



MASSWILDLIFE

## DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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Jack Buckley, Director

### **MassWildlife Proposing New Dog Leash & Waste Disposal Rules on Wildlife Management Areas *Public Hearing Scheduled February 6, 2018***

MassWildlife is proposing leash and waste disposal regulations for dogs on Wildlife Management Areas. A public hearing has been scheduled for February 6, 2018 at 7 PM at the MassWildlife Field Headquarters, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, 01581.

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) has a long tradition of welcoming dogs to Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Dogs are still welcome visitors on WMAs under this proposal.

MassWildlife proposes to take this action due to repeated complaints from WMA users about negative and unsafe encounters with dogs and dog waste. MassWildlife protects and manages its WMAs primarily for wildlife to thrive and for wildlife-related recreation such as hunting, fishing, and watching wildlife. At the same time, MassWildlife strives to provide a safe and enjoyable outdoor experience for all visitors.

1. The proposed regulations require leashing dogs and other domestic animals on WMAs. Dogs may be off-leash only when hunting or hunt training with licensed hunters or at permitted field trials. Leashing dogs decreases dog fights and bites to both pets and people, resulting in safe and positive experiences for everyone.
2. The proposal requires dog owners to pick up dog waste and dispose of it off site. Removing dog waste reduces nuisance and health risks for other dogs, people and wildlife.

Information on the public hearing and proposed regulatory language will be posted on MassWildlife's website the week of January 1, 2018 at [Mass.gov/masswildlife-public-hearings](http://Mass.gov/masswildlife-public-hearings)

#### **Public Comment Period:**

The Fisheries and Wildlife Board will accept written comments on the proposals at any time prior to the public hearing. Written and oral comments are accepted at the public hearing. Written comments are also accepted for an additional two weeks after the hearing. Comments (both oral and written) must focus on the proposed regulation. Written comments can be mailed to:

Chairman, Fisheries and Wildlife Board, c/o MassWildlife Director  
Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581

Comments by e-mail may be sent to [Susan.Sacco@state.ma.us](mailto:Susan.Sacco@state.ma.us), Attn: Fisheries & Wildlife Board

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