

Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting
December 12th, 2016
7:30 PM

Location: DCR Quabbin Visitor's Center, Belchertown, MA 01007

Members Present: Tom Berube (MA Council of Sportsmen), Elisa Campbell (Sierra Club), Craig Cortis (Worcester County League of Sportsmen), Jerry Eves (Trout Unlimited), Larry Gates (Quabbin Fisherman's Association), J.R. Greene (Friends of Quabbin, Inc.), Ralph Lapinskas (Public at Large), Tom Lautzenheiser (MA Audubon Society)

DCR Staff Present: Justin Gonsor, Bill Pula

Public Attending: Rich Ambrozy, Rosemary Charron, Lexi Dewey, Mike LaPrade, Brad Miner, Lewis Starkey, Lawrence Tucker, Steve Ward

Superintendent's Report

Meeting Start Time: 7:29 PM

This will be Bill Pula's last QWAC meeting as Regional Director at Quabbin. He will be retiring on January 2nd, 2017.

Approval of Minutes of Meeting on September 19th, 2016

Elisa Campbell noted one edit to be made to the September minutes. The statement 'Quabbin is overseen by the Department of Environmental Protection' should be changed to 'Quabbin is regulated by the Department of Environmental Protection'.

Elisa Campbell made a motion to accept the minutes from the QWAC meeting held on September 19th, 2016 with edits. Tom Lautzenheiser seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2016 Quabbin Deer Hunt Wrap-Up Discussion

Bill Pula briefed the committee on the results of the 2016 Quabbin Deer Hunt. Two draft summaries from the hunt were passed out to committee members; those summaries are attached at the end of these minutes.

For the first time at Quabbin since the deer hunt started, not all hunters had the option to purchase a doe tag. This year, roughly 500 doe tags were issued for the hunt. The exact number of doe tags issued and hunter's percentage chance of winning a tag will be available to the public at a later date. In total, 53 deer were harvested at Quabbin; 40 bucks and 13 does.

A new check-in process for hunters was piloted in the New Salem zone. In addition to the usual paper access cards hunters are normally given, New Salem hunters were also issued a plastic access card with a bar code to be scanned in. This new method provides more accurate information for the biologists about hunter effort and gives them a number of new ways at interpreting and sorting the data. The pilot program was a success and may be implemented for all hunt zones going forward.

Steve Ward commented that hunters who don't win a doe tag will no longer have the option to take a 'bonus' deer at Quabbin if they have already filled their two buck tags for the state prior to the Quabbin hunt. This could lead to decreased hunter participation in future years if not all hunters have the option to purchase an antlerless tag anymore.

Petersham will be the rested zone in 2017.

Moose Survey results have not been tabulated yet.

Tom Berube mentioned that two deer were harvested during the paraplegic hunt in Quabbin Park. MassWildlife is in charge of organizing and implementing the paraplegic hunt. Quabbin Park is one of many host sites across the state for the paraplegic hunt.

Bill Pula reminded the committee that hunting is also allowed on off-reservation land west of Rt. 202; subject to MassWildlife regulations.

2016 Quabbin Fishing Season Wrap-Up Discussion

Bill Pula updated the committee on the 2016 fishing season at Quabbin. Two spreadsheets were handed out to committee members, one on the 2016 boat launch area (BLA) figures and one with BLA revenue from 2014 and 2015; both documents are attached at the end of these minutes.

There was discussion about people using the fishing area parking lot for activities other than fishing (hiking, sightseeing, birding, etc.). There was concern about the BLA parking lots filling up with people not there for fishing, and running out of parking spaces. Although, it doesn't appear to have ever been an issue in the past. The situation will be monitored more closely going forward. Anyone parking at the BLA's for an extended period of time is required to pay for parking, regardless of whether or not they plan to fish.

Reservoir level at Quabbin is currently at 518.75 feet above Boston city base, down almost 12 feet; 79.5% full. Quabbin is no longer supplying Worcester or Cambridge with water.

Steve Ward asked if there is a limit to how much water can be drawn from the Ware River to Quabbin. Bill Pula answered that we are limited by the time of year. Water can be drawn from Ware River to Quabbin from October 15th through June 15th with a minimum flow rate of 85 million gallons per day.

Quabbin Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan Update

Bill Pula updated the committee on the 2016 Quabbin Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan update that is currently happening; the plan was last updated in 2006. A working group was formed in 2015 to complete the update which included the Quabbin regional director, assistant regional director, interpretive services, watershed rangers, forestry staff, geographic information's systems staff, and environmental planning staff.

In 2016, an electronic public opinion survey was conducted from August 31st through October 10th; 41 days. The survey consisted of 23 questions; 692 responses were received (3x more than the 2006 survey). The survey was distributed through the Quabbin Visitor Center, Quabbin BLA's, Quabbin Rangers, DWSP web site and twitter accounts, Swift River Valley Historical Society, QWAC, Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee, Friends of Quabbin, New England

Mountain Bike Association, Porcupine Ridge Runners, and North Quabbin Woods. Copies of the flier were placed in the town halls and libraries, and the link posted on the web sites and Facebook pages of watershed towns. The survey was publicized on the MassWildlife Facebook page and in local newspapers.

Policy is currently being drafted concerning the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's, aka drones) at Quabbin. It appears as though their use on the watershed will be banned without a permit. New FAA regulations were discussed that are classifying UAV's as aircrafts.

Policy is being drafted to close parking and access on Rt. 9 at the Swift River between 11PM – 4AM. Jerry Eves will alert Trout Unlimited about the potential change.

Language about Quabbin's boat sealing/decontamination program that is required to launch a private boat on the reservoir is being added to the access plan.

The policy on bicycling at Quabbin is not changing; bicycling is allowed on specific, designated roads in the watershed but not allowed on any trails.

The threshold for the size of large group events, specifically for wedding ceremonies, will be updated and clarified. Currently, ceremonies of more than 25 people are required to obtain a permit from the visitor center; ceremonies of more than 100 people are required to hire a watershed ranger for supervision. Bill Pula talked about the problems associated with pulling a ranger off regular detail to supervise a ceremony during busy times of year. Ralph Lapinskas made a motion to support limiting wedding ceremonies to 25 people or less. Elisa Campbell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Porcupine Ridge Runners – Quabbin Snowmobile Trail Proposal Update

Bill Pula updated the committee on a trail proposal from the Porcupine Ridge Runners Snowmobile Club.

Rich Ambrozy has supplied Helen Viner with a GPS'd map of their trail re-route proposal. Helen has since walked and viewed the route. The proposal is to expand the snowmobile trail system north outside of New Salem towards Hessian

Lane. The re-reroute stays on already existing logging roads and does not go through any wetlands and would not need any bridges to be built; the route would stay on off-reservation lands. The trail proposal gives two different re-route options to consider; a map of each route option is attached at the end of these minutes.

Elisa Campbell asked about how wide the new trail would be. Rich answered that it would be about 6ft. wide at a minimum, no wider than the existing logging roads that are already there.

Tom Berube asked for details on the grooming process for this new trail. The Ridge Runners would like to groom the trail; they currently use a snowmobile with two long track sleds that drag behind to groom their already existing trails.

Tom Berube requested that either Helen Viner or Herm Eck attend the next meeting to give their thoughts on the proposal.

Mill Valley Snowmobile Club – Trail Proposal update – Larry Tucker

Larry Tucker updated the committee on his group's proposal to create a connecting snowmobile trail from Belchertown to Shutesbury, some of which would cross onto DCR Off-Reservation land. There was discussion about where cutting and brush clearing would need to be done. One bridge would need to be constructed over a small brook. The trail would be about 6 ft. wide or as wide as existing loggings roads already are. The trail would be groomed using a snowmobile.

Elisa Campbell was concerned about other user groups using the trail during times when there is no snow, which would be most of the year. Larry Tucker gave some examples of the Mill Valley Club working successfully with other agencies (MassWildlife) to help control access issues by constructing gates, etc. There was discussion on where gates would potentially be constructed along the proposed trail.

6.2 miles of the proposed trail fall inside Quabbin off-reservation lands. The Mill Valley Club estimates that around 6 snowmobilers per day would use the trail; with their season lasting roughly 60 days out of the year (providing snow cover is

adequate). Tom Berube was concerned about larger crowds showing up to use the trail if it became established.

Tom Lautzenheiser was concerned about the potential impact to the water supply, which serves over two million people in the state. He also talked about the concern of other user groups using the trail. Any new off-reservation trail would have to be open to other users currently allowed on off-reservation lands; you can't create a trail for just one user group. Larry Tucker commented on the other recreational uses that are currently allowed on the watershed that could potentially negatively impact the water supply.

A letter was submitted to the committee by Judy Eiseman, past president of the Swift River Valley Historical Society, in opposition to the trail proposal. That letter is attached at the end of these minutes.

It was suggested that Herm Eck walk the route with someone from the Mill Valley Club, is possible.

Member Issues

Elisa Campbell will draft a letter on behalf of QWAC to send to Massachusetts senators and representatives that QWAC has voted to oppose to single track bicycle riding on DCR Watershed Lands in the past.

Larry Gates mentioned that the 'save the date' postcard has gone out for the Ware Business and Civic Association Quabbin Bass Fishing Tournament. The group is looking to make a donation to Quabbin. 'The Friends of Quabbin' were suggested as a good potential group to donate to.

Meeting End Time: 9:08 PM

Upcoming QWAC Meetings:

- Monday, March 13th, 2017 at 7:30 PM – DCR Quabbin Visitor Center, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007



Division of Water Supply Protection
Natural Resources Section

2016 QUABBIN DEER HUNT SUMMARY

After 50 years without hunting, in 1991 Quabbin Reservation was opened to limited, controlled public deer hunting. This action was in response to growing concern about the impacts of deer browsing on forest regeneration and the potential long-term consequences of those impacts on water quality. The hunt is held during the 2-week shotgun season.

This was the 26th successful season of the Quabbin Deer Management Program. The results below for **Prescott, New Salem, Pelham and Petersham** are *preliminary numbers*. This data will be finalized and published in the report: *Quabbin Reservation White-Tailed Deer Impact Management Program: Results from 2016*. Overall, there were 53 deer harvested during the 2016 season. The harvest sex ratio was 40 bucks to 13 does. The largest deer harvested at Quabbin this year was a 185 lb, 8-pointer from Pelham.

First Week: December 1st and 2nd

Pelham: 16 total deer harvested

December 1, 2016

- Number Harvested: 12
- Sex Ratio: 11 male/ 1 female
- Largest Buck: 182 lbs (3.5yrs, 9 pts)
- Largest Doe: 118 lbs (2.5yrs)

December 2, 2016

- Number Harvested: 4
- Sex Ratio: 4 male/ 0 female
- Largest Buck: 185 lbs (3.5yrs, 8 pts)
- Largest Doe: No does harvested

Prescott: 14 total deer harvested

December 1, 2016

- Number Harvested: 10
- Sex Ratio: 9 male/ 1 female
- Largest Buck: 155 lbs (3.5 yrs, 8pt)
- Largest Doe: 117 lbs (2.5 yrs)

December 2, 2016

- Number Harvested: 4
- Sex Ratio: 1 male/ 3 female
- Largest Buck: 179.5 lbs (3.5 yrs, 9pt)
- Largest Doe: 113 lbs (2.5 yrs)

Second Week: December 8th and 9th

New Salem: 7 total deer harvested

December 8, 2016

- Number Harvested: 2
- Sex Ratio: 2 male/ 0 female
- Largest Buck: 150 lbs (3.5 yrs, 9 pt)
- Largest Doe: No does harvested

December 9, 2016

- Number Harvested: 5
- Sex Ratio: 3 male/ 2 female
- Largest Buck: 152.5 lbs (3.5 yrs, 8 pt)
- Largest Doe: 117.5 lbs (1.5 yrs)

Petersham: 16 total deer harvested

December 8, 2016

- Number Harvested: 8
- Sex Ratio: 5 male/ 3 female
- Largest Buck: 148 lbs (3.5 yrs, 9pt)
- Largest Doe: 132 lbs (3.5 yrs)

December 9, 2016

- Number Harvested: 8
- Sex Ratio: 5 male/ 3 female
- Largest Buck: 164 lbs (3.5 yrs, 8pts)
- Largest Doe: 86 lbs (1.5 yrs)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Charlie Baker
Governor

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Leo Roy, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

2016 - Quabbin Hunt Information – Executive Summary

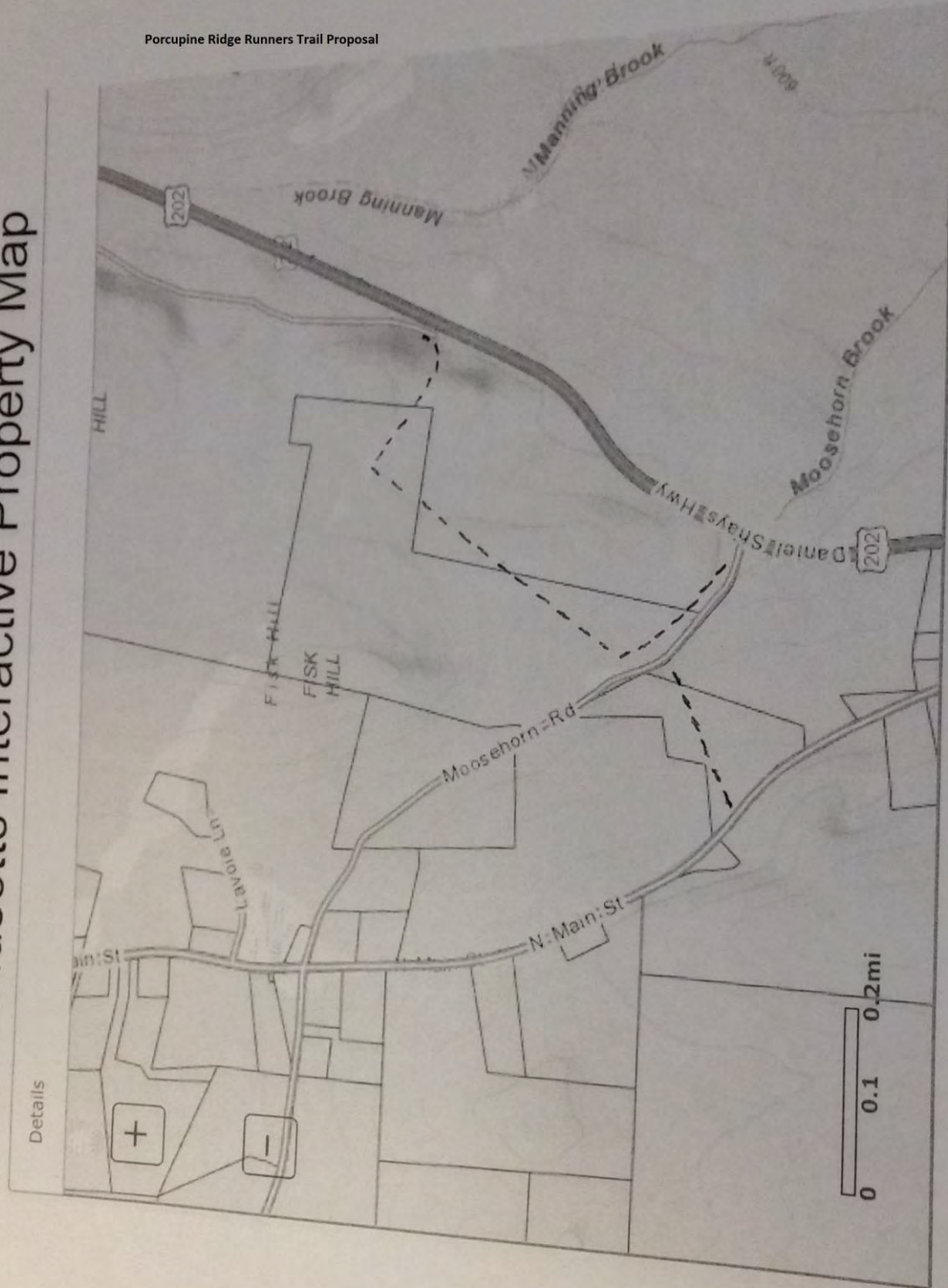
	Dec. 1 & 2 Pelham	Dec. 1 & 2 Prescott	Dec. 8 & 9 New Salem	Dec. 8 & 9 Petersham	Totals
Hunters Selected	297	409	222	252	1,180 (1,180 applied)
Eligible Hunters (Returning or Attended Orientation)	285	372	207	227	1,091 / 1,180 (92%)
Scouting – Participation Day 1; Participation Day 2; Total	24%; 21%; 42%	28%; 31%; 51%	24%; 31%; 50%	26%; 28%; 50%	26%; 28%; 48%
Hunt Attendance – Day 1 / Hunters Eligible to Hunt	219 / 285 (77%)	280 / 372 (75%)	170 / 207 (82%)	172 / 227 (76%)	841 / 1,091 (77%)
Hunt Attendance – Day 2 / Hunters Eligible to Hunt	151 / 285 (53%)	189 / 372 (51%)	117 / 207 (57%)	101 / 227 (44%)	558 / 1,091 (51%)
Hunt Attendance – Day 1 and/or Day 2 (Participation Rate)	233 / 285 (82%)	289 / 372 (78%)	175 / 207 (85%)	177 / 227 (78%)	874 / 1,091 (80%)
Deer Taken - Day 1 (# Males; # Females)	12 (11 Bucks; 1 Doe)	10 (9 Bucks; 1 Doe)	2 (2 Bucks)	8 (5 Bucks; 3 Does)	32 (27 Bucks; 5 Does)
Deer Taken – Day 2 (# Males; # Females)	4 (4 Bucks)	4 (1 Buck; 3 Does)	5 (3 Bucks; 2 Does)	8 (5 Bucks; 3 Does)	21 (13 Bucks; 8 Does)
Total Deer Taken – 2 Days (# Males; # Females)	16 (15 Bucks; 1 Doe)	14 (10 Bucks; 4 Does)	7 (5 Bucks; 2 Does)	16 (10 Bucks; 6 Does)	53 (40 Bucks; 13 Does)
Success Rate – Deer Taken / People Hunted	16 / 233 (7%)	14 / 289 (5%)	7 / 175 (4%)	16 / 177 (9%)	53 / 874 (6%)
Size of Hunt Area (mi. ²)	8,487.2 Acres (13.26 mi. ²)	12,019.9 acres (18.8 mi. ²)	6,871.4 acres (10.7 mi. ²)	6,965 acres (10.9 mi. ²)	34,343.5 acres (53.7 mi. ²)
Deer Taken / Square Mile	16 / 13.26 (1.21)	14 / 18.8 (0.74)	7 / 10.7 (0.65)	16 / 10.9 (1.47)	53 / 53.7 (0.99)
Largest Deer Taken	F – 118 lbs; 2.5 yrs M – 185 lbs; 3.5 yrs; 8 pt	F – 117 lbs; 2.5 yrs M – 179.5 lbs; 3.5 yrs; 9 pt	F – 117.5 lbs; 1.5 yrs M – 152.5 lbs; 3.5 yrs; 8 pt	F – 132 lbs; 3.5 yrs M – 164 lbs; 3.5 yrs; 8 pt	F – 132 lbs; 3.5 yrs M – 185 lbs; 3.5 yrs; 8 pt
Notes:					

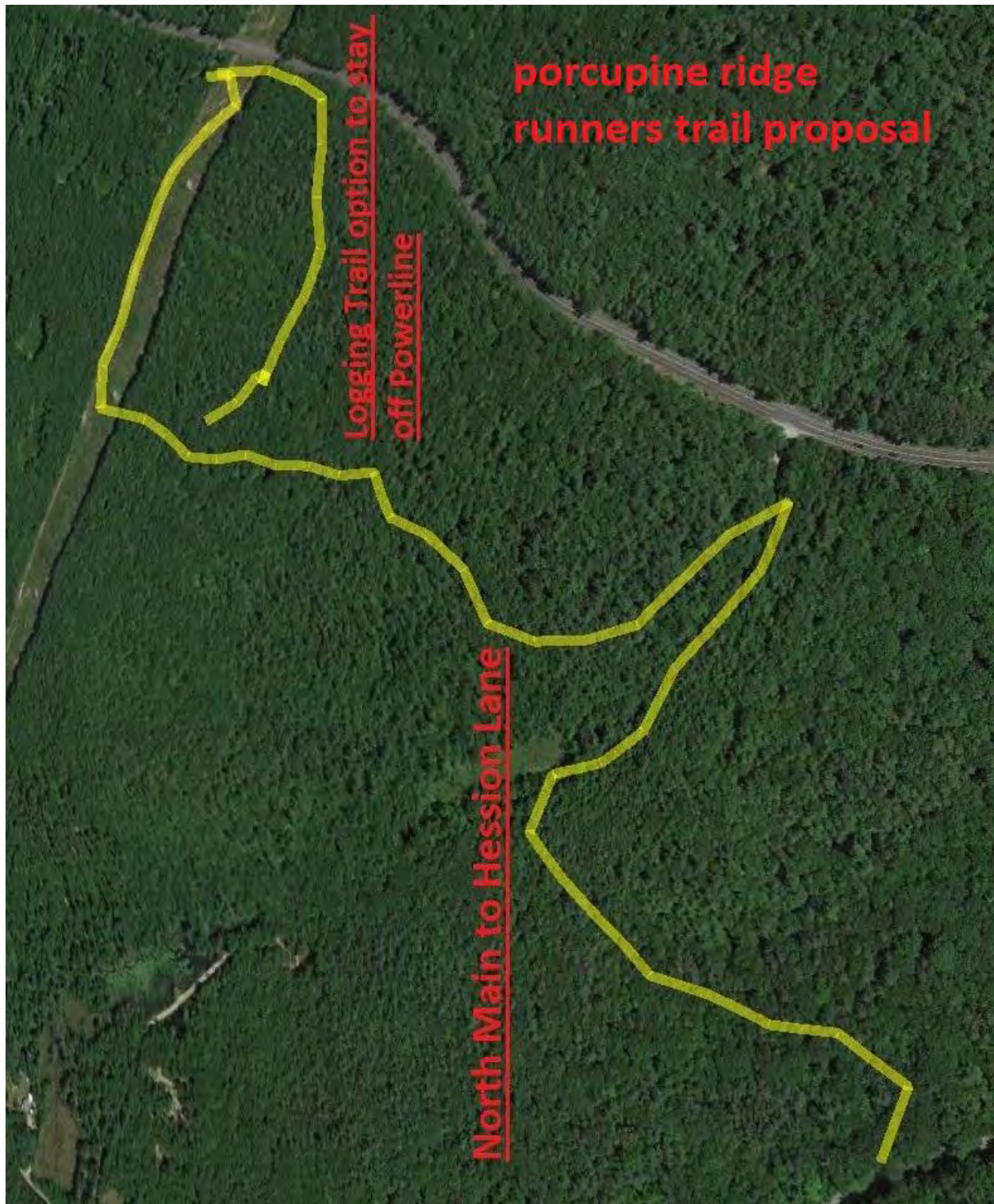
2014 and 2015 Revenue and People Totals

BLA REVENUE 2014											
Month	BLA #1	BLA #2	BLA #3	BLA Revenue Total by Month	Season Pass Revenue Total by Month	BLA #1	BLA #2	BLA #3	V/C ADMIN	Total Revenue	
April	\$2,618.00	\$1,879.00	\$1,710.00	\$6,207.00	\$6,950.00	\$1,025.00	\$3,450.00	\$2,400.00	\$75.00	\$13,157.00	
May	\$13,015.00	\$14,302.00	\$15,635.00	\$42,952.00	\$8,025.00	\$1,525.00	\$3,175.00	\$2,975.00	\$350.00	\$50,977.00	
June	\$15,232.00	\$16,031.00	\$17,474.00	\$48,737.00	\$2,500.00	\$525.00	\$925.00	\$950.00	\$100.00	\$51,237.00	
July	\$12,127.00	\$13,675.00	\$14,063.00	\$39,865.00	\$700.00	\$200.00	\$125.00	\$275.00	\$100.00	\$40,665.00	
August	\$12,305.00	\$12,681.00	\$15,183.00	\$40,169.00	\$200.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00		\$40,369.00	
September	\$6,257.00	\$6,547.00	\$7,839.00	\$20,643.00	\$25.00	\$25.00				\$20,668.00	
October	\$1,580.00	\$1,369.00	\$1,403.00	\$4,352.00	\$0.00					\$4,352.00	
Totals	\$63,134.00	\$66,484.00	\$73,307.00	\$202,925.00	\$18,400.00	\$3,350.00	\$7,725.00	\$6,700.00	\$625.00	\$221,325.00	
2014						Season Pass Sales 3/23-3/31				\$2,475.00	
BLA 1 # of Visitors	9,666					Season Pass Sales Prior to Opening				\$3,275.00	
BLA 2 # of Visitors	10,477					Total Revenue				\$227,075.00	
BLA 3 # of Visitors	11,706										
Total # of Visitors	31,849										
BLA REVENUE 2015											
Month	BLA #1	BLA #2	BLA #3	BLA Revenue Total by Month	Season Pass Revenue Total by Month	BLA #1	BLA #2	BLA #3	V/C ADMIN	Total Revenue	
April	\$2,980.00	\$2,440.00	\$2,428.00	\$7,848.00	\$8,550.00	\$1,350.00	\$4,025.00	\$2,925.00	\$250.00	\$16,398.00	
May	\$14,994.00	\$17,538.00	\$19,621.00	\$52,153.00	\$7,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,050.00	\$2,700.00	\$250.00	\$59,653.00	
June	\$11,466.00	\$12,077.00	\$14,948.00	\$38,491.00	\$1,375.00	\$150.00	\$400.00	\$775.00	\$50.00	\$39,866.00	
July	\$13,050.00	\$13,461.00	\$14,312.00	\$40,823.00	\$900.00	\$275.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$25.00	\$41,723.00	
August	\$13,345.00	\$13,777.00	\$15,861.00	\$42,983.00	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$75.00	\$25.00		\$43,133.00	
September	\$7,211.00	\$6,926.00	\$9,579.00	\$23,716.00	\$75.00	\$50.00	\$25.00			\$23,791.00	
October	\$2,260.00	\$2,333.00	\$3,685.00	\$8,278.00	\$50.00			\$50.00		\$8,328.00	
Totals	\$65,306.00	\$68,552.00	\$80,434.00	\$214,292.00	\$18,600.00	\$3,375.00	\$7,875.00	\$6,775.00	\$575.00	\$232,892.00	
2015						Season Pass Sales 3/1/15-4/24/15				\$5,825.00	
BLA 1 # of Visitors	11,993									\$238,717.00	
BLA 2 # of Visitors	10,098										
BLA 3 # of Visitors	12,675										
Total # of Visitors	34,766										

Massachusetts Interactive Property Map

Porcupine Ridge Runners Trail Proposal





To: Quabbin Advisory Committee Members
Date: December 12, 2016

The trend at DCR seems to be toward more access for more modes of recreation – bikes and snowmobiles, for example – and I expect that pressure will increase. Inviting the snowmobilers back seems to imply some sort of agreement to open up for them – along with the noise, the pollution and whatever else might accompany them.

If DCR is really considering to allow the creation of a new trail on off-reservation land, the agency should realize that the trail **MUST** also be open to all other users, including horses, dirt bikes, and dog walkers. Think about it: It *is* public land, after all. I had always assumed and understood that this public land is for the preservation of the public's drinking water. What has changed? Is it that people no longer understand needs that are longer term than their immediate desire to do as they please, wherever they choose regardless of the common good?

Why should a new trail be available to only a select group? If protecting water quality is still the goal, no trail should be created that close to the reservation inviting a concentration of horses, or dog walkers, or mountain bikers, or anything else. The fishermen and hunters are one thing, a done deal. The snowmobilers will say that if they create it and agree to maintain it and police it, they should be able to have it to themselves, but that's just inviting ugliness and vandalism if someone else gets caught using 'their' trail. (I know someone who has been confronted while horseback riding on a snowmobile trail on public land, and these folks do claim ownership; I am told it was not a fun encounter.)

DCR must realize the size of the Pandora's box this will open. Will swimming be next? Having grown up in Michigan, I'd sure like to have a big lake nearby. And public beaches with bath houses, trash, lotions, bug spray, campfires, hot dog roasts and food trucks? Oh, and perhaps expensive filtration for the system down the road a piece? I am very worried. Small rational-seeming decisions can lead to unexpected and much larger consequences.

Judith Eiseman, Past President, Swift River Valley Historical Society