

A. RICHARD MILLER

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Secretary Ian A. Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
Anne Canaday, EOE #14197 (1-617/626-1035; anne.canaday@state.ma.us)
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston MA 02114

Re: Birch Road Wellfield Redevelopment and Water Treatment Plant, EOE #14197 DEIR

Dear Secretary Bowles:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. As one member of the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee, I urge you to require further study of this proposed water withdrawal project. Its public review was so flawed, and so many questions remain, that **its current Draft Environmental Impact Report should not be allowed to become a Final EIR.**

1. This proposal may significantly affect the Sudbury River and Lake Cochituate. The latter is the main domain of interest of the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee, whose members are appointed by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Conservation and Recreation.
2. The Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee was not advised in a timely manner of this comment period. We were notified on July 21st, 2009 that its 30-day comment period would end in three days, on July 24th. I spent the next two of those three days attempting to round up the draft report and some comment letters by others. Then the comment period was extended one week to July 31st. Although appreciated, this did not permit consideration at a CSPAC monthly meeting.
3. I experienced extraordinary difficulties in obtaining a copy of the report. Despite goodwill efforts by all concerned, it took valuable days to obtain a copy.
4. Serious questions remain. For example, other current comment letters state that this proposal would withdraw more Sudbury River water than all downstream wells combined, that it would expand Framingham's total existing water capacity by more than 50%, and that a major (perhaps the major) Framingham user is a Nestlé water-bottling plant. Once that new supply becomes established demand, what safeguards will exist against the commitment to supply that water (from Lake Cochituate?) in times of drought? Even slight changes in water level can hamper boat traffic between its ponds and can result in major shoreline changes where the drop-offs are gradual. Interactions between aquatic herbicide treatments in the lake and the new water supply also require further consideration.

With vast quantities of information to read and discuss in one summertime week, and with no meeting within that time frame, I do not anticipate that the CSPAC can respond as a body. Please accept my comment for now, and **include the CSPAC in the future deliberations on this and similar matters.**

Sincerely,

A. Richard Miller, Member
Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee