

Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Winter wildlife enforcement at the refuge

Hillman, Matthew D <matthew_hillman@fws.gov>

Fri 2/3/2023 2:43 PM

To: Bovio, Kelly <Kelly.Bovio@mail.house.gov>
Cc: Joseph, Jennifer A <jennifer_joseph@fws.gov> 1 attachments (229 KB)

News Release_responsible wildlife viewing_Feb2023.pdf;

Hi Kelly,

As expected, based on observed public behavior, we did have to change our refuge opening rules effective today (attached press release for more information). This has made quite a stir locally, and you may or may not hear about it from your constituents (although I will say that, based on our Facebook page comments, MOST are glad to see this change occur as they, too, have witnessed unethical and illegal behaviors on the refuge).

Thanks for your previous offer to help spread the word via social media. The attached messaging will soon be published on our [refuge website](#) and Facebook page; feel free to share it!

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend,

Matt

Matthew D. Hillman

Project Leader

Parker River NWR Complex

Newburyport, MA

O: 978-572-5613

C: 774-303-9090

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker-river>matthew_hillman@fws.gov

From: Bovio, Kelly <Kelly.Bovio@mail.house.gov>**Sent:** Friday, January 27, 2023 2:07 PM**To:** Hillman, Matthew D <matthew_hillman@fws.gov>; Horsman, Liam (Markey)

<Liam_Horsman@markey.senate.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Winter wildlife enforcement at the refuge

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Thanks, Matt. Great seeing you today.

Very much appreciate the update. It sounds like those owls are making a push for People magazine's sexiest birds issue. In all seriousness, please let us know if there's anything we can do to help curtail bad behaviors, even if it's just sharing messaging on social.

Regarding the PH, I can't say this enough: your dedication to continuing the search for an alternate property, and keeping this potential exchange alive, is above and beyond what any us expect. Thank you.

Have a great weekend all,
Kelly

From: "Hillman, Matthew D" <matthew_hillman@fws.gov>
Date: Friday, January 27, 2023 at 1:35 PM
To: "Bovio, Kelly" <Kelly.Bovio@mail.house.gov>, "Horsman, Liam (Markey)" <Liam_Horsman@markey.senate.gov>
Subject: Winter wildlife enforcement at the refuge

Hi Kelly and Liam,

So glad you could both make it to the meeting today. Always a pleasure to see you.

Just FYI -- we are seeing increasingly problematic behaviors at the refuge: photographers harassing owls to get the best photo, trespassing into the dunes, blocking traffic flow, increased illegal parking, etc. All of these behaviors stem from a pair of very photogenic barred owls and coyotes during the season when out staffing is lowest and visitation has increased exponentially. It has become a public safety concern on an active roadway in addition to increasing disturbance to the wildlife we protect. Individually, these behaviors are not overly problematic, but with the masses the impacts are cumulatively significant.

We have taken a number of outreach and enforcement measures to counteract these behaviors, including [this op-ed](#) published in the Newburyport Daily News and banning ALL live parking from the northbound roadway, with mixed success. Our next steps are to issue more violation notices and possibly to limit refuge open hours (e.g., closing 1 hour early, when many of these issues have been occurring).

Might as well send a Pink House update, while I'm at it -- I have been communicating with my in-state colleagues about additional USFWS land purchase options that could be used for a future swap -- notably at Monomoy in Chatham and in the lands around Mashpee. We have also identified at least one parcel in Madbury, NH, with the goal of establishing Great Thicket NWR in that state. So it continues to be a slow process but work is progressing behind the scenes.

Take good care and hope to chat again soon.

Matt

Image removed by sender.

[ACES: Respecting all species at the refuge](#)

The refuge's primary mission is to conserve and protect wildlife and their habitats. When visitation pressures compromise that mission, we are obligated to intervene.

www.newburyportnews.com

Matthew D. Hillman

Project Leader

Parker River NWR Complex

Newburyport, MA

O: 978-572-5613

C: 774-303-9090

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker-river>

matthew_hillman@fws.gov



**NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM**