

Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting
September 20th, 2021
7:00 PM

Location: DCR Quabbin Visitor Center, 100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

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

Massachusetts Council of Sportsmen: Tom Berube (chairperson)

Alternate:

Trout Unlimited: Jerry Eves

Alternate: Joe Babineau

Quabbin Fisherman's Association: Larry Gates

Alternate: Bill Martell

Worcester County League of Sportsmen: Ronald Komar

Alternate:

North Worcester County Quabbin Anglers Association: Tony Brighenti (vice chairperson)

Alternate: Tom Barnes; Dennis Duguay

Mass Audubon: **Tom Lautzenheiser**

Alternate:

Swift River Valley Historical Society: James Boyko

Alternate: Jane Peirce

Massachusetts Wildlife Federation: **Bill Pula**

Alternate:

New England Sierra Club:

Alternate:

Friends of Quabbin, Inc.: **J.R. Greene**

Alternate: Gene Theroux

General Public: **Ralph Lapinskas**

Alternate:

DCR staff present: Dan Clark, Justin Gonsor

Members of the public present: Bob Sagan

Meeting Start Time: 7:11 PM

Approval of Minutes of Meeting on June 28th, 2021

Approval of the minutes was postponed until the next meeting due to there not being enough committee members present for a quorum.

2021 Cold weather quarantine (CWQ) dates

Dan briefed the committee on the annual CWQ program where boats are visually inspected and then sealed (free of charge) to the trailer to be ready to launch the following season. The public notice detailing the program and how to schedule a CWQ appointment is posted on Quabbin's fishing web page (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/quabbin-reservoir-fishing-guide>) and is also attached at the end of these minutes.

2021 Deer hunt plans

Dan summarized the plans for the 2021 deer hunt at Quabbin. The details are as follows:

- Designated land in the Hardwick, Pelham, and New Salem hunt zones will be open for public hunting during the 2-week shotgun season (Nov. 29 – Dec. 11) on a permit only basis.
- Hunting is for white-tailed deer only.
- Access to this property is walk-in only from designated gates and parking areas.
- There will be a few interior DCR access roads open to get allow hunters better access to each zone (same as last year).
- Quabbin hunters must apply by Oct. 31 to be eligible to buy a Quabbin antlerless deer permit. Antlerless permits go on sale Monday, Nov. 15 at 8AM on MassWildlife's massfishhunt website.
- Prescott, Petersham, and Quabbin Park will not be hunted this year.

Snowmobile proposal: proposal to expand snowmobiling on DWSP land in Pelham

Dan briefed the committee regarding an ongoing proposal to expand snowmobiling on DWSP land in Pelham.

In 2019, the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) approached Quabbin with a proposal to establish a 'connector trail' to already existing trails in

the north and south parts of the state. This proposal crossed into DCR-DWSP property. Snowmobiling is currently allowed in certain DWSP areas designated as 'off-reservation'. Quabbin staff toured the proposed route and raised concerns over several stream crossings and expanding snowmobiling into an area where it currently is not allowed. Watershed staff recommended SAM rework the route to get almost all of it onto private property and to avoid the stream crossings. SAM recently submitted an updated route proposal, but it still includes multiple stream crossings where no existing structures exist. The Watershed Protection Act mandates that everything within 200 and 400 ft. of a tributary be heavily regulated.

Committee members discussed and commented on their concerns regarding the proposal. Tom expressed his opposition to the proposal specifically. He is also opposed to expanding snowmobile access and creating any new trails for that purpose in general. Multiple committee members talked about the remaining streams crossings in the proposal as a problem. No formal recommendations were made by the committee as a quorum wasn't present.

Quabbin Park Cemetery (QPC): interest from outside groups to list QPC on national historic list

Dan talked about recent efforts from outside groups to get QPC listed as a national historic site.

Massachusetts Historical Commission has reached out to DCR that they are currently going through the process of getting QPC listed on the national historic register. It is a collaborative effort with the Friends of Quabbin (FOQ) and Ware Historical Commission. If approved, it may be an avenue for grant money to repair headstones or other maintenance needs at QPC.

DCR has no opposition to the efforts. It was noted that the process could take multiple years.

Keystone bridge: update on status of stone arch bridge

Dan updated committee members on the status of the stone arch bridge located just inside gate 30. It is a free-standing, stone arch bridge built with no mortar in the 1860's.

This past spring, DCR was notified of irregularities at the bridge. Staff investigated the issue concluded it could not be fixed internally by DCR-DWSP. The gate 30 parking area and entrance was then closed off to the public and safety barriers put in place. Signage was put up on location to educate people on why the area was closed and directing folks to other nearby Quabbin gates. This information was also posted on Quabbin's website. An engineering firm was hired to do an assessment of the bridge. Their report documented the various forms of degradation to the bridge and concluded it was unsalvageable and would collapse if anything was done to correct the problems. Their recommendation was to dismantle it safely and then build a new bridge in its place. DCR will be pursuing a second opinion from a mason before any actions are taken.

Multiple committee members commented that they would like to see the bridge salvaged/repaired/rebuilt, if possible, rather than having it simply dismantled. Seeking outside federal/state funding for the work was suggested.

Member Issues

Bill Pula talked about his participation with the Wounded Warrior Project for military veterans. He set up an event at Quabbin and took out a group of about 8 veterans to boat and fish for the day during this past summer.

Meeting End Time: 7:58 PM

Upcoming QWAC Meetings:

- Monday, December 13th, 2021 at 7PM – DCR Quabbin Visitor Center, 100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, MA 01007



**Quabbin Boat Seal
Cold Weather Quarantine (CWQ)
2021 Schedule**

Saturday, November 6th - New Salem
Wednesday, November 10th - New Salem
Saturday, November 13th - Belchertown
Thursday, November 18th - Belchertown
Saturday, November 20th - Belchertown

The Quabbin Visitor Center Will Start Taking CWQ Appointments on October 1st, 2021.

- All boats and motors must meet Quabbin regulations.
- All private boats launched at Quabbin must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal.
- The Cold Weather Quarantine program is free of charge.
- All boat owners must arrange appointments with the Quabbin Visitor Center.
- DCR is **NOT CLEANING** your boat and trailer. This is an inspection and seal program.
- All surfaces of the trailer, boat, motor, live wells, and bilge that may come in contact with the reservoir water shall be cleaned by the owner prior to inspection.
- There shall be no dirt, grease, oil, leaves, rust, fungi, or other material that may mask the inspection of the trailer and boat.
- There shall be no moisture or standing water in the bilge or live wells. The owner shall dry the interior of the bilge and live wells prior to inspection.
- The motor shall be lifted to full up position either by hand or battery during the inspection so that the underside can be inspected.
- Carpeting is allowed on the trailer bunks and rails only during this winter quarantine program. Freezing temperatures will kill aquatic invasive species.
- Carpeting is not allowed during warm weather decontaminations.

**Call the Quabbin Visitor Center to make an appointment at
413-323-7221. Press 0 when the recording starts to speak to a staff person, leave a
voicemail if necessary.**

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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