

Pawtuckaway State Park – Campground Expansion
Response to Comments - June 9, 2023

The Division of Parks and Recreation will continue to update this document as design progresses.

1. Use of ARPA Funds

Pursuant to US Treasury 31 CFR Part 35, RIN 1505-AC77, the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (FRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allows New Hampshire State funding for capital improvements to the State Park system and State Land reservation infrastructure as allowable uses of FRF funds to respond to directly the public health emergency and as aid to an impacted industry within tourism, travel and hospitality. Additionally, some of these projects are also allowable as water or sewer infrastructure improvements.

The redirection of these funds for operations, invasive aquatic species remediation, or other management activities is not allowed. Some of the suggestions can be accomplished by operational funding (invasive aquatic species/staffing) or capital funding appropriated by the legislature (upgrades to existing infrastructure).

2. Town Provided Public Safety Service – Fire, Police, Ambulance

The State of New Hampshire does not pay property taxes, however, the Town is eligible to apply to the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) for Payment In Lieu of Taxes per [RSA 227-H:17](#) for approximately 5,275 acres of undeveloped state owned land.

On June 5, 2023 DPR met with the DRA to discuss how Payment In Lieu of Taxes is calculated and payments sent to the town. On average DRA has sent \$4,000/year to the town.

Per [RSA 216-A:3-a](#) the State of New Hampshire made payments to the Town when the recreational areas, approximately 262 acres, was developed in the early 1960's.

On the busiest days the Park contracts with the Town of Nottingham for a detail officer to be at the park. The town invoices the Division, and we pay all required fees.

3. Wetland/Shoreland and Permitting

The Division will be securing all required permits for the development of the new campsites and adhering to the applicable rules and regulations.

The design of the campsites will be set back from the shore a minimum of 50' as required, however, the division anticipates campsites to be located between 150'-250' depending on topography and wetland resources. The Division believes this will be far enough back from the shoreline to dissuade guests from exploring.

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4. Dump station, new septic systems, current septic system maintenance and water quality protection

Recreational vehicles (pop-ups to motor homes) are equipment types used by campers at the park today. There is currently no dump station facility offered and a dump station is being proposed as part of this project to service the recreational vehicles at the park. The dump station along the park road will service all recreational vehicles camping in the Big Island and Horse Island areas (tent camping only at Neal's Cove). The new septic systems for the dump station and new bathhouse will be permitted by the Department of Environmental Services.

On p.118 of the Feasibility Study the consultant noted that the tank was full of solids. Division staff were not present during the inspection; however, the staff reports that the tanks are pumped twice a year, mid-season and at the end of the season as standard maintenance procedure. There are 14 septic systems in the park.

5. Invasive aquatic species

The Department of Environmental Services is developing a management plan for aquatic invasive species. The Division will be following DES guidance on removal of these plants in areas adjacent to the park shoreline and enhance education of our staff and visitors. The Division recognizes that as part of the Pawtuckaway Lake community and stewards of the parklands we have a shared responsibility to its protection.

6. Waterfront Use

There are no [administrative rules](#) for the park prohibiting swimming or launching boats from waterfront campsites. In the past there had been policies, such as no swimming from campsites, set by park staff that were unenforceable and therefore the signs have been removed. The Division will be making repairs to existing campsites to address erosion, encourage using existing launches in the park and educating guests on proper boat storage and mooring.

7. Road Maintenance and Increased Traffic

The roads in the park and Mountain Road from Route 156 to the park entrance are [Class III Recreational Highway](#) maintained by the Department of Transportation.

The Division does not anticipate a significant increase in traffic with the addition of 35 campsites, a 15% increase in the number of campsites. The average stay is 4 nights and the recreational vehicles are usually parked on-site for the duration of their stay. The most traffic volume would occur at check in and out on Fridays and Sundays. We are evaluating the total guest capacity in the park and will decrease the number of day-use visitor tickets sold in proportion to campsite increase.

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