

Myles Standish State Forest Resource Management Plan

Resource Management Plans

The Department of Conservation and Recreation is guided by a legislative mandate (M.G.L. Chapter 21, Section 2F) to prepare management plans for every DCR reservation, park and forest, to provide management guidelines for the protection and stewardship of natural and cultural resources, and ensure consistency between recreation, resource protection and sustainable forest management. The legislative mandate also requires the incorporation of public review and input into the development of management plans, and review and adoption by the DCR Stewardship Council.

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) consider the past, present and future of a forest, park or reservation. Through an assessment of resources, clear management goals and objectives are developed, and short and long-term implementation action plans are identified for the management of properties under the stewardship of the DCR. RMPs are written to meet the information needs of a diverse audience: from the decision-makers directly involved in the operation and management of a property, to a variety of outside stakeholders. RMPs are intended to be working documents for setting priorities, budgeting and resource allocation, and establishing guidelines for balancing sustainable recreation with the stewardship of natural and cultural resources. Finally, RMPs are of value to users that are interested in learning more about that property, the challenges it faces, and how decisions affecting it are made.

DCR staff undertook a statewide survey in 2008 – 2009 to assess the level of existing resource and planning data available, and correlate that with operations and management considerations. This assessment was used to identify groupings of properties that should be included together in a single RMP, i.e. planning units. The statewide survey was also used to develop a strategic plan for the RMP program, including identification of a sequence for preparing RMPs. MSSF is ranked 4th out of the 80 planning units identified statewide.

Planning Process

Resource Management Plans are developed by the DCR's Resource Management Planning Program through an iterative process of data gathering and analyses, public input, review and revision. Administrative, cultural (i.e., archaeological and historic), ecological, recreational, social and spatial (i.e., mapping) information is gathered. Sources of information include interviews with DCR staff, site visits, administrative files and reports, legal documents, map data, and municipal and regional plans. An

initial meeting is convened to provide the public with an opportunity to express their thoughts about the properties included in the RMP and to provide input into the plan's contents. The public meeting is announced in the Environmental Monitor, advertised in local media outlets, and posted in town halls and libraries.

A draft RMP is then prepared according to a standard format (see attached Table of Contents). This draft is then distributed within the DCR for internal review. The draft RMP is repeatedly reviewed and revised to produce a revised draft RMP for public review and comment.

The revised draft RMP is made available to the public via the DCR web page, and a second public meeting is convened. Once again, the public meeting is announced in the Environmental Monitor and advertised in local newspapers. An overview of the RMP's findings and recommendations is presented at the meeting, and public comment solicited and recorded. These comments, and written comments received during the public comment period, are used to further develop the draft RMP.

Once revised, a final draft RMP is submitted to the Stewardship Council for review and adoption. The Stewardship Council is a 13-member citizen advisory board that works with the Department to provide a safe, accessible, well-maintained, and well-managed system of open spaces and recreational facilities that are managed and maintained on behalf of the public for the purposes of natural and cultural resource protection, sustainable recreation and education.

Once adopted, the Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation files copies with the Secretary of State, and the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture of the Massachusetts General Court. The adopted RMP provides structure and guidance for the operation and management of properties included in the plan and ensures consistency between resource management, recreation and sustainable forest management.

Anticipated RMP Schedule

Initial Public Meeting	October 2010
Complete Initial Draft RMP	January 2010
DCR Internal Review	February 2011
Public Meeting, Review and Comment	March - April 2011
Revise Draft RMP	May 2011
Stewardship Council Review and Adoption of Plan	June 2011
File RMP with Secretary of State, and the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture	July 2011

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