area of land that drains into a particular water body. Duxbury's six watersheds provide important habitat for birds, fish, and mammals, as well as scenic and recreational value for humans. The Five-Year Action Plan in the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan recommends that Duxbury's watersheds serve as the centerpiece of a network of conservation lands and greenways.

The Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act of 1996 and the Town of Duxbury Wetlands Regulations restrict development within 200 feet of perennial rivers and streams. However, the upland region beyond this 200 foot buffer also plays an important ecological role by serving as the recharge area for rivers; by providing a complementary habitat for riparian species requiring upland resources; and by allowing riparian corridors to serve as effective migration corridors for species requiring larger areas habitat. Currently, Duxbury's riparian corridors are primarily undeveloped, but much of this land is semi-protected or unprotected.

Duxbury contains several relatively small, shallow ponds, some of which are currently experiencing eutrophication (elevated levels of the plant nutrients nitrogen and phosphorus) and associated weed infestation. Eutrophication in Duxbury is the result of nonpoint-source pollution from agricultural chemicals (for example, from cranberry bogs), street runoff, septic systems, and lawn and household chemicals. Duxbury's ponds are especially prone to elevated nutrient levels because the Town's porous soils readily transmit pollution and because the ponds are shallow and incapable of buffering pollution loads. Remediation of weed and nutrient problems is ongoing at Island Creek Pond, Garside Reservoir, and Lower Chandler Mill Pond through a combination of techniques including weed harvesting, planting of native aquatic species, and chemical treatment. Homeowners' groups also play an important role by educating lakeshore residents on how to reduce nonpoint source pollution from their property.

Table 3-2 summarizes important qualities of Duxbury's six watersheds. Additional information is available in the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**Table 3-2
Important Characteristics and Current Protection Status of Duxbury's Six Watersheds**

<u>Watershed</u>	<u>Valuable resources</u>	<u>Protection Status</u>
South River (Northwest Duxbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality fish & wildlife habitat • MA Natural Heritage Exemplary Natural Community 	Contains many large open tracts where development pressures are increasing. Portions of Camp Wing were recently acquired; others are still unprotected.
Green Harbor River (North Duxbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquifer protection district for Marshfield & Duxbury wells • High-quality fish & wildlife habitat 	Contains some medium-sized open tracts where development pressures are increasing; opportunity for protection
Back River (From North Hill Marsh East to Duxbury Marsh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shellfish harvesting area near mouth • Recreation use in North Hill Marsh area 	North Hill Marsh is largely protected. Lower stretches contain low-density residential, with limited opportunity for protection
Island Creek (southeast Duxbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Island Creek Pond: fishing & boating • Anadromous fish run, with fish ladder* 	Lower portion of the watershed contains significant development. Upper portion includes conservation lands, with potential to protect additional land around Island Creek Pond.
James River (Southern Duxbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquifer protection district for Kingston • Lower part of watershed, is an MA Natural Heritage Exemplary Natural Community 	Almost completely unprotected. Some land is in Chapter 61A (agricultural use).
Bluefish River (Eastern Duxbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadromous fish run, with fish ladder* • Headwaters in Aquifer Protection District 	Much of the watershed is semi-protected, in municipal and non-profit ownership. Past pollution problems from ineffective septic systems have been corrected.

Source: 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan.

* Note: Both Island Creek and Bluefish River support alewife fish runs, according to the Duxbury Conservation Administrator. The Island Creek fish ladder is Town owned, and is planned for repair in the upcoming years. The Bluefish River fish ladder is privately owned.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas characterized by standing water, hydric soils, and/or water-tolerant vegetation, and typically occur along the shorelines of ponds, streams, and the ocean, as well as in isolated depressions in upland areas. Wetlands provide several benefits both to humans and to ecological communities. Important wetland functions regulated under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act including the following:

- **Pollution Control:** Vegetated wetlands remove or detain sediments, nutrients (such as nitrogen and phosphorus), and toxic substances (such as heavy metals) that are found in run-off and flood waters.
- **Flood Control:** Vegetated wetlands temporarily store flood waters, allowing some evaporation and slowing the release of flood waters to downstream areas.
- **Storm Damage Prevention:** The reduction of the quantity and flow of flood waters lessens damage to private and public property.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** The hydrologic regime, plant communities, soils, topography and water chemistry of vegetated wetlands provide food, shelter, migratory, overwintering and breeding areas for many birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Thirty-five percent of plants and animals that are listed as endangered or threatened in the United States live in wetlands or depend upon them for survival.
- **Fisheries:** Vegetated wetlands provide habitat for insects and aquatic invertebrates, which are an important source of food for fish.
- **Ground Water Supply:** Some vegetated wetlands discharge ground water to the surface. Wetlands also aid in maintaining base flow levels in rivers and streams and filter and clean surface water as it percolates into the groundwater.
- **Public and Private Water Supply:** Vegetated wetlands help maintain high-quality groundwater, a primary source of drinking water in many communities including Duxbury.

Another benefit of wetlands not discussed in the Wetland Protection Act is:

- **Passive Recreation:** Vegetated wetlands provide opportunities for nature study, photography, bird-watching, and other recreational uses.

Duxbury has approximately 1,165 acres of freshwater wetlands, marshes, and swamps; 425 acres of freshwater ponds; and 370 acres of cranberry bogs.

The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act restricts activity within 100 feet of wetlands and other water bodies. The Duxbury Conservation Commission administers this law locally, and considers applications for activities in wetland zones. Generally wetland alteration is allowed only in small areas when there are no feasible alternatives, and is subject to the condition that an equivalent amount of wetland must be replicated elsewhere. In wetland buffer zones, work is often allowed subject to an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission. Although the Conservation Commission has some discretion in deciding how much development to allow

in wetlands and buffer zones, the MA Department of Environmental Protection has the authority to override any Conservation Commission decision.

The Duxbury Zoning Bylaws and Wetland Regulations further protect wetlands within Wetlands Protection Districts (Duxbury Zoning Bylaws, Article 403, 1997). In these districts, which include both isolated wetlands and wetlands bordering other water bodies, alteration of land is prohibited except by special permit. The Duxbury Wetlands Protection Districts include a small amount of land outside of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act jurisdiction, and vice versa.

Beaches, Saltwater Wetlands, and Coastal Resources

Duxbury Beach, Duxbury Bay, and Duxbury Salt Marsh provide important recreational and ecological services. All three are currently protected from development. Duxbury Beach is a 4½ mile long barrier beach, a long, narrow strip of sand separated from the mainland by Duxbury Bay. As a result of tides, storms, and wind action, barrier beaches are constantly changing. Typically the beach erodes in the winter, when large storms remove sand, and accrete in the summer, when lower-energy waves return sand from offshore areas. Barrier beaches also protect the mainland from the ravages of winter storms by intercepting large waves and dispersing their energy.

In the summer of 1999, Duxbury saw unprecedented crowds on the “drive on” portion of Duxbury Beach. The significant increase in activity was caused by several factors; a hot summer, the growing popularity of 4 wheel-drive vehicles, the prohibition of 4 wheel-drive vehicles on beaches in neighboring Towns and an increase in the purchase of oversand beach permits, 8% by Duxbury residents and 23% by non-residents. The Board of Selectmen formed a committee to study the overcrowding, the use of 4 wheel-drive vehicles on the beach and the policies regarding the distribution of oversand permits.

Duxbury Beach supports a dune community typical of Massachusetts’s coastal areas. The beach is a breeding ground for three rare bird species—the least tern, the arctic tern, and the piping plover—and an important feeding and resting area for many bird species migrating on the eastern flyway. The Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program considers the beach a “high priority site for protection.”

Duxbury Beach Reservation, Inc., owns the beach and leases it to the town on an annual basis. The Town and Duxbury Beach Reservation, Inc. jointly provide beach management and law enforcement services. The beach is currently being managed under the 1997 Duxbury Beach Management Plan, prepared by the Town of Duxbury Beach Committee. Current management activities include:

- Duxbury Beach Reservation’s program of beach grass and shrub planting to enhance dune stability and provide greater habitat diversity for threatened species.
- Enforcement of the Duxbury Beach Rules and Regulations to restrict pets, trash disposal, removal of natural material from the beach, bonfires, camping, and other activities.
- Town of Duxbury beach patrols daily from 6AM to 2AM in the summer, with shorter hours in other seasons.

- Restrictions on off-road vehicle use, including a limit of 500 vehicles at any one time on the beach.

Other recommendations of the Duxbury Beach Management Plan concerning wildlife, plant communities, off-road vehicles, and dunes are discussed below in the Recommendations and Options section of this chapter.

The mudflats and shoreline of Duxbury Bay support some of the most important commercial and recreational shellfisheries in southeastern Massachusetts, as well as commercial lobstering and finfishing. While the Duxbury Bay environment is generally clean, the Shellfish Warden reports localized seasonal contamination, typically from sewage wastes.

The 1000-acre Duxbury Salt Marsh is an important component of Duxbury's marine ecosystem, providing food and habitat for invertebrates, fish, birds, and mammals. The town owns part of this marsh, and state wetland laws currently protect the entire marsh. In other coastal areas, the Duxbury Wetland Regulations restricts activity within 100 feet of the ocean and within 100 feet of land subject to tidal and wave action, such as beaches, dunes, and salt marshes.

Wildlife Habitat and Rare and Regionally Important Species and Habitats

Duxbury's matrix of forests, fields, water bodies, and edge zones provides habitat for a variety of mammals and birds, including raccoon, fox, rabbit, deer, ruffed grouse, quail, turkey, red-tailed hawk, and great horned owl. The suburbanization of Duxbury insures that there is and will continue to be plenty of edge habitat where two or more land use types abut—habitat useful for common species such as rabbit, squirrel, ruffed grouse, and quail. However, most of Duxbury's large, unfragmented parcels of wildlife habitat are currently unprotected. Duxbury's less common mammals, such as fox, as well as its rare turtle and salamander species, require these larger parcels, and are threatened by roads, houses, and other forms of habitat fragmentation.

Three regions in Duxbury provide habitat for rare species and play an especially important role in regional ecology:

- **South River Watershed:** The Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program designates much of this watershed as a high priority site for protection of rare species habitats and exemplary natural communities, providing habitat for fish, mammals, and migratory waterfowl. This watershed is very sparsely developed at present, but is partially unprotected and subject to increasing development pressure.
- **Wetlands and Vernal Pools:** The Natural Heritage Program has identified several wetlands and vernal pools as rare and important habitat, including parts of the North Hill Marsh District to the east and west of Route 3 and part of the South River Watershed. Wetlands and vernal pools provide habitat for rare amphibians, including the Eastern box turtle, spotted turtle, and four-toed salamander, and to birds including the American bittern. The Duxbury Wetland Regulations protect vernal pools (whether or not they are certified by Natural Heritage). However, many species that utilize vernal pools and wetlands also require adjacent upland for a viable habitat, and the law does not protect these upland areas.

- **Duxbury Beach:** Duxbury Beach provides breeding habitat for the piping plover, a threatened species at both the federal and state levels, and habitat for the least and arctic terns, both Species of Special Concern in Massachusetts.

3.2 EXISTING CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES, AND PROVISIONS FOR THEIR PROTECTION

Duxbury is rich in heritage: historic houses, sites, and artifacts recount the town's long and interesting history. In spite of this wealth of history, there are no designated historic districts in Duxbury to protect these resources. For a town of its size, Duxbury also possesses a wide variety of cultural attractions, including museums and libraries.

A Brief History of the Town of Duxbury

Adapted from the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan

Incorporated in 1637, Duxbury is one of Massachusetts' oldest communities. Its earliest inhabitants were Pilgrims who moved from Plymouth Colony to establish homesteads. Two of the earliest settlers—John Alden and Myles Standish—are remembered today by their historic homes and gravesites.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, shipbuilding and fishing had become major enterprises in Duxbury. Because of the area's abundant timber supplies and sheltered harbors, ships could be constructed at lower costs than in England. Ezra Weston, known in Duxbury as "King Caesar," was a prominent shipbuilder and sea merchant who established a large shipbuilding yard on Powder Point. His home still stands and is maintained as a museum. As ships grew larger with deeper drafts, the shallow waters of Duxbury Bay could no longer accommodate them, and the master shipbuilders and workers began to move from the area. The decline in the shipbuilding industry caused a significant downturn in the local economy by the mid-1800s.

The railroad came to Duxbury in 1871, bringing with it non-resident "summer people" from Boston who sought Duxbury's cool oceanfront amenities. This influx of tourists altered Duxbury's demographics and town character, and the town increasingly became a seaside community where people came to "summer" in their cottages. The railroad also employed many townspeople and facilitated the transport of commodities to major markets in Boston. As a result Duxbury's economy began to shift from shipbuilding to agriculture, including the harvesting of Duxbury's many lowland cranberry bogs.

In 1963, the completion of Route 3 changed Duxbury's complexion once again. While still maintaining a summer ambience, the town became a year-round home for people working in and around Boston. Summer cottages were weatherized and became year round homes. Today, Duxbury has become a commuting bedroom community, or exurb, of Boston. Town services and schools have been upgraded to meet the increasing year-round demand for services. Duxbury's zoning bylaws allow for a diversity of housing types, but excluded industry and extensively limit commercial development. This zoning encouraged a pattern of residential areas clustered around small commercial "village centers." Since the 1970s, land and home prices in Duxbury have increased dramatically. The Duxbury population today is well educated and economically advantaged.

In late 1997, the MBTA began service from Boston to the South Shore along the Old Colony commuter rail line. Although there are no rail stations in Duxbury, new commuter stations and commuter parking lots in surrounding towns such as Kingston are likely to increase growth pressures in Duxbury. Duxbury may therefore be on the verge of yet another transformation.

Inventory of Historic Resources

Duxbury is rich in heritage, as evidenced by its brief history retold above. Much of this history is reflected in still-remaining houses, sites, and artifacts that are designated Historic Sites. In spite of this wealth of history, there are no designated Historic Districts in Duxbury to provide protections to these properties.

Duxbury's most important historic and cultural sites are listed below.

- John Alden House, Alden St. This house is a museum containing artifacts of the Alden family, who were among Duxbury's original Pilgrim settlers.
- Myles Standish Homestead/Cellar Hole, Marshall St., Standish Shore. This site overlooking Plymouth Harbor is the historic homestead of one of Duxbury's most prominent founders.
- John Alden, Priscilla Mullin, and Elder Brewster gravesites. Burial site for some of Duxbury's earliest settlers.
- Gershom Bradford House, Drew House, and King Caesar House. These three historic house museums are operated and maintained by the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society. Together, they recall Duxbury's shipbuilding era in the mid-1800s.
- Cable House, Duxbury Beach. This privately owned house was the site, in 1869, of the first transcontinental cable connecting the U.S. to France.
- Cushman House. This house contains a memorial room with exhibits of Captain Cushman's artifacts and memorabilia. The Wild Lands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts owns the house.

Inventory of Cultural Resources

Duxbury's major cultural attractions include:

- Art Museum, Alden St. This museum features an extensive research library, a Japanese tea house and garden, and rotating art exhibits. It is free and open to the public.
- New Duxbury Free Library. This new town public library recently opened in the renovated former Alden Upper School building.
- Ellen Bumpus Gallery. Located in the former Duxbury Free Library, this gallery showcases local artists on a rotating basis. The building itself is a historic structure donated to the town in the late 1800s.

- Ellison Center for the Arts/South Shore Conservatory of Music. South Shore Conservatory of Music recently created the Ellison Center in the former Holy Family Church, Duxbury's first Catholic church. Lectures and concert series will be offered here throughout the year.

3.3 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS AND POLICIES

Recent surveys of Duxbury residents and Duxbury Town boards, committees, and officers indicate general consensus concerning natural and cultural resource management. For the most part, Duxbury values its rural character, open space, high-quality drinking water, and freshwater and saltwater resources. The Goals and Objectives section of the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan reflects many of these concerns. This section of the Comprehensive Plan builds on the goals expressed in earlier documents, but focuses more closely on natural resource issues. It is intended to complement the Goals and Objectives in the 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan, which focus primarily on open space, town character, and drinking water issues.

In December 1995, the Town of Duxbury mailed a ten-page questionnaire to 9,047 registered voters in the town. The 2,375 people who returned this questionnaire identified open space and natural resources as top concerns in Duxbury, and most indicated that they wanted to see these resources preserved and expanded where possible. Specifically:

- In response to the question "What do you like most about living in Duxbury?" the top three answers were Ambiance, Beach/Water, and Nature.
- When asked to name the top three issues facing Duxbury, Schools and Taxes/Spending were mentioned most frequently. However, all of the other top issues related to land use and natural resources. In order of perceived importance, these included: Growth, Zoning, Environment, Water, Beach, Sewage.
- A large majority of residents were concerned with several environmental issues: Water use & purity (87%), Duxbury Beach (85%), and Environmental Protection (80%). 86% agreed that Duxbury should develop an on-going plan to manage and maintain open space (only 5% disagreed). 64% of residents wanted the town to pursue the purchase of additional open space as it becomes available (16% did not).
- Residents were very concerned about water supply and water quality. 61% thought that there are problems with town water (24% disagreed). To rectify these problems, 66% were willing to reduce their water use (22% were not), 60% favored a water filtration system (23% did not), and 67% said that the town should purchase developable land to preserve it for aquifer protection purposes (10% disagreed).

The 1997 Duxbury Open Space and Recreation Plan distilled these questionnaire responses, plus input from Duxbury town boards, committees, and officials, into four general goals:

- 1) Protection of the Town's drinking water supply.

- 2) Protection and enhancement of Duxbury's natural resources and ecosystems.
- 3) Improvement of Town recreational opportunities with minimum impact to the environment.
- 4) Preservation of the character of Duxbury.

The Plan then elaborated on these broad goals by proposing specific actions and strategies, such as public education programs, planning efforts, and financial commitments.

The following paragraphs describe six categories of goals: open space, groundwater and drinking water, freshwater resources, beaches and saltwater resources, wildlife and rare species, and cultural and historical resources.

1. Open Space

- Expand Duxbury's open space holdings.
- Where possible, increase the level of protection on unprotected and semi-protected open space parcels.
- Explore innovative mechanisms to fund open space protection, such as Transfer of Development Rights programs.

2. Groundwater and Drinking Water

- Identify and reduce the major sources of aquifer contamination, including lawn chemicals and failing septic systems.
- Expand the town's aquifer protection holdings around existing and proposed future well sites where necessary.

3. Freshwater Resources

- Safeguard Duxbury's freshwater wetlands from development.
- Implement a "watershed approach" to freshwater resource management.
- Manage water quality through monitoring programs.
- Educate the public on the importance of maintaining clean water, and on how individual homeowners can promote this goal.

4. Beaches and Saltwater Resources

- Manage Duxbury's beach to provide for both recreational and rare species uses.
- Safeguard Duxbury Marsh from development.

5. Wildlife and Rare Species

- Maintain viable populations of state and federally listed rare and endangered species in Duxbury.
- Maintain viable populations of all other native species.

6. Cultural and Historic Resources

- Protect Duxbury's historic buildings from demolition or inappropriate alteration.
- Identify and implement historic districts in appropriate areas.
- Maintain the general architectural consistency and visual character of Duxbury's built environment.
- Enforce the demolition delay bylaw.

In many towns, the range of public opinion concerning open space and resource preservation would justify the presentation of alternative resource management scenarios in the Comprehensive Plan. In Duxbury, where there is overwhelming public sentiment that the town should remain a rural, wooded community dedicated to environmental protection, this approach appears to be inappropriate. Instead, a single resource management program is recommended, based largely on the opinions of Town citizens and officers, expressed in written surveys and at meetings. This program emphasizes open space preservation, environmental protection, and historic small-town character. In cases where public sentiment is divided, unknown, or in opposition to important resource management objectives, a variety of options are presented.

3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Primary Recommendations

1. Identify parcels for open space acquisition in accordance with criteria listed in the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan.
2. Further limit the uses allowed in the Aquifer Protection Overlay District and examine the need for additional land protection around existing and potential future Town Well sites.
3. Initiate a water quality monitoring program on Duxbury's major streams and watershed.
4. Consider designating historic parts of the Town as Local Historic Districts or as National Register Historic Districts.
5. Develop a management plan for open space lands acquired by the Town.

Secondary Recommendations

1. Seek open space linkages through a variety of mechanisms, including open space purchases, donation linear easements, cooperation with subdivision developers, and utilization of the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act.
2. Identify and certify vernal pools in Duxbury.
3. Examine the possibility of utilizing Transfer of Development Rights (TDR).
4. Continue implementation of the Duxbury Beach Management Plan as adopted in 1997 by the Town of Duxbury Beach Committee.
5. Continue implementation of the recently adopted Demolition Delay Bylaw so as to discourage the demolition of historically significant structures.

**Appendix 3-1
Inventory of Conservation & Open Space Lands in Duxbury**

See information in the Duxbury Open Space Plan and Article 17 of ATM 1999

Appendix 3-2 The Process of Protecting Historic Resources

As mentioned above, although Duxbury possesses a wealth of historic places and resources, it has not designated any places as an historic district. In Duxbury, the protection of historic and cultural resources has traditionally been accomplished by private historic preservation societies such as the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society, non-profit conservation land trusts, and by private deed restrictions or easements. In the past, Duxbury has considered the establishment of historic districts; however, sufficient support was not mustered to implement them. Should Duxbury wish to explore the establishment of historic districts in the future, below is described the nature of historic districts and the process of establishing them. Historic Districts may be established at the federal, state or local levels. Each provides varying degrees of protection. Local Historic Districts can provide the greatest protections to historic properties. National Register properties and State Register properties provide more limited protections. Privately deeded restrictions or easements can provide the greatest protections, but must be either privately donated or directly purchased.

Local Historic Preservation Programs and Districts

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. The MHC is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the office of State Archaeologist. The MHC works closely with local preservation groups and, if one has been established, the Local Historic Commission (LHC), which must be established by vote of the town.

As the State Historic Preservation Office, the MHC acts as liaison to federal, state, and local development agencies. The MHC is authorized by state and federal law, through its environmental review processes, to review and comment on certain state and federally licensed or funded projects (i.e. the Old Colony Rail Line or the widening of Route 3) that have an impact on historic properties.

Local Historical Commission (LHC): Once established, the LHC is the municipal agency responsible for ensuring that preservation concerns are considered in community planning and development decisions. They serve as local preservation advocates and as an important resource of information about their community's cultural resources and preservation activities.

Local Historic Districts (LHD): An LHD is established and administered by a community to protect the distinctive characteristics of important areas and to encourage new construction that is compatible with the historic setting. A District Study Committee is appointed to conduct a survey of the area and to prepare a preliminary report for state and local review. A final report is then submitted to the local governing body for approval of the local ordinance. Once the LHD is established, a Local Historic District Commission (LHDC) is appointed to review all applications for exterior changes to buildings within the district.

This design review process assures that proposed changes to properties will not destroy the district's character. Review criteria, which may be either quite restrictive or quite flexible, are determined locally by each town and city and vary considerably for each local district. Therefore, it remains the decision of the town as to the degree of discretion given to the LHDC to review proposed exterior property changes.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) documents and records the nation's significant buildings, sites, and objects as well as districts worthy of protection. Based on local and state surveys, nominations to the NRHP are generally initiated by the Local Historical Commission, which works with MHC staff to prepare the nomination form. The MHC then reviews nominations. State Review Board at a public meeting and forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register for approval.

Listing on the NRHP provides a basis for making informed planning and development decisions. NRHP status places no constraints on what owners may do with their properties when using private funds. While the NRHP is not a design review program, it does provide limited protection from state and federal actions, as well as eligibility for matching state and federal restoration and research grants and certain federal tax benefits for certified rehabilitation projects.

State Register of Historic Places

The State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) was created to serve as a master list of designated historic properties in Massachusetts and to provide an added measure of protection to these properties. Properties are included on this Register if they are: listed or determined to be determined eligible for listing in the NRHP; local historic districts; local, state and national landmarks, state archaeological landmarks; or properties with preservation restrictions. The State Register serves as a guide for project developers to determine whether a state funded or licensed project will affect any historic properties. The State Register review process is modeled closely after the federal review process and ensures that State Registered properties will not inadvertently be harmed by activities supported by State agencies.

Preservation Restrictions

Preservation Restrictions protect historic properties from changes that may be inappropriate. A preservation restriction (easement) on a property restricts present and future owners from altering a specified portion of a building, structure or site. A restriction can run for several years or in perpetuity and may be included as part of a property deed. Preservation restrictions can be donated or purchased by a government body, or private preservation organization and are enforced by the holder of the restriction. Charitable donations of easements on historical buildings or archaeological sites may qualify for federal income tax deductions.

**Appendix 3-3
Natural And Cultural Resource Protection Tools Available To Duxbury**

Adequate protection of Duxbury's natural and cultural resources will require the use of a variety of tools, including state and local environmental regulations, self-help grants, technical assistance programs, and other tools. In 1996, Massachusetts passed a \$400 million Open Space Bond Bill, providing \$50 million to replenish the Self-Help and Urban Self-Help grant programs. The following list describes some of the important resource protection tools available to Duxbury.

State and Local Regulations

- **Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act.** The MEPA review process requires the proponents of large projects to examine and mitigate the environmental impacts of their projects. The Town of Duxbury may influence this process by submitting comments on projects proposed in Duxbury.
- **Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Protection Act.** The Duxbury Conservation Commission and the DEP administer these state regulations. The Commission has some discretion to determine whether activities (such as the construction of houses, septic systems, and roads) are permitted in wetlands and the 100 foot buffer zones around wetlands, and within 200 feet of perennial streams.
- **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.** Designated and administered by the Department of Environmental Management, ACECs are intended to protect natural resources of regional importance, which often span two or more municipalities. Local citizen or government groups may petition the DEM for inclusion in the ACEC program of an outstanding natural resource in their area. Once designated, an ACEC provides additional protection against development. In Duxbury, several of the watersheds, as well as the salt marsh, might be reasonable candidates for ACEC designation.
- **Massachusetts Endangered Species Acts.** This Act, administered through the Duxbury Conservation Commission, allows for review by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of projects proposed within designated habitat areas.

Self-Help Grants

- **Massachusetts Self-Help Program.** This program provides up to 90% reimbursement for the cost of land purchase for conservation or passive outdoor recreation purposes. Projects that are successful typically protect water resources, include rare or endangered species habitat, link to other protected open space, or contain historic or archaeological resources, and include participation with other governmental or private non-profit agencies. Annual filing deadline is June 1. Contact the Division of Conservation Services at 617-727-1552.
- **Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program.** This program provides up to 90% reimbursement for the cost of purchasing and/or developing land for recreational uses, including ballfields, golf courses, playgrounds, and other facilities. Successful acquisition projects typically provide water based recreation, link protected open space, protect rare or endangered species habitat, or protect cultural or archaeological sites. Cooperation with other governmental and nonprofit agencies is encouraged. Only municipalities with a park, playground, or recreation commission are eligible. Annual filing deadline is June 1. Contact the Division of Conservation Services at 617-727-1552.
- **Coastal Access Grant Program.** This program supports local efforts to enhance the public's ability to access the shoreline. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Contact the DEM at 617-727-3180.

- **Greenways and Trails Demonstration Grants Program.** The DEM provides grants of \$1,000 to \$3,000 to municipalities and non-profits to support innovative projects which advance the creation and promotion of greenway and trail networks in Massachusetts.
- **Lake and Pond Grant Program.** This program provides grants for comprehensive, integrated approaches to lake management, protection, and restoration. A maximum grant of \$10,000 is available on a 50/50 cost sharing basis. Annual application deadline is in November or December. Contact the DEM, Office of Water Resources, at 617-727-3267.
- **National Recreational Trails Act Grant Program.** These grants provide funding for trail projects to private organizations and municipalities. Contact the DEM at 617-727-3180.
- **Forest Stewardship Program.** This program provides incentives for sound forest management on private lands. Landowners, with the assistance of DEM foresters, develop a forest stewardship plan for their property, which makes them eligible for federal cost-sharing dollars to help carry out the plan. Most grants range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Contact the DEM at 617-727-3180.
- **Urban Forest Planning and Education Grants.** Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to assist communities and non-profit groups in developing forestry programs that involve local residents and educators. Contact the DEM at 617-727-3180.
- **State Revolving Fund.** This fund supports water pollution abatement projects, and especially watershed management projects with substantial water quality and public health benefits. Typical projects include new wastewater treatment facilities as well as nonpoint source pollution abatement efforts. Contact the DEP at 617-292-5749.
- **Acquisition and Development Funds for Statewide Trails.** This program offers grants to acquire long-distance trail corridors as greenways linking public and nonprofit conservation land and to incorporate long-distance trails into local open space planning.
- **City and Town Commons Program.** This program provides grants to rehabilitate commons and squares in municipal centers.
- **Aquifer Land Acquisition Program.** This program provides grants to purchase lands in the primary area of contribution (Zone II) to public water supplies.
- **Massachusetts Highway Department's Bikeways Program.** Grants are available to develop bikeways and to provide bicycle parking facilities.
- **Clean Lakes Program.** This program aids municipalities in addressing problems of eutrophication of publicly owned lakes and ponds used for recreational purposes.

Other Resource Protection Tools

- **Conservation Restrictions.** A landowner may place restrictions on his or her deed, either temporarily or in perpetuity, to keep the land in an open, natural, or scenic condition. Local Conservation Districts provide technical and financial assistance to landowners seeking Conservation Restrictions. Contact the Plymouth Conservation District at 508-295-5495.
- **National and State Registers of Historic Places.** These programs may be used to protect historic buildings, districts, and sites. A local party often initiates the registration process. These programs are discussed further in the Cultural and Historical Resources section, above.

- **Local Historic Districts.** These districts vary in their level of protection, but commonly provide for a design review process to ensure aesthetic consistency within the district. This option is discussed further in the Cultural and Historical Resources section, above.

Community Preservation Act

Over the last several years, the Massachusetts State legislature has been debating legislation that would enable municipalities to establish a small excise tax on the transfer of land to be used for open space preservation or affordable housing. To date, this legislation has failed, although several towns have succeeded in enacting special legislation that allows them to proceed with such a program.

It is important to note that the legislation does not require municipalities to enact the deeds excise tax. In a recent draft of the bill, the maximum excise tax is 1%, and a community can exempt up to \$100,000 of every purchase from this tax. The legislation would mandate that at least 10% of the fund be used for each of three programs: open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing. The remaining 70% could be allocated in a manner that meets the community's goals and objectives. In Duxbury, such a revenue stream could be used to implement a number of townwide objectives, such as open space acquisition, historic preservation, and sewage disposal improvements.

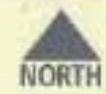
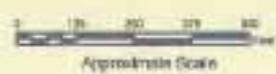
This approach has worked in other communities, most notably Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, which have used the funds predominantly for open space preservation, affordable housing, and maintaining community character. If this legislation becomes law, Duxbury should consider adopting a real estate transfer tax. It will enhance the implementation of the recommended land use scenario by providing additional financial resources for acquiring open space, thereby protecting community character and the Town's environment.



Bay Farm Trail Map

Kingston, Massachusetts 02364

Prepared by Kingston Department of Conservation, April 2011



From: Bob Bale [<mailto:bob.bale@wildlandrestoration.org>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 4:59 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Myles Standish Complex Resource Management Plan Comments from WRI

Dear Commissioner Murray,

Please find the attached pdf with comments for the Myles Standish Complex Resource Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Bob Bale

Bob Bale, President
Wildland Restoration International
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January 14, 2014

Jack Murray, Commissioner
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Commissioner Murray,

On behalf of Wildland Restoration International, I submit the following comments in relation to the drafting of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Myles Standish Complex - specifically, Myles Standish State Forest (MSSF).

The RMP should elevate to the highest priority the management of pine barrens vegetation in MSSF. The management practices should include:

- Invasive species control
- Harvesting (removal) of non-native plantations
- Mechanical thinning and mowing to allow for safe, large scale prescribed burning
- And, most importantly, **large-scale prescribed burning**.

Being a pine barrens forest, the exclusion of fire over recent decades has compounded the hazard of wildfire. Pine barrens are the most fire prone plant community in the Northeast. In fact, the needles of pitch pine burn hotter than those of any other native pine tree in the entire country. Wildfires have not so much been prevented here as postponed.

The present condition of the forest leaves it vulnerable to a host of dangers that threaten DCR employees, visitors, the residents in the surrounding towns, the region's emergency responders, and the health of the forest itself. These vulnerabilities include:

- Catastrophic wildfire
- Pests and pathogens (e.g., southern pine beetle)
- Invasive plants (e.g., glossy buckthorn)

Increasingly harsh and frequent summer droughts in our region's changing climate will aggravate these hazards.

The MSSF pine barrens' ecological resilience can be dramatically increased and the risk to public safety dramatically decreased if modern forest fuels management practices are implemented at a large scale.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Bob Bale

From: Melissa Guimont [<mailto:madshamel@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 4:30 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Forefathers Monument RMP

Hello. I would like to submit 2 comments for consideration on the Resource Management Plan for the Forefather's Monument in Plymouth. 1. Attention is needed on eradicating the invasive Oriental Bittersweet vine that is growing up and amidst the Cedar trees to the right of the monument. It would be nice to let those cedars thrive without being choked up by this vine.

The only effective way to remove it is to cut most of the vine and then pull out the roots, and if the roots aren't able to be removed, then a high concentrated "round up" application on the cut stem of the root will help prevent new shoots from forming. 2. It would be nice if there were some birdhouses (on poles in the field areas) up to encourage native birds similar to the ones up at Myles Standish State Forest. Thank you for consideration of these two things. -Melissa Guimont, -Friends of Myles Standish State Forest.