



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Bureau of Planning, Design & Resource Protection
Resource Management Planning Program

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Nickerson Management Complex

Including Shawme-Crowell State Forest, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, South Cape Beach State Park, Washburn Island, Quashnet Woods State Reservation, Roland C. Nickerson State Park, Hawksnest State Park, Cape Cod Rail Trail, Manuel F. Correllus State Forest, Joseph A. Sylvia State Beach, South Beach State Park, Nantucket State Forest, and Reforestation Lots and Fire Observation Towers on Cape Cod and the Islands



June 2015



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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2015

Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Carol I. Sanchez, Commissioner

Resource Management Plans provide guidance for managing properties under the stewardship of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). They are intended to be working documents for setting priorities, enabling the Department to adapt to changing fiscal, social and environmental conditions. The planning process provides a forum for communication and cooperation with park visitors and the surrounding communities to ensure transparency in the DCR's stewardship efforts.

Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket have long been tourist destinations. Each year, an estimated six million tourists visit Cape Cod, with most arriving in the summer or early fall. They come to enjoy the beach, attend cultural events, and experience the region's character. Parks in DCR's Nickerson Management Complex provide these visitors with memorable destinations and recreation experiences. Whether staying in a DCR campground, spending a day at an oceanfront beach, cycling along the Cape Cod Rail Trail, or taking a hike through the woods, the Complex's properties delight and enrich the lives of tourists and residents alike. In addition to providing outstanding recreational opportunities, these parks also protect important natural and cultural resources.

Throughout the Complex are numerous examples of how partnerships can benefit resources and the visitor experience. The historic Crosby Mansion at Nickerson state park has been painstakingly restored through a partnership among the DCR, Town of Brewster, and the Friends of Crosby Mansion. Nearby, the Cape Rep offers creative and professional theater presentations in the park. The properties of Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve exist because of a longstanding partnership between the DCR and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. On the Vineyard, Sylvia state beach and South Beach State Park are owned by the DCR and managed by the county and Town of Edgartown, respectively. Friends groups at Shawme-Crowell, Nickerson, and Waquoit Bay help improve our parks and the park-going experience. The lives of Cape and Islands residents and visitors are enriched by these partnerships.

This Resource Management Plan provides recommendations that protect the parks' natural and cultural resources while providing for compatible recreation, so that they may be enjoyed by generations.

I invite you to visit these parks and enjoy some of the best of what the Cape and Islands have to offer.



Carol I. Sanchez
Commissioner

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about the DCR, our facilities, and our programs please visit us www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are working documents that provide a guide to the short- and long-term management of properties under the stewardship of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). They include an inventory and assessment of natural, cultural, and recreational resources; identify unique characteristics and values of a property; analyze complex resource protection and recreation issues; and develop clear management recommendations. They guide the management of DCR's properties by setting priorities, targeting capital and operational resources, protecting sensitive resources, and improving communication and cooperation with park visitors and the surrounding communities.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation is directed by legislative mandate (M.G.L. Chapter 21: Section 2F) to prepare management plans for "all reservations, parks, and forests under the management of the department." Although the mandate does not specify the format or content of these management plans, it does require that:

"Said management plans shall include guidelines for the operation and land stewardship of the aforementioned reservations, parks and forests, shall provide for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources and shall ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection, and sustainable forest management."

The legislative mandate also establishes two other requirements. First, that the DCR "shall seek and consider public input in the development of management plans, and shall make draft plans available for a public review and comment period through notice in the Environmental Monitor." Second, management plans must be reviewed and adopted by the DCR Stewardship Council, a thirteen-member citizen oversight entity. Within 30 days of adoption, the Commissioner "...shall file a copy of such management plans as adopted by the council" with the Secretary of State and the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

This plan covers the Nickerson Management Complex.

THE NICKERSON MANAGEMENT COMPLEX

The Nickerson Management Complex includes DCR properties on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket. It includes parks, reforestation lots, and properties on which the DCR holds a legal interest.

The following 12 parks are included in the Nickerson Management Complex:

- Shawme-Crowell State Forest
- Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- South Cape Beach State Park
- Washburn Island
- Quashnet Woods State Reservation
- Roland C. Nickerson State Park
- Hawksnest State Park
- Cape Cod Rail Trail
- Manuel F. Correllus State Forest
- Joseph A. Sylvia State Beach
- South Beach State Park
- Nantucket State Forest

Also included in the Complex are the following five reforestation lots:

- Sandwich Reforestation Lot
- Falmouth Reforestation Lot
- Barnstable State Forest, Route 132 Lot
- Barnstable State Forest, Old Stage Road Lot
- Brewster State Forest

In addition to these parks and reforestation lots, the DCR holds conservation restrictions on multiple properties on Cape Cod (566.7 acres, total) and two properties on Martha's Vineyard (83.0 acres, total). Typically, the fee owners of these properties are municipalities or non-profit organizations.

This RMP also contains information on seven fire observation towers located in, or near, DCR properties in the Complex.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPING THIS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Notice of a public meeting and of the DCR's intent to prepare an RMP for the Nickerson Management Complex was published in the November 20, 2013 Environmental Monitor (Volume 81, Issue 2). Notices were also posted at the Complex's parks and mailed to approximately 120 stakeholders. An initial public meeting was convened at Cape Cod Community College, Barnstable on December 5, 2013. Approximately 12 people attended this meeting, which ran from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.

A second public meeting, in the form of an open house, was held in the garage at Manuel F. Correllus State Forest on December 7, 2013, from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. Announcement of this open house was also published in the November 20, 2013 issue of the Environmental Monitor and included in mailings. Approximately 10 people attended.

The initial public comment period ran from December 5, 2013 through January 10, 2014; 15 sets of written comments were received.

Notice of two public meetings on the draft RMP for the Nickerson Management Complex, and of the availability of the plan, was published in the January 7, 2015 Environmental Monitor (Volume 83, Issue 5). Meeting notices were also posted at the Complex's parks and mailed to stakeholders. The first meeting was held on January 29, 2015 at the West Barnstable Fire Station; approximately 14 people attended. The second meeting was held on February 7, 2015 at the headquarters at Manuel F. Correllus State Forest. Approximately 16 people attended.

The public comment period on the draft RMP ran from January 30 through March 9, 2015; 22 sets of written comments were received.

Additional information on the public process for this RMP is provided in Appendix B (Public Participation).

This Resource Management Plan was submitted to the DCR's Stewardship Council on May 14, 2015, and was adopted by the council on June 18, 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One hundred and twenty-seven priority management recommendations were developed for the Complex in its entirety, individual parks within the Complex, and associated fire observation towers. Fifteen of these recommendations apply to more than one property in the Complex.

For a recommendation to be considered priority it must address one or more of the following criteria:

- Regulatory compliance or compliance with legal agreements.
- Health and safety of park visitors and employees.
- Imminent pending loss of a natural, cultural, or recreation resource.

Priority recommendations are summarized in Table ES-1.

Table ES.1. Summary of management recommendations for the Nickerson Management Complex.

Recommendation^a	Complex	Shawme-Crowell	WBNERR	South Cape Beach	Washburn Island	Quashnet Woods	Nickerson	Hawksnest	Cape Cod Rail Trail	Correllus	Sylvia State Beach	South Beach	Nantucket	Reforestation Lots	Fire Towers
Monitor properties in which the DCR has a legal interest for consistency with agreements.	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prepare barrier beach management plan in accordance with EO 181.	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Contact the Office of Cultural Resources before starting any project beyond those described in the BMPs.	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Install an external sink on the comfort station near the Friends' pavilion; remove current temporary sink from near the pavilion.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seal floor drain in the basement stairwell of the park headquarters and install an alternative drainage system.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trim vegetation to improve traffic sight lines.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perform a structural analysis of former superintendent's residence and outbuildings.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rehabilitate comfort stations.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Evaluate, reroof, and mothball CCC building.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clear vegetation from CCC dynamite bunker and evaluate for masonry repairs.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continue existing maintenance practices for the administration building.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Secure and mothball former FAA building, demolish if appropriate.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Address safety issues with playground equipment, increase frequency of inspections.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ensure appropriate number of accessible grills and tables at campsites.	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repair ADA accessible showers.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investigate potential encroachment.	-	X	X	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repair or replace damaged pavement.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Develop or improve trails map; distribute.	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Locate, establish, or re-establish agreements for the presence of equipment, facilities, or management activities.	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X
Add accessible parking spaces and/or pavement markings.	-	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-
Continue ongoing rare species monitoring and management.	-	-	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Minimize further impacts to historic landscape.	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fill vacant staff positions.	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table ES.1. Summary of management recommendations for the Nickerson Management Complex. (Continued)

Recommendation^a	Complex	Shawme-Crowell	WBNERR	South Cape Beach	Washburn Island	Quashnet Woods	Nickerson	Hawksnest	Cape Cod Rail Trail	Correllus	Sylvia State Beach	South Beach	Nantucket	Reforestation Lots	Fire Towers
Reconfigure the entrance to Wills Works Road.	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Install standard Land and Water Conservation Fund signs.	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Request that the Town of Mashpee permanently dedicate at least one seat on the South Cape Beach Advisory Committee to a representative of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Create pedestrian corridor(s) to regulate dune crossings.	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Improve interagency coordination in the placing of dredge spoils on park.	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continue discussions with the Town of Mashpee regarding creation of boat ramp.	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Submit maintenance and management activities to the NHESP for MESA review.	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X
Replace damaged steps to campground.	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Develop and implement a strategy for the long-term maintenance of composting toilets.	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continue efforts to restore New England Cottontail habitat.	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coordinate river restoration activities with DCR archaeologist.	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Implement Cliff Pond management plan.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work to develop mutually agreeable arrangement for leasing house at 207 Weathervanes Way.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work with MassDOT and town to direct park visitors to new sidewalk and crosswalk.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assess and manage trails to protect Coastal Plain Pondshore communities.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reduce trails from camping areas to ponds.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Survey Coastal Shore and Dune Management Unit for occurrence of state-listed plants.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erect a kiosk with park information and rules.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Remove temporary stump piles.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Apply Cape Cod-style design standards to new construction.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conduct a cultural resources survey to assess the historical significance of Camp Monomoy.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assess and document pump house structure, remove if necessary.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perform condition assessment of CCC-built structures and prioritize repair.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table ES.1. Summary of management recommendations for the Nickerson Management Complex. (Continued)

Recommendation^a	Complex	Shawme-Crowell	WBNERR	South Cape Beach	Washburn Island	Quashnet Woods	Nickerson	Hawksnest	Cape Cod Rail Trail	Correllus	Sylvia State Beach	South Beach	Nantucket	Reforestation Lots	Fire Towers
Rehabilitate comfort station at park entrance to make it accessible.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post park regulations at specific locations.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Establish suitable marker for the Robert B. Hooper Memorial Bicycle Path.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post park boundaries.	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gate Round Cove Road to decrease depreciative behavior.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Create gravel parking lot.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Install lead-in signs from main road to park.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Install trail signs and markings in accordance with the DCR's Trail Guidelines and Best Practices Manual.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investigate potential encroachment and resolve with abutters, if warranted.	-	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-
Increase the DCR's presence in the park.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Implement improvements to boat ramp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Obtain data to regulate flow of water through Namskaket Creek culverts.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assess work proposed adjacent to or near the multi-use trail for potential impacts to archaeological resources.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Re-establish bridle trail.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paint pavement markings and post "No Parking" signs opposite accessible spaces at Wellfleet trail head.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Identify options for expanding authorized parking.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Install or update road crossing signs and markings to meet current safety standards.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
Implement recommended safety measures at Eastham underpass and elsewhere along trail, as warranted.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actively promote trail user etiquette and safety.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-

Table ES.1. Summary of management recommendations for the Nickerson Management Complex. (Continued)

Recommendation^a	Complex	Shawnee-Crowell	WBNERR	South Cape Beach	Washburn Island	Quashnet Woods	Nickerson	Hawksnest	Cape Cod Rail Trail	Correllus	Sylvia State Beach	South Beach	Nantucket	Reforestation Lots	Fire Towers
Following completion of Dennis to Yarmouth extension, prepare a master plan for the entire park.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work with towns to improve safety at road crossings.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
Prepare an updated fire break management plan to close out Conservation Permit #01.012.DFW.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Prepare and implement a comprehensive fire management plan to promote populations of rare species, their habitats, and native natural communities; and to decrease the risk of fire to the forest and abutting properties.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Remove remnant non-native conifer plantations to promote native vegetation and to decrease fire risk to the forest and abutting properties.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	X	-
In association with The Nature Conservancy, periodically review and update the Pohogonot Tract's Management and Maintenance Plan.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassify Martha's Vineyard Riverhead Disc Golf Course as Parkland.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Survey park boundary and establish permanent bounds.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Work with the County of Dukes County to clarify issues regarding concessions in the park.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Work with the Town of Edgartown to establish a new MOU for park operations and management.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
Ensure that existing Habitat Management Plan is implemented.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Provide the NHESP with annual written notification of "activities planned to meet management goals" for the savannah-open woodland project area in the North Pasture.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Conduct a state-wide survey of condition and cultural significance of all fire towers.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Determine ownership of the State Police building, stabilize, and mothball if owned by the DCR.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Conduct an inventory of all antennas and communication equipment, compare against existing legal agreements, and establish new agreements as warranted.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X

a. When possible, similar recommendations have been grouped under common, associated themes.