

Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting
December 18, 2023
6:30 PM

Location: DCR Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor's Center, 100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

Members: (members in **BOLD** were present)

Massachusetts Council of Sportsmen: **Bill Pula**

Alternate: Robert Sagan

Trout Unlimited: Richard Taupier

Alternate: Joe Babineau

Quabbin Fisherman's Association: **Clayton Sydla (Vice-Chair)**

Alternate: Mike Laprade; **Bill Kimball**

Worcester County League of Sportsmen: Ronald Komar

Alternate: John Root

North Worcester County Quabbin Anglers Association: Samantha Robinson

Alternate: **Tom Barnes**; Mike Polchlopek

Mass Audubon: **Tom Lautzenheiser**

Alternate:

Swift River Valley Historical Society: Elena Palladino

Alternate:

New England Sierra Club:

Alternate:

Friends of Quabbin, Inc.: **J.R. Greene (Chair)**

Alternate: Gene Theroux

General Public: **Ralph Lapinskas**

Alternate:

DCR staff present: Dan Clark, Justin Gonsor

Members of the public present: Chris Barnard, Patty Barnard, Edward Blanchard, Peter Durant, David Korash, Susan Meagher, Pam Mitchell, Charles Schmohl, Dennis Schmohl, Moussa Siri, Todd Smola, Stephen Smith, Diane Smith,

Meeting Start Time: 6:33 PM

Approval of minutes from meeting on September 18, 2023

Ralph made a motion to accept the minutes from the QWAC meeting held on September 18, 2023. Bill Pula seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2023 Quabbin fishing season report

Dan presented the 2023 fishing season draft report to the committee. The complete report is attached at the end of these minutes.

Revenue was comparable to previous years. 2023 was the first full season that the BLA's were on credit sales only, no cash was accepted.

If anyone notices any errors in the report, they should send Justin (justin.gonsor@mass.gov) an email about it.

Preliminary 2023 Quabbin deer hunt results

State Representative Todd Smola commented on the Quabbin Park hunt. He expressed frustration with the process of how the Park hunt was announced and wished DCR had been in more communication with stakeholders before the final decision to hunt the park was made.

Dan gave the committee preliminary harvest numbers from the deer hunt. A complete breakdown and analysis will be given by NR staff later in 2024.

Three managed hunts (2-day controlled hunts) took place at Quabbin; Petersham, Prescott, and Quabbin Park for the first time.

Petersham was hunted first on Nov. 29-30. 204 hunters attended and harvested 41 deer; 28 male (mostly adults) and 13 female.

Quabbin Park was hunted second on Dec. 4-5. 72 hunters attended and harvested 37 deer; 5 male and 32 female (mostly adults). The estimated size of the deer herd in the park was discussed. Pellet surveys will be conducted in the spring by NR staff, as has been done in the past. Hunter success was almost 50%. Clayton commented that he has anecdotally heard that people haven't been seeing many deer in the park for years. He also suggested increasing the paraplegic hunt in the park to 3-weeks and to hold a youth hunt in the park as well. Bill Pula reminded everyone that in 2019 the QWAC unanimously voted to support hold a 2-day controlled hunt in Quabbin Park.

Prescott was hunted third on Dec. 6-7. 276 hunters attended and harvested 40 deer; 24 male and 16 female.

Current regulations only allow for a shotgun deer hunt at Quabbin. DWSP has been looking into getting the regulations changed to allow for archery, black powder, etc.

Which zones will be hunted in 2024 is still being discussed internally with DWSP.

Update on forestry and ranger buildings on Blue Meadow Road

Dan updated the committee on the status of the forestry and ranger buildings on Blue Meadow Road.

Since the last meeting, DCR submitted a Project Notification Form (PNF) to the MA Historical Commission (MHC) on Oct. 16, 2023. Both projects were submitted simultaneously on the same form, requesting demolition of the ranger station and forestry building. The PNF is attached at the end of these minutes. MHC approved the project stating that it has been determined that the project is unlikely to effect significant historical or archaeological resources. The plan going forward is to focus on the demolition of the forestry building first.

J.R. commented that he recently toured the ranger station, and it is no condition to be used as a site for a new visitor center, as had been suggested in the past. It was built in 1900.

Gate 43

- **Road repaving schedule**

- State Representative Todd Smola spoke about the need to repave the gate 43 road that people use to get to BLA3. Funds were secured in/around 2022 to get the road repaved. He commented that was told by DCR that the plan was to get the road paved in the fall of 2023, but it didn't happen.
- J.R. clarified that QWAC is simply an advisory group/body and doesn't have veto power against any decisions that DCR makes.
- Dan updated the committee on the paving plan going forward. DCR recently met on-site with the paving contractor and the DCR-contract manager who oversees the paving contract. The gate 43 road is at the top of the list for when the paving season starts in 2024. May 6 is the tentative start date for the project and is set to last up to 3 weeks. The plan is to reclaim all pavement from gate 43 to the bridge and put a

base coat down. Starting at the gate, a topcoat will then be put down and go as far as money allows, there won't be enough money for the top coat to be put down all the way to the bridge. Whatever is left will get finished in the following fiscal year. The entire road will be repaired and have a base coat put down in May.

- State Senator Peter Durant asked how much of the road DCR anticipates they will be able to completely pave and an estimate on how much more money it will take to finish the job.
- Dan answered that he has not yet seen specific updated figures from the paving contractor.
- Tom Barnes commented that it is important that the finishing topcoat get put down within a year of the base coat being put down; the sooner the better.
- **Closing of Pottapaug Pond to private boats**
 - Dan updated the committee on potential options for fishing Pottapaug Pond going forward after an invasive plant (swollen bladderwort) was discovered this past year, resulting in the closure of the pond to private boats.
 - MWRA is finalizing a contract to bring in a company that specializes in invasive plant management. They will survey the pond and plan for 2 full weeks of hand pulling in the early spring.
 - No decision has yet been made about allowing private boats on the pond for 2024.
 - Clayton wanted it clarified that he never said private boats were being closed to Pottapaug Pond in 2024.
- **Power at BLA3 building**
 - Dan updated the committee on plans to overhaul the solar power system at BLA3. There is money in place in the current fiscal year to accomplish this task. The photovoltaic system at the area will be upgraded to modern standards, like the upgrade that recently happened at BLA1. It is unclear on if the project will be completed before the fishing season begins.

Plans to rebuild/replace all three BLA shacks

At a previous meeting a QWAC member suggested replacing/rebuilding all the BLA shacks. Since then, Dan has investigated the notion and gotten feedback on the condition of the shacks. The consensus is that there is nothing structurally wrong with the structures. They are seasonal buildings that are in a sound condition, so this project would currently be lower down on the priority list. There is no timeline to replace them.

Gate 8 road

- **Avoiding use of sharp stones for pavement**
 - This item is simply a reminder that the annual laying of gravel on the gate 8 road avoid the use of sharp stones; to help avoid cars getting flat tires.

Improving vistas at Enfield and Pelham lookouts

- A QWAC member at a previous meeting suggested DCR investigate improving the vistas at the Enfield and Pelham Lookouts.
- Since the last meeting Dan investigated the issue with DWSP staff and assess possibilities.
- The lookout at the tower could be improved internally easily. The plan is to improve that vista this winter.
- The Enfield and Pelham Lookouts are more challenging to improve the vista. The trees are too large and far away to be removed by DCR staff. Chief forester Ken Canfield is going to assess both sites for a potential forest harvest to be put out to bid as a regular forest management project.

Member Issues

Tom Barnes asked about the status of the watershed forestry program. All new projects had been put on hold as the Healey administration reviewed forestry on public lands across the Commonwealth. Dan answered that the review was supposed to be concluded on Dec. 8, 2023, but was contacted and told that more time was needed to finalize their recommendations. The new timeline anticipates that the review will be completed by the end of 2023.

Clayton has GPS coordinates of loose anchor lines that need to be removed near the gate 8 barrel line. The coordinates will be given to the state police; they plan to remove them.

Clayton spoke about cushions that were place at the private dock last year and how much the fishermen appreciated them. He asked if they could also be placed at the rental dock as well. Dan will investigate the issue.

Clayton commented on the bridge at gate 43. He said that although he has been told the bridge is structurally sound, he mentioned that cosmetically, the concrete at the top is crumbling. He hoped DCR masonry staff could fix that issue. Dan answered that the bridge was assessed by an engineering company several years

ago and was told that there are other issues that need to be addressed with the bridge other than concrete. Repairs needed to the bridge are more extensive than just replacing some concrete.

Clayton commented that he would like to see the permanent restrooms at the observation tower reopened. They have been closed since 2020. Dan will investigate the issue.

Tom Lautzenheiser spoke about a recent report put out by MA Audubon and Harvard Forest titled Growing Solar, Protecting Nature. It is regarding balancing development of solar capacity with forest protection. There will be a public forum in Amherst at the Bangs Community Center on Monday, January 22, 6pm.

J.R. was contacted by two members of the Asnacomet Pond Association in Hubbardston regarding DCR allowing long-distance swimming at the pond. J.R. noted that the pond is in the Ware River Watershed and that the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) would be the more appropriate group to bring their concerns to.

- Susan Meagher, president of the Asnacomet Pond Association, commented that the association is opposed to the current DCR plan to create a 4-5 car parking area for long-distance swimmers at the southeastern end of Comet Pond. The group is opposed to any proposed changes at the pond. She stated that 11 members of the association met with Dan Clark on 11/20 to voice their concerns. She also voiced concerned about safety from increased vehicle traffic in the area. She suggested a solution would be that all visitor swimming must take place at or from the public beach.
- Ed Blanchard, longtime user of Comet Pond, expressed his concern about open water swimming being allowed at the pond. He expressed concerned that boaters and fishermen are not the only people using the boat ramp, other user groups use it (swimmers, kayakers, canoers, etc.). He spoke about the frustration of fishermen having to avoid other users of the water body. He feels boaters and fishermen have been unfairly negatively affected as other recreational uses of the pond have increased. He stated that contamination of the water body would increase as more people use the pond. He suggested Brigham Pond and Moose Head Pond are located a mile from Comet Pond and would be good for distance swimming. At those ponds the swimmers wouldn't have to worry about avoiding boaters or fishermen on the water.

- Howard Whitney, regular swimmer at Comet Pond, spoke about enjoying swimming at the pond. He expressed concern that DCR's proposal would put swimmers near boaters and fishermen that are launching; it is the narrowest part of the pond. He also referencing underwater obstructions that limit where people can go. He feels that swimming off the beach is a better and safer option.
- Dan reminded everyone that the most recent update to the Ware River Public Access Management Plan was approved and finalized in the fall. Open water swimming is discussed in the plan and the wording is that it isn't prohibited. The plan also states that DWSP would commit to trying to identify an entry/exit point for open water swimmers at Comet Pond. Based on where DCR owns land around the pond, there are only a couple options for a parking lot. One consideration was to try and separate the beach from distance swimmers. The proposed parking lot at the southeastern end of the pond isn't technically adjacent to the boat ramp, but further up the eastern shoreline. An issue that complicates the matter is that DCR-DWSP manages the southeastern corner of the pond while DCR-State Parks manages the swimming beach. Dan has since met with folks from the State Parks side of DCR, but no final decision has yet been made. Dan reiterated that he has done his best to pass on the concerns of the association to the higher ups in DCR and that the final decision would not come from Dan alone.

Meeting End Time: 7:59 PM

Upcoming QWAC Meetings:

- Monday, March 18, 2024, at 6:30 PM – DCR Les and Terry Campbell
Quabbin Visitor Center, 100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

Quabbin Fishing Program

2023 Annual Report



Introduction

The Quabbin Fishing Program began in 1946 when the reservoir was opened to the public for shore fishing. The program was expanded in 1952 to establish limited boat fishing within defined areas and parameters. Rules governing the operation of the Quabbin Fishing Program are outlined in *Watershed Protection Regulations 313 CMR 11.9*.

In accordance with *313 CMR 11.09(2)(b) Special Regulations for Quabbin Reservoir*, “Fishing from the shorelines of Quabbin Reservoir and its tributaries within the Watershed System or fishing from boats shall be allowed only during a season designated by the Commissioner”. The Quabbin fishing season runs for a period of six months beginning around the third Saturday of April, weather and conditions permitting. In 2023, the Quabbin Fishing Program operated from April 15th to October 21st. There were 190 days to the season, and the program operated three boat launch areas seven days per week.

Revenues related to the operation of the Quabbin Fishing Program came from two sources – user fees (rental boats, private boater fees-launching and shore fishing/parking fees) and season pass sales. This year season passes were only available for purchase on-line beginning in February 2023.

This year there were a total of 24,958 fishermen and women to the three Boat Launch areas. The 2023 revenue generated by the Quabbin Fishing Program was \$180,852.00. In addition, 2023 revenue generated by season pass sales totaled \$30,925.00. In total, the Quabbin Fishing Program generated \$211,777 in 2023.

The following is a summary of revenues and usage of the Quabbin Fishing Program for the 2023 season. In addition, this report includes a description of the Quabbin Boat Decontamination and Quabbin Boat Seal programs. All boats launching on the Quabbin Reservoir at one of the three Boat Launch Areas must be decontaminated for aquatic invasive species before launching. This is demonstrated by an intake Quabbin Boat Seal obtained following the decontamination and verified by the Boat Launch Area attendants before launching. More specific details regarding this Program can be found in the DCR’s Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plans.

I. Quabbin Fishing Program Revenues

The revenue from boat rentals, private boat launching, shore fishing and parking totaled \$180,852. Season pass sales reached \$30,925 for a combined total revenue of \$211,777.

a. Revenues by Month

2023 BLA REVENUE BY MONTH			
MONTH	BLA FEES-DEPOSITS¹	BLA FEES-CREDIT CARD	TOTAL
APRIL	\$0	\$16,883	\$16,883
MAY	\$0	\$40,671	\$40,671
JUNE	\$430	\$32,803	\$33,233
JULY	\$347	\$34,164	\$34,511
AUG	\$324	\$29,841	\$30,165
SEPT	\$259	\$16,586	\$16,845
OCT	\$128	\$8,416	\$8,544
TOTAL	\$1,488	\$179,364	\$180,852

¹ BLA rental/parking fee payments collected from checks and/or money order.

b. Revenues by Year

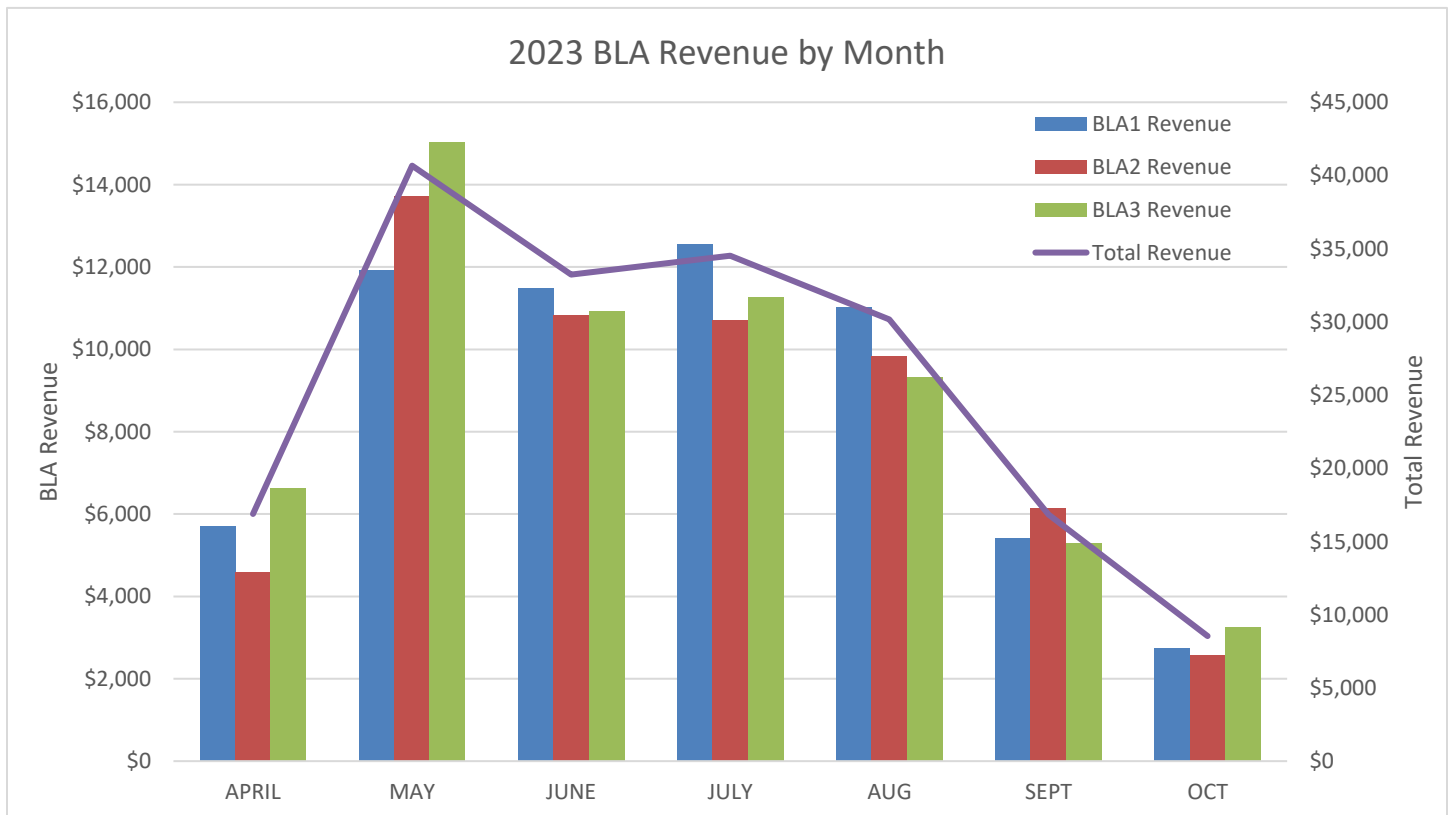
YEAR	FEE REVENUE	SEASON PASS REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE
2023	\$180,852	\$30,925	\$211,777
2022	\$193,984	\$30,150	\$224,133
2021	\$193,617	\$29,945	\$223,562
2020 ¹	\$22,983	\$27,045	\$50,028
2019	\$204,400	\$28,434	\$232,834

¹There were no boat rentals in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

c. Boat Launch Area Fees

Boat launch area revenues were comprised of fees for rental boats, private boat launching, shore fishing, as well as parking.

2023 BLA FEES REVENUE BY MONTH & AREA				
MONTH	BLA #1	BLA #2	BLA #3	TOTAL BLA FEES
APRIL	\$5,692	\$4,576	\$6,615	\$16,883
MAY	\$11,916	\$13,723	\$15,032	\$40,671
JUNE	\$11,489	\$10,818	\$10,926	\$33,233
JULY	\$12,541	\$10,706	\$11,264	\$34,511
AUG	\$11,015	\$9,823	\$9,327	\$30,165
SEPT	\$5,414	\$6,149	\$5,282	\$16,845
OCT	\$2,738	\$2,563	\$3,243	\$8,544
TOTAL	\$60,805	\$58,358	\$61,689	\$180,852



d. Season Pass Sales

Quabbin Boat Launch Area Season Passes cover vehicle/trailer parking and boat launching fees throughout the Quabbin Fishing Season. Season pass sales opened February 1, 2023. All season pass sales were purchased online; no season pass cash sales were available at the Boat Launch Areas. A total of 884 passes were sold. Out of state residents accounted for close to 5% of total sales – 24 from Connecticut, 4 from New Hampshire, 3 from Rhode Island, 3 from Vermont, 1 from Florida and 1 from Pennsylvania.

Table 1 On-line Season Pass Sales/Credit Card Transactions - 2023

ON-LINE SEASON PASS SALES/ CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS							
MONTH	# OF REGULAR	TOTAL \$	# OF SENIOR	TOTAL \$	# OF HANDICAPPED	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$
FEB	33	\$1,650	59	\$1,475	5	125	\$3,250
MAR	129	\$6,450	232	\$5,800	8	200	\$12,450
ARP	127	\$6,350	124	\$3,100	7	175	\$9,625
MAY	48	\$2,400	45	\$1,125	1	25	\$3,550
JUNE	13	\$650	20	\$500	0	0	\$1,150
JULY	7	\$350	11	\$275	1	25	\$650
AUG	4	\$200	1	\$25	0	0	\$225
SEPT	0	\$0	1	\$25	0	0	\$25
OCT	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
TOTALS	361	\$18,050	493	\$12,325	22	550	\$30,925
REPLACEMENT FEES	8	\$160			TOTAL ON-LINE SALES		\$30,925

Table 2 Number of Quabbin BLA Season Passes Used by Month/Area - 2023

NUMBER OF SEASON PASSES USED BY MONTH/AREA				
MONTH	AREA 1	AREA 2	AREA 3	TOTAL SP USED
APRIL	211	385	355	951
MAY	346	755	677	1778
JUNE	297	479	448	1224
JULY	308	408	375	1091
AUG	300	341	328	969
SEPT	283	220	196	699
OCT	177	158	111	446
TOTALS	1922	2746	2490	7158

e. Boat Launch Area (BLA) Payment Vouchers

The BLAs switched to ‘credit card sales only’ on June 1, 2022. To accommodate fishermen/fisherwomen that did not have a credit or debit card but wanted to rent a boat, park a vehicle, etc., a process was developed to accommodate these visitors. These customers were allowed on to the water but were given the original of a three-part payment form and were told they were required to mail in their payment as a check or money order. This exception was only allowed once for each individual boater. In addition, customers who owed DCR money were not allowed access on to the Reservoir until their payment had been received.

These payments were processed and deposited. Delinquent customers were contacted and reminded to send in their payment. The table below summarizes the number of payments that were received as well as the total amount left uncollected.

Table 3 Quabbin Boat Launch Area Payment Vouchers - 2023

BOAT LAUNCH AREA PAYMENT VOUCHERS			
AREA 1	FEE AMOUNT	AMOUNT PAID	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING
APRIL	\$46	\$46	\$0
MAY	\$135	\$89	\$46
JUNE	\$29	\$29	\$0
JULY	\$138	\$102	\$36
AUG	\$39	\$39	\$0
SEPT	\$0	\$0	\$0
OCT	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$387	\$305	\$82
AREA 2	FEE AMOUNT	AMOUNT PAID	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING
APRIL	\$0	\$0	\$0
MAY	\$0	\$0	\$0
JUNE	\$0	\$0	\$0
JULY	\$0	\$0	\$0
AUG	\$0	\$0	\$0
SEPT	\$0	\$0	\$0
OCT	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0
AREA 3	FEE AMOUNT	AMOUNT PAID	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING
APRIL	\$0	\$0	\$0
MAY	\$382	\$194	\$188
JUNE	\$865	\$516	\$349
JULY	\$154	\$80	\$72
AUG	\$488	\$219	\$274
SEPT	\$292	\$174	\$118
OCT	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$2,181	\$1,183	\$1,001
TOTAL AMOUNTS ALL 3 AREAS	\$2,568	\$1,488	\$1,083

II. Usage

a. Boat Launch Area Usage

The 2023 Quabbin Fishing season drew a total of 24,958 fishermen/fisherwomen. This year usage was comprised of rental boats, rental canoes, rental kayaks, private boaters launching, and shore fishing

All One-Day Fishing License revenue is delivered to the MA Fish and Wildlife Agency.

Boat Launch Area Usage by Category					
Area #1	Number of	Regular	Senior	Handicapped	Minors
Private Boats	2071	1464	1520	4	58
Motor Boats	1355	2031	342	41	260
Shore Fishing	554	818	90	13	188
Row Boats	21	32	8	0	8
Canoes	2	4	0	0	0
Kayaks	2	2	0	0	0
# of Additional Vehicles parked	443	483	139	4	56
Area # 1 Totals	4448	4834	2099	62	570
Area #2	Number of	Regular	Senior	Handicapped	Minors
Private Boats	2729	2889	1456	19	100
Motor Boats	1374	2254	337	43	289
Shore Fishing	677	719	327	26	125
Row Boats	36	33	30	1	9
Canoes	15	17	8	0	1
Kayaks	33	26	5	0	1
# of Additional Vehicles parked	122	120	52	1	17
Area # 2 Totals	4986	6058	2215	90	542
Area #3	Number of	Regular	Senior	Handicapped	Minors
Private Boats	2470	2573	1243	5	121
Motor Boats	1491	2326	417	17	175
Shore Fishing	256	411	29	3	40
Row Boats	5	7	2	0	0
Canoes	19	33	4	0	6
Kayaks	32	30	8	0	6
# of Additional Vehicles parked	577	738	214	10	70
Area # 3 Totals	4850	6118	1917	35	418
Totals All Areas	14284	17010	6231	187	1530
Total # of Visitors	24958				

Table 4 - One day Fishing Licenses Sold at Boat Launch Areas - 2023

2023 APRIL-OCTOBER QUABBIN ONE-DAY FISHING LICENSES										
<u>MONTH</u>	<u>PURCHASED AT BLA 1</u>	<u>BLA 1 CASH SALES</u>	<u>BLA 1 CREDIT CARD SALES</u>	<u>PURCHASED AT BLA 2</u>	<u>BLA 2 CASH SALES</u>	<u>BLA 2 CREDIT CARD SALES</u>	<u>PURCHASED AT BLA 3</u>	<u>BLA 3 CASH SALES</u>	<u>BLA 3 CREDIT CARD SALES</u>	<u>TOTAL SALES</u>
APRIL	70	\$50	\$300	43	\$55	\$160	59	\$45	\$250	\$860
MAY	148	\$65	\$675	141	\$65	\$640	181	\$155	\$750	\$2,350
JUNE	151	\$75	\$680	122	\$110	\$500	81	\$125	\$280	\$1,770
JULY	190	\$140	\$810	136	\$30	\$650	120	\$85	\$515	\$2,230
AUG	150	\$125	\$625	150	\$50	\$700	128	\$100	\$540	\$2,140
SEPT	72	\$80	\$280	98	\$20	\$470	63	\$80	\$235	\$1,165
OCT	25	\$25	\$100	40	\$15	\$185	47	\$45	\$190	\$560
TOTALS	806	\$560	\$3,470	730	\$345	\$3,305	679	\$635	\$2,760	\$11,075

b. Quabbin Boater ID Cards

Quabbin Boater ID Cards are issued to private boaters to identify their boat prior to launching at the three boat launch areas. It identifies the owner and the boat's registration number. The card is scanned by an attendant with an iPad when the boater is going on and off the water. This expedites the launching process and provides instant and accurate data. In addition, as boats are scanned on and off the water, an online BLA tag in/tag out monitoring dashboard is instantly updated. This information is available at the boat launch areas and is used by the BLA attendants to track boats still on the water. It is also used by Watershed Rangers in case of emergencies. This season there were 137 Boater I.D. cards issued to Quabbin boaters.

2023 BOATER ID CARDS												
CARD TYPE & STATE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	TOTAL CARDS ISSUED
NEW CARDS												
MA	1		7	6	30	8	12	5	2	2	1	74
CT				2	1			1				4
NEW BOATS												
MA		1	5	3	13	2	3	1	1		3	32
CT					1							1
RI			1									1
VT					1							1
REPLACEMENT CARDS												
MA			7	4	7		1	2		1		22
CT					1							1
NH					1							1
TOTAL CARDS ISSUED												137

III. Personnel Update

Since the 2020 season, the Boat Launch Area Foreman has been out of work with an injury. As a result, the Field Operations Team Leader (FOTL) for the Quabbin/Ware Region assumed responsibilities for managing day to day operations of the fishing areas. It is unclear how long the foreman will be out of work or when the position might become available to fill.

Three additional seasonal attendant positions were created for the 2023 fishing season. This personnel change was first used in the 2022 season. The rationale is to provide two-person coverage for every morning shift (Tues-Sat). Mornings are the busiest times at the fishing areas, and historically only one attendant had worked the morning shift on Tuesdays-Fridays. Adding a second attendant provided extra help to the morning shift and offered redundancy if someone needed to call out sick. DCR was able to hire these 3 additional attendants, but unfortunately, one of our regular attendants working at Fishing Area 2 resigned not long into the season and wasn't replaced. However, adding the extra staff person when possible was helpful. It is likely this expanded staffing will continue in the future.

The Quabbin Fishing Program is a collaborative effort between multiple groups of the DWSP Quabbin/Ware Region (e.g., Watershed Management, Watershed Rangers, Environmental Quality, Civil Engineering, GIS, Interpretative Services, Administrative, and Management groups). Twelve to fifteen Recreational Facility Supervisors and one Boat Launch Area Foreman run the three Boat Launch Areas (BLAs) in a variety of weather conditions and situations that arise during the season from April into October, seven days a week, from dawn to dusk.

After many years of dedicated service, Jennifer Peterkin, an Office Support Specialist I, retired from state service. Jen was responsible for many of the administrative tasks associated with the Fishing Program. Jen's vacancy was filled by Melissa Hanks, who will take over Jen's responsibilities. Melissa, along with Leah Mustakangas, an Office Support Specialist II, process

BLA receipts and revenue, tabulates data, generate the Quabbin Fishing program report, and produce Boater I.D. cards. In addition, the Office Support Specialists provide data on season pass sales, produce season pass cards and process credit card refunds. Interpretive Services staff provide information such as the annual Fishing Guide and schedule boat decontaminations for the Boat Seal program. Watershed Rangers provide security support to all three Boat Launch Areas, and operational support is provided by Watershed Maintenance staff. Environmental Quality staff conduct the Quabbin Boat Seal, Boat decontamination and Cold Weather Quarantine Programs.

IV. Quabbin Boat Decontamination and Quabbin Boat Seal Programs

Since 2010, the DWSP has implemented a comprehensive Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention program for Quabbin Reservoir. The program assesses risks from AIS and implements prevention strategies for all vectors that might introduce alien species into Quabbin Reservoir. A major component of the program is a decontamination procedure for all boats, motors, trailers, and other equipment that are launched or otherwise used in Quabbin Reservoir. Before a private individual or public agency boat is allowed to launch onto the reservoir, it must be inspected and decontaminated according to DWSP protocol and under DWSP staff supervision to remove any possible AIS. This process can occur via a high-temperature wash that is conducted at a local carwash, or via a “cold weather quarantine” period.

During the high temperature wash procedure, the boat’s hull, all through-hull fittings, live wells, bilge, downriggers, anchors, anchor ropes, and trolling motors, as well as the boat trailer or any other piece of equipment that may come in contact with the water, are thoroughly washed with pressurized water that is maintained at a minimum of 140 °F. Boat motors are also flushed with hot water and are run until a thermometer registers that the water flowing from the exit hole in the motor has reached 140°F for 10 seconds.

Cold weather quarantine (CWQ) dates were initially determined using the 100th Meridian Calculator. CWQ is typically conducted up to five dates during the months of October, November, and December; in 2023, CWQ was conducted on one date in October, three dates in November and one date in December. Boats and trailers are inspected to be sure that they are clean, do not have excessive amounts of rust, and all compartments are dry. By the time the fishing season begins at Quabbin, any possible AIS would be killed from a combination of desiccation and freezing.

Boats going through one of these decontamination processes are ultimately sealed with a Quabbin-specific, numbered security seal affixed to the trailer. Only boats/trailers with intact seals are allowed to launch on the Reservoir or Regulating Ponds at the Boat Launch Areas during the Quabbin Boat Fishing Season. Prior to the launch, the seal is inspected by the attendants, documented for validation and tracking purposes, and removed. Upon leaving the reservoir, the Boat Launch Area attendants affix a new seal. The unique numbers on the individual boat seals allows them to be traced through a database for program validation, monitoring, and analyses.

In 2018, DWSP made significant changes to streamline data management related to the collection and storage of boat decontamination and boat launch records. This included the use of iPads to electronically track boat seal records both at boat decontamination stations and at the three boat launch areas. To collect boat-seal records quickly and efficiently, Quabbin boaters were issued unique boater ID cards that allowed boat launch area attendants to quickly scan boaters on and off the water. The use of iPads, coupled with ArcGIS software, helped eliminate the need for paper records and time-intensive data entry work. Records from Quabbin Boat Decontamination are also collected in real-time and stored in a database for enhanced record-keeping and information sharing across DWSP programs.

In 2023, 145 boats were inspected and decontaminated over 16 event dates, and 62 boats went through CWQ (Table 5). There are currently 2,714 unique boats in the Quabbin Boat Decontamination/Boat Seal database following an update and standardization of Boater Records. To date, a total of 3,342 decontaminations have been conducted. CWQ accounted for another 1,412 boats sealed since 2010.

Table 5 Number of Quabbin Boat Decontaminations Conducted by DCR staff (2019-2023)

Year	Warm Weather Decontamination	Cold Weather Quarantine
2019	164	96
2020	173	105
2021	201	92
2022	160	72
2023	145	62

Approximately 7,628 boat launches across the three BLAs during the 2023 Quabbin fishing season (Table 2). QA/QC on boat tag records is ongoing, and some minor data entry errors and subsequent changes to these records are anticipated. Since 2010, the first year of full-season Boat Seal Program operations, there have been approximately 115,985 “sealed” boat visits to the three BLAs: 27,510 to BLA 1; 40,068 to BLA 2; and 48,407 to BLA 3. See Table 2 for the number of “sealed” boat visits processed for 2023 and the previous 4 years.

Table 6 Number of Boat Launches t Quabbin Boat Launch Areas (2019-2023)

Year	BLA 1	BLA 2	BLA 3
2019	2,054	2,797	3,647
2020	2,049	2,763	3,939
2021	2,286	3,294	3,879
2022	2,041	2,766	3,301
2023	2,002	2,835	2,791

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

RC. 62382
RECEIVED

OCT 16 2023

Project Name: Demolition of two buildings
Location/Address: Blue Meadow Road, Quabbin Reservoir
City/Town: Belchertown, MA

MASS. HIST. COMM

Project Proponent

Name: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Address: State Transportation Bldg., 10 Park Plaza, Suite 6620
City/Town/Zip: Boston, MA 02116-3978
Phone: (617) 626-1250

After review of MHC files and the materials
you submitted, it has been determined that
this project is unlikely to affect significant
historic or archaeological resources.
RC. 62382

11/1/23
Elizabeth Sherva
Preservation Planner
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Agency License or funding for the project (list all licenses, permits, approvals, grants or other entitlements being sought from state and federal agencies).

Agency Name
DCR

Type of License or Funding
Funding

Project Description (narrative)

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)'s Division of Water Supply Protection is proposing to demolish two former residential buildings located on Blue Meadow Road at Quabbin Reservoir. The "Forestry Office" and "Ranger Station" buildings were converted from residential to office use c. 1990. As a result of the new remote work model at DCR, staff who formerly worked out of the buildings now use shared office space in the Quabbin Headquarters building. Accordingly, the buildings now stand vacant and serve no current or future functional need for DCR. Considerable investment into hazardous material remediation, new building systems and access improvements would be required to enable their reuse, and DCR would prefer to invest its limited funds into preservation of more significant historic resources in the Quabbin Administration complex, including the headquarters building, Quabbin Tower, and resources at the Quabbin Park Cemetery. Leasing the buildings for private or commercial use is not a feasible option, given that Blue Meadow Road is not accessible to the public and the fact that their location within 200' of the reservoir significantly limits allowable activities and changes to the sites. DWSP staff presented the proposed demolition to the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee on September 18, 2023 (members include a representative of the Swift Valley Historical Society), and the committee expressed support for this approach. A third

former residential building on Blue Meadow Road has been more recently renovated for conference center and office use and will remain in active use.

Does the project include demolition? If so, specify nature of demolition and describe the building(s) which are proposed for demolition. Yes. The main buildings will be demolished. The garage at the Forestry Office will be demolished but the Ranger Station garage will remain. The garage slab will be left in place, while the building foundations will be removed down to grade level and basements infilled. Both driveways will remain intact and the landscapes around the former building sites will continue to be mowed or maintained as meadows.

The Forestry Office was built in 1945 by the Massachusetts Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission to house reservoir maintenance staff. Originally built using wood salvaged from the creation of the reservoir, the facility served for many years as a residence before it was converted to office space in the mid-1990s. The building consists of ten rooms: six (6) offices, one (1) full-bathroom, one (1) half-bathroom, one (1) small conference room, and one (1) full kitchen. There is a full basement that houses mechanical equipment and storage/workspace. The building has lost some of its historic integrity through the replacement of all original wood windows with vinyl windows and application of vinyl siding in the early 2000s.

The Ranger Station building and garage appears to date from the late 19th century and pre-dates the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir. It was acquired by the Commonwealth between 1928-38 and renovated for reservoir maintenance staff in 1944. The building consists of eight rooms: four (4) offices, one (1) full-bathroom, one (1) half-bathroom, one (1) small conference room, one (1) kitchen and a two-car garage. There is a full basement that houses mechanical equipment. The building has lost some of its historic integrity through the loss of the original front porch, along with the early 2000s replacement of all original wood windows with vinyl windows and application of vinyl siding.

Does the project include rehabilitation of any existing building? If so, specify nature of rehabilitation and describe the building(s) which are proposed for rehabilitation. No.

Does the project include new construction? If so, describe (attach plans and elevations if necessary). No.

To the best of your knowledge, are any historic or archaeological properties known to exist within the project's area of potential impact? If so, specify.

The Forestry Office (BLC.221) and Ranger Station (BLC.141) are included in the *Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth* as part of the Blue Meadow Road Area (BLC.J).

What is the total acreage of the project area?

Woodland _____ acres
Wetland _____ acres
Floodplain _____ acres
Open Space _____ acres

Productive Resources:
Agriculture _____ acres
Forestry _____ acres
Mining/Extraction _____ acres

Developed _____ acres

Total Project Acreage _____ acres

What is the acreage of the proposed new construction?

N/A

What is the present land use of the project area?

Water supply protection.

What has been the previous land use of the project area?

Residential/farmland.

Please attach a copy of the section of the USGS quadrangle map which clearly marks the project location.

This Project Notification Form has been submitted to the MHC in compliance with 950 CMR 71.00.

Priscilla Geigis

10/3/23

Signature of Person Submitting this Form

Date

Name: Priscilla Geigis, Deputy Commissioner

Address: Department of Conservation and Recreation

City/Town/Zip: State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 6480, Boston, MA 02116

Telephone: 617-626-1250