



**WATER SUPPLY CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
to the Mass. Water Resources Authority

485 Ware Road
Belchertown MA 01007
(413) 213-0454
fax: (413) 213-0537
email: info@wscac.org

January 29, 2016

Commissioner Leo Roy
Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Single-Track Mountain Bike Riding in DCR Watersheds

Dear Commissioner Roy,

As a stakeholder in the programs and policies of DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection, the Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee is concerned with the ongoing issues related to illegal single-track mountain biking in DCR watersheds.

We met recently with Senator Gobi at the Blue Meadow Conference Center at the Quabbin Reservoir to discuss the effects of illegal biking. Members of the Swift River Historical Society and others expressed their opinions and experiences with bikers who do not follow DCR rules, continue to cut new illegal trails and destroy DCR signs and trail work completed by DCR staff and Student Conservation Association crews.

There are 45 state parks in Massachusetts that encourage mountain biking and 14 are located in the Central Region where illegal biking is occurring in the watersheds. There are also many opportunities for biking on watershed lands using designated trails as noted on DCR's website, Public Access Plans and on-site signage.

The Division of Water Supply Protection is tasked with protecting the water supply for 2.5 million people. That is accomplished through stringent state and federal regulations designed to protect water quality including EPA's Surface Water Treatment Rule and the Massachusetts Watershed Protection Act.

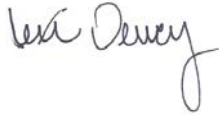
The MWRA operates one of very few unfiltered water systems of its size in the country. Working in collaboration with the MWRA, DCR has purchased watershed lands using ratepayer funds, not taxpayer dollars, to serve as biofilters to protect water quality. These areas are not state parks and are not staffed as such. Though many public water suppliers prohibit all public access, DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection continues to allow various forms of passive recreation on watershed land. Single-track mountain biking is not a passive recreational use. It is often a group activity leading to the need for facilities and additional parking. The cumulative impacts are evident by the erosion on steep slopes, damage to wetland areas and cutting of shrubs and trees to create new unauthorized trails.

We support public access and recreation, but respectfully request that single-track mountain biking be done in designated state parks and away from DCR watershed lands.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Title: Chair, Water Supply Citizens
Advisory Committee



Lexi Dewey
Executive Director

Cc: Jonathan Yeo, Director, DCR Division of Water Supply Protection
Fred Laskey, Executive Director, MWRA
Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director, MWRA Advisory Board
Kathy Baskin, EOEEA Director of Water Policy