BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
January 29, 1999
Purgatory Chasm State Reservation
Sutton, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Friday, January 29, 1999 at Purgatory Chasm State Reservation in Sutton, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Debbie Cary, Elisa Campbell, Michael Last, Patricia Karl, Ron Smith and Brendan O'Neill. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Chief of Legal Services Kate Lewis, Douglas State Forest Supervisor Bill Annese, Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park Supervisor John Pelczarski, and Purgatory Chasm State Reservation Supervisor Dave Podles. Others present included Representative George Peterson, Mark Bettencourt, Bill Perry, Mike Creasy, Lisa Mosczynsk, Pat Nedoroscik, Chris Siracola, Maryanne Dubie, Richard C. Lindstrom, Mary K. Comer and Alype Auber.
The meeting was called to order at 11:00am by Chairman Tad Ames.

Elisa Campbell moved to accept the December meeting minutes. Brendan O'Neill seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board approved the December meeting minutes.

SUTTON - DOUGLAS GREENWAY LINK
Dave Podles handed out and discussed the *Sutton - Douglas Greenway Concept.* Mary K. Comer presented an overview of the proposal which highlighted the increased citizen awareness of parcels being developed and the impact this project will have on the quality of life for residents. Pat Nedoroscik displayed and discussed a map which illustrated the connection between Sutton State Forest and Douglas State Forest, as well as many historic and esthetic values of the connecting parcels. Lisa Mosczynsk displayed a map and handed out the *Proposed Douglas Greenway Section* which described the property located in Douglas. Lisa also explained the objective of this section of the Greenway and the possibility for connection to the Mid State Trail. Tad asked what the total estimated cost for this proposal is and Pat responded that it is approximately three million, three hundred thousand dollars for the 106 parcels (1500 acres) located in Sutton. Lisa stated that figures are not available at this time regarding the Douglas properties estimated cost. Dave concluded with a brief discussion about the wildlife in the area which includes deer, mountain lions (Eastern Puma) and rattlesnakes.

LAND ACQUISITIONS UPDATE
Kate Lewis reported that the Brandt Point parcel was acquired. According to Kate, DEM's offer for the Markos property was not accepted. Kate stated that ongoing discussions with the Town of Hingham and the Army Corp of Engineers are making sure environmental concerns are addressed regarding the Hingham Annex property which is adjacent to Wompatuck State Park Tad asked what the concerns are and Kate responded that they include ground water contamination; unexploded ordnance; a solid waste dump; lead paint; and asbestos. Kate informed the board that a response is expected within two weeks to DEM's final offer for the Hoosic Lake property. Debbie noted that the board has many concerns with

the Hoosic Lake project. Kate gave a brief overview of the Krutiak land Acquisition project and requested the board's approval for the use of eminent domain. Kate added that the use of eminent domain is for title clearing purposes only and in all respects constitutes a "friendly taking."
Elisa Campbell moved to approve the Krutiak Land Acquisition Project. Ron Smith seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board approved the exercise of power of eminent domain by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management, acting pursuant to and in accordance with Sections 3 and 3A of Chapter 132A of the General Laws, to acquire 440 acres, more or less, of land located in the Town of Florida on the southerly side of River Road and the Deerfield River, now or formerly owned by Ronald Krutiak, Kathy Krutiak, and owners unknown.

Debbie stated that information about the Wachusett Trust Fund that was presented by Tom Lavoie at the Mt. Wachusett Advisory Council meeting was well received. Kate added that there are five projects in the works that are located in the Wachusett area. Debbie asked about the Bentley Trust Land and Kate responded that it is being discussed at the February Lands Committee Meeting. Elisa asked for an update on Mt. Tom and Kate explained that DEM is looking into use of the property. Debbie asked for the total amount of dollars allocated for land acquisitions this year and next year. Kate responded that this year's budget is approximately $7.7 million, including No Town.

PUBLIC COMMENT
According to **Mark Bettencourt** (Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders), should DEM reopen trails at Myles Standish SF, Douglas SF, Leominster SF, Upton SF and perhaps Brimfield SF, members of the PSTR are willing to sign an MOA to work on them. Mark urged board members to attend upcoming ORV Public Hearings.
Bill Perry (Douglas SF Friends Group) handed out, discussed and requested board support for the *Massachusetts Blackstone River Bikeway, Conceptual Design and Feasibility Study.*
Michael Creasy (Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission) added support for the bikeway and encouraged the board to consult with the BRVNHCC on issues that may benefit from their advocacy and support.
Debbie suggested that Mike and Bill be notified of upcoming budget hearings.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
Todd Frederick reported that he, along with Commissioner Webber and Secretary Durand recently attended the Land and Water Conservation Rally held in Albany, NY. Todd stated that meetings are currently scheduled to discuss the possibility of holding a similar rally in Massachusetts. Todd informed the board that the new CAMP Massachusetts Reservation System (1-877-I-CAMP-MA) is scheduled to begin taking reservations at 9:00am on March 3rd. According to Todd, the on-line reservation system (www.Park-Net.com) should be available in a couple of months. Based on prior campers' receipts, information has been sent to campers. Patricia asked if any sites are being retained for walk-in campers and Todd responded that 20% will be set aside. Todd reminded the board of the upcoming ORV Public Hearings scheduled for February 16, 17 and 18. Todd stated that there is a need for public hearings to discuss the proposed camping rate increase which may not take effect until November. Todd suggested scheduling the March DEM Board Meeting for March 23 at the Supervisors Conference being held March 22 -24 at Jiminy Peak in Hancock, MA.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Peter Webber handed out and discussed *FY99 Spending Plan for $2.3M in Operating Funding; The Governor's Budget Recommendation Fiscal Year 2000;* and *FY2000 House-1 Budget Recommendations.* According to Peter, unless the Article 87 Reorganization Proposal is rejected by a majority of either branch within sixty days from the filing date, it will take effect combining the Department of Environmental Management with the Metropolitan District Commission into a single Department of Conservation and Recreation. Peter explained that under this proposed consolidation, there will be three divisions: the Massachusetts Parks Service; the Metropolitan Parks Service Division; and the Division of Water. Debbie commented on the need for the Governor to strategically market the consolidation so that constituents are aware of the benefits. Peter replied that he would pass Debbie's comments along to Secretary Durand and urged other board members to share their views. Mike commented that the board's priority remains the protection of DEM's budget. Debbie suggested scheduling a meeting with the Secretary for further discussion. Peter continued his report by informing the board that several grant programs are coming round for their annual cycle, including Coastal Access Grant Awards which will be announced next week. Peter noted that Centennial Recognition Programs are being held in each region to acknowledge and thank all DEM staff for their efforts towards making the Centennial a success. Peter stated that time was needed on next month's agenda to report on the downtown revitalization of Salisbury.

BOARD CONCERNS

Debbie asked for a breakdown of actual F&P field positions established this year. According to Debbie, this information would be helpful to advocate for a better budget. Elisa agreed the Board needs a good understanding of where the jobs are as well as what they are. Susan stated that the numbers will be provided to board members.

Debbie suggested a spring Friends Group gathering to offer F&P advocates an opportunity to meet Secretary Durand as well as to inform them of current budget issues.

Elisa questioned where DEM is in terms of collective bargaining contracts for DEM employees and Susan replied that while they are not all on the same schedule, one is ready to go on the table.

Ron Smith requested an update on the relocation of DEM from the Saltonstall building. According to Peter, Secretary Durand has put a halt to the Albany Street move; however, no further details are available at this time.

Debbie expressed concern about potential land use at Freetown SF and Peter informed the board that he has received many letters about a land swap proposal.

Debbie asked for an update on the Halibut Point windmill. According to Peter, Beverly High School may be interested and the Energy Office has encouraged DEM to work with them. Peter added that the Boston Harbor Islands are also a possibility for the windmill's new location.

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Having concluded all business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for **February 24 , 1999** at Dunn Pond State Park in Gardner. The March meeting has been tentatively scheduled for *March 23, 1999* at the DEM Supervisors' Conference being held at Jiminy Peak in Hancock, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
February 24, 1999
Dunn Pond State Park
Gardner, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, February 24 1999 at Dunn Pond State Park in Gardner, MA.
Those in attendance were Vice-Chairperson Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Ron Smith and Brendan O'Neill. Absent were Tad Ames, Michael Last and Patricia Karl. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Martin Suuberg, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette and Chief of Legal Services Kate Lewis. Others present included Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund and Jackie Davison.
The meeting was called to order at 11:20am by Vice-Chair Deborah Cary.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
Commissioner Peter Webber reported that he will attend a hearing before the State Administration Committee today regarding the reorganization petition submitted along with House 1 proposing the consolidation of MDC and DEM. According to Peter, either legislative branch may reject the proposal within the specific time frame.
Peter reported that he had a positive meeting with Senator Pacheco. The Senator requested more detailed information about DEM's budget, and also reiterated his interest in resolving the Off Road Vehicle (ORV) issue and reestablishing some limited riding opportunity in the Myles Standish State Forest. Debbie noted that it would be helpful for the board to have copies of any information that is sent to the Natural Resources Committee.
Peter informed the board that a meeting took place with the current owner of Cheshire Lake Ray Shea to confirm DEM's final offer for the property.
Peter discussed that as a result of a meeting attended by Secretary Durand, along with many local cultural organizations concerned over the character of landscape and scenic surroundings, internal meetings are taking place regarding a pilot project. The Berkshires is being discussed for this pilot project. The Berkshire area would be a model for open space conservation that brings together all resources including those in the private sector. Peter concluded that this initiative is still at the defining stage. Debbie noted that the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition Meeting is scheduled for March 20th.

Elisa Campbell moved to accept the January meeting minutes. Ron Smith seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the January meeting minutes.

SALISBURY

Marty Suuberg discussed a map of the downtown beachfront section of Salisbury which is adjacent to Salisbury Beach State Reservation. According to Marty, there has been a long standing interest in the town to have several decrepit structures torn down. Marty added that a few years ago, an earmark was inserted into one of the open space accounts authorizing DEM to acquire the buildings for the purpose of demolishing them and restoring the beach. Debbie asked about current owners, and Marty responded that there has been some discussions with the owners, some of whom are local and some are absentee owners. The Town of Salisbury has not responded to DEM's questions regarding owners' responsibility. Brendan asked if the beachfront is subject to erosion and Marty stated that while some seasonal erosion is evident, the beachfront comes back and remains stable. Marty presented an engineering report that determined that the buildings should be removed. Marty noted that another aspect brought up by local representatives is eminent domain; however, DEM disagrees with this approach. Marty noted that DEM has been invited by Representative Finnegan to a meeting on Friday to discuss this issue further. Marty concluded that appraisals are ongoing as well as discussions. He will keep the board apprised.

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Kate Lewis reported that it has been publicly stated that DEM will not entertain the recent proposal by a golf course developer, who had also approached the local legislative delegation to obtain a disposition regarding the newly acquired Brandt Point parcel in Mattapoisett.
According to Kate, while two offers have been made on the Mt. Tom parcel, it is not expected to close this fiscal year. Kate noted that an answer is expected by Friday regarding the Cheshire Lake property. Kate informed the board that a meeting is scheduled to take place on March 1st to further discuss the Hingham Annex property. Debbie asked for an update on the No Town Reservoir and Kate responded that DEM now owns the property; the final check is being processed.

GREYLOCK UPDATE

Marty reported that the Greylock project is still in the environmental design phase. According to Marty, the FEIR (Final Environmental Impact Report) is still being worked on and should be filed this spring. Marty added that DEM is also working as a partner with the Division of Capital Asset Management on a Draft Land Disposition Agreement.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Todd Frederick reported that he responded to an invitation by Becky Kalagher to attend the NE Trail Riders Conference in Foxboro, MA. Debbie proposed having an evening DEM Board meeting once or twice a year for interested parties that are not available during the day. Debbie noted that this would also allow the board to follow up on Becky's request to address the board.
Todd reported that he had a meeting with the president of the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) to discuss grooming trails for snowmobiles, cross country skiing and dog sledding. The club is interested in purchasing groomers to assist DEM staff with the grooming of trails on public property.
Todd expressed appreciation for board participation in the Forests and Parks Staff Centennial Recognition Programs.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT (continued)

Todd informed the board of possible shortages in the seasonal staff budget due in part to seasonal staff being kept on longer last season. Todd expressed concern over the effect of the minimum wage increase on seasonal staffing.

According to Todd, the new reservation system, CAMP MA, will begin accepting phone reservations for twenty-eight state forests and parks campgrounds at 9:00am, March 3, 1999. Todd added that hearings regarding increased campground fees have not yet been scheduled. Debbie recommended that CAMP MA information be sent to all legislators.

Todd stated that the kickoff for the Facility Based Information System was two weeks ago. Elisa commented that F&P events information should be current and Todd replied that would be one aspect of the system.

Todd reported that he has been asked to serve on the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD) sub-committee for the purpose of developing a new action plan, which is basically a five year GOALS Plan.

Todd reported that the Off Road Vehicle (ORV) public hearings have concluded and the public comment period will continue through March 15, 1999 at 5:00pm. Todd summarized the similar concerns that ORV riders have as: extended riding season; more facilities being open; and the re-opening of Myles Standish State Forest. Todd said that he is also beginning to hear from various environmental groups who are opposed to the re-opening of Myles Standish roads to ORVs. Ron reported that he and Tad attended the Pittsfield hearing and found that most attendees were in favor of an extended riding season and special event riding permits throughout the year.

According to Debbie, the Supplemental FEIR for Wachusett has just come out and the comment period will extend to mid-March. Todd noted that Wachusett SR and Leominster SF are being grouped together with a new supervisor to be hired. Debbie questioned whether DEM's relationship with private contractors that lease DEM property is that of partners or tenants, and Todd responded that they are tenants.

Elisa asked what was being done to control the invasion of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid which has been found in the middle of the state. According to Todd, it is a problem at Purgatory Chasm SP and they have been spraying trees near the Chasm with a soapy water solution.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marilyn Lund recommended that a similar board be created should the merger of DEM and MDC take place. According to Marty, the proposal does contemplate a similar board.

Mark Bettencourt supported Debbie's recommendation for an evening DEM Board meeting. Mark also reiterated his request for ORV opportunities to be listed on the new F&P map. Mark mentioned that one of the speakers at the Fall River ORV hearing supported the reopening of Myles Standish SF for equestrian trail use. Elisa responded that equestrian trail users may hold some responsibility for trail maintenance too. Mark also noted that the Friends of Freetown supported a "Toys for Tots" ride at the Freetown-Fall River State Forest after the season. Todd emphasized the whole department's appreciation for the outstanding working relationship that has been established with ORV groups and for all of the work they have done. Debbie expressed the need to explore additional options for ORV's use such as non-public lands. Mark stated that the Director of the California ORV program is willing to travel to Massachusetts to address the board regarding the ORV program.

HIRING UPDATE

Susan Frechette discussed the DEM *Year-round Staffing by Location* which she explained as a list of staff positions within the F&P staffed recreation facilities. Susan discussed recent hires, internal promotions and positions that have been posted. Debbie asked how many of the vacant positions have actually been funded. Debbie commented and Todd agreed that there are many vacancies but not enough money to fill them. Debbie asked if any comparison information were available to reveal staffing patterns in Massachusetts forests and parks as well as compare with MDC, other states, etc., and Todd said that he would look into it. Todd noted that Fire Control and Forestry staff work within Recreation at times. Debbie requested the following information: What percentage of positions are vacant? What would it cost to fill the vacancies? Compared to the budget, what is the gap? Susan suggested that the board look at information from Forestry and Fire Control first.

BOARD CONCERNS

Elisa noted that press reports the oldest (approximately 525 years) Massachusetts tree, a Blackgum Tupelo, has been discovered in Oakham, MA.

Elisa commented that due to state cutbacks on aid to cities and towns, many will be looking towards the budget surplus for assistance, and DEM needs to find its place at the table.

Debbie asked for an update on communication with Friends and Advisory groups and Todd responded that he is meeting shortly with newly hired Friends Liaison Tim Clark to discuss among other things, scheduling a Spring Friends & Advisory group meeting. Debbie expressed concern for individual advocates that may not get the information that is being sent only to the contact/chair of the friends group. Marilyn acknowledged that communication is not as it should be at Walden. It was agreed to add Marilyn Lund as a co-contact person for Walden Pond Advisory.

Debbie noted that the board has been discussing the need for emergency capital bond funding for over a year with no progress.

Elisa noted that Brendan O'Neill's current term on the board ends on September 10, 1999.

Debbie urged Todd to make sure that Chairman Tad Ames has time on the Supervisors Conference agenda to address F&P supervisors.

Elisa request an update on the Watershed Initiative.

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Having concluded all business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 10:00am, **March 23, 1999,** at the DEM Supervisors' Conference being held at Jiminy Peak in Hancock, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
March 23, 1999
Forests and Parks Supervisors Conference
Hancock, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Tuesday, March 23, 1999 at the Forests and Parks Supervisors Conference in Hancock, MA
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Ron Smith and Michael Last. Absent were Brendan O'Neill and Patricia Karl. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Peter Brandenburg, Robin Barboza, Phil Rodbell, Edith Makra and Jane Calvin. Also present was Mark Bettencourt (Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders).
The meeting was called to order at 10:00am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Mark Bettencourt noted that in his comments as recorded in the February meeting minutes "speakers" should read "equestrian speakers" and "equestrian trail use" should read "ORV trail use". All board members present agreed to the change.
Ron Smith moved to accept the February meeting minutes as modified. Tad Ames seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the February meeting minutes.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
Todd reported that the DEM Forests and Parks Ranger Program has begun and the Rangers have completed training at the UMASS, Continuing Education, Ranger Training Program. Todd discussed the program that will provide F&P Rangers in each region with basic law enforcement techniques. Mike asked what will be assigned as the Ranger's top priority, and Todd explained that priorities will include meeting with park staff to determine each facility's needs with regard to rules and regulations enforcement. They will also meet with local community law enforcement to establish an ongoing relationship. Todd stated that budget proposals have been included in DEM's FY00 budget plan to bring on another level of rangers. Debbie commented that now may be the time to let the legislature know of this need.
Todd updated the board on the Campground Reservation System that went live on March 3rd at 9am. According to Todd, Parknet received more calls than expected resulting in over 9,000 reservations being made with an estimated one half million dollars in revenue. Todd explained that one of the benefits of the system is the comprehensive reports obtained on visitor demographic information. Peter noted that seventy to seventy-two per cent of the reservations to date have been made by Massachusetts residents and half way through the first day, customers represented 170 different communities across the Commonwealth. Mike asked what the website address for Parknet is and Todd responded www.Park-Net.com.

URBAN FORESTRY
Phil Rodbell handed out and discussed a packet containing information on the Urban Forestry Program. Phil presented a brief history of the program that started with tree planting and has expanded its mission to include assisting communities with planning and management of trees along community streets and in

URBAN FORESTRY (continued)
parks as well as working with developers to protect private lands. Phil discussed how staff is working with local public works and planning departments to determine the condition of their existing urban forests and where critical funding is needed. Phil displayed and discussed a map highlighting the cities and towns that have applied for and received grants. Edith Makra explained how the Mass ReLeaf Fund was originally set up as part of the Conservation Trust and now actively raises funds from private sources and public grants to award grants to communities. Jane Calvin discussed how community outreach is helping many towns to assess what they have and to assist them with becoming more sustainable through management plans. Elisa commented that cities and towns will need state funding to maintain the health of trees and protect them against ever increasing threats such as the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. According to Phil, forest health is being addressed. The Massachusetts Community Forestry Council is initiating the Massachusetts Community Forestry Act of 2000 which addresses forest health. Also, the Northeast Center for Urban Forestry is now working with the DEM to establish the first in the country urban forest monitoring system. Peter added that the current strategy is to build a constituency. Todd informed the board that Phil Rodbell will be departing DEM at the end of the month and his job has been posted.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Mark distributed a press release for the King Phillips Trail Riders 12th Annual Forest Clean-up being held at Wrentham State Forest on April 10th. According to Mark, a four wheel drive vehicle is being donated to Foxboro SF and will be presented to Supervisor Ron Clough. Mark encouraged the board to support the re-opening of ORV trails and the expansion of the ORV program.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
Commissioner Webber reported that the deadline for DEM's offer for Cheshire Lake has passed without a response. Lt. Governor Swift and the Lake Association have asked that the door be kept open and Peter agreed to look at alternatives.
Peter noted that he has accompanied Secretary Durand on visits to the Cape which included a stop at the Crosby Mansion and a tour of the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. According to Peter, the most significant stop was the Massachusetts Military Reservation where DEM has been assigned a key role in developing a contingent management plan between DEM and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife that would show how the land would be managed should the present military use end or become dramatically reduced.
Peter reported that he chaired a hearing on the Resource Management Plan for the Pleasant Bay Area of Critical Environmental Concern Resource Management Plan which is leading to a decision later this week by the Secretary.
Peter discussed the board's concerns regarding a five year Special Use Permit issued to Wachusett Mountain Associates (WMA) relative to the boundaries of the ski area. According to Peter, there was a discrepancy regarding the lease area as defined in the legislation and in the lease which raised issues of liability that needed to be addressed immediately on an interim basis while work is being done on a long term basis. Peter recognized and acknowledged concerns about lack of consultation and proper communication. Debbie commented that in this situation, DEM should have thought through, a bit more, to the ramifications of when the permit came out. Debbie added that due to the controversy surrounding this issue, even if it wasn't appropriate to involve others such as board members in the decision making process, they should have been notified as soon as the decision was made to issue the permit. Debbie expressed concern over the need to review the current lease and Peter agreed. Elisa noted that in the past WMA has continually exceeded the lease agreement in terms of the numbers of skiers and the area that they lease. Elisa concluded that it is her opinion that this process was not handled well and subsequently undermines the involvement of official advisory committees including this board. Mike suggested using
COMMISSIONER'S REPORT (continued)

the successful public-private partnership between DEM and ORV users as a model for a partnership with the tenants at Wachusett. Peter stated that it may be valuable to invite WMA to the next board meeting. Mike recommended that the board hold an executive session to discuss legal and negotiating issues prior to discussions with WMA. Debbie reminded the board that with regards to the proposed expansion, the comment period for MEPA process closes the end of this week. Peter responded that he will have forty-five days in which to respond to the Secretary's decision. Mike requested that board members be supplied with a list of the central provisions of the expansion proposal. Tad concluded Wachusett Mountain should be discussed further at the next board meeting.

BOARD CONCERNS

Tad informed the board of the departure of Land Acquisition Specialist Christine Chisholm. Tad expressed concern about the position being an 03 contract position as opposed to being an 01 permanent position. Tad suggested that this may be the time to make this a permanent position and to clarify the chain of command for land acquisitions. Tad recommended that land acquisitions be placed under the control of the director as opposed to the legal department. Peter stated that it is the intent to make the position a permanent position as Director of Land Acquisitions. According to Tad, at one of the sessions held yesterday at the supervisors conference, many stated that there is no clear point person for land acquisitions which is a concern of people in the Berkshires who are trying to preserve land and may result in lost opportunities for DEM. Susan responded that all land acquisition proposals should be going through the regional director into Boston. Debbie commented that if DEM had a good system in place for land acquisitions, more funding may follow.

Elisa commented that Mount Holyoke Range State Park is hiring a full time interpreter for the first time since 1989.

Elisa commended DEM staff responsible for developing the *Statewide Survey of Civilian Conservation Resources in Massachusetts State Forests and Parks* report.

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Having concluded all business, the meeting adjourned at 12:15pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, April 13, 1999 at the Walden Pond State Reservation in Concord, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

April 13, 1999
Walden Pond State Reservation
Concord, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Tuesday, April 13, 1999 at the Walden Pond State Reservation in Concord, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Michael Last, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Chief of Legal Services Kate Lewis, Peter Brandenburg and Don Stoddard. Also present were Mark Bettencourt, Benton R. Phelps, Mark Snider, Russell Shirley, Laurier Cantwell, Julie Pechilis, Marilyn Lund, Jason Phelps, Paul Remington and Art Peppin.
The meeting was called to order at 11:10am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Elisa Campbell moved to accept the March meeting minutes. Michael Last seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the March meeting minutes.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
ORV Policy: Todd Frederick handed out and discussed *Policy Recommendation: Off-Road Vehicle Use,* which included the DEM staff recommendation for continuing the 1996 ORV program with the following policy changes: 1. An extension of the ORV riding season, through the last Sunday in November each year; 2. On a trial basis, the addition of Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth and Carver to the list of areas where ORV trails may be designated; 3. Several minor policy and procedural modifications. Todd explained the review process and the level of public and legislative demand for additional ORV riding opportunities as the primary reason for the two major recommendations of a longer riding season and the opening of MSSF. Todd noted that the MSSF trail would not be open until the trail is marked and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place. According to Todd, DEM will be initiating a full scale Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP) at MSSF, and an extension of the ORV riding season at MSSF beyond the 1999 season will be based on the findings and recommendations of the plan. Debbie asked when DEM expects the RMPP to be completed and Peter replied that the target date for completion is March, 2000. Elisa asked where funding for the RMPP will come from and Todd responded that it will be included in the budget. Tad asked how the adherence to designated trails is going and Peter Brandenburg stated that while it varies for each park, compliance has gone up significantly. Peter B. added that it appears to be the users that are not affiliated with clubs that are most likely to go off the designated trails. Tad asked if there was adequate funding for signage and Peter B. responded that there are federal funds available through the Recreational Trails Program (formerly SYMMS). Patricia questioned the availability of staff to put together base-line data for comparison next year and Todd stated that all requirements, including the base-line data, must be in place prior to the trails opening on May 1st. Patricia suggested an educational brochure for non-club users to highlight the MOU and explain that this is a model year. Elisa commented that there is still the need for

funding to improve trails throughout the system. Peter concluded that including MSSF, there are now ten facilities authorized for ORV use. Peter also suggested and encouraged ORV clubs to work to overcome strong local opposition in the Brimfield area.

Public ORV Comments: Mark Bettencourt urged the board to consider a longer riding season and noted that the current proposal does not allow for a *Toys for Tots* event in December. Mark suggested that trails be open for a few Sundays in December so that this event may be held. Mark also commented that the opposition in Brimfield was due to the town's fear of being overwhelmed with riders because it is the only facility in the area that would allow ORV trail use. Mark recommended opening other trails in the area to ease some of the burden that Brimfield may experience. Mark stated that it is his opinion that the main purpose of Senate 1031 is to restore year-round use.

Ben Phelps encouraged more trails, more forests and more time to use them.

Paul Remington suggested opening Douglas SF or Leominster SF.

Russ Shirley urged board members to approve the opening of trails at MSSF.

Laurier Cantwell expressed his opinion that the trails should be open year-round.

Mark Snider commented that other states have miles of trails and suggested that ORV users pay a fee to help with budget constraints. Todd asked what he would be willing to pay and he responded $10.00.

Art Peppin stated that New Hampshire requires ORV users to have a sticker and suggested that a fee be attached to ORV registration.

Jason Phelps disagreed with a fee for each use because it would be unfair for ORV users to pay more than other park users.

Elisa commented that the board is open to the possibility of fee for use. Elisa added that to restrict access for ORV use to Massachusetts citizens may be an option specifically in Brimfield.

Michael raised the issue of a "Special Use Permit"(SUP) for charitable purposes such as *Toys for Tots* and expressed concern over the costs associated with any special event. Peter replied that he had hoped that the end of November would be suitable for this event; however, he would be willing to try it for one year and that the costs could be written into the SUP as the club's responsibility. Todd disagreed that a SUP should be issued for the event. Debbie disagreed with granting an SUP that violates the guidelines within the policy. Tad disagreed with the burden of subjective judgment that would be put on DEM staff.

Patricia Karl moved to approve the Proposed Regulations for Off-Road Vehicle Use. Michael Last seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all board members present, the board approved the Proposed Regulations for Off-Road Vehicle Use.

Further ORV Discussion: Michael suggested that next year the board explore further the possibility of SUPs with the clubs responsible for all costs associated with the event. Elisa stated and Patricia agreed that ORV user fees should also be addressed in the future. Board members clarified that they are supportive of the MSSF RMPP but before any other plans are considered, funding needs to be secured. Brendan asked Mark if any of his club members were from out of state and Mark responded that Pilgrim Sands and King Philip Trail Riders have many out-of-state members. Peter suggested that demographic information may be useful.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN

Debbie commented that proposed ski area expansion has resulted in a new level of interest and support from both the public and the DEM that could be used as an opportunity to review management of the reservation. Debbie initiated discussion with several questions such as: Is the lease the right tool? Is it adequate to manage the contractual arrangement between the ski area and the state? Do Board Members feel that they are fulfilling their duty to oversee the lease arrangement? Is there room for modification?

Is it the right fee? Is the lease still doing what we need it to do? Kate advised that any board discussions related to ongoing negotiations must be held in executive session with board members and essential DEM staff present; however, discussions not related to on-going negotiations should be held during the regular board meeting so that the public has the benefit of the dialogue. Tad and Mike agreed to the need for clarification of the core issues surrounding Wachusett Mountain SR. Region III Director Don Stoddard responded that one of the most significant issues is with the ski area expansion. According to Don, Wachusett Mountain Associates (WMA) have not submitted the MEPA required archeological report. Don continued that the certificate also calls for DEM to work closely with the Wachusett Mountain Advisory Council, the Sierra Club, Audubon and WEST. Don stated that the track for completion of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) is the end of June, and once the plan is completed, the MEPA process will begin for the reconstruction of the down road and the summit improvements as well as allow another opportunity for public comment and input. Todd explained that DEM will do a Section 61 Finding where any additional terms and conditions will be spelled out such as off-season use within the lease area. Peter said that outside the lease area activity that was confirmed by a survey and temporarily authorized by the SUP would require legislation to be done on a long term basis. Brendan asked what the term for the SUP is and Peter responded that the term is five years revocable. Peter added that he may consider changing the term to two years retroactive. Peter also discussed the possibility of increasing the percentage of dollars received from WMA. Elisa asked how the number of customers is monitored and Don responded that it is based on lift ticket sales. Mike asked if WMA is the only issue in terms of conflict with resource preservation and other uses. Peter replied that traffic to the summit is a major issue. Don added that Wachusett has one of the best marked hiking trails in the Commonwealth but it does not pose a conflict. Mike inquired into the possibility of a user fee for the road during the summer months and Debbie stated that there is strong local opposition to a fee. Debbie suggested free transportation to the summit. Elisa noted that a fee is charged for roads at Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom. Tad concluded that entrance fees and the relative costs associated with collecting should be a future board meeting agenda item. Debbie informed the board of a bill submitted by Representative Harriet Chandler to increase fees. Mike asked how WMA is going to assist with the monitoring and protection of resources. Peter responded that WMA staff need to be trained. Don added that DEM rangers are patrolling the area on skis.

LAND ACQUISITION

Kate handed out and discussed a report on the status of on-going land acquisition projects for the current fiscal year. According to Kate, EOEA has informed DEM that the Secretary is dramatically revising plans for capital allocations for next fiscal year and those results will be announced tomorrow. Kate added that funding is expected to go down. Peter suggested that the best answer may be to rally the land trust and lands community toward being at the table for surplus dollars. Debbie commented that a ten to fifteen year recap on how much has been spent on open space would be helpful.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Peter handed out and discussed the *DEM FY99 Supplemental Seasonal Appropriation* and *Urgent DEM Capital Relief.* Peter reported that in sixty days DEM will have no capital funds remaining for repairs to parks, pools, beaches or skating rinks. Peter continued that DEM's Clean State program and Dam Safety program will be unfunded. According to Peter, an appropriation is urgently needed to carry these activities forward into Fiscal Year 2000. Peter reported that DEM is seeking a total of $860,185 in additional funding for seasonals in FY99 and $1,254,000 for seasonals in FY00. Peter discussed the justification for this request as well as the public safety issues that may be effected without this funding. Debbie commented that it was time for Board Members to reach out to their legislators for their support.

BOARD CONCERNS

Elisa commented that it is frustrating for DEM not to have an adequate budget to maintain the forests and parks, especially in financially great times where the state has a surplus.

Debbie asked for an update on the DEM/MDC proposed merger and Peter responded that there doesn't seem to be a majority of legislative support for the bill.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marilyn expressed concern for the lack of ongoing publicity about the needs of DEM in terms of operation and maintenance.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:15pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, May 19, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Office in Ayer, Ma.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
May 19, 1999
DEM-Devens Office
Ayer, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, May 19, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Office in Ayer, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Michael Last, Ron Smith, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Elisa Campbell. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Martin Suuberg, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Chief of Legal Services Kate Lewis, High Ground Manager John Motroni and Anita Wysocki. Also present were Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Donna Brownell, Heidi Roddis, A. Richard Miller and Jill Miller.
The meeting was called to order at 11:00am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Brendan O'Neill moved to accept the April meeting minutes. Deborah Cary seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the April meeting minutes.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
High Ground: Todd reported that DEM is currently looking at fire tower sites across the state as an opportunity to develop new revenue for the agency that would be deposited into the 2nd Century Fund. John Motroni handed out a packet which included DEM FY92-99 Non Tax Revenue; Draft Policy DEM High Ground Communications Public Sector/Private Sector Access and Use Policy (3/22/95); and St. 1997, C.88, Section 110. Tad asked how many of the fifty-two high ground sites managed by DEM currently have signed leases. John explained that there are approximately thirty-five sites presently in use that DEM seeks revenue from. Tad inquired about a bill being passed authorizing DEM to spend money to repair fire towers. Todd responded that the Capital Bond Bill made funding available to repair the fire towers for observation as well as for telecommunications. According to Tad local sentiment opposing the proposed new installation of a high school weather station at the Mt. Everett fire tower raises two questions that the policy does not address: Does/should DEM consider local sentiment about this type of use for existing fire towers? Are there any criteria about location appropriateness? The Commissioner stated that there are no present plans for commercial use of the Mt. Everett fire tower. The Commissioner agreed that the site is inappropriate for commercial use for a number of reasons including the location of the tower on the Appalachian Trail and is an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The Commissioner concluded that the proposed project for the students to install a weather station is an exciting one. John explained that everything for this project would be fully solar powered and housed inside the cabin. John noted that at a recent public meeting he attended, the majority voiced support, while a loud minority was against this project that would repair the tower back to its original condition. Tad suggested incorporating special consideration for site by site evaluation into the policy. The Commissioner responded that it might be valuable as evaluation criteria. Debbie asked if all fire towers have roads and John responded that approximately 98% do have roads. Brendan asked if there is a growing need for trenching and bringing in power. John responded that most sites

already have power. Debbie recommended that the board spend more time over the next couple of months to come up with a policy that would alleviate some of the concerns that seem to be erupting. Debbie added that some comparison would be helpful to see what other states are doing. Debbie expressed the need for assurance that DEM is getting what it should in terms of the dollar amount received from the leases. The Commissioner said that recent bids are coming in higher and communities have been steering applicants toward DEM. Tad agreed with the need for a thorough policy that the board could vote on. Michael stated that the policy needs to be consistent with the 1997 statute. Brendan expressed concern for clarity on terms used regarding the hybrid uses and DEM's liability with regard to what the tower is to be used for. Michael asked if DEM has public liability insurance and the Commissioner stated that he would discuss this with Kate Lewis. Brendan suggested that it be clear in the policy and the lease agreements that should a ground base site move to a satellite-based system, the site must be restored. Mike recommended provisions for early termination premiums. All agreed to continue the High Ground discussion at a future board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Bettencourt (Pilgrim Sands Trailriders) commented that the length of the riding trail being proposed at Myles Standish SF is shorter than the previously agreed upon eight or nine miles. The Commissioner explained that part of the dispute is over the accuracy of the Global Positioning System used by DEM that measures 7.3 miles, and the accuracy of Mark's odometer that measures 6 miles. The Commissioner added that he has met with Senator Pacheco, Secretary Durand and DEM staff to discuss the addition of another mile. According to Tad, the board's primary concern is for the protection of the natural resources within the area, and he encouraged Mark and ORV groups to work with staff at DEM to resolve the issue of length.

A. Richard Miller (Cochituate SP Advisory Committee) expressed concern for a piece of property, currently owned by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority that is needed for the proposed Cochituate Rail Trail. According to Mr. Miller, the Turnpike Authority has approached abutting businesses to purchase the land. According to the Commissioner, DEM supports the project and can approach the Turnpike Authority to inform them of the interest for this parcel. Heidi Roddis (Massachusetts Audubon Society) suggested that a process be set up to look over and flag all parcels being sold by the Turnpike Authority that DEM may be interested in before negotiations to sell begin. Tad requested that DEM look into the broader implications of this issue.

Heidi Roddis urged DEM and the board to address outstanding issues regarding the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area with Wachusett Mountain Associates prior to any permit being signed. Donna Brownell (Watchdogs for an Environmentally Safe Town) handed out copies of the Notice of Intent (NOI) that was filed with the Secretary by WEST and the Sierra Club. Tad acknowledged that the board is well aware of the ongoing management concerns of hosting a ski area as well as DEM's mission for natural resource protection. Debbie added that the lease might be a key element that should be addressed properly. Martin Suuberg explained that the Section 61 Finding and the Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP) are expected to be completed by mid-June. The Commissioner added that to complete the MEPA process, an archeological study must be done that may trigger issues requiring a Notice of Project Change. Mike questioned the role of the board upon completion of the RMPP and the Section 61 Finding. Tad responded that the board's role should remain as a public oversight board to represent the interests of the public. Debbie concluded that the board needs to remain on top of this very important issue.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

The Commissioner reported that there is a serious shortfall in funding for seasonal staffing; however, DEM is working with individual members of the Senate as well as the Ways and Means Committee to seek support for the seasonal staffing program. According to the Commissioner, the House has finished the budget process, both capital and operating, and the focus is now on the Senate. The Commissioner

will meet with Secretary Durand and Art Bergeron on Monday to discuss cap allocations. Debbie expressed concern that as DEM meets biodiversity goals, the agency should not accept a zero allocation for open space. Tad suggested a letter to the Secretary from the board. Marty noted that Andrea Lukens has put together a summary of diversity programs that may be a valuable resource.

LAND ACQUISITION

Kate Lewis presented an issue concerning the acquisition in fee of a 344.01+ acres of land from the American Farmland Trust, Inc. located in the Connecticut River Valley at French King Gorge in the towns of Northfield, Erving and Gill. The French King Gorge Land Acquisition project was approved by the Board on September 2, 1998 and is scheduled to close before the end of the Fiscal Year 1999. American Farmland Trust, Inc. acquired 664 + acres of forest and pastureland on the Connecticut River from New England Power Company. The Certification of Title finds numerous encumbrances and exceptions to the title that are too indefinite to locate. Due to the issues with the title, and the impending end of the fiscal year, the Department of Environmental Management proposes to obviate its agreement with the American Farmland Trust, Inc. and take the parcel by eminent domain rather than purchase. The most expeditious route would be to take the property through eminent domain under Chapter 132A of the General Laws. A "friendly" taking of this parcel will cure all title defects and allow the Department of Environmental Management to acquire the parcel in this Fiscal Year on the same terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition by sale. The amount of damages will be at the agreed purchase price of $354,000.00 as stated in the executed Purchase and Sale Agreement.

Kate Lewis presented an issue regarding the urgency surrounding the proposed acquisition by eminent domain of a conservation restriction over a certain parcel of land in the Town of Rowley comprised of approximately forty-four acres +/-. The Town of Rowley is currently under contract to purchase the underlying fee interest in this fiscal year. The Town is doing so with the understanding that DEM will then purchase a Conservation Restriction from them. Financial constraints within the Town of Rowley make a taking before the close of the fiscal year urgent, so the board is being asked to vote at this meeting.

By a majority vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the following Vote:

On a motion duly made by Ron Smith and seconded by Michael Last, 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, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to acquire ownership in fee simple over (3) certain parcels of land containing a total of 344.01 acres, more or less, located in the Towns of Northfield, Erving and Gill, Massachusetts, now or formerly owned by American Farmland Trust, Inc.

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, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to acquire ownership in fee simple over a certain parcel of land containing 14.5 acres, more or less, located in the Town of Gill Massachusetts, now or formerly owned by Walter R. O'Sullivan III.

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, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to acquire a conservation

restriction over a certain parcel of land containing 44 acres, more or less, located in the Town of Rowley, to be owned by the date of the taking by the Town of Rowley.

Kate encouraged board member attendance at the regional land meetings that are currently being scheduled for July and August. Kate notified board members of two new technical support staff positions based in Boston that have been filled for a Paralegal and a Land Protection Specialist. Kate concluded that the position of Director of Land Protection has not yet been posted.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT (Continued)
Todd reported that A&F has approved the rate increase for campgrounds to be phased in over the next two years. The Commissioner added that staff will begin to look at day-use rates. According to Todd, the glitches are still being worked out on the new campground reservation system. Todd passed around the May 1999 Edition of Firehouse Magazine which included an article on DEM Fire Control.

BOARD CONCERNS
Brendan distributed copies of recent newspaper publications from the Vineyard Gazette regarding the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest.
Ron recommended a joint board meeting with the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and Todd said that he would contact Director Wayne MacCallum to discuss the possibility of a September meeting.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, June 23, 1999 at Purgatory Chasm State Reservation in Sutton, Ma.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
June 23, 1999
Purgatory Chasm State Reservation
Sutton, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, June 23, 1999 at the Purgatory Chasm State Reservation in Sutton, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Elisa Campbell, Ron Smith, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent were Deborah Cary and Michael Last. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette and Peter Brandenburg. Also present were Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Jackie Davison, Donna Brownell, Heidi Roddis, James McCaffrey, Susan Manero, Tom Lynch, Kirk Stottmeier, Linda Merims and Jason Nato.
The meeting was called to order at 11:00am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Ron Smith moved to accept the May meeting minutes. Patricia Karl seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to approve the May meeting minutes.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
High Ground Draft Policy: Todd discussed the Draft High Ground Policy that was previously mailed to board members for their review. Elisa recommended that the policy mention explicitly that it does not deal with legislatively authorized towers located on DEM property that are not owned by DEM. Commissioner Webber informed the board that DEM strongly supports the use of the Mt. Everett tower for a proposed school project; however, there are no plans for future use of the tower for communication purposes. Tad suggested that the policy use specific language to acknowledge the criteria that must be met on a site-specific basis. Patricia noted that the policy also needs to be specific that no telecommunications towers will be allowed under any circumstances if it jeopardizes public safety. Tad recommended that the first sentence of Item #2 of the Draft policy end after the word "*allowed*", thus deleting "*...unless such tower shall be owned by DEM.*" Todd concluded that the revised High Ground Draft Policy will be presented to the board at the July meeting, along with an appendix listing the location of all current towers.
Manuel F. Correllus SF: Todd reported that due to high fire danger, park staff have been doing a lot of emergency construction of fire breaks within the Manuel F. Correllus SF. According to Todd, follow-up meetings are scheduled with National Heritage and Fisheries and Wildlife staff to address the fire danger issue. Brendan informed the board that Island fire chiefs are concerned about the high risk for fire due to the lack of rainfall, as well as the ability of town volunteer fire departments to handle a major fire. Brendan noted that there are many dead end roads that go down into the forest without fire hydrants, putting the homes adjacent to the forest at risk. Brendan added that the DFW has scheduled public meetings and the Nature Conservancy has scheduled a meeting with DEM's forester Bill Rivers. Brendan explained that recent press has focussed on the Harvard Report, which recommends the removal of non-native trees that were planted years ago on the sandplain as an effort to help the economy by establishing a timber industry. Brendan also noted that rare native plant species occur in the fire lanes

and that increased attention is being paid to the native scrub oak barrens. Todd acknowledged that while National Heritage may assist with the funding for removal of these non-native trees, a gap remains. Brendan concluded that a response from DEM to recent press reports might be helpful.

WACHUSETT

According to Commissioner Webber, this week's Environmental Monitor will publish the Draft Section 61 Findings, and the Revised Draft Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP) will be available for public review this Friday. Peter added that the public comment period for these documents and the Mass Historic Commission Archeological Survey is upcoming. Peter reported that DEM is continuing discussions with Wachusett Mountain Associates (WMA) to address several issues including off season use and revenues as well as amendments to the lease. Peter handed out and discussed the summary of *State and US Ski Area Lease Charges on Public Lands from Survey of States and US Forest Service*. Peter stated that the goal is to have sufficient capacity to provide funding that DEM could draw upon for additional staffing as needed. Tad stated that there needs to be a mechanism within the lease for guaranteeing that WMA acts as stewards. Peter responded that some aspects might require an amendment to the lease and/or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Elisa requested clarification on the expected order of what needs to be done prior to the issuing of a permit from DEM. Peter responded that all other permits such as from the Conservation Commission, the DEP, MOUs as well as any other necessary permits must be resolved prior to DEM issuing a permit for the expansion. Peter added that the construction program that was agreed upon by WMA establishes a date, sometime around mid-September, for which all work must be done. Elisa asked if it's not possible to complete the work by this date, will WMA have to wait until next year and Todd answered yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wachusett: James McCaffrey commented that there are four key points that the board should consider: the zoning issue; the capacity increase; the Alpine Park area; and the MEPA process.

Donna Brownell presented a map that highlighted the Alpine Park area and the Old Growth area at the Wachusett Mt. Visitor Center. Donna noted that the Red Oak, which is the largest in the area, is not within the Old Growth area and subsequently will be cut down for the Alpine Park. Donna added that the project also impacts the water supply at the base of the mountain. Donna presented a petition containing over 3500 signatures of citizens opposed to the expansion. Donna asked about the status of a new appointment of a Native American person to the Wachusett Advisory Council and Peter responded that while no final decision has been made, discussions are taking place to create a seat on the council for a representative of the Native American community.

Heidi Roddis expressed concern about the private commercial interest in the mountain. Heidi urged the board and DEM to remain focussed on the integrity of the mountain and its natural resources especially the Alpine Park area.

Susan Manero urged the board and DEM to look closely at the issue of carrying capacity and how it is monitored. Sue commented that historical data needs to be preserved; the preservation of watersheds should remain a priority; and the Special Use Permit process needs to be followed. Sue concluded that the removal of trees in the Alpine Park area would create a wind tunnel putting the Old Growth in danger.

Tom Lynch expressed concern for the public drinking water supply and handed out a list he had made of the annual attendance figures for the reservation and the ski area from 1969 through 1996.

Jason Nato commented that the Environmental Impact Report does not cover use of the reservation for Native American ceremonies which take place four to five times a year or the continued use of Mt. Wachusett as a sacred site. Jason added that the economic impact with regard to declining property values of the abutters of the reservation is also not mentioned in the EIR.

Elisa asked if the copy of the Wachusett Mt. Draft Resource Management and Protection Plan dated January 1998 is the most recent version and Peter replied that an updated version will be available on Friday. Elisa commented that as a DEM board member, she is not convinced that the expansion should receive board approval. Tad agreed that a case has not been made for the expansion.
ORV: Kirk Stottmeier presented a petition signed by 120 abutters to Myles Standish State Forest opposing trail use in the forest. According to Mr. Stottmeier, the Town of Carver does not have the emergency services to support the influx of ORV users.
Mark Bettencourt expressed sympathy for Mr. Stottmeier's situation and suggested that some of the trails be moved away from the homes and spread further into the forest.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
Commissioner Webber discussed the recent shortage of lifeguard applicants for DEM swimming areas. According to Peter, the shortage is not a funding issue. Elisa asked if it could be a pay scale issue and Peter replied that senior lifeguards receive just under ten dollars per hour. Todd added that private clubs and condos are paying more. Patricia suggested that in-house training may be an option and Peter responded that DEM may consider hiring applicants as trainees. Peter stated that DEM is also considering hiring 16 year olds. Brendan asked if it could be a demographic issue. Peter noted that the cost for transportation may be a factor; however; it is more likely that many college students are looking toward career oriented summer jobs. Patricia added that colleges are beginning earlier and it may be impossible for a lifeguard to commit to the timeframe. Peter concluded that DEM is considering incentives for lifeguards.
Budget: Peter handed out and discussed a chart entitled *DEM Budget Information* which included figures for FY99, FY00 House and FY00 Senate. According to Peter, DEM's final appropriation will fall somewhere between the FY00 House proposal and the FY00 Senate proposal. Susan Frechette explained that the Senate version may pose a problem with a split of the seasonal appropriation into four separate accounts: summer, spring, fall and winter.

BOARD CONCERNS
Elisa reiterated the board's request to meet with Secretary of Environmental Affairs Bob Durand. Peter agreed to work on it for the July meeting.
Ron expressed concern regarding the controversy surrounding Hoosac Lake and Greylock Glen. Tad responded that Greylock Glen is scheduled to be on July's agenda. According to Peter, he does not have a recommendation for Hoosac Lake; however, a revised recommendation may be brought before the board at some point. Peter added that DEM does not have an allocation of funds at this time to pursue any recommendation.
Elisa asked for information regarding the wooly adelgid and Todd explained that recently 10,000 lady bugs (non-native species) were released on to one tree in Wilbraham in the hopes of keeping the adelgid in check. Todd informed the board that discussions are ongoing with the possibility of introducing more non-native species into the Commonwealth to keep the bugs in check. Ron asked if the adelgid is eating the hemlocks and Todd said yes, they've been found in eleven of the thirteen counties. Todd concluded that Forest Health Program Manager Charlie Burnham and other designees are monitoring the problem and doing some spraying with detergent soap.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, July 28, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Office in Ayer, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

July 28, 1999
DEM-Devens Office
Ayer, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, July 28, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Office in Ayer, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Michael Last, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Stephen Brown, Don Stoddard, Richard Thibedeau, and Stu Weinreb. Others present included Donna Brownell, Thomas Lynch, Sue Manero, Jay McCaffrey, Patty Miller, Jason Nadeau, Phyllis Booth, Linda Orel, Tom Myers, Jeff Crowley, David Crowley, Padgett Berthiaume, Nancy Berthiaume, John J. Caron, Dennis S. Gubatrer, David Nichols, Loretta Conlon, Lauretth Conlon, Annette Czado, Anthony J. Martino, Cleo Girouard, Jo Claghorn, Jillie Ryan for Senator Antonioni, Earle Vickery, Carlista H. Vickery, Mark Bettencourt, Vernon H. Hall, Bruce McDonald, Laura Harme, Anne Kruse, Suzanne Spencer, Victoria Hoffman, Helen Yune, Carolyn Stimpson, Bob Hawk, Arthur Seldon, Peter Bidden, Don Baymore, Heidi Roddis, Edith Morgan, Timothy McGuire, Lisa Stanley, Joe Choiniere, Frank Shea, Donald E. Bauria, Paul Hitchins, Francis Wojasyeck, Tory Hoffman, Ed Driscoll, James J. Leitch, Dennis Kaversky, Christopher Fleming, Tom Sullivan, David McKeon and Norma L. Smith.
The meeting was called to order at 11:20am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The board agreed to defer approval of the June Meeting Minutes until the August Meeting.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT
High Ground: Director of Forests & Parks Todd Frederick discussed the revised Draft High Ground Policy that was previously mailed to board members for their review. According to Todd, changes have been made based on the recommendations of board members at the June meeting. Elisa asked if there was a need for a public hearing on the policy and Todd replied that a public hearing is not necessary.
Elisa Campbell moved to approve the adoption of the DEM High Ground Telecommunications Public/Private Sector Access and Use Policy. Michael Last Seconded.

Vote

By unanimous vote of board members present, the board approved the adoption of the Department of Environmental Management High Ground Telecommunications Public/Private Sector Access and Use Policy.

All in favor. None Opposed.

WACHUSETT MT.
Chairman Tad Ames recognized and thanked DEM staff as well as members of the public for all of their efforts regarding Wachusett Mt. SR. Tad suggested that public comments be made first, followed by comments of DEM staff, and concluding with the board's discussion.
Public Comments: David McKeon expressed concern for the public comment period being first and requested clarification of what the board's discussion will be about. Tad responded that the intention of the board is to make a recommendation to the Commissioner, as to the board's opinion on the plans for expansion of the ski area, as presented.
Jason Nadeau presented copies of his report, *Control of Mount Wachusett,* based on a case study of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the expansion of the ski area.
Donna Brownell commented that upgrades have begun on the high-speed quad chair lift and the footings for the base lodge are being put into the small pond this year, prior to all of the details being addressed.

Public Comment:(continued): Jay McCaffrey handed out copies of a letter, addressed to him from Thomas B. Bracken (Bracken and Baram,) which includes Mr. Bracken's legal opinion as to the DEM Board's powers of authority.
Heidi Roddis questioned whether the mountain is able to take any more fragmentation without considerable harm to the ecosystem of the mountain. Heidi commented on additional issues that should be addressed including the need for increased staffing, such as an ecologist, and for special use of the land outside of the leased area. Heidi urged the board not to make any small decisions now, specifically with regards to the ski lift area, which may lead to forced decisions in the future.
Tom Lynch handed out and discussed a packet of backup materials with zoning classification issues highlighted. Tom noted that watershed areas are not listed in the Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP). Mike Last asked Tom for his perspective on the impact of the expansion plans with regard to watershed protection and Tom expressed serious concerns for the Fitchburg drinking water supply.
Sue Manero urged the board to consider the effects of wind/ice storms on the north side of the mountain, and to be sure that the correct process is being followed by WMA with regard to obtaining the applicable permits for any construction being done.
Vernon Hall commented that DEM staff has failed to address the safety issues of the proposed capacity increase. Mr. Hall recommended that DEM back away from its partnership with WMA and consider hiring a third party to take a closer look at this issue.
Edith Morgan commented that every business needs to update and it is time to bring more opportunities for recreation to the area. Ms. Morgan supported WMA's request for an additional eight acres to be added to their lease area.
Jo Claghorn stated that she is very proud of what WMA has done for the mountain and suggested that attention be directed to maintaining the hiking trails outside of the lease area.
Cleo Norman Girouard commented that the Crowleys have done a good job providing ample and safe skiing. Mr. Girouard added there is ample room on the mountain for recreation as well as conservation.
Anthony questioned what the purpose of protecting the mountain is if the citizens can't use it.
Russ Vickery commented on the need for vigorous outdoor exercise both during the winter and the summer for young people in the area.
Loretta Conlon expressed support for WMA and the ski area expansion.
David Nichols urged support for WMA and the Crowleys.
John Caron commented that WMA has shown excellent stewardship of the mountain.
Dennis Kaversky suggested that the ski area expansion be approved for safety reasons.
Nancy Berthiaume questioned the delay in the issuing of the permits for construction to begin.
Owner and operator of WMA Jeff Crowley stated that WMA has always been concerned about water quality and a diversion site has been built. Jeff noted that the Town of Fitchburg is in the process of installing a filtration plant. Mr. Crowley explained that WMA is currently dismantling the old lift and has made a down payment on a new high-speed quad lift. Tad asked if the new high-speed quad lift is the key element of the expansion. Mr. Crowley discussed how the new lift would provide variety and allow for more families, beyond the current capacity limit of 3,225, to come out and enjoy the mountain. Debbie asked Mr. Crowley to outline the procedure for removing the old lift. According to Mr. Crowley, when he received the Secretary's April, 1999 Certificate, he checked with WMA's attorney who advised him that it was likely that the expansion was going to be approved so he ordered the new multi-million dollar ski lift. Mr. Crowley explained that due to pressure from WMA staff to have the project completed safely and timely, he preceded with the removal of the current lift. Mr. Crowley stated that he consulted with DEM staff, through WMA's attorneys, to inform them that WMA was commencing to dismantle the lift and that there would be no excavating at this time. Brendan asked if WMA could improve the equipment and the infrastructure in the absence of the expansion of the Alpine Park. Mr. Crowley explained that the Alpine Park is a very important component to the operation, as is the need for more room.
Tom Sullivan commented that it is time to support the Commissioner; to work on implementing the expansion; and to move forward.
David McKeon commented that access to the mountain is important. Mr. McKeon discussed the economic impact of the ski area to the region in the form of jobs, room rentals and restaurants. Mr. McKeon urged the board to encourage and nurture the partnership of DEM and WMA.
Bob Hawk commented on the social impact of the ski area and urged the board to move ahead with the approval of the expansion.

Public Comment:(continued): Ann Kruse commented that the off-season fairs and festivals provide a vital link for tourism and businesses in the area. Ms. Kruse encouraged support for the expansion.
Arthur Seldon commented that WMA has allowed illegal trails and DEM should revoke the lease.
Peter Bidden commented that Wachusett Mountain is an essential ingredient to the tourism in the area.
Don Baymore expressed concern for what he feels is misinformation about WMA in recent press articles.
DEM Staff: Commissioner Webber handed out copies of Chapter 287 of the Acts of 1977, the enabling legislation that established the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area. Peter explained how the Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP) outlines how DEM intends to proceed. According to Peter, DEM plans to move forward with conditional approval of the proposed ski area improvements and the expansion. Peter reported that the first step is authorizing the upgrading of the two ski lifts this construction season, which ends in September. Peter discussed the numerous conditions, including early submittal of detailed plans to DEM by WMA on the next phase of construction, which includes clearing of the trails in the summer of 2000 construction season, for review and approval.
Don Stoddard stated that the position of *Superintendent of the Wachusett Mountain SR* has been advertised and closed. According to Don, DEM is in the process of sorting through the resumes that were received. Don said that due to the readjustment of seasonal dollars, he hopes to have more patrols on the mountain.
Rich Thibedeau stated that the key instrument developed to protect the natural resources on Wachusett Mt. is the RMPP.
Epsilon consultant Tory Hoffman commented that there is no compelling evidence that an additional ski area will result in the determent to the reservation overall. Tory suggested that there is a need to look more closely at the other sections of the reservation to be set aside for conservation.
Peter recommended the board's concurrence with the Revised Draft Section 61 Findings.
Board Discussion: Deborah Cary commented that the lack of communication with regards to WMA's removal of the chair lifts damaged the public trust. Deborah urged WMA and DEM to think through the ripple effects and ramifications of every decision that is made about what goes on at the mountain. Peter responded that he spoke about the removal of the chair lifts at the last meeting and therefore, he felt it was unreasonable for the reaction that this was done in bad faith. According to Peter, WMA has not proceeded with the expansion or the installation of the new lifts yet. Deborah stated that she understands the logic for WMA's removal of the lifts; however, she suggested that a brief memo update could have prevented it from being blown out of proportion.
Elisa discussed the need for clarification of the role of the board. Elisa commented that the cutting of eight acres for the Alpine Park is inconsistent with DEM's mission; with the GOALS Plan and zoning for that part of the mountain; and with water supply and biodiversity protection. Elisa added that her understanding of the mission is conservation first and dispersed recreation next. Elisa commented that the approval of this expansion would contradict what was done with regards to the ORV Policy. Elisa stated that it is important and it is time for this board to find out exactly what its role is. Elisa concluded that she has no problem with the installation of new lifts, however, she hopes the majority of the board will vote to say that the Alpine Park should not be approved.
Patricia agreed to the use of public land for responsible recreation such as skiing but she expressed concern for using it for snowboarding.
Michael discussed the parameters of the issue including finalization of the changes to the lift, negotiation of amendments to the lease and the requirement of WMA to submit a plan in early 2000 for the new trails if they are approved. Tad noted that there is also a request to expand capacity from 3300 to 4125. Mike asked if the capacity increase would apply to this season or once the new trails were in and Peter responded that the request for capacity increase is not a resolved issue. Mike asked if the additional monitoring is to be done by DEM staff and Peter replied that some of the responsibility is with WMA. Mike asked if the new dollars through the lease would pay for the additional monitoring and Peter responded that the lease in place would provide the mechanism for the increased dollars. Mike asked if DEM was comfortable with the safety issues that may arise as a result of an increased number of skiers on the slopes. Rich stated that the plan implemented has been deemed to be safe. Deborah commented that there appears to be strong public support for adequate protection of the natural resources. Peter stated that he does endorse the new trails and he proposes to give conditional approval with a requirement that WMA to come back with specific plans that would be subject to review and approval. Peter continued that the Alpine Park would provide a separate place for snowboarders. Tad acknowledged that the establishment of the Alpine Park would attract snowboarders, but the ticket would not limit the snowboarders to the Alpine Park area. Tad asked if there is a commitment to how long funding would be available for the ecologist and Peter responded that the structuring of how the ecologist will be financed is still being negotiated. Tad asked if any guidelines have been established in the event of negative findings by the ecologist. Peter explained that there are provisions built into the RMPP and the ongoing monitoring process that deal with the discovery of negative impacts to the environment as a result of the

Board Discussion (continued): work being done. According to Peter, WMA would be required to pull back on the activity. Elisa asked where that provision is located in the RMPP. Peter responded that he addressed this issue in his cover letter to the Secretary. Elisa commented that if the function of the RMPP is to protect the mountain then there is a need for an enforcement mechanism within the RMPP. Peter responded that DEM would follow Elisa's recommendation. Mike asked if DEM has rights, under the lease, to mandate the necessary adjustments to address any adverse impacts. Peter said he believes that DEM does have that authority. Mike stressed the importance of the lease and suggested scheduling a meeting of the board with legal counsel present to discuss the proposed amendments. Tad commented on the context of DEM's Mission of balancing conservation and recreation. Tad strongly supported the opinion that if there is a question, when in doubt, conservation should come first. Tad discussed how the enabling legislation does not say that DEM must provide any land or approve any expansion plan that WMA feels it needs. Tad stated that in terms of monitoring mitigation, DEM is moving towards establishing a mechanism for knowing how the ski area affects the reservation. Tad continued that as a matter of policy, the board needs to consider very carefully that certain portions of the expansion may have negative effects; however, the Alpine Park absolutely has an immediate negative effect of clear cutting eight acres of the mountain in an area that has been determined to be within a conservation zone. Brendan commented that natural areas that are owned by the citizens of the Commonwealth and managed by the DEM should be a model of setting limits. Elisa noted that the Old Growth Policy discusses allowing old growth to continue to grow without interference. Elisa also questioned the process and stressed the importance for the board to find out exactly what its role is. Michael asked Tory Hoffman of Epsilon to comment on the eight acres and Tory responded that both Harvard Forest and a botanist from Epsilon concluded that the eight acres had little significant impact. Michael stated that the board might be ready to endorse the lift but not the increased lift density. Michael continued that the board still has significant concerns regarding the eight acres that falls into two sub-issues: 1) Is the cutting of the eight acres tied in to the increased density; and 2) What do the plans for the new trails look like. Tad responded that the position that Michael outlined regarding the eight acres is not necessarily that of all board members. Jeff Crowley stated that the area above the Administration Road has never been cleared and that is why it is old growth. With regards to the lift capacity, Jeff informed the board that it is now 3225 and WMA would ultimately like to increase it to 4125; however, Jeff explained how the incremental capacity increase of 600 this year is tied in to the installation of the new chair lifts and the remaining 300 is tied into the expansion of the trails and the Alpine Park. Jeff commented that it is unfortunate that the DEM Board was not brought into this process early on. Peter stated that while he would welcome and appreciate the board's endorsement of the recommendations as presented, he understood that the board has concerns that need to be addressed further with regards to the Alpine Park therefore, he requested that the board focus on the ski lift upgrades as proposed with a limited capacity increase for this season. Peter added that WMA has discussed approval of replacement of the footings for the expanded base lodge this season. Tad expressed reluctance to go forth with what MEPA might call a segmentation vote and asked the board to consider postponing the vote for the entire project until the next meeting when more study could be done regarding the possible resources of the Alpine Park area and more information could be obtained on the dynamics of the lift capacity and trail capacity. Mike requested that the information be provided at the next board meeting for the board to be certain that there will be adequate funding within the terms of the revised lease and that there will be adequate recourse provisions within the lease should problems develop. Elisa commented on the history of this project and the failure of the environmental review process. Patricia expressed sympathy for Mr. Crowley and WMA and urged board members to consider the importance of their responsibility. Mike suggested a vote of approval conditional on a report back at the August meeting. Peter commented that there is a question on whether board approval is needed. Debbie agreed that there is confusion as to what the board's role is. Debbie stated that while she shares the concerns for recreation verses conservation, she feels that the ski area is a great recreational resource for the area; however, she is not ready to approve new trails until more detailed plans are available. Tad reiterated the items that the board would like to have more information about: assurances or explanations on the mechanisms that will allow for guaranteed funding and enforcement mechanisms for monitoring and mitigation; engineering opinion regarding skier density; definition of Alpine Park trails, if available. Peter informed the board that deferring the vote would not defer his approval of the permit. Mike asked if the lease must be finalized prior to the issuing of the permit, how long will it will take to finalize the lease. Peter replied that it would take approximately one week. Elisa suggested meeting early in August.

Board Discussion (continued): Patricia Karl made a motion for the board to recommend to the Commissioner that the board is in consensus with the plans for upgrading the equipment at Wachusett Mt., not including the increase in capacity which will be considered at a later time pending further study nor an endorsement of the Alpine Park, to support the goals and beliefs and to support WMA in their efforts to do things in a timely manner, subject to the amended lease.
Michael Last seconded.

Vote

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board recommended to the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management that the board is in consensus with the plans for upgrading the equipment at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area; not including increased capacity nor an endorsement of the Alpine Park, subject to the amended lease.

All in favor. None opposed.

Board members and DEM staff agreed to hold a special meeting of the board on August 10, 1999 to review the lease and to ensure that the funding mechanisms are in place.

GREYLOCK CENTER

Stephen Brown handed out and discussed an update on the Greylock Center Project. According to Stephen, current goals include preserving the integrity of the site's natural resources, arranging land uses in a manner, which compliment each other, and creating an exciting place to visit, recreate and learn. Stephen explained the overall site plan, Phase I of the project and the preliminary budget. Stephen concluded that the next steps are the completion of the FEIR; crafting the final development parameters and management/operations plan; securing financing from other sources; and updating and pulling the stakeholders into the process. Tad asked where the funding will come from for the gap in funding for the golf course and Stephen replied that currently there isn't a solution to that issue, but DEM is working on securing those funds. Stephen added that Phase II consists of completion of the village including the conference center, and the creation of the outdoor learning center. Debbie asked what the master plan test for houses is and Stephen responded that they must support the other components of the project, not have a negative physical fiscal impact on the region, and they have to use green technology. Elisa commented that there are other interpretations of what the tests are. Tad asked if trees have to be cut down for the golf course and Stephen replied that the proposed new site for the golf course is in what was once an open field and the trees that will need to be removed are basically plantation plantings. Tad asked if there is a need for blasting and Stephen replied that blasting would be necessary. Elisa asked if there has been any discussion about letting the old ski trails grow up and Stephen said that it may be discussed in the future. Stu Weinreb described quote stones as natural-looking pieces of rock set into the landscape along the paths that have simple and short quotes from famous authors, who have written about Greylock, sandblasted cut into them. Elisa asked about viewing stones identifying the views and Stu replied that on the overlook to Adams there will be granite view stones that will have a silhouette of what can be seen with callouts sandblasted names cut into them. Elisa suggested similar information should be on the north and west side of the mountain and Stu said that there will be small sections of view stones next to the Thunderbolt Ski Shelter and next to Bascom Lodge.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Webber discussed a preliminary report on Land Acquisitions and Protection. According to Peter, 22 properties have been acquired in fee or with conservation restriction, totaling approximately 2137 acres. Peter stated that this does not include additional properties acquired through the Wachusett Trust. Peter explained the transition within DEM land staff: Ron Washburn is Acting Chief of Legal Services; David McGowan is Acting Director of Land Acquisitions; and Christine Berry is a new staff person. Susan Frechette noted that the job-posting deadline for the position of Chief of Legal Services has been extended until August 26th. Tad asked if the position for Director of Land Acquisitions has been posted and Susan responded that it may not be posted until the position of Chief of Legal Services has been filled. Susan explained that whereas the Director of Legal Services will be supervising the

Commissioner's Report (continued): Director of Land Acquisitions, it may be helpful for the positions to be filled in this order. Tad said that he was under the impression that the Director of Land Acquisitions would not be supervised by the Chief of Legal Services, thus giving more authority to the position for making decisions and deals. Peter informed the board that a public hearing has been scheduled about increased camping fees; the hearing is at the State House on August 16th.
Peter noted that Todd represented the department at a meeting last night with the Town of Carver Board of Selectmen to discuss their concerns regarding the ORV trails in Myles Standish State Forest. Todd reported that the town is very concerned and the Board of Selectmen has requested that there be no riding until all of their questions have been answered. According to Todd, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the clubs has not been signed. Mark Bettencourt asked who represented Pilgrim Sands at the meeting and Todd responded that he did not know if anyone was representing Pilgrim Sands but there was an ORV representative at the meeting. Mark commented that if DEM and the trail riders are suppose to have a partnership then the ORV clubs should have been informed of the meeting. Tad stated that this was a meeting held by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Carver and it is not DEM's responsibility to inform the ORV clubs.

Elisa Campbell moved to adjourn. Tad Ames seconded.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 3:40pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for Tuesday, August 10, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Offices in Ayer, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
August 10, 1999
DEM-Devens Office
Ayer, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Tuesday, August 10, 1999 at the DEM-Devens Office in Ayer, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Ron Smith, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Michael Last. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Martin Suuberg, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Don Stoddard, Andrea Lukens, Ellen FitzPatrick and Anita Wysocki. Others present included Donna Brownell, Thomas Lynch, Sue Manero, Jay McCaffrey, Patty Miller, Jason Nadeau, Phyllis Booth, Linda Orel, Tom Myers, Jeff Crowley, Mark Bettencourt, Anne Kruse, Heidi Roddis, Edith Morgan, Marilyn Lund, Joe Choiniere, Ed Driscoll, James J. Leitch, David McKeon, Norm Girouard and Wendy Weeks.

The meeting was called to order at 10:07am by Chairman Tad Ames.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION
Chairman Tad Ames recapped the last meeting with regard to Wachusett Mt. whereby the board voted to approve upgrading of two chairlifts, conditional upon the review of the proposed amendments to the lease and also conditional upon the findings on skier density and safety. Tad expressed disappointment that Commissioner Webber has executed the lease and signed the Section 61 Findings prior to this meeting and any further public discussion regarding the terms of the amendments and the findings. Tad questioned the Commissioner's haste in going forth with these documents whereas the board was led to believe that these actions would not be taken prior to this meeting. Commissioner Webber responded that after touching base with every board member as well as the Wachusett Mt. Advisory Council, he signed the lease and the Section 61 Findings on Friday. Elisa stated that she was never informed that the Section 61 Findings would be signed and Peter responded that it was necessary to sign the Section 61 Findings prior to his approval for the chairlift upgrade. Debbie commented on the need to move forward and revisit the lease agreement with specific regard to capacity increase. Elisa noted that she understood that the board would see the lease prior to this meeting. Tad asked if the lease has been signed and Peter said that it has. Peter handed out and discussed the *Third Amendment to Lease.* Marty Suuberg stated that DEM staff has extensively reviewed the construction plan for the ski lift upgrade. Debbie mentioned that the Wachusett Advisory Council did give consideration to the board when it recommended to the Commissioner that he approve the lift upgrades expeditiously. Elisa asked if the advisory council members understood that in order to go forward with the lift upgrades, the Section 61 Findings and the lease had to be signed. Debbie answered that she did not think that the council understood, as it was unclear as presented. Debbie commented that the only thing going forward under this authorization appears to be the lift upgrades. Peter responded that the Section 61 Findings authorize, subject to review and approval of the plans, other work as well, including new trails. Peter added that further review and approvals are necessary from the DEM prior to trail work on the Alpine Park. According to Peter, WMA has expressed the desire to move forward with the basic foundation work on the footings of the base lodge; however, as of Friday, the plans had not been received. Peter explained how the WMA is required to deposit an additional $75,000 into the new Resource Management and Protection Plan Trust Fund annually for a five year period that will be a resource for the whole reservation, additional to the Land Trust Fund, and at the end of the five-year period, WMA and DEM will meet to discuss future contributions. Tad questioned the possibility of the $75,000 deposited into the RMPP Trust Fund being deducted from DEM's total annual budget appropriation and Peter responded that there is always the risk of that happening with any dedicated fund. Debbie inquired about an audit of WMA conducted over the past year by the State Auditor's Office and Todd responded that the state auditor did complete an audit for which the final draft should be available within a few months. Debbie requested that when the audit becomes available, it be shared with board members and the Wachusett Advisory Council. Elisa commented that there is no mention within the lease regarding sanctions for wrongdoing and Peter replied that it is covered by the "abate and mitigate" language. Tad noted that the need for specific enforcement mechanisms within the lease was discussed at previous board meetings. Elisa asked if DEM has done an ecological study on the Alpine Park and Peter responded that a study has been done by Epsilon Associates and a more detailed study may be conducted. Elisa handed out and discussed *Notes on Bird Census and other Fauna/Flora,* which was prepared by Joseph Choiniere of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Elisa stated that before any detailed plans for the trails are discussed, it is important to know what is out there, where it is located and what is its value. Tad asked if the amendment to the lease grants authority for the WMA to increase capacity to 4,125 skiers per day. Peter replied that it does not immediately increase to 4,125. Marty added that based on the lift upgrades and the Sno-Engineering analysis, WMA has requested an increase to 3,625. Tad asked if DEM having approved the upgrade of the ski lifts, retains the authority to say no to an additional increase in capacity and Marty responded that DEM is comfortable with the increase associated with the ski lift upgrade and it was not prudent to do that given that the upgrade is going forward. Peter added that given the questions raised by the board at the last meeting with specific regards to safety, he asked WMA to have Sno Engineering

supply the justification for the analysis to defend the increase and DEM agreed with the study. Elisa requested a copy of the Epsilon Associates study and Andrea Lukens stated that it is in the RMPP. Elisa commented that further study may be necessary other than what is in the RMPP and Peter agreed to the need for further analysis. Marty stated DEM has made the commitment through the Section 61 Findings and the RMPP to do a number of studies including breeding bird species at the edges and the interior forests; how the snow making guns affect the old growth forest; wetlands; water resources; how the off-season events worked this past year; recovery of species along the unauthorized trail; baseline inventories; state listed species inventories; and other studies. Peter noted that the Secretary's Certificate establishes 1,000 acres of the reservation as a no cutting area. Brendan commented that clearly the authority is triggered for planned review of the Alpine Park; however, alternative studies should also be done to explore the alternatives such as converting existing trails. Tad expressed concern for the issue of conservation zoning as established in the 1985 GOALS Plan and re-established in the 1999 RMPP. Tad added that he does not agree with the Section 61 Findings that the clearing of trails for ski trails may be allowed in a conservation zone. Peter responded that the 1985 GOALS Plan explicitly excluded the lease area from zoning classification. Peter stated that the judgement was made to classify the ski area as a conservation zone in the RMPP because it was the closest match to existing classifications, due in part to the old growth within the lease area. Peter acknowledged that it is difficult to classify zones within a ski area.
Elisa moved to vote on a motion that was previously drafted by her. Ron Smith seconded.
Board members discussed amending the motion.

Elisa Campbell moved to vote on the following motion, as amended. Ron Smith seconded.

Vote

The Board of Environmental Management advises Commissioner Peter Webber that, given the current knowledge, the Board opposes construction of the Alpine Park. The Board believes the subject area has not been sufficiently studied to establish its environmental values; that alternatives have not been thoroughly presented and studied; and that proceeding without such information would be in non-compliance with the conservation zone established in the 1999 Resource Management and Protection Plan prepared for Board approval pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 21, Section 2F.

Therefore, the Board advises the Commissioner, as a policy recommendation, that no approval of said Alpine Park trails proceed until such time as the above concerns are addressed.

All in favor. None opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Wendy Weeks expressed disappointment that the board voted prior to public comment. Wendy commented that the legislature makes the policy for the state and she questioned where the board has been for the last six years of this process.
David McKeon commented that DEM staff has nurtured the successful partnership with WMA and the board's micro-management may hinder future public/private partnerships.
Jeff Crowley noted that WMA was very careful when planning trails 5A and 5B not to impact the mountain laurel.
Norm Girouard expressed concern that Elisa may be biased in recognizing experts from the Sierra Club and Mass Audubon over DEM experts.
Edith Morgan urged board members and DEM staff to look at the overall picture, including the dollars provided by WMA for the upkeep of trails outside of the lease area.
Heidi Roddis commented that the board's role is clearly a safety valve/oversight for the citizens in a process that may be unduly influenced by political pressure. Heidi added that the questions raised by the board have been raised many times in the past by citizens but have never been addressed.
Tom Lynch handed out copies of DEM's mission.
Jason Nadeau handed out a list of what he believes to be flaws in the process.
Jay McCaffrey commented that the board is bringing perspective to a proposal that has spun badly out of control. Jay added that after six years, many questions remain unanswered.
Donna Brownell questioned if there was other documentation that has not yet been made public.
Patty Miller expressed appreciation for the board's decision.

Elisa Campbell moved to adjourn. Ron Smith seconded.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 12:30pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, Wednesday, September 22, 1999.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
September 22, 1999
Carroll A. Holmes Recreation Area
Shutesbury, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, September 22, 1999 at the Carroll A. Holmes Recreation Area in Shutesbury, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Ron Smith, Michael Last and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Patricia Karl. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber and Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick. Others present included Phyllis Booth, Merle Buckout, Jerry Randall, Mark Bettencourt, Eleanor Tillinghast, Kurt Stottmeier, Helga Stottmeier, Marilyn Lund, Heidi Roddis and Jay McCaffrey.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Elisa Campbell moved to adopt the June, July and August Meeting Minutes. Deborah Cary seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to adopt the June, July and August Meeting Minutes.

Tad Ames requested that a copy of the *DEM High Ground Telecommunications Public/Private Sector Access and Use Policy* adopted by the board at the July meeting should be attached to the July minutes. All board members present agreed.

CARROLL A. HOLMES RECREATION AREA
Todd Frederick gave a brief overview of the facility. Todd informed the board that the 72-acre property, which opened in June, is close to Wendall State Forest and DEM hopes to establish a link to it in the future. Todd discussed how the late Region Four Director Carroll A. Holmes envisioned DEM acquiring the property to meet the need for public swimming in the area. Todd explained the many restoration projects and improvements that have been well received by members of the community including the active Lake Wyola Advisory Committee and the Lake Association. Todd concluded that a big concern is moving visitors across the road to the swimming area.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION
Todd informed the board that the upland groundwork has been completed to get the new lifts ready to go for the coming ski season. Todd discussed how a meeting with Chairman Tad Ames and Vice Chair Deb Cary resulted in a list of four primary points that will be clarified for the board with regard to the proposed project. The first point, according to Todd, is to complete a study comparable to the resource analysis done by Joe Choiniere of Massachusetts Audubon to determine what resources are in the proposed Alpine Park area and if those resources are elsewhere on the mountain. Todd stated that information is currently being gathered and there is a commitment to proceed. Debbie commented that it is important for the board and DEM staff to be clear with the timetable to make sure that all of the information is compiled prior to Commissioner Webber making a decision. Peter stated that DEM has been formally notified by Administration & Finance that the Wachusett Trust instrument has been approved by the Secretary and funds should be available in the current fiscal year. Peter added that these funds may be used to complete the analysis. Elisa questioned the practicality of doing a breeding bird survey prior to next spring when they will be actually breeding. Peter responded that the short-term goal is to gather baseline existing conditions in the proposed Alpine Park for future comparison and monitoring purposes. Tad commented that in order for the board to be satisfied that the creation of the Alpine Park is not destroying something that is unique to the mountain or creating a situation that eliminates certain ecological services on the reservation, a clear presentation from DEM on: what is in the Alpine Park area; what is going on in there; what sort of birds are nesting there; what other wildlife are using the area; and how old are the trees. Tad continued that based on the summary of this information, the analysis or presentation should address whether or not a particular type of plant community /ecological habitat is present elsewhere on the mountain. Todd noted that as this information is gathered, the board will receive updates at least monthly. Todd stated that the second point that needs to be clarified for the board is why there is no other alternative area for expansion. Todd explained that DEM and Wachusett Mountain Associates (WMA) would provide an outline of the need for additional ski trails along with a timetable: the outline will also address why other sites on the reservation will not work. Peter questioned if this point relates to the safety of capacity increase and Debbie responded that it does not. The third point, according to Todd, is defining the old growth area by establishing where the actual old growth

is on the reservation and where the administrative boundaries are. Debbie added that this is to assure that the board has a better understanding as it relates to the role of the proposed Alpine Park area as a buffer to old growth or not. Peter noted that this information will be presented with maps and pictures. Point four, according to Todd, is that the State of the Mountain Report should be available in draft form in October. Debbie asked if it will be available at the October Board meeting and Todd said that the draft will be mailed to the board as soon as it becomes available. Todd mentioned that the Mountain Laurel tree will need to be protected and will be included in points 1 or 2. Elisa repeated other previous concerns on policy issues, one that involves the DEM Old Growth Policy that has a component to protect and encourage old growth potential. Another concern, according to Elisa, is how the cutting of trees in state forests to make ski trails contradicts what DEM does in regards to the Off Road Vehicle Policy as well as DEM's mandate of conservation first, recreation second. Todd agreed to add the zoning issues as point five. Brendan asked if the lessee understands the uncertainty of the recreational development of the proposed Alpine Park area and the timetable. Todd responded that as of yet, no formal design plans have been submitted but he will have to get back to the board with an answer. Mike commented that WMA would need approval in early spring to complete the project during the 2000-construction season and questioned if they are still moving on that timetable. Peter responded that WMA has already taken the lift that was replaced by the new quad lift and moved it to the beginners slope area. Peter added that WMA hopes to have the approval to go forward for the next construction season. Peter said that DEM would have to see WMA's preferred design and location of the proposed Alpine Park in greater detail to form an analysis. Mike noted that DEM would need the design by November to match it to the RMPP and have time for hearings, comment periods, etc. Peter added that the preferred time for any clearing to have the least impact is when the ground is frozen. Elisa stated that it may not be feasible to make an adequate assessment without going through another growing season. Tad asked if it would be worthwhile for the board to send a letter notifying WMA of the potential for timing crunches in the spring and that this may be a project for cutting in the winter of 2001. Mike recommended that Tad include in the letter a suggestion for WMA to send a representative to the board meetings. Debbie noted that there are no new steps to the process that the board is trying to implement through MEPA. Peter consulted with the board on the replacement of footings to the base lodge this fall season for which WMA has received approval from the Conservation Commission. Todd added that WMA has received local approval and the Wachusett Mountain Monitoring Board is meeting next week to review the project. Todd continued that DEM may approve the project next week. Todd informed the board that the Final State Auditor's Report has not been released; however, DEM has submitted its response to the audit. Debbie asked when the RMPP will be officially finalized and Peter responded that it should be available for the October Board meeting. Debbie asked if the board will be voting on the RMPP and Peter said yes. Debbie commented that it may be a difficult vote without more information, particularly with regards to the zoning issue and it would be helpful for the board members to receive the RMPP ahead of time for review. Peter informed the board that the vote on the RMPP may be deferred. Elisa asked what the relationship between the RMPP and the State of the Mountain Report (SMR) is and Peter replied that the first year they may be similar. Peter added that the intent of the SMR is to provide an annual report as outlined in the RMPP and suggestions for what is to be included would be welcomed. Debbie asked if DEM was comfortable with the capacity safety issues. Mike questioned if DEM allows more people on the mountain, is it safe. Mike suggested DEM should get an independent analysis of the safety of the capacity increase to keep on file. Debbie commented that it would be valuable for the board to have a summary from WMA documenting why the increase in capacity is justified and why it is safe. Elisa stated that DEM needs to corroborate the information from WMA. Mike added that the data could be used for future requests for capacity increases. Todd concluded that the seven points that need to be addressed are: 1) resource analysis; 2) outline of the need for additional trails and why other sites won't work; 3) defining old growth area; 4) State of the Mountain Report; 5) zoning issues; 6) timetable; and 7) safety of increased capacity. Todd added that he will contact WMA to urge them to have a representative at future board meetings.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Myles Standish State Forest/ORV: Todd reported that the Town of Carver Conservation Commission as well as Massachusetts Audubon have raised issues regarding the previously agreed upon trail in the MSSF. Todd stated that the Trail Monitoring Contract group met last week to work towards developing a monitoring plan and to complete a baseline assessment of the trails. Todd continued that the Resource Trails Management Plan Contract has been awarded to Epsilon Associates and they will start later this fall season. Todd described a small working group that has been formed to work on issues regarding the trails to include representatives of Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders, neighbors of the forest, Mass Audubon and members of the scientific community. Todd concluded that no riding will be allowed in MSSF until DEM hears from the Conservation Commission.

Todd continued the F&P Report by handing out and discussing *The Massachusetts Register, which* included the approved new camping rates.

Todd reported that Hurricane Floyd caused damage to dams in Region Four. Debbie asked who covers the cost for repairing the Chicopee dam and Todd replied that the city does but there also may be funds available through FEMA.

Todd reported that he attended the National Association of State Park Directors Conference in Wyoming with Secretary Durand. According to Todd, discussed at the conference was the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund that has been reenacted by Congress with 900M to 1B billion dollars available nationwide and approximately 40M per year available to Massachusetts. Todd added that he and Secretary Durand will attend a meeting at the White House with Robert Balentine, a member of the president's staff, to discuss land and water conservation. Debbie suggested that Todd invite Secretary Durand to the next board meeting to share some of what he experienced at the conference. Peter noted that Secretary Durand wants to come to a board meeting and recommended setting aside a few future dates that he can offer to him.
Elisa commented that the city of Easthampton is looking into purchasing a parcel of land located on the western slope of Mount Tom to protect their part of the range and the Holyoke City Council voted against allowing the quarry on Mt. Tom.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Mark Bettencourt commented that ORV clubs are working with Park Supervisor Steve Bates in the Freetown SF and they have received lumber to repair the bridges.
Marilyn Lund asked if the people in the Mt. Tom area that are downstream from the dam that was damaged by Hurricane Floyd have been notified and Todd responded that they have as have the Mt. Tom Advisory group.
Heidi Roddis thanked the board for its proper due diligence with Wachusett as well as other issues and reminded the board that while there may be a reaction from WMA regarding further delays, all of the information has been requested before throughout the process. Heidi suggested that the board revisit the High Ground Policy with particular regard to road improvements and utilities.
Jay McCaffrey commented that there is improvement to response and communication from DEM. Jay informed the board that it may be necessary for a Notice of Project Change due to the connection of the water supply to the Wachusett ski area. Jay suggested that with regards to capacity, it may be best to turn to an external source to corroborate what Sno Engineering has reported in the past. Jay added that while safety is an issue, expansion is too, as capacity is what drives the need for an expansion. Jay handed out copies of the Sierra Club newsletter, *The Massachusetts Sierran* that included an article about the Massachusetts Military Reservation.
Helen Stottmeier asked if the Resource Trails Management Plan contract is for the 9 miles of ORV trails or for the entire forest. Todd explained that the ENSR trail monitoring contract will focus on the proposed trails and the Epsilon contract is the larger Trails and Natural Resources Management Plan.
Eleanor Tillinghast handed out and discussed a packet that contained several recent letters addressed to Commissioner Webber regarding the protection of Mount Everett. According to Eleanor, the letters are unanimous in asking DEM to allow for a full study of fragile ecosystem on Mount Everett's summit before proceeding with plans to use the fire tower for telecommunications. Eleanor expressed concern that if South Berkshire Regional School District is allowed to use the fire tower for telecommunications, it will open the door for future public/private use. Eleanor commented that the MEPA review may be based on incomplete information and she urged DEM to halt the MEPA process until adequate information is available. Tad asked if the MEPA filing is imminent and Peter responded that DEM is holding off filing the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) until studies are complete. Peter reiterated that nothing about this project will begin until next year and there is concern about the hazardous conditions of the existing structure. Ron asked if people can get up into the tower and Eleanor replied that the lower steps have been removed and the hazards appear no different than they have been for a number of years. Peter noted that now there is attention focussed on the tower and people are more curious and attracted to it.
Jerry Randall commented that he is pleased that DEM is working with user groups towards providing authorized ORV riding areas in Southeastern Massachusetts.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
Commissioner Webber reported that according to DEM Engineer Bill Saloma, the installation of a device to bring the water level at Lake Bray down to about half of its depth is being implemented and once that is done staff will evaluate the feasibility of doing dam repairs. Mike asked if the purpose of the dam is flood control and Todd replied that the dam was built in the 1950's to create a swimming area. Mike raised the possibility of allowing the area to return to its original meadow/marsh habitat and Todd said that something is needed to cross the area so the road will not wash out. Peter noted that it would cost approximately $400,000 to restore the dam. Elisa added that some visitors appreciate the aesthetics of the pond; however she is generally in favor of not fixing the dam. Debbie commented that there may be funds available as the Army Corp of Engineers is looking at dams throughout the Blackstone Valley. Peter added that another opportunity for assistance could be through the River Restore Program. Peter reported that another, more serious dam failure was at the privately owned Bernardston dam which is located just above a campground. Peter stated that there are no plans to repair this dam which was last inspected in 1982 and deemed to be in okay condition. Mike asked what the dam's functional use was and Todd responded that it was an old milldam. Elisa asked if it flowed into the Connecticut River and Peter replied

that it did if the river flows. Todd stated that there will be follow-up meetings to discuss breaching at other dam sites in the Blackstone River Valley.
Peter reported that DEM had a good series of events last week which included the dedication of the Allan Fearn Boathouse at Quinsigamond SP, the 25th Anniversary Celebration at Great Brook Farm SP, and the dedication of a dam that was repaired in Norwood. Upcoming events include a dedication of the new exhibit at the visitors center at the Waquoit Bay Estuarine Research Reserve on October 4th that will have an indoor/outdoor walkthrough watershed.
Peter passed around the *Commonwealth of Massachusetts Technology Annual Report* which has two articles about DEM, one stating that DEM is Y2K compliant.
Elisa asked if campers were adjusting to the new Camping Reservation System and Todd replied that they were. Todd added that reservations can now be made on line at www.reserveamerica.com. Todd concluded that there are still a few bugs to be worked out regarding refunds.

BOARD CONCERNS
Ron Smith commented that Pittsfield has had great success with the use of the chemical Sonar for weed control. Ron questioned if DEM has used Sonar and Peter replied that DEM has used it successfully for weed control on a limited basis. According to Peter, a recent study has shown that Sonar is most specific to the weed with the least amount of impact to other species; however, the study also recommended a long-term commitment along with ongoing maintenance to prevent the weed from re-establishing itself. Peter concluded that there is currently a committee working on a generic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that may be available this spring.
Elisa Campbell commented that she has been contacted regarding all terrain vehicle use on the roads at Catamount. Elisa noted that the town closed some of the roads to protect the stone bridges; however, use of these roads continues to be an issue. Peter responded that he attended a meeting in August with Regional Director Doug Poland, Rep. John F. Merrigan, town officials and a watershed representative that resulted in a general agreement that DEM will put gates at strategic locations. Peter continued that DEM is waiting to hear from the Highway Department regarding the Chapter 90 law to be sure that putting in the gates at Catamount doesn't have unintended consequences in other state forests and parks. Peter stated that the gates are more expensive than anticipated. Mike questioned the possibility of using boulders and Peter replied that the roads need to remain accessible for emergency purposes.
Michael Last stated that he attended the New England Aquarium Biological Diversity and Species Preservation Program and the issue was how to make the concerns for biological diversity and species preservation alive and interesting to the public so that people can relate to it. Mike added that it would be valuable to make the connection between parks and classrooms. Todd reported that Regions 2 & 4 have hired Parks as Classroom Coordinators. Peter informed the board that DEM has received a grant from the US Department of Education for accessibility with a focus on making recreation available to people of all abilities. Peter suggested a joint meeting with the Board of Education to discuss connecting and utilizing DEM parks and farms for classrooms. Deb asked for an update at a future board meeting. Elisa commented that people respond to species and Brendan commented that environmental education needs to go beyond natural history and move toward land preservation issues. Mike concluded that it would be a tremendous role for the board to establish links to education.
Deb Cary requested an update on the budget process, most importantly with regards to the supplemental budget and the Open Space Bond. Peter reported that there hasn't been much progress; however, Secretary Durand is meeting tomorrow with members of the Natural Resources Committee to discuss the Open Space Bond. Peter added that while the meeting may begin with discussions on EOEA capital allocations, hopefully it will move into a discussion regarding emergency rehab. Deb asked if there is anything the board can do and Peter said that talking to legislators as a group or individually may be helpful. Peter noted that there are unresolved issues regarding the seasonal account and the overall capital spending plan has not received final approval. Preliminary instructions for submitting the final spending plans for this fiscal year and the proposed maintenance funding levels, according to Peter, are to be very conservative with an initial goal of controlling growth and spending at the statewide levels. Peter reiterated that the seasonal budget is the issue that needs to be raised in this budget cycle.

Debbie Cary moved to adjourn. Ron Smith seconded.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:30pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, Monday, October 25, 1999 at Walden Pond State Reservation in Concord, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
October 25, 1999
Walden Pond State Reservation
Concord, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Wednesday, October 25, 1999 at the Walden Pond State reservation in Concord, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Michael Last, Patricia Karl and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Martin Suuberg, State Management Forester Bill Rivers, Chief Fire Warden Mike Tirrell and Land Use Planner Jennifer Howard. Others present included Gail Halloran, Marianne Edwards, Burt Tinker, Mark Bettencourt, Marilyn Lund, Heidi Roddis, Jay McCaffrey, Donna Brownell, Patty Miller, Sean Hartman, Tom Lynch and David Crowley.

The meeting was called to order at 11:06am by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Elisa Campbell moved to adopt the September Meeting Minutes. Brendan O'Neill seconded.
By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to adopt the September Meeting Minutes.
All in favor. None opposed.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION
Todd reported on the current construction taking place on the mountain: the above ground snowmaking pipe is being completed on trail 1; also on trail 1, the triple chair lift is complete and the other lift is 90% complete. Todd continued that the Crowleys have decided that work on the footings and around the base lodge will not happen this year; however, work is continuing as planned to connect to the town water system. According to Todd, DEM staff are making daily visits to the site. Todd informed the board that as of the first week in October, Dwayne Erickson is the new full-time supervisor of Wachusett Mountain State Reservation. Todd reported that the Draft State of the Mountain Report (SMR) is complete. Marty reported that DEM staff is in the process of reviewing the Draft SMR with the intent of having the report complete in November. Marty noted that as soon as the SMR is complete, it will be distributed to DEM Board members as well as the Wachusett Mountain Advisory Board for their review. Marty handed out copies of the *Certificate of the Secretary of Environmental Affairs on the Special Review Procedure for the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation Resource Management and Protection Plan (RMPP).* Tad asked if this year's version of the RMPP is done and Marty responded that it is done except for what will be covered in the first update such as the review of off season activities and the course of studies that will be undertaken in future years. Marty added that the RMPP is meant to be a living, ruling document. Tad asked if the RMPP is a successor to the 1985 GOALS plan and Marty answered that it is, at least in part. Tad stated that the RMPP is a document that the Board should approve and Marty agreed. Debbie asked if the SMR is an opportunity to recommend changes to the RMPP and Marty replied that it is. Todd reported that meetings with Harvard Forest in regard to the habitat in the triangle area on the front side of the mountain have been ongoing but there is nothing solid to report yet. Marty added that the information should be available for the next Board meeting. Elisa asked if the RMPP had been altered as a result of comments received. Marty stated that the August version of the RMPP is the latest. Debbie expressed concern for comments received towards the end of August and Marty replied that it's possible that the comments received at the end of August may not be included but he would check on it.
Public Comment (Wachusett): Heidi Roddis handed out and discussed a memo that was sent to Commissioner Webber, the DEM Board and Chair of the Wachusett Mountain Advisory Board Tom Sullivan on October 25, 1999. According to Heidi, the memo listed the major outstanding topics remaining unresolved in relation to the RMPP and the proposed ski area expansion along with suggestions for action steps that DEM could take to resolve the items. Heidi summarized the issues that still need to be addressed as: 1) the RMPP, specifically zoning and future projects; 2) adequacy of the ecological information and analysis and the new snowmaking water supply in the Alpine Park; 3) Article 97 lands; 4) the stream below the diversion structure; and 5) special events. Heidi concluded that there are numerous other items that require ongoing attention. Debbie stated that she shares Heidi's concern that the ski area should have the classification of intensive use. Tad agreed that the issue may be discussed further at a future board meeting when there is more time allotted. Heidi commented that the stream below the diversion structure needs priority attention due to the tremendous amount of erosion taking place. Tad commented that the stream and diversion issue appears to be an immediate management problem as opposed to a

procedural decision policy issue. Tad questioned if DEM is aware of the problem and Marty responded that DEM staff are aware of the problem and some of the work has been identified. Deb stated that it is specified in the Section 61 Finding that this issue is to be addressed and perhaps the timetable should be shortened. Dave Crowley commented that while the amount of flow is high, the board should recognize that the diversion structure is open to protect Fitchburg's water supply by preventing Route 140 from washing out and overflowing into the reservoir. Dave emphasized that construction doesn't necessarily mean diversion. Tad concluded that this is a management question and policy is not in dispute; however, the board encourages DEM, WMA and Fitchburg Water Supply to coordinate and cooperate as much as possible to minimize the problem.
Donna Brownell displayed pictures of the trails and expressed concern for the hikers being allowed to walk on the ski trails. Todd responded that he has no knowledge of opening up the ski trails for hiking. Donna displayed pictures of flooding that took place as a result of Hurricane Floyd and also a sign that was put up after Hurricane Floyd that read " Private Function Today, Closed to the Public."
Tom Lynch commented that the erosion has been pointed out to WMA on numerous occasions. Tom added that he just received the Secretary's Certificate this past Saturday and he would like to review it and send his comments to the board. Tom handed out copies of DEM's Mission.

MANUEL F. CORRELLUS STATE FOREST
Todd reported that a meeting was held in mid-August to discuss better management of the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest (MCSF) at which the focus was on fire danger. Todd stated that some equipment is being moved down to MCSF and fire training will be done. Bill Rivers presented slides and discussed the history of the 5,000-acre forest. According to Bill, Hurricane Bob (August 1991) caused damaged to several hundred acres of the forest resulting in a clean up cost of approximately $50K. Bill explained how a graphic created to apply for funding assistance from FEMA shows the existing fire danger. Bill discussed how a committee was formed to create the Ecosystem Management Plan that was done in 1984; however, at that time there wasn't any funding to accomplish any of the work. Bill stated that the emphasis of the plan was to create sandplain grassland, which was determined by the committee to be the native and natural vegetation. The second item of emphasis, according to Bill, was to rehabilitate the firebreak system that was established in the 1920's and 30's. Bill explained the concerns of the scientific community since the plan was made public, including the invasion of exotics, the promotion of the establishment of pitch pine and the location of sandplain grassland. Bill discussed the Harvard Forest Report that states that the pre-settlement vegetation was not sandplain grassland but trees. Bill informed the board of a study done last summer by the University of Massachusetts which found no invasion of exotics in the harrowed area, the woody species abundance was less and the pitch pine was not a problem in the managed firebreaks. Bill added that more recent preliminary results of another UMass study resulted in the following recommendations for firebreaks: the exterior firebreaks should be 400 to 500 feet wide; 50 to 100 feet area near the boundary should be devoid of fuel; reduced fuel in other areas of the firebreak; and the use of animals such as sheep and/or goats to maintain the firebreaks. Bill noted that the existing firebreaks in the interior forest, which are now approximately 40 feet wide, need to be maintained to a minimum width of 100 feet for adequate safety. Bill pointed out on a map the highest priority areas that need expanded firebreaks by next spring. Todd commented that the one unresolved issue is whether or not to turn the soil over. Bill stated that there are no plans for any significant soil disturbance in the existing firebreaks to allow the species of concern to exist there. Mike Tirrell reported that while most communities across the Commonwealth have their own firefighting equipment, the only piece of forest firefighting apparatus on the island of Martha's Vineyard (MV) belongs to DEM Fire Control. According to Mike, DEM is willing to train firefighters on how to use the equipment; however, they need to have the equipment first. Mike commented that there is a need for a designated fire control person at the forest to be responsible for DEM equipment and to work with the local fire chiefs on prevention and training. Debbie asked what staff is at MCSF now and Mike replied that there are two staff people, the supervisor and a heavy equipment operator as well as a seasonal person in the fire tower. Elisa asked if the airport on MV has fire-fighting apparatus and Mike responded that they do, but not with off-road firefighting capabilities. Mike presented pictures of a harrow and discussed its effectiveness. Bill explained that the harrow, which turns the soil, weighs about 12,000 pounds and has a blade approximately 3 feet off the ground. Brendan asked what is the argument for non-tilling. Bill responded that studies show that if an area had been tilled, the subsequent vegetative community would be much different. Elisa asked if the area is harrowed, would there be more pitch pine and Bill replied that there would. Tad question if the only harrowing being done is to expand the fire roads and Bill responded yes. Brendan asked if the frost bottoms are being protected and Bill replied that they do not have to be disturbed. Elisa commented that it appears that the towns on MV are not willing to shoulder their responsibilities for fire safety. Mike responded that as a state agency, DEM's responsibility is to assist local communities with fighting fires; however, it is not DEM's responsibility to provide them with everything that they need. Mike added that there needs to be a happy medium in what we will provide such as specialized training. Debbie suggested future updates to the board on the unresolved management issues and recommended a commitment from DEM in writing to local fire chiefs explaining exactly what DEM can offer in terms of

assistance. Deb noted that it is important for DEM staff to clarify the steps that will be taken to ensure fire safety. Todd agreed that a letter to the fire chiefs stating what DEM plans to do and meetings to debate the issues will be helpful. Debbie asked about the staffing issues and Todd said that the desired goal is to have someone with fire science experience on the island to work with the chiefs. Mike Last questioned whether use of the harrow raises mainly botanical concerns or larvae concerns as well. Brendan said that there is ongoing debate between groups representing various life forms. Mike Tirrell stressed the importance for DEM to be responsible for protecting lives and property of the citizens on the island and added that if there is a fire, DEM will make a firebreak. Brendan concluded that the locals need to think about funding for moving equipment to the island as well as training. Mike Tirrell explained how there is equipment available that would need to be retrofitted and he would be willing to work with the local officials to teach them how to meet the specifications. Marilyn Lund commented that if there is going to be a paper explaining what DEM intends to do, it should also state why.

STATE GREENWAYS PLAN UPDATE

Land Use Planner Jennifer Howard discussed how DEM hired the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) to work as a consultant on developing a Statewide Greenways Plan whose overall goal is to create a vision of statewide trails, provide basic information, point out priority projects and generate resources to implement those projects. According to Jennifer, the four basic products that AMC intends to have completed by Christmas are a Massachusetts Greenways Trail map; a vision map; a pre-plan document to support the maps; and a poster. Jennifer continued that workshops have been held across the state to develop regional vision maps. Jennifer explained how the Greenways program provides assistance to communities through the grants program. Elisa expressed concern for the possibility of cutting new trails that are not necessarily an enhancement to the habitat. Elisa added that it's great to have a plan; however, many of the rights-of-way may become obsolete. Peter mentioned that at Friday's Community Preservation Breakfast with Secretary Durand in Waltham, 5 out of 8 of the communities spoke about a rail trail to improve quality of life in their communities. Jackie Davison asked if the Blackstone Corridor is incorporated into the map and Jennifer replied that it is. Debbie asked where the funding for carrying forward this project is coming from and who is the staff assigned to it. Jennifer responded she is the staff person assigned to the project and the funding has been requested. Heidi Roddis suggested that a notice be published in the Environmental Monitor when the finished project is released. Debbie recommended that Jennifer contact the Assumption College in Worcester as they have received a major grant for 5 years of funding to study transportation and environmental issues.

MASSACHUSETTS MILITARY RESERVATION

Commissioner Webber handed out copies of *Executive Order No. 414 Establishing the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve and Commission* and *House Bill No. 4814* which calls for a special commission to be set up to include the Director of the Division of Forests and Parks, the Director of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Director of Watershed Management of MDC as well as representatives of the Guard and members of an advisory board. Peter reported that the legislation calls for 15,000 acres to be transferred to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for oversight of the reservation with focus on the protection of water supply and wildlife habitat. Peter added that compatible military uses such as training for the National Guard will continue. Todd reported that the next steps will include internal meetings with all of the parties involved. Mike asked if there was any question that the legislation will pass. Peter responded that it should pass and administratively it is already happening. Peter noted that the Advisory Council still needs to be set up but that is expected to happen quickly. Debbie asked if DEM has a vision and Todd replied that while there are a host of issues, he envisions limited public access and perhaps some passive recreation. Todd added that within the northern two thirds of the property is a 5,000 acre site that has been heavily disturbed by the military. Tad asked about funding and Peter said there has been much discussion through the on-going MEPA process about funding such as federal dollars for clean-up, but nothing has been guaranteed yet. Jay McCaffrey questioned DEM's role. Marty explained that while the property goes to DFW for permanent Article 97 protection, the actual governance will be handled by DEM, DFW and MDC. Jay asked how the oversight of DEM, DFW and MDC will jointly integrate with the recommendations of new advisory committee and what will the process be. Peter responded that when Secretary Durand signs the MEPA Certificate for EIR, the parties involved will look to the MEPA recommendations and the Section 61 Certificate. Marty agreed that the MEPA Certificate will be a starting point for the commission to develop actual management recommendations.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Webber reported there was a larger shortfall in the seasonal budget than anticipated. DEM did its best to minimize system wide impacts on services that had already been scheduled. Seasonal staff departed on Columbus Day weekend with the exception of staff at Walden Pond SR, Great Brook Farm SP and Plymouth Rock. Peter discussed how support from the DEM Board, advocates and legislators help to make a case for core funding in next year's budget. Peter added that to reach DEM's goal for a diverse workforce, there needs to be very aggressive recruiting. Todd explained how DEM was given additional seasonal funding last June but it had to be spent in two weeks, which could not be done. Todd

discussed how the lifeguard issue continues to be a problem and DEM hopes to increase the current hourly wage next spring. Mike suggested that this year's strategy for the budget should focus on the Secretary's educational initiative. Tad noted that environmental education is an agenda item at the December meeting. Peter reported that several members of the legislature have encouraged DEM to push for increased day use fees. Elisa commented that in a recent conversation with Senator Rosenberg, the Senator suggested that someone from DEM contact him, as he still is confused over the use of the 2nd Century Funds for seasonal staff. Elisa also noted that in general DEM is hampered in its ability to provide parks for education when most of DEM staff do not work when school is in session and there is no guarantee as to when there will be staff. Elisa commented that the parks can not be closed and recently at Natural Bridge SP, there were about a dozen visitors with no staff present. Peter stated that as patterns of use have changed, so have DEM's staffing needs. Debbie commented that the focus should be forward and the board needs to develop a strategy to be most effective when advocating for the budget. Patricia stated that while an increase in the seasonal budget is important, the Board needs to advocate for year-round full time staff at key facilities, so that teachers can plan ahead and utilize those facilities for a solid curriculum of education. Patricia added that fundamentally, if education is a critical piece for DEM, then there is a major turnaround that needs to take place. Deb and Patricia agreed to work on a strategy to present to Secretary Durand at the next board meeting. Peter informed the board of the annual EOEA Budget Hearing scheduled for November 4, 1999.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Director Frederick reported that the Recreation Supervisor's Conference has been scheduled for March 13 - 16, 2000 at the Sea Crest in Falmouth. Todd said that the board meeting held at last year's conference was well received and he hoped that the board would agree to participate again this year. Todd continued that people calling for camping reservations for Patriot's Day weekend are being charged the new increased rates. Todd informed the board that the National Congressional Revitalization of the Land and Water Fund Conference is being held October 29th through 31st in Saratoga, NY. Todd reported that the Myles Standish SF plan is continuing along with the development of a Technical Advisory group. Todd concluded that the 2nd round of interviews has been completed for the Chief of the Bureau of Interpretive Services and the final decision should be made by the next board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Bettencourt commented that there may be more constituent support for an increased budget if there is a push for more recreation opportunities, such as more ski and bike trails.

BOARD CONCERNS

Mike commented that current board officers have been in office for more than two years and he suggested that it may be time to consider board succession. Debbie added that some board members have terms coming to an end.

Debbie commented that regional Friends and Advisory group meetings are being planned and suggested that the board have a presence at these meetings.

Debbie asked who is in charge of the Conservation Trust Fund. Susan Frechette replied that Liz Pifer is currently working on the trust with a system of quarterly reporting so that park supervisors know on a quarterly basis how much they have in the trust account. Susan continued that Liz is embarking on a major mail solicitation this fall with the names received through ReserveAmerica and also a matching grant program this fall up to $1000 for any park that wants to submit a proposal, the trust will provide matching funds of an equal amount for a project or activity. Susan added that Liz has been approached by "money finders" regarding approximately $300K that has been awarded to DEM through various court judgments. According to Susan, Liz will be working with the Treasure's Office on getting those funds into the Trust. Susan concluded that DEM has received a donation of $1.3M for a land transaction at Cochituate SP that is being deposited into the trust.

Debbie stressed the importance of the concerns of the board as well as issues, being addressed prior to any final decision on the Alpine Park.

Tad asked if there are any plans to pave the road leading up to the Lenox Firetower as stated in recent press and Peter replied that there are no plans at this time.

Patricia Karl moved to adjourn. Tad Ames seconded.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 2:40pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 12:00pm, Thursday, December 16, 1999 in the McCormack Building, Room 2, Boston, MA.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
December 16, 1999
John W. McCormack Building
Boston, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Environmental Management was held on Thursday December 16 at the John W. McCormack Building in Boston, MA.
Those in attendance were Chairperson Tad Ames, Deborah Cary, Elisa Campbell, Patricia Karl, Michael Last and Brendan O'Neill. Absent was Ron Smith. Present from DEM were Commissioner Peter Webber, Director of Forests and Parks Todd Frederick, Deputy Commissioner of Administration Susan Frechette, Deputy Commissioner of Resource Conservation Martin Suuberg, EOEA Secretary Bob Durand, Director of Office of Public Information Susan F. Hamilton, Bureau of Interpretation Acting Chief John Nove, Project Learning Tree Coordinator Kristin Karl, Assistant to the Commissioner Anita Wysocki and GOALS Program Director Jack Lash. Others present included Eleanor Tillinghast, Lisa Standley, Mark Bettencourt, Jeff Crowley, James McCaffrey, Heidi Roddis, Tim McGuire and David Crowley.

The meeting was called to order at 12:16pm by Chairman Tad Ames.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Elisa Campbell moved to adopt the October 1999 Minutes. Michael Last seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

By unanimous vote of all members present, the board voted to adopt the October 1999 Meeting Minutes.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN STATE RESERVATION
Todd stated that the board has four primary areas that they would like addressed: 1) Various reports are moving right along but have taken longer to complete than expected; 2) Further assessment is needed regarding the 5A/5B zone to determine its uniqueness; 3) DEM is in the process of formulating the job description for an ecologist to perform an assessment of the 5A/5B zone to determine its significance; 4) A draft of the *State of the Mountain Report* (SMR) should have been received by board members. Wachusett Mountain SR Supervisor Dwayne Erickson is collecting comments. Todd discussed a memo from Heidi Roddis (Mass Audubon) which led to the recent discovery of old growth outside of the administrative boundary set a couple of years ago. According to Todd, further exploring will take place in the near future. Debbie commented that it would be helpful to know the timetable to pull all of the links together. Peter replied that there is no fixed timetable. Marty added that the ecologist position will be posted in 30 days and the study is expected to be completed in the spring. DEM staff will work on the design of the study during January and February. Tad asked if the timetable for the study conflicts with WMA's construction timetable. Marty responded that while construction is not allowed during the months of April through July, there is not a conflict. Tad asked if information will be available prior to the ecological study and Marty said that some elements will be ready and available prior to the completion of the study. Elisa recommended that Wachusett be kept on the agenda. Michael agreed that a list of objectives/timeline would be helpful. Todd informed the board that a nationwide search resulted in the hiring of Dwayne

Erickson from Maryland for the position of Wachusett Mountain SR Supervisor. Debbie suggested that he attend the next board meeting to present the SMR.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Heidi Roddis commented that she has met Dwayne and she is glad to have him on board. Heidi encouraged DEM to publish the SMR in the Environmental Monitor to provide the opportunity for public comment. Heidi stressed that the integrity of the mountain remains a big issue especially with regards to further fragmentation impact on the forest. Heidi commented that it is imperative to have map representation showing clearings as well as where there is no buffer to the old growth. Heidi noted that there is no information on the triangle area in the RMPP and the documentation on 8A and 8B does not include the new old growth discoveries which according to the RMPP, may be rezoned for protection. Heidi suggested that it is important to include the new discoveries in the SMR. Heidi concluded that she would like to see the scope of work that the ecologist will do in the snow park area. Michael questioned the diverse aspects of creating new species habitat in addition to possibly destroying existing habitats. Peter answered that some analysis has been done in previous studies and this information can be highlighted and incorporated into the SMR.

Jay McCaffrey commented that he can not understand how DEM staff and the Board can grapple with the concept of new ski trails creating new habitats. Jay encouraged the Board to take a hard look at what it will mean to sanction the clearing of the forest for increased usage of intensive recreation activity. Jay handed out and discussed a list of comments written by Donna Brownell in which Donna asks if there is any possibility of clear cutting in the Alpine Park area this winter. Jeff Crowley responded that there will be no clear-cutting this winter. Jay emphasized that the position of the Sierra Club has never been for removal of the Wachusett ski area. Jay explained that while some believe the ski area is well run to provide a service, he is opposed to increasing its impact on the reservation. Jeff rebutted that family recreation is the focus of WMA and there are many families turned away due to capacity issues.

Tad stated that the board is glad to have both perspectives. Tad noted that the board has asked for more information prior to making any decision regarding the Alpine Park. Debbie added that she did not expect the Commissioner to make any decision either, prior to further studies being completed.

Eleanor Tillinghast handed out and discussed a memo written by her to the board, re: *Highlights of Preliminary Report on Mount Everett*. Peter responded that DEM staff is still reviewing the report and when they finish, he will report back to the board. Peter explained that the area has been identified as a significant area; however, it is important to remember that this is a school project related to the tower and repairs. Elisa expressed concern for the lack of funding within the budget for DEM staff to conduct their own studies of unique places such as Wachusett and Mt. Everett. Heidi asked for information regarding a study that she was told is being done by Epsilon. Peter responded that Epsilon is not doing a study but they were hired as consultants to prepare a draft Environmental Notification Form (ENF). Tad concluded that the board is concerned with Mt. Everett and the issue will be on a future agenda for further discussion.

Mark Bettencourt thanked the board for extending the riding season so that the Toys for Tots event could take place on November 28th. Mark added that 300 toys were collected in one day.

Heidi Roddis asked if DEM has a master schedule of upcoming resource management an/or project management activity that is available to the public and the board. Marty responded that a list of project management plans is usually prepared around June or July and a list of resource management plans could be prepared for a board update. Elisa agreed that it would be helpful for the board to get a sense of upcoming projects.

FORESTS & PARKS REPORT

Todd reported that he along with Commissioner Webber and 36 DEM staff members participated in the memorial service for the Worcester firefighters. According to Todd, it was a truly moving event.

Todd reminded the board of the upcoming Statewide Friends gathering on January 29th at the Natick Amvets Post #79. Todd stated that notices have gone out and more details will be mailed in early January.

Todd updated the board that the Trails and Resource Management Plan for Myles Standish SF is underway with ongoing meetings and discussions.

Todd stated that the new camping rates are in effect with only a few complaints by those making reservations.

Todd informed the board that Region 1 Director Anne Stempke will be retiring as of December 31st and Acting Region 4 Director Rodney Whipple will retire as of the end of January. Both jobs will be posted.

Todd reported that the Regional National Park Directors and the State Park Directors of the northeast region will have a meeting in Delaware this March.

Todd concluded that DEM is an integral part of the Y2K network for the state. Todd added that DEM's communication system is the best statewide system available.

SECRETARY DURAND

Chairman Tad Ames conveyed to Secretary Durand how the board's primary concern at this time is that DEM's annual budget is stagnant and therefore, according to Tad, the FY00 budget is actually lower than FY91. Tad highlighted several changes to DEM since 1991 which included: the addition of 29 new programs, 13 new parks; a significant increase in the amount of acreage which DEM protects, and a decrease in the number of full-time employees from 631 to 521. Tad discussed how DEM, while responsible for approximately 285,000 acres of land that includes large unbroken blocks of land, wetlands, forestlands and coastline, also plays a major role in support of the Secretary's key issues of bio-diversity and sprawl. Tad urged Secretary Durand to support a more feasible budget for DEM. Secretary Durand responded that it is important for DEM to recognize as a goal for the next few years to keep the emphasis on infrastructure. Secretary Durand continued that DEM needs to tap into its other resources such as its partnerships with friends groups and AmeriCorp. Debbie expressed concern for the Secretary's lack of commitment for more DEM land acquisitions. The Secretary responded that management of its current holdings is the key to the future for DEM. The Secretary stated that he is pushing for more awareness of the Community Preservation Act, which brought in 250 responses from communities. Debbie agreed that the Community Preservation Act as well as the Land and Water Conservation Fund can make a huge difference to help with land acquisitions. Debbie suggested that Secretary Durand attend the upcoming Statewide Advocates Meeting on January 29th. Secretary Durand stated that he has been working towards getting other legislators on board with the Community Preservation Act and to become involved with environmental issues such as open space and water resources. Secretary Durand concluded that environmental education is a priority of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs with energized staff to go out into the schools and a strong relationship with UMass to provide students with the opportunity to learn about environmental issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Bureau of Interpretation Acting Chief John Nove and Project Learning Tree Coordinator Kristin Karl presented an overview of the interpretation program and environmental education program. According to John, the interpretive program has a total staff of 97 (24 year round, 73 (26 long term) seasonal) that represents the second largest core of interpretive services in the US. John presented an organizational chart and discussed various roles within Interpretive Services. John discussed briefly some of the interpretive programs offered during all seasons such as bird walks at Halibut Point SP, the Junior Ranger Program and treasure hunts. Kristin discussed Project Learning Tree, F&P on Wheels, and Parks as Classrooms. Kristin discussed a few new and interesting partnerships such as AmeriCorp, City Year Boston, Parent Involvement Project (PIPS), Eco-Heroes, and professional educators. Patricia recommended that this information be presented at the January 29th Advocates Meeting and Deb suggested making it available to new legislators.

WBNERR

Jack Lash handed out and discussed the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR) Management Plan and asked for the board's vote at the January or February meeting. Jack stated that comments from the board are welcome.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Peter reported that both the House and the Senate had a significant number of earmarks attached to their version of DEM's budget. The conference committee reviewed the earmarks. They deleted a number of them and deleted that amount off the bottom line. The result is a budget lower than either the House or the Senate versions. This will result in a deficit for DEM at some point during this fiscal year. Peter stated that he is encouraged by what Secretary Durand is doing to focus on areas that can expand the picture such as the Community Preservation Act and the Land and Water Fund. Elisa commented that DEM's whole budget is smaller than that of the town of Amherst. Elisa expressed concern that the Secretary did not want to discuss staffing issues. Debbie suggested broadening the group that DEM is targeting for support. Peter responded that many members of the groups need to be reinforced and re-energized. Debbie suggested an additional advocates meeting in the western part of the state to bring them up-to-date. Debbie and Elisa agreed to form a sub-committee to discuss possible agenda items for a second Advocates meeting in western Massachusetts.

BOARD CONCERNS

Elisa expressed concern for the possible development of certain parcels of land on the Mt. Holyoke Range. Peter noted that there is the possibility of contamination on one of the sites in question.

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Having concluded all business the meeting adjourned at 3:20pm. The next meeting of the Board of Environmental Management has been scheduled for 11:00am, Tuesday, January 25, 2000 at Dunn Pond State Park in Gardner, MA.