



June 23, 2010

Richard L. Sullivan, Commissioner
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway St., Suite 600
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Commissioner Sullivan,

We are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your decision, mentioned in the Boston Globe Article, *A Piece of the Park* (June 13), that DCR will pursue a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Middlesex Fells Reservation before considering changes to the current trail use plan.

In recent weeks the Massachusetts Forest and Park Friends Network has come under harsh criticism for supporting RMP's, as if we were using our position on this issue as a tactic against the mountain biking community. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Friends Network began in June 2007 at the Partners in Parks Conference with two goals in mind: find a way to control illegal off-highway vehicle use; and promote RMP's for every state forest and park as required by MGL Chapter 21, Section 2F. Those two goals remain at the forefront of our agenda for a very good reason—they are both key to preserving our state forests and parklands.

Friends groups want what is best for our parks. Your landmark decision to complete a RMP for the Fells before creating a new trails system sets a precedent for future decisions affecting state lands; namely, that protecting our natural resources is DCR's highest priority. We believe that once the RMP is completed, user groups will have the information necessary to understand the full range of concerns, which we believe will lead to better cooperation among all of the Fells stakeholders.

Again, we applaud your decision to complete a RMP for the Fells. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest

With the Massachusetts Forest and Park Network Facilitators:

Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park
Mike Ryan, Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation
Ellen Arnold, Friends of Upton State Forest
Mike Toomey, Friends of Douglas and Spencer State Forests

Cc: Henry Lee, DCR Stewardship Council, Chairman
Conrad Crawford, DCR Partnerships Director