

Mark Droy, President  
Massachusetts Hang Gliding Association  
P.O. Box 652  
Easthampton, Massachusetts 01027  
10 March 1978

Gilbert A. Bliss  
Director of Forests and Parks  
Leverett Taltonstall Building  
100 Cambridge Street,  
Boston, Massachusetts 02202

Dear Mr. Bliss,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss hang gliding in state parks. I believe many pilots left that meeting more open-minded and understanding of the State's position and responsibilities.

Pursuant to that meeting of 9 March 1978, we present for your consideration the following recommendations for the proposed regulations on hang gliding on Department properties:

For the Definition, we propose the following paragraph:

"For the purposes of this section, a free flight device shall be considered any aircraft defined as a 'hang glider' by the Federal Aviation Administration."

We believe this will keep an up-to-date, working definition of hang gliding in use.

In Part A, we propose that "the Director" be clarified to read, "the Director of Forests and Parks."

In Part B, we wish to add, "Permits shall be available during normal park operating hours."

In Part D, we are interested in a provision for minors to participate in hang gliding activities with permission, if not accompaniment, of a parent or guardian.

In Part E, the word, "licensed" should be changed to read, "rated", and the phrase, "National Hang Glider Association" should be corrected to read, "United States Hang Gliding Association". We would also wish to add the phrase, "or an equivalent" to the rating requirements. This will allow the continued use of "Greylock Cards" issued at Mt. Greylock for qualified pilots who were not members of the USHGA. As in the past, we would expect the set-up of any alternative rating system to be worked out with park officials and Regional Supervisors. The proposed regulations should allow for this.

We are further interested in a provision in Part E to allow advancing pilots to fly a mountain site under the direct supervision of a USHGA Observer. For example, since Greylock is a Hang IV site, a Hang III could fly with the accompaniment of a USHGA Observer. This, also, would be worked out with officials at the individual sites, but

the proposed regulations should allow for this.

I am enclosing the USHCA Hang Rating System Publication. From this, you can see that Greylock should remain a Hang IV site, while Skinner should remain a Hang III site. Minimum Hang Ratings at any other sites shall be worked out with the local Supervisors.

In Part F, we feel that pilots have proven themselves capable of judging safe flying conditions. Part F, therefore, could be shortened to read,

"The use of such devices may be prohibited at certain times, when, at the discretion of the Director, such use is unsafe, impractical, or in conflict with Departmental policy or management."

We also propose an additional regulation (G),

"No flight shall be made in violation of the United States Hang Gliding Association's 'Basic Safety Regulations', or State and Local ordinances pertaining to hang gliding."

I am looking forward to our meeting with the Town of Hadley to resolve the traffic problem on Route 47 on those days when hang gliding may cause a "tourist attraction".

Again, Thank you for your concern and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mark Droy

encl.

cc: Charles H. Dane, Chief, Bureau of Recreation  
Representitive Bruce Wetherbee  
Richard Archambault, V. Pres., U. of Lowell HGC  
Phil Friel, Pres., NENGA  
Walter W. Niemi, V. Pres., Windward Kite and Gliding Club  
Maryanne Cappello, Pres., U.Mass. HGC  
Don McCabe, Region 8 Director, USHCA

SUBJECT: Restrictions on Hang Gliding in Mass. State Parks

3/09/78 MEMORANDUM - Department of Environmental Management  
ARRANGED BY: State Representative Bruce Weatherbee  
COORDINATED BY: Walt Niemi, Winward Kite & Gliding Club

Letter of June 6, 1977 to Chuck Laversa from Charles H. Dane, Chief of the Bureau of Recreation, Department of Environmental Management in which there was an attached copy of proposed regulations which had not been at that time submitted to the State Attorney General for his approval.

Section XLX

USE OF HANG GLIDERS ON DEPARTMENT PROPERTIES

Definition: For the purposes of these regulations, the term "Hang Glider" shall refer to an unpowered, single place air vehicle whose launch and landing capability depends entirely on the legs of the occupant and whose ability to remain in flight is generated by natural air currents.

- A. The use of Hang Gliders shall be confined to those areas, designated by the Director of Forests and Parks for such use.
- B. The use of hang gliders on Department property shall be by permit only. Permits shall be issued at the discretion of the Director or his designee upon written request of the applicant.
- C. Permits shall be issued on an annually renewable basis at the discretion of the Director or his designee.
- D. The minimum age of hang glider pilots utilizing Department facilities shall be 18 years of age.
- E. Monday through Saturday
  - { April - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
  - { May
  - { June - - 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
  - { July
  - { August
  - { September - - 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
  - { October
  - { November

note The use of hang gliders is prohibited on Sundays, holidays and holiday weekends and when weather or other conditions make such use unsafe or impractical.

### GREYLOCK SITUATION: COOPERATION

At the Greylock Reservation, there is currently a sane, regulated program which has been in effect for several years, with NO INCIDENTS that have come into conflict with the general public.

Mr. Douglas Poland, D.E.M. Regional Director, has extended his cooperation in setting up the reasonable and realistic hang gliding program with local pilots.

### SKINNER STATE PARK SITUATION : CONFLICT

There has not been a permanent and satisfactory program worked out between the Hang Gliding Community and the Regional Director, Mr. Kenneth Debuke.

When the hang gliding activity first became a reality at Skinner, and for a brief time to follow, there was a regulatory program in effect which seemed fair, and took into consideration the safety of all. With the passage of time, and several discussions and confrontations later between Mr. Debuke and local pilots, flying became more restricted, ELIMINATING WINTER, HOLIDAY, HOLIDAY WEEKENDS, AND SUNDAY Hang Gliding use.

This was felt to be extremely unfair to the general flying public (hang glider pilots) because:

(1) Many pilots have to work Saturdays, and Sunday may be the only day they have to enjoy the sport.

(2) Those who can fly on a Saturday may find the unpredictable New England weather prohibiting the activity that day, thereupon leaving Sunday the only possibility. (It is not unusual to have an entire weekend unsuitable for flying due to adverse conditions).

(3) Holidays and Holiday Weekends restrictions take away from people the only days they might have a chance to enjoy this recreation also.

Now a pilot must ask himself this question: If we are told we cannot fly because of a park being too busy or crowded, then why are we singled out and the first to be excluded???

The activity at Skinner takes place far and away from the public at large, a good  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the Hotel/Picnic Area.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL SATURDAY : By eliminating Sunday flying etc., a situation is created that induces some pilots to possibly go against their better sense-to fly on days that conditions might be marginal. The thought is, "If I can't fly today, I won't get another chance until next week, or the week after." Instead, the thought should be, "Tomorrow is another day." An extra burden is placed on a pilot's normal good judgement.

The entire hang gliding "Mystic" - has certainly been misunderstood by the public at large.

We are not some group of "Dare Devils" or fatalistic "Evil Knevil" types. We are for the most part, responsible persons who enjoy the artful bliss we find in flying - being able at times, to emulate a hawk or an eagle, sometimes if only for a brief few minutes. Many pilots are family members with responsible jobs (We have to be employed to support our rather expensive habit).

But, hang gliding has suffered from the newness, sensationalism on part of the media, misconceptions, and alike. The negative side of hang gliding has all too often been played up, with half truths, fallacies, and just plain misrepresentations.

Yes, there has been some good media coverage on the sport, but too many times it seems that hang glider pilots are either being rescued, spend half of their life in a tree, or are involved with some fantastic stunt.

We are a cohesive group, with the national organization being the United States Hang Gliding Association with some 15,000 members. Representing the U.S.H.G.A. today is Region 8 Director Don McCabe, and writer for the monthly publication, Hang Glider Magazine, Bill Allen.

#### POSITIVE ASPECTS IN THE SPORT

(1) The University of Lowell has seen fit to make Hang Gliding an accredited course.

(2) The F.A.A. looked at hang gliding for several years and decided - that because of the fine job of the hang gliding community had done in self regulating itself, to keep hands off policy in the form of official regulations. (NOTE: The F.A.A. encourages all pilots to be familiar with F.A.R./General Aviation rules if hang gliders are going to fly above certain altitudes and especially if they are going to operate near controlled air space).

(3) In a recent magazine article, it was revealed that hang glider pilots have approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  fewer fatal accidents than private powered aircraft.

(4) In Britain, an Air Ministry Official stated that hang gliding is safer than general aviation.

(5) Safety within the sport - much has been learned over the past several years.

(a) Gliders designs have changed considerably for the better.

(b) Training Programs are much more extensive for new pilots (The U.S.H.G.A. Certified Instructors must attend periodic clinics for updating teaching skills).


(c) Better dissemination of information on such subjects as micrometeorology, general glider performance, and glider maintenance and care.

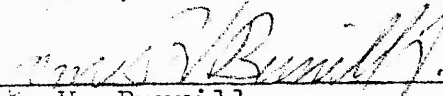
March 9, 1978

We, the undersigned, as elected representatives of the Massachusetts Hang Gliding Association, propose the following rules and regulations to govern the use of hang gliders on Department properties:

Definition: For the purposes of these regulations, the term hang glider, shall refer to a single place, fixed wing (i.e., not rotary wing), heavier than air vehicle; capable of being carried, launched, and landed solely by the use of the pilot's legs, and whose ability to remain in flight is generated by natural air currents.

- A. The use of hang gliders shall be confined to those areas, designated by the Director of Forests and Parks, for such use.
- B. The use of hang gliders on Department property shall be by permit only. Permits shall be issued at the discretion of the Director or his designee.
- C. Permits shall be issued on a daily basis. Applicants must provide proof of identification and a valid rating card issued by the United States Hang Gliding Association, Inc., or an equivalent card.
- D. The Director shall determine the minimum pilot rating required by applicants at each site. Provisions shall be made with the Regional Supervisor for the use of an area by pilots under the instruction of a Certified Instructor or Observer of the United States Hang Glider Association.
- E. No flight shall be made in violation of United States Hang Gliding Association "Basic Safety Regulations, Part 100 ", or State and Local Ordinances pertaining to hang gliding.

  
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Mark Droy  
President, Massachusetts Hang Gliding Association

  
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James H. Burrill  
Vice President, Mass. Hang Gliding Association

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Charles LaVersa  
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