

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

February 27, 2001

Massachusetts Electric Company

Northborough, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Tuesday, February 27, 2001 at the Massachusetts Electric Company in Northborough, MA.

Those in attendance were Chairman Michael Last, Brendan O'Neill, Tad Ames, Ron Smith, Patricia Karl, Elisa Campbell and Deborah Cary. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick and Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin. Others present included Tom Sullivan, Whitney Hatch, Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Heidi Roddis, Jay McCaffrey, Tim Dinger, Brian Reid, Jeff Crowley and Brian McDonald.

The meeting was called to order at 11:10AM by Chairman Michael Last.

Chairman Last and Commissioner Webber welcomed potential board members Tom Sullivan and Whitney Hatch. Peter updated the Board on the status of pending appointments. According to Peter, letters of appointment are on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature for appointing Tom and Whitney as well as V. Van Johnson III.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats - attached

Developing a Desired Future State - attached

Improving the Board's Effectiveness - attached

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ron Smith moved to approve the December Meeting Minutes. Tad Ames seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the December 2000 Meeting Minutes.
All in favor. None opposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

③ Commissioner Webber reported that he does not anticipate being at a point of signing the Greylock Land Disposition Agreement or the Master Lease prior to the April meeting. Peter added that there will be the need to have a full Board vote at the April meeting on the Mt. Greylock wastewater disposal and water supply improvements.

③ Peter suggested that program presentations become part of the Board agenda on a regular basis and Todd recommended sending out information on the program being presented prior to the Board meeting. Michael requested that the presentations tie the program into the vision. Patricia requested that the cost to implement the program also be tied in, including what the cost is, what it should be and what are the challenges. Debbie commented that to focus each program presentation should have consistent points such as fiscal needs, constraints, challenges, and opportunities. Michael agreed and suggested that a SWOT analysis on each program would be informative.

③ Mary noted that a procedural hearing on the Wachusett documents is scheduled for March 15, 2001.

③ Peter updated the Board on the Budget. According to Peter, a hearing on the FY02 Budget last week was encouraging with regards to seasonal hiring. Peter informed the Board that a supplemental budget has been filed and is in House Ways and Means to fully fund earmarks. Peter added that on the capital side, there may be an infusion of funds for equipment with a portion for design and permitting for sustained park improvements.

③ Mary updated the Board on several key land purchases have been accomplished in the last few months as well as those currently being worked on.

③ Todd reported that the interview process for Region 2 and Region 5 Directors will begin in March. Todd added that he is hopeful to have a new Chief of Interpretive Services by tomorrow.

③ Todd reported that a 100 acre controlled burn is scheduled to take place at Myles Standish SF in March.

③ Peter reported that an RFR has been posted on the web for a short-term operator to manage Bascom Lodge this season. Todd added that the deadline is March 29, 2001.

③ Commissioner Webber presented Certificates of Appreciation to Elisa Campbell and Deborah Cary for their service on the Board.

Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30PM. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for Friday, April 20, 2001 at Quinsigamond State Park.

STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES/THREATS (SWOT)

Strengths

- ξ Dedicated, knowledgeable, passionate staff (especially for land protection)
- ξ Large, high quality land holdings
- ξ Provides diverse, inexpensive recreational opportunities
- ξ Potential for increase public support

Weaknesses

- ξ Under funding
- ξ Staff morale (low)
- ξ additional staff needed to deliver services
- ξ Constituency Groups
 - ξ feel not included
 - ξ not organized via regions/state
- ξ Priorities of agency poorly defined
- ξ Mission/Vision unclear
- ξ Difficulty in assessing proposed projects
- ξ Failure to cultivate external support

Opportunities

- ξ Building partnerships with non-profits, citizens, and friends groups to advance education, park management and acquisition of land
- ξ Create a cohesive vision in management area around issues of biological management, education and management plans
- ξ Harness technology for better communication
- ξ Refine mission - clear and compelling
- ξ Political opportunity - more funding
- ξ Marketing
- ξ Land protection
- ξ Education (everybody's land)
 - ξ public
 - ξ classrooms
 - ξ legislature
 - ξ staff

Threats

- ξ Lack of adequate resources
 - ξ staffing
 - ξ aging facilities
 - ξ funding under needs
- ξ Don't have a well organized advocacy group so constituents can help support the environment
- ξ Inability to balance recreation with conservation
- ξ Growth and development pressures on land
- ξ Increased pollution and threats to natural resources

DEVELOPING A DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Comments on/reaction to DEM Coordinating Committee drafts

Vision - Version 1

- ξ too high level of abstraction
- ξ need to weave in:
 - ξ educate public - integrate content with experiences
 - ξ balance multiple uses
 - ξ quality of experience
- ξ too people focused and left out other aspects of agency, maybe emphasizes recreation over preservation
- ξ more recreation leads to educate and support

Vision - Version 2

- ξ too dry
- ξ "managing and conserving"/should be proactive to include evaluating, encouraging, and participating in land acquisitions
- ξ needs culture of openness (working with outside groups, diverse representation, input)
- ξ should be more proactive
 - ξ updated goals plan for every facility prior to projects
- ξ encourage people to engage in resource stewardship

Mission

- ξ too broad, mission statement should be focused
- ξ needs to define the core mission
 - ξ keeping parks open, maintained, staffed
 - ξ *save the world* for mission is too broad
- ξ institutionalize the balance - *This is what we do - identity* - insulate leadership in the legislative process (sorry, we'd love to help you but, **this** is what we do) educate legislature
- ξ Group D mission statement is a good vision statement that could be focussed on by "...the Connection between the people and our natural world **through**.....(mission specialties such as. education, science, land acquisition)."


SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING THE BOARD'S EFFECTIVENESS

What is the Best Role for the Board/ How can Board Support the Mission

- ξ bridge between DEM and public
 - ξ public forum
 - ξ Governor appoints as public representatives to oversee the agency
- ξ advocates for DEM to the public and the legislature
- ξ a loyal opposition within DEM to express concerns of the public, staff and/or individual member concerns
- ξ point of having a Board is to get public involvement and voice to agency
- ξ watchdog
- ξ serve as useful vehicle to for the benefit of leadership to insulate against political buffering /outside pressures
 - ξ put it on the Board

Suggestions on Improving the Board's Effectiveness

- ξ clarity on scope of authority would benefit Board and leadership
- ξ setting and monitoring the agency's mission and performance
- ξ evaluating/supporting CEO
 - ξ working cooperatively
- ξ making sure resources are available
- ξ concern over role and supporting organizational roles members have as individuals
- ξ clear understanding of purpose, responsibility and involvement of (scope of authority)
 - ξ should be involved in policy setting and if so, need more information
 - ξ should see the big picture, better long term information so decisions are in context
- ξ would like to see vision, mission and goals have outcomes with alignment to budget
- ξ should be part of development of budget process earlier on, need to see decisions in light of funding
 - ξ information in clarity (insist on getting information that is clear, understandable)
- ξ could focus on the parks/activities connected to the region they are appointed in
 - ξ be aware of what happens with the parks
 - ξ see what it is like
- ξ should be in touch with public
 - ξ land owners/Chapter 61
- ξ help set vision/policy and help see carried out
 - ξ not micromanage
- ξ can be a sounding board/ think outside the box (creative thinking)
- ξ fiduciary responsibility to the public and the agency
- ξ bully pulpit/ powerful advocates
- ξ need to review the legislative responsibilities
- ξ narrow focus



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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



c/o DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
251 CAUSEWAY STREET, BOSTON, MA 02114
PHONE 617-626-1250

*****MEETING NOTICE*****

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT MEETING

Jane Swift
GOVERNOR

Bob Durand
SECRETARY

Peter C. Webber
COMMISSIONER

BOARD MEMBERS

Michael P. Last
Wellesley Hills
CHAIRPERSON

Brendan T. O'Neill
West Tisbury
VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Patricia Karl
North Andover
SECRETARY

Ron R. Smith
Pittsfield

Whitney Hatch
Ipswich

V. Van Johnson III
Springfield

Thomas E. Sullivan
Princeton

**NO MARCH 2001 MEETING
DUE TO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS**

*Meeting date is subject to change depending on weather and other factors.
Call (617) 626-1332 for updates and cancellations.
Thank you.*

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

April 20, 2001

Quinsigamond State Park

Worcester, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Friday, April 20, 2001 at the Quinsigamond State Park in Worcester, MA. Those in attendance were Chairman Michael Last, Brendan O'Neill, Patricia Karl, Ron Smith, Patricia Karl, Whitney Hatch, Tom Sullivan and Van Johnson. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Susan Frechette, Director of Resource Protection Richard Thibedeau, Chief Engineer Raul Silva, Legal Counsel Marcos Pittore and Interpreter Tim Rayworth. . Others present included Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Heidi Roddis, Marianne Cokely, Phil Collins, Brian Reid, Jeff Crowley, Karen Lombard, Heather Clish, Peg Brady, Mathew Pearson, Kurt Stottmeier, Helga Stottmeier, Jackie Davison, Linda Merims, Tom Delisle and Jessica Schultz. New Board members Whitney Hatch of Ipswich, Tom Sullivan of Princeton and V. Van Johnson III of Springfield were sworn in by Commissioner Webber and Al Bove of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office. The meeting was called to order at 11:40AM by Chairman Michael Last.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ron Smith moved to approve the February Meeting Minutes. Patricia Karl seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the February 2001 Meeting Minutes.

All in favor. None opposed.

MT. GREYLOCK STATE RESERVATION

Following Board discussion and pursuant to 302 CMR 8.03 the Board voted on the following two capital improvement projects:

▪ Wastewater Disposal Improvements

As a requirement of active DEP Administrative Consent Order ACO-WE-99-5010, DEM is required to submit a plan for the long-term wastewater treatment at the Bascom Lodge facility at the Reservation. DEM has submitted such a plan, which has been approved by DEP. The plan calls for the installation of a new 10,000 septic tank to function in conjunction with the existing 10,000 tank as a fully operational 20,000 tight tank system. The system will include appropriate mechanisms to meet the criteria of DEP regulations and would eliminate any potential discharge to the environment of inadequately treated wastewater.

Ron Smith moved to approve the Wastewater Disposal Improvements. Patricia Karl seconded.

By unanimous vote of all seven members, the Board approved the Wastewater Disposal Improvements at Bascom Lodge.

Roll call: Patricia Karl "yes," Ron Smith "yes," Brendan O'Neill "yes," Whitney Hatch "yes," Van Johnson "yes," Michael Last "yes," Tom Sullivan "yes"

▪ Water Supply Improvements

DEM is proposing to establish a new water supply well at the summit area to replace the existing well that supplies water to Bascom Lodge. The existing well is located directly in front of the Lodge entrance. The proposed new well will be approximately 400 ft. deep, bedrock well located to the southeast of the War Memorial Tower. The new source well permitting has been completed and approved by DEP.

Ron Smith moved to approve the Water Supply Improvements at the summit of Mt. Greylock. Patricia Karl seconded.

By unanimous vote of all seven members, the Board approved the Water Supply Improvements at the summit of Mt. Greylock.

Roll Call: Patricia Karl "yes," Ron Smith "yes," Brendan O'Neill "yes," Whitney Hatch "yes," Van Johnson "yes," Michael Last "yes," Tom Sullivan "yes"

LAND ACQUISITION

Marcos Pittore presented a map and discussed the need for eminent domain taking of several parcels in Sutton. On motion duly made by Patricia Karl and seconded by Ron Smith it was voted:

To approve the taking by eminent domain by the Department of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of General Laws Chapter 79, and General Laws Chapter 132A Section 3 of approximately seventy to ninety acres of forest land in the town of Sutton as follows:

The premises belonging to Robert Nunnemacher listed by Assessors' Book and Parcel number, followed by a title reference to the Worcester south district Registry of Deeds:

1. 37/9; Book 5049, Page 264, +/- 24 acres (tax title problem).
2. 37/11; Book 4959, Page 50, +/- 6.9 acres (tax title problem).

The premises belonging to Robert Nunnemacher and Marie Linder, tenants in common, listed by Assessors' Book and Parcel number, followed by a title reference to the Worcester south district Registry of Deeds:

1. 49/75; Book 12501 Page 102, 15.5 acres (tax problem);
2. 49/76; Book 12501 Page 102, 3 acres (tax problem);
3. 49/77; Book 12501 Page 102, 6 acres (tax problem);
4. 49/79; Book 12501 Page 102, 6 acres (tax problem);
5. 49/80; Book 12501 Page 102, 7.5 acres (tax problem);
6. 49/81; Book 12501 Page 102, 6.36 acres (tax problem);
7. 49/83; Book 12501 Page 102, 6 acres (tax problem).

All in favor. None opposed.

MYLES STANDISH STATE FOREST

Rich Thibedeau gave a brief presentation and overview of the Myles Standish State Forest (MSSF) Trails and Resource Management Plan. Rich discussed the history of Board votes on MSSF plans. According to Rich, the plan will be discussed in more detail at the June 2001 Board meeting and is expected to come before the Board for a vote around the December 2001 meeting. Brendan expressed concern for the Board voting on the plan prior to the MEPA process. Peter responded that the Board's endorsement of the plan would be conditional upon information gathered through the process. Board members agreed to hold the June Board meeting at MSSF and to devote the first hour or two looking at some of the areas in question.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Bettencourt presented pictures in support of ORV trail use at MSSF.

Thomas Delisle presented pictures in opposition to ORV trail use at MSSF.

Kurt Stottmeier urged the Board to visit MSSF.

Phil Collins commented that he supports the reintroduction of ORV use to MSSF in a managed way.

Helga Stottmeier urged Board members to consider the uniqueness of the resources at MSSF that need protection.

Heidi Roddis commented that the small percentage of users is disproportionate to the large impact on the trails. Heidi requested a Wachusett update at the next Board meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Michael Last handed out and discussed a memo, *Educational Initiative*, which summarized the potential benefits of participating in an environmental education initiative as well as an integrated educational approach to accomplish objectives. Michael discussed the "Wild Friends" program; expanding the existing "Parks as Classrooms" initiative and utilizing service learning programs to bring young people into the forests & parks. Michael suggested that the Board might become involved in forming a coalition of groups in support of this initiative. Public attendees discussed the support of their organizations to the initiative.

Parks as Classrooms Interpreter Tim Rayworth presented a slide show and discussed environmental education programs utilized within DEM.

FOREST & PARKS REPORT

Todd Frederick reported that the Forests & Parks Leadership Conference went well. According to Todd, Secretary Durand announced at the conference that DEM will receive an additional \$2mil in capital funding for forest and park improvements. Michael recommended that the Board make a resolution to draft a letter thanking Secretary Durand for releasing the additional funds and for hearing the Board's priorities.

Ron Smith moved. Brendan O'Neill seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board approved a resolution to draft a letter thanking Secretary Durand for releasing additional funds and for hearing the Board's priorities.

All in favor. None opposed.

Todd continued that HWM released the FY02 budget and DEM numbers are \$2.2 mil less than the Governor's recommendation. Todd added that DEM needs support from the Board and advocates to get back up to the House 1 number. Mike requested a draft letter for Board members containing the specific issues along with a list of to whom letters should be directed. Peter replied that he would get information to Board members on Monday. Marilyn Lund commented that the information would also be helpful to advocates so they could add their support. Todd informed Board members that a hearing will take place on May 16 on increased day-use fees.

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Todd reported that a booklet is being produced that will be distributed next week. Todd added that another series of public meetings have been scheduled throughout the state.

Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30PM. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 23, 2001 at Walden Pond State Reservation.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

May 23, 2001

Walden Pond State Reservation

Concord, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, May 23, 2001 at the Walden Pond State Reservation in Concord, MA.

Those in attendance were Chairman Michael Last, Brendan O'Neill, Whitney Hatch, Tom Sullivan and Van Johnson. Absent were Patricia Karl and Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Susan Frechette, Director of Resource Protection Richard Thibedeau, Regional Director Don Stoddard and Wachusett Mountain SR Supervisor Dwayne Ericson, Research Coordinator/Ecologist Doug Williams. Others present included Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Heidi Roddis, James McCaffrey, Jeff Crowley, Donna Brownell, Gordon Brownell, Joe Choiniere, Edith Morgan, Tim McGuire, Gil Cronin, Jessica Barber and Todd Shimkus.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00AM by Chairman Michael Last.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Sullivan moved to approve the April Meeting Minutes. Whitney Hatch seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the April 2001 Meeting Minutes.

All in favor. None opposed.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION UPDATE

Dwayne Ericson handed out copies of the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation Research Management and Protection Plan (RMPP) which includes State of the Mountain Reports (SOMR). Dwayne discussed the four primary categories listed under Management Recommendations: objectives, policies, land stewardship objectives and management (operations). Dwayne described how a percentage of Wachusett Mountain Associate (WMA) profits go into the Wachusett Land Acquisition Trust Fund which funded the acquisition of approximately 133 additional acres to the reservation in the past two years. According to Dwayne, the Wachusett Mountain SR Advisory Group, which was originally formed in 1969, has been reorganized to include a wide representation of the towns, the local organizations and the user groups that represent the community. Dwayne reported that DEM staff are working on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for two key projects, the summit restoration and the down road restoration. Dwayne discussed recent improvements including renovations to the Visitor Center and work on the hiking trails. Dwayne discussed partnership opportunities that are being explored in addition to WMA such as a community-based partnership to benefit the Superintendent's House.

Doug Williams reported that his goal is to recognize and understand the processes that are going on in the communities on the mountain. Doug displayed a map with 118 permanent points on the reservation from which studies and inventories will be conducted.

Mary Griffin requested that the Board vote to go into an executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss litigation strategy.

LAND ACQUISITION

Mary Griffin requested Board votes of approval for "friendly" takings initiated by Secretary Durand in the Towns of Orange, Athol, Royalston and Warwick as part of the Tully Valley Land Protection Initiative. Mary noted that the purpose of these acquisitions is to prevent fragmentation and development in the area and to promote forestry management and biodiversity.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approves the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire parcels of land in the Town of Orange and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A1".

All in favor. None opposed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approves the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire parcels of land in the Town of Athol and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A2".

All in favor. None opposed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approves the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire parcels of land in the Town of Warwick and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A3".

All in favor. None opposed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approves the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire parcels of land in the Town of Royalston and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A4".

All in favor. None opposed.

Mary requested Board approval for the "friendly" taking of seven parcels along the Merrimack River to create a riverfront walkway in Lawrence from the Visitor's Center to Pemberton Park. Mary explained that this is a Brownsfield site. Michael asked if DEM will be responsible for the cleanup and Mary responded that DEM will be responsible; however, the value of the taking reflects the costs of the cleanup. Mary added that additional sources of funding to assist with the cleanup are being explored such as through the EPA or a Brownsfield program.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approved the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire seven (7) parcels of land in the City of Lawrence, Essex County, and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A5".

All in favor. None opposed.

Mary requested Board approval for the "friendly" takings as part of Secretary Durand's Initiative in the Hatfield Watershed. Mary explained that the purpose of the land would continue to be to provide water supply to the Town of Hatfield and allow limited public access consistent with water supply protection. Michael expressed concern that this acquisition may set a precedent. Mary agreed that further discussion on the subject of water supply protection in general may be appropriate. Van suggested that in the future it would be helpful for the Board to have a statement from municipalities on what's the impetus for their desire to sell the interest.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Environmental Management, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, as amended, approves the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management to acquire parcels of land in the Town of Hatfield and more particularly described in the attached "Exhibit A6".

Four in favor. None opposed. Michael Last abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Heidi Roddis handed out copies of two letters from the Massachusetts Audubon Society, one addressed to Chairman Last summarizing several concerns of Mass Audubon and the other addressed to Secretary Durand and Mr. Wickersham (MEPA) requesting clarification of the need for a Notice of Project Change (NPC) for new construction activities proposed at the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area. Heidi presented a map and pointed out the proposed construction areas. Heidi expressed concern for the specific mitigation measures falling behind schedule and the process for new construction. Donna Brownell handed out copies of a letter that Watchdogs for an Environmentally Safe Town (WEST) sent to Commissioner Webber to express their concern for the ski area proposed work projects for 2001. Donna expressed concern for the process as well as the amount of work scheduled to take place within the confines of the administrative old growth forest. Donna commented that the Wachusett Mountain Advisory Council (WMAAC) is not getting the same information as the Wachusett Monitoring Board. Donna questioned how WMA could move forward with projects when the Section 61 Findings and stream remediation has not yet taken place.

Tim McGuire commented that the WMA projects are for upkeep that must be done on a yearly basis to keep the ski area maintained. Tim stated that a specific process is followed for all projects related to the ski area and that process was followed.

Gil Cronin commented on the need for a snow board park at Wachusett to meet the growing demand of many schools.

Edith Morgan commented that while the ski area expansion may cause some impact, it is important to do it to provide a positive experience to the users.

Todd Shemkus commented that Wachusett Mountain Associates, as the number one tourist attraction in the area, provides an economic benefit to the region.

Jessica Barber read a letter that she received in of support for the ski area expansion.

Joe Choiniere commented that as member of the WMAC, he received a packet of information on the proposed work projects six days in advance of the meeting which included a map that was difficult to read. Joe expressed concern that the projects were approved by DEM prior to the meeting and many answers lacked supporting data.

Jeff Crowley explained that the dredging of the snowmaking pond is necessary because the intake/wetwell is not accessible due to leaves and debris, and keeping the erosion up on the hill will protect the reservoir and wildlife. Jeff commented that digital photos of existing snow making pipes in the old growth forest showed healthy growth around them and did not show any erosion. Jeff stated the reason for additional snow making pipes is for WMA to become more energy efficient.

Jay McCaffrey commented that with respect to the process and the expansion at Wachusett ski area and from the Sierra Club's perspective, the two main things that remain at stake are Board authority and compliance of the project to the RMPP. Jay urged the Board to assert its authority and look carefully at the facts. Jay noted that there is already a snow board park and a raceway at the ski area.

Heidi Roddis commented that Mass Audubon is supportive of the existing ski facility and recognize that it is a valuable public recreational resource that should be allowed to do reasonable upgrades; however, there is concerned with the clear cutting of forest that is over one hundred years old in a biodiversity overlay.

DRC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Susan Frechette presented a slide show and discussed the offices, bureaus and programs within the Division of Resource Conservation (DRC). According to Susan, DRC includes the Bureau of Resource Protection, the Office of Water Resources, the Office of Dam Safety, the Bureau of Project Planning, Design and Development, the Bureau of Engineering and a small operations component. Susan concluded that if requested by the Board, she will do a presentation on the specific program of interest at a future meeting.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION UPDATE

Tom Sullivan moved to for Board to go into executive session in accordance with General Laws Chapter 30, Section 11A 1/2 (3). Van Johnson seconded.

Roll call: Brendan O'Neill "aye," Whitney Hatch "aye," Van Johnson "aye,"
 Thomas Sullivan "aye," Michael Last "aye."

All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to go into executive session in accordance with General Laws Chapter 30, Section 11A 1/2 (3) because the topic of the executive session could have a potentially detrimental effect of the litigation position of a governmental body being the Department of Environmental Management and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Chairman Last stated that the Board will reconvene after the executive session.

Reconvened

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Webber handed out and discussed the new schedule of fees and charges for the forests and parks 2001 season that has been approved by the Executive Office of Administration and Finance. Peter noted that the new fees have support of environmental organizations and we'll go into effect this coming weekend.

According to Peter, Senator Pacheco contacted him to inquire about a sense of the Board on the recommendation for Myles Standish SF RMPP specifically with regards to the reopening of ORV trails. Peter added that the Senator may request in the near future that the Board take a conditional vote based on the results of the performance measures.

Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30PM. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, June 14, 2001 at Myles Standish State Forest.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

June 14, 2001

Myles Standish State Forest

South Carver, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Thursday, June 14, 2001 at the Myles Standish State Forest in South Carver, MA.

Those in attendance were Vice Chairman Brendan O'Neill, Patricia Karl, Whitney Hatch, and Van Johnson. Absent were Michael Last, Tom Sullivan and Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin, Director of Resource Protection Richard Thibedeau and Regional Director Brian Shanahan. Others present included Brian Reid, Dianne Anderson, Kerry Anderson, Amy McNamara, Linda Merims, Tom Maloney, Edward Grimes, Loring Tripp, Tom Delisle, Kurt Stottmeier, Helga Stottmeier, Mark Bettencourt, Herb Howe, Richard Lopes, Jim Doran, Heidi Roddis, Marianne Cokely, Joanne Michaud, Tom Benner and Paul Withington.

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 AM by Vice Chairman Brendan O'Neill.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Van Johnson moved to approve the May Meeting Minutes. Whitney Hatch seconded.

**By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the
May 2001 Meeting Minutes.**

All in favor. None opposed.

MYLES STANDISH STATE FOREST TRAILS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Richard Thibedeau reviewed the process of developing the Trails and Resource Management Plan. Rich briefly discussed the next steps including performance standards development, Board review; MEPA Process; and local, state and federal review of the plan. Rich added that the performance standards will be compiled and sent to the original stakeholders sometime in the fall. Rich noted that all comments are welcomed. Steve Barrett of Epsilon Associates summarized the Myles Standish State Forest Trails and Resource Management Plan via a PowerPoint presentation and a handout of two maps depicting the *Land Stewardship Zones* and the *Recommended Modifications to the Trail Network*.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Delisle pointed out the location of damage caused by illegal trails on a map of MSSF.

Kurt Stottmeier commented that the current proposal of new trails is acceptable to the Town of Carver.

Helga Stottmeier commented that she is opposed to the damage being done by illegal riding. Helga added that she recently mailed information to Board members.

Mark Bettencourt commented that it is important for Board members to understand the history of trail riding in Massachusetts. Mark stated that he disagrees with many parts of the Epsilon Associates plan.

Herb Howe stated that he is prepared to work to mitigate issues so that the trails can reopen.

Richard Lopes commented that he would be very appreciative for a place to ride his ATV.

Jim Doran said that he hopes those involved will work towards a compromise to reopen the trails.

Heidi Roddis stated that she disagrees that the plan could be used as a model as the whole process has been set up backwards. Heidi concluded that the management plan should not be driven by one well-organized special interest but should be an objective, comprehensive management plan.

Marianne Cokely commented that there is plenty of room at MSSF for everyone.

Diane Anderson questioned if studies will be done after the ORV trails open. Steve responded that a two step process includes developing performance standards via field studies to determine a baseline for long-term monitoring before any trails are opened.

Linda Merims commented that currently there is no avenue for concerns.

Tom Maloney stressed the regional importance of the forest as a habitat. Tom added that the Nature Conservancy opposes the re-introduction of ORVs to MSSF because little actual fieldwork has been done.

Loring Tripp commented that the Plymouth Planning Board voted unanimously against and would continue to actively oppose the management plan. Loring submitted a copy of a letter to the Commissioner from the Planning Board. Loring noted that some members of the Board of Selectmen have also taken a stance against the effort.

Brian Reid submitted copies of a letter to Commissioner Webber from Joanne Michaud.

Paul Withington commented that he is opposed to ORV use in the MSSF and expressed concern for lack of funding for law enforcement of the trails.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

- ③ Commissioner Webber reported on the budget. Peter stated that in a key area relative to the Second Century Fund, the Senate approved, in a bipartisan amendment, to increase the level from the Governor's original recommendation, before the fee increase was implemented, that will bring in additional revenues for next year. According to Peter, the level of funding was raised from 1.9 million to 3.3 million based on DEM's projections of revenues going into the dedicated fund. Peter concluded that there is broad support for the increase and hopefully it will sustain through the Conference Committee.
- ③ Peter updated the Board on recent land acquisition and protection efforts including Pemberton Park in Lawrence.
- ③ Peter notified the Board of staff changes including Irene Del Bono as the new Director of Land Acquisition and Protection and Susan Hamilton as the Region 2 Director.

F&P REPORT

- ③ Director Frederick reported that the day use fee increase is in effect.
- ③ According to Todd, a stakeholder meeting held in Boston showed support for the strategic plan.
- ③ Todd updated the Board on current staff training opportunities for lifeguard, interpretive and ranger services.
- ③ Todd reported that there was a good exchange of information at the recent meeting of the North East State Park Directors. According to Todd, several common issues were discussed including the use of public land for ORV use.

Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 1:30PM. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 19, 2001 at Skinner State Park in Hadley, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

July 19, 2001

Skinner State Park

Hadley, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Thursday, July 19, 2001 at the Skinner State Park (Summit House) in Hadley, MA.

Those in attendance were Chairman Michael Last, Brendan O'Neill, Patricia Karl, Ron Smith, Whitney Hatch, Van Johnson and Tom Sullivan. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Susan Frechette, Regional Director Tom Lavoie, Director of Land Acquisition Irene Del-Bono, Director of Historic Resources Patrice Kish, Christine Berry, Dave McGowan, Terry Blunt, Kristin Nelson and Jennifer Howard. Others present included Mark Bettencourt, Heidi Roddis, Marilyn Lund, Paul Regish and Jason T. Phelps.

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 AM by Chairman Michael Last.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Patricia Karl moved to approve the June Meeting Minutes. Whitney Hatch seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the June 2001 Meeting Minutes.
All in favor. None opposed.

LAND ACQUISITION

Mary Griffin presented a review of FY01 projects completed by the Land Acquisition Team. According to Mary FY01 was a very active and successful year with 10,868 acres acquired. Mary reported that DEM closed on over 70 individual parcels of land and spent between 10 and 11 million dollars. Irene Del-Bono highlighted the acquisition of Pemberton Park as viable and important to the community. Christine Berry discussed the Bugley property acquisition as part of the Callahan State Park. David McGowan explained how acquisition of the Markos property in Ipswich as part of the Willowdale State Forest is an example of a true partnership. According to David, partners to protect this 40-acre parcel include the Essex County Greenbelt Association, the Massachusetts Legislature, the Town of Ipswich, the Friends of Willowdale, the neighboring Town of Topsfield as well as individuals including local school children who offered contributions ranging from a few dollars to thousands of dollars. David highlighted the acquisition of the Tully properties, a total of 36 parcels located in the towns of Royalston, Orange, Warwick and Athol. Terry Blunt presented a slide show of the public resources available within the Connecticut River Valley Region.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Patrice Kish and Kristen Nelson presented handouts and a slide show to discuss the programs within the Office of Historic Resources including a new community preservation initiative, the Massachusetts Historic Heritage Landscape Inventory. According to Patrice, ten to fifteen communities will be selected via the Request for Response (RFR) process to receive technical assistance to identify, document and evaluate significant cultural and scenic landscapes. Peter added that this program is being funded by a special supplemental appropriation.

Commissioner Webber presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Board member Ron Smith whose term expires August 20, 2001.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Commissioner Webber reported that the final meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee is scheduled for this Monday to wrap up this phase of the process. Peter stated that the final Strategic Plan document will be distributed widely in draft form. Susan Frechette added that FY02 goals for each division are being reviewed and management will meet to develop a three-year capital plan. Peter discussed the Governor's new Managing for Results Initiative (MRI). According to Peter, the MRI process will involve all agencies and is similar to the DEM Strategic Planning process. Peter added that the MRI may be an opportunity to demonstrate need and make a strong case for allocation of additional funding.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Regish questioned when there will be resources to manage the land acquired. Paul suggested that when the DEM Strategic Planning Committee prioritize threats to DEM, they should question what is more of a threat, the developer or the trail user.

Jason Phelps expressed sentiment for the departure of western Massachusetts Board member Ron Smith. Heidi Roddis clarified that while not specifically listed a copy of the May 22nd letter regarding Wachusett that was handed out at the last Board meeting was also given to Tim McGuire of Wachusett Mountain Associates (WMA). Heidi distributed correspondence regarding the stream remediation issue. According to Heidi, a meeting is being scheduled with representatives from Mass Audubon, DEM, WMA, DEP and F&W to discuss the stream remediation issue. Heidi commented that she is hopeful that any future improvements at Wachusett are within the existing ski slopes. Heidi expressed concern for the overall environmental stewardship and educational programs of WMA. Heidi added that Massachusetts Audubon is willing to work with WMA to develop more in depth, actual educational and stewardship programs.

Heidi questioned if DEM is involved in the land swap relative to the Southeastern Massachusetts Bio Reserve. Mary Griffin responded that discussions are ongoing regarding the original MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).

Mark Bettencourt commented that additional land acquisitions should allow for more opportunities for trail bike and all-terrain vehicle trails.

WACHUSETT

Mary reported that a Superior Court decision was issued late yesterday afternoon on the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area Expansion. According to Mary, DEM legal staff will continue to evaluate what the judgment means in terms of DEM's Section 61 response under MEPA, and will consult with the Attorney General and others about what our next steps should be. Mary added that based on a very preliminary review, the judge generally concurred with DEM's position with respect to the role and authority of the Board. Mary concluded that an update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

- Commissioner Webber updated the Board on the termination of the Greylock Center Project.
- Peter reported that while there hasn't been a significant drop off in attendance due to the recent fee increases, customer feedback reveals dissatisfaction with the quality of service and maintenance at facilities where the fee has increased to \$7 per day. Susan Frechette added that from the time that the increase went into effect around Memorial Day until the end of June, revenues have increased an additional one million dollars.
- According to Peter, a grand Reopening Celebration is being planned for Great Brewster Island, which has opened to visitors for the first time in ten years.

F&P REPORT

- Region Four Director Tom Lavoie reported that one of the biggest issues facing the Pioneer Valley Region is staff shortages. According to Tom, the region is down approximately 35-40 positions.
- Tom discussed how Secretary Durand's Capital Improvement Initiative resulted in many major improvements.
- According to Tom, aging vehicles are a major problem in the region as well as statewide. Susan explained that all passenger vehicles must be leased through the Office of Vehicle Management (OVM); however, currently there are many challenges to obtaining replacement pick-up vehicles. Chairman Last agreed to draft a letter to the Secretary of Administration and Finance from the Board.
- Tom reported that a major emphasis in Region 4 has been on the Clean State Initiative.
- Tom concluded that the Board should be aware of major expense of swimming pools and skating rinks.

Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30PM. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 14, 2001.

**NO AUGUST MEETING DUE TO
SCHEDULING CONFLICTS**

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Thursday, October 11, 2001 at the Walden Pond State Reservation in Concord, MA. Those in attendance were Chairman Michael Last, Brendan O'Neill, Whitney Hatch and Tom Sullivan. Absent were Patricia Karl, Ron Smith and Van Johnson. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin and Forester Bill Rivers. Others present included Marilyn Lund, Donna Brownell, Gordon Brownell and Jessica Barber. The meeting was called to order at 10:00AM by Chairman Michael Last.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Whitney Hatch moved to approve the September Meeting Minutes. Tom Sullivan seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the September 2001 Meeting Minutes.

All in favor. None opposed.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Webber reported that the Fiscal Affairs Division has released an interim budget while the budget is still in conference committee. According to Peter, what's being done for all agencies is, the lower of the two versions (House and Senate) is being loaded into the system for access. Peter explained that DEM is encouraged by conversations with the Budget Director regarding some measure of relief through Second Century Fund.

Peter reported that there is support from legislators regarding a pending bill that would shift the primary responsibility for doing periodic inspections of privately owned dams to the owners. Peter discussed a bill to increase fines for illegal dumping on public lands that has been receiving increasing support from legislators as well as a bill to increase fines for non-compliance with Forest Cutting Plans.

Peter updated the Board regarding a recently passed supplemental Budget for last fiscal year and the current fiscal year that includes \$2.5 million for bike paths and rail trails in addition to funding for key projects such as Grey Court Park in Methuen and repairs to the dam at Mount Tom. Peter added that language has been changed to consolidate the process to solicit through competitive bidding for long-term leases for rinks.

Commissioner Webber handed out and discussed the updated Areas of Environmental Concern (ACEC) Program Guide. Chairman Last commented that those responsible for recent DEM publications should be specially acknowledged for their commitment to quality.

Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin informed the Board that DEM has joined the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area expansion appeal to represent the Commonwealth's interests.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Director Frederick reported success in obtaining an extension for seasonal staff to stay on until November at intensive use fall recreation facilities. • Todd updated the Board on the continued heightened security due to the September 11 tragedy. Todd added that he is beginning to see more DEM staff activated to the military reserves. • Todd discussed ongoing meetings with Secretary Durand's Chief of Staff Chuck Anastas regarding capital spending. According to Peter, DEM is committed to have projects ready should additional capital dollars become available. • According to Todd, a group in Berkshire County is looking to extend the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. Todd stated that he is meeting with George Wislocki (Berkshire Natural Resources) to discuss. • Todd reported that DEM Forestry staff have been meeting with staff from the Secretary's Office and Food & Agriculture to look at developing a new forestry program similar to the Farm Liability Program for land protection of forest lots. • According to Todd, staff from Walden Pond SR, Wachusett Mountain SR and Great Brook Farm SP made a presentations on partnerships at the recent NASPD Conference in Denver. • Todd concluded that the New England State Park Directors have been invited to attend a National Park Service Directors Conference for five days beginning November 26.

MANUEL F. CORRELLUS STATE FOREST UPDATE

Bill Rivers presented slides and updated the Board on firebreak rehabilitation and maintenance at the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest. Bill discussed how the history of the forest relates to current fire hazard conditions. Bill presented and explained several maps of the forest including a *Forest Type Map*, *Firebreak Treatment Type Map* and a *Listed Species/Firebreak Map*. Todd informed the Board that an ENF has been filed and a MEPA Certificate will be issued. Todd noted that current work is only to the perimeter of the forest. According to Todd, there is an RFR for a contractor to assist with the development of a monitoring regime and there'll be another one in the future to assist with the development of a management plan. Donna Brownell asked if DEM has been working with Harvard Forest and Bill responded that the Harvard Forest report is cited in the ENF. Donna expressed concern for possible harrowing in areas where it is not clear what resources are actually there. Brendan commented that use of the harrow during the initial phase is controversial and questioned the long-term effects and plans for ongoing maintenance.

DELINEATION OF BOARD PRIORITIES

Michael opened discussion on Board priorities and focus during the next business year.

- Tom suggested that information regarding the overall management philosophy for the state forests, including mandates of Chapter 132 as well as the goals, objectives and broader issues of the forestry program be brought to the Board.
- Whitney noted that the DEM strategic plan is the context in which the department will be moving forward. Whitney recommended that the Board be provided with a very clear picture of where the organization is on the strategic planning process in terms of what implementation steps will be taken in a prospective year, how the budget relates to those steps, and then some context for which the Board could vote internally as well as engage with the Commissioner and staff in terms of help, questions, creative criticisms, etc. Whitney added that it would be useful for Board members to have something tangible representing a sense of the whole to assist in responding to inquiries and requests for support of budget items. Whitney concluded that information such as how priorities are outlined on a budgetary sense may lead to agenda items.
- Brendan discussed the historical context of the Board's role as it relates to its scope of authority. Brendan stressed the importance for the Board to ascertain and focus on that which clearly falls within the scope of authority of a particular issue. Brendan suggested that the Board define "recommend policy to the Commissioner" and determine how it relates to a particular issue.
- Michael acknowledged the Board's role to approve management plans and discussed the possibility of using the Wachusett Mountain SR Management Plan as a model for good management planning. Michael suggested that monitoring and follow-up reports at the Board level on how the management plans are working would be useful to determine if changes should be made.
- Michael questioned what the Board's role in partnering should be as a leverage/integration effort.

Mary informed the Board that the SE Mass Bioreserve Management Plan will be brought before the Board for approval within the next year.

Peter informed the Board that there is strong interest in a major upgrade to the road network within the Mt. Greylock SR and this project will require Board approval.

Michael asked the Commissioner what he and DEM Senior Staff would suggest to the Board as priorities for the coming year.

- Peter responded that the Managing for Results Initiative is all about leveraging and partnering to provide better services and find opportunities for corporate or foundation funds. Peter suggested that while DEM will always need to lobby legislators, the Board may be an effective tool in maximizing DEM's effort to bring in other resources as well.
- Marilyn Lund (Walden Pond Advisory Board) commented that the bridge between DEM and the public really does need to open up and the public needs to be educated on how to keep their state parks open, maintained and safe. Peter noted that the DEM Director of Public Information position should be filled soon.
- Mary urged Board members to notify DEM staff of any controversy and/or public concerns that come to their attention.

Michael summarized the discussion as follows:

- overall management philosophy for forestry including what leadership role the Board should play in that arena
- Strategic Plan context: how are we doing with it and how are we integrating that with the budget
- management planning process: MMR, Bio Reserve
- partnering - how can we leverage our resources and integrate them better
- public communication strategies
- feedback to DEM staff on controversial issues

Whitney commented that as a new Board member, he is not familiar with the process of approving management plans and it may be helpful for the Board to determine a check list of what they expect to see included in each management plan. Michael agreed that whereas there are some important management planning issues coming up, it might be interesting as well as timely to see historically what has been included and how it has evolved with the Wachusett situation and may evolve even further with the Bio Reserve concepts. Peter suggested that the Board assist DEM staff with determining a way to monitor both management plans and conservation restrictions. Michael concluded that the Board's focus at the next meeting should include a strategic plan/funding update and an overview of what goes into a management plan and how it evolves. The following meeting may include a presentation on an overview of forestry.

Having concluded all business, the meeting adjourned at 1:10PM. The next Board of Environmental Management Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, December 5, 2001.

**NO NOVEMBER MEETING DUE TO
SCHEDULING CONFLICTS**

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

December 5, 2001

Wachusett Mountain State Reservation

Princeton, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2001 at the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation in Princeton, MA. Those in attendance were Vice Chairman Brendan O'Neill, Patricia Karl, Whitney Hatch Tom Sullivan and Van Johnson. Absent were Michael Last and Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Chief of Legal Services Mary Griffin, Regional Director Don Stoddard, Supervisor Dwayne Ericson, Ecologist Doug Williams, Sharon Hoey, Jennifer Howard, Anita Wysocki and Gail Yeo. Others present included Marilyn Lund, Donna Brownell, Gordon Brownell, Chris Curtis, Matt Barron, Jeff Penn, Nicole Fernald, Mike Daniels, Heidi Roddis, Mark Bettencourt, James Caffrey, James McCaffrey, Sue Manero, Mark Ellis and Lisa Dupill. The meeting was called to order at 10:00AM by Vice Chairman Brendan O'Neill.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Sullivan moved to approve the October Meeting Minutes as amended. Patricia Karl seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted to approve the October 2001 Meeting Minutes.

All in favor. None opposed.

WESTFIELD RIVER LOCAL SCENIC DESIGNATION

Director of the DEM Greenways Program Jennifer Howard distributed maps and information packets to Board members as she discussed how the Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee (WRWSAC), Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the state, and the National Park Service are working to expand the previous designation of 44.5 miles an additional 34.9 miles of the river. Chris Curtis of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission displayed a powerpoint presentation and explained the process for scenic river designation.

Whitney Hatch moved to approve the expansion of the Local Scenic River designation to include 34.9 additional miles of the Westfield River. Patricia Karl seconded.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the Board voted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 21 §17B to approve the expansion of the Westfield River Local Scenic Designation to include an additional 34.9 miles.

All in favor. None opposed.

Director Frederick welcomed all to Wachusett Mountain State Reservation and introduced Regional Director Don Stoddard and Supervisor Dwayne Ericson who gave an overview of the reservation and discussed the State of the Mountain Report (SOMR). Ecologist Doug Williams discussed some of the studies being conducted. Tom commented that the Wachusett Mountain SR Advisory Council considers two major long-term capital projects as: 1) Superintendent's House and 2) improvements to the summit.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Budget: Commissioner Webber reported that the Governor signed the budget last Saturday with a number of vetos. According to Peter a supplemental budget has been filed and is scheduled for a special legislative session today. Peter expressed concern that the legislature substantially reduced DEM's main operating account by \$2.4M, which includes earmarks for various local projects. Peter explained that the account for summer and fall seasonal staff is below what has already been spent; however, the Governor has filed a supplemental to increase the amount. Peter discussed impacts to DEM and ways to achieve savings. According to Peter, the Governor filed House bill 4767 on November 19 and sent a letter to all employees late last week urging support for the bill which is an early retirement incentive program necessary for a reduction in the workforce to avoid lay offs. Peter added that passage of this bill would have a significant impact on the DEM workforce. Todd discussed some of the common themes from F&P managers regarding potential savings and impacts such as delaying the opening of pools, campgrounds and day use areas; shifting all or part of administrative fees for campground reservations to the user; removing pay phones; vehicle costs; building efficiency/electric utilities; and consolidating staff. Peter introduced Sharon Hoey as the new Conservation Trust Coordinator.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Director Frederick reported that he along with Commissioner Webber met with several statewide environmental groups to discuss advocacy, sharing information and a common vision: A follow up meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2002. •Todd stated that seasonal fire staff were brought back to assist with one of the most active fire seasons that DEM statistics show. •Todd reported that effective this Monday forestry bureaus are aligned within the division to bring more efficiency as well as more uniform services. Todd added that work is ongoing with regard to the Forest Viability program. Todd informed the Board that he met with the Commissioner of Mass Highway to discuss forest management on Mass Highway property: A follow up meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. •According to Todd, the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest project is moving along with an RFR for a management consulting team to assist with the fire management plan and trails awarded to The Nature Conservancy and UMass Forestry School. •Todd discussed a recent meeting he had with George Wislocki of Berkshire Natural Resources regarding extension of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail •Todd reported that Robert Mellace has been hired as the new Region 5 Director. Tom questioned how the DEM forest management planning efforts relate to Secretary Durand's Forest Vision. Peter explained that the Secretary wanted to go outside of the agency for input when developing the Forest Vision document.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Heidi Roddis commented that she was encouraged by a meeting that took place last week with Commissioner Webber, Director Frederick and environmental group members. Heidi suggested that the Wachusett SOMR would be a good model for future management plans. Heidi agreed to the need for improvements to the summit but stressed the importance of staying within the footprint of what has already been cleared. Heidi suggested that DEM consider a possible land swap with Wachusett Mountain Associates for a parcel that WMA has used with a special use permit for the past five years. Heidi informed the Board that Mass Audubon is in need of a permit for coring of a limited number of trees to confirm old growth status and questioned the process for obtaining special use permits for studies. Heidi stated that there should be a clear, standard, consistent and easily manageable process for approving these studies especially when they are being done at no cost to the DEM. Heidi also questioned how the management plan is updated with new resource information obtained through the studies. According to Heidi, Mass Audubon sees three major priorities: 1) protect natural resources; 2) assist DEM with securing necessary funding and 3) opportunities for public involvement.

Donna Brownell questioned the process for a special needs permit and expressed concern that Mass Audubon was denied a permit to do core and soil samples. According to Donna, one of the trails discussed on page 5 of the SOMR has been rerouted into the old growth forest. Dwayne responded that DEM staff are working to set up standards and guidelines for the issuing of special use permits for research.

Todd concluded that he would prepare a report for the next Board meeting detailing this issue.

Mark Bettencourt commented that the full cost of the campground reservation system should be shifted to the user to minimize delaying the opening of facilities.

Jay McCaffrey expressed support for the process of regular meetings with environmental groups as a way to bring together a strong constituency for state forests and parks. Jay requested more consistency in the way data is presented within the SOMR. Jay explained one example of inconsistency is where the non-skier visitation figures listed on page 3 state that the number is a decrease from the previous year; however, the ski area visitation figures listed on page 9 do not state whether the number is an increase or a decrease from the previous year. Jay commented that the non-skiing related special events for spring, summer and fall has been a great source of concern. Jay noted that during his visit to the mountain on the weekend of the Annual Applefest, there were hundreds of hikers on the ski trails, and the signs prohibiting the activity which are usually prominently displayed were not prominently displayed. Jay concluded that there is clearly a need for oversight and guidance of these weekend events.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Todd reported that six goals have been delineated: protection and management, high quality services, environmental education, support and develop staff, partner with others and financial resources. Todd stated that he will mail copies of the goals to Board members next week. Todd added that comments from Board members are welcomed and any member who may be interested in serving on an ad hoc committee should contact him. According to Todd, the steering committee is scheduled to meet in December and the final document should be completed in mid January. Peter handed out and discussed the Managing for Results Initiative (MRI) document, which according to Peter contains information consistent with the Strategic Plan.

Having concluded all business, the meeting adjourned at 1:10PM. The next Board of Environmental Management Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 30, 2002.

