

Western Massachusetts Council Camp Property Wood Policy

Following the recommendation of the US Forest Service, National Parks and state parks guidelines, the WMC is adopting a "**Don't Move Firewood**" policy. What does this mean for our HAMSR/Chesterfield guests?

The transportation of any wood into or out of camp is prohibited. This includes firewood, kindling, and poles or staves which have come from outside the camp. This prohibition includes lumber scraps or pallets.*

Why is WMC modifying its wood policy?

Invasive insects and diseases that live in firewood and untreated lumber present a growing threat to our valuable camp resources. The movement of firewood has been blamed for the spread of gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle and other native and non-native insects and diseases.

Even wood transported from areas close to camp may bring infestations of invasive forest pests. Many of these destructive pests can remain undetected for years and even experts can have a difficult time confirming their presence.

It is estimated that invasive pests can kill or damage up to 50% of a park's forest. This includes damage to valuable timber resources, reduction of wildlife food sources like fruits, seeds and nuts, and loss of canopy and tree mortality causing stream and pond temperature increases which impact the fish, amphibians, and aquatic insects they feed on. In addition, the death of trees may lead to increased forest fire risk, exotic plant invasions and erosion.

So what are we doing about this problem? Besides monitoring for early detection of these pests, we are working to accommodate your firewood needs.

-Firewood will be provided with camp building rentals at no additional charge.

-Campers may still collect dead and downed firewood for campfires.

-Staves, poles and pioneering project wood will be provided from a stockpiled supply at the camp.

Your understanding and cooperation with this important conservation policy improvement is appreciated. Let's preserve the forest resources for generations of Scouts to come. Thank you.

WMC Properties Committee and Conservation Committee

Questions? Feel free to ask the Ranger or contact:

Steve Scannell, conservation committee chair: Conservation234@yahoo.com

*Imported pallets are believed to be the original source of the emerald ash borer, first in Detroit and currently threatening the ash tree population in the Northeast.