

Town of Pound Ridge Police Department

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Thomas D. Mulcahy
Chief of Police

Dear Pound Ridge Community,

As we all know and appreciate, Pound Ridge has more than its fair share of open space for the public to enjoy. We are very fortunate to have the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, Cross River Reservoir and various Preserves all in our backyard for the public to enjoy in various ways. We also have various open spaces which are posted and not open to the public for use. I want to take a moment to educate our great residents on a few of the larger parcels that fit this description (Aquarion Watershed and Mianus River Gorge).

These private properties are posted "No Trespassing" for various reasons including safety and environmental impact. As far as safety, these properties do not maintain marked trails and contain limited access for emergency responders. There are various environmental programs that occur on these properties spanning from research projects, forest management, deer management and water quality management programs. Individuals who disregard these signs, besides violating the law, are disrupting these programs.

The first is Aquarion Watershed properties. These properties surround the various reservoirs and aquifers in Pound Ridge which supply drinking water to the City of Stamford and serve to protect and recharge the aquifer areas which benefit our own private wells. The only area that is open to Pound Ridge Residents is the west side of Trinity Lake and the property is accessed from the trailhead at the parking area on Trinity Pass (see Recreation Department for parking tag). Boating and ice fishing is strictly prohibited on these reservoirs. Since these are reservoirs, the water level can change without notice as water is moved throughout the system. This is especially dangerous when it comes to ice and being on it when this occurs. We unfortunately have had issues in the past with swimmers getting hurt, boats being used on these properties (which were removed), and trespassing hunters. More recently, we have had issues of ATV use on the Old Mill River Reservoir where these trespassers have been destroying the understory of the forest and disrupting the Deer Management Program being run there. Aquarion has the Saugatuck Aspetuck Trail system which is only a half hour away from Pound Ridge which is open to the public for hiking.

I recently had a discussion with Mianus River Gorge concerning their properties in Pound Ridge which lies east of the Mianus River. It appears that the number of trespassers has increased significantly over the past year. Based on what they have observed, it appears to be comprised of dog walkers and hikers who are likely local residents due to lack of parking and access to parcels. This activity is disruptive to wildlife behavior and other natural processes, and Mianus Gorge conducts various research projects and stewardship

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programs which hiking and dog-walking impact as well. Inevitably, a little bit of hiking leads to more hiking, which leads to more serious trespass such as fires, poaching, and squatting. Finally, as described above regarding Aquarion's land, hiking in areas with no trails or other access can pose a danger if an emergency develops if police or other responders cannot find or reach someone in trouble. Mianus Gorge does maintain 2.5 miles of trails on the west side of river which are open to the public from April 1 to Nov 30, though dog-walking is prohibited on all of their property for a number of reasons. Again, there is no public access at all on any of the Mianus Gorge property in Pound Ridge and we ask that our residents respect these restrictions and enjoy the trails on the North Castle/Bedford side of the river.

I want to thank you for your time in reading this letter and for your assistance in protecting those properties. Hopefully through education and not enforcement, we can correct the issue of trespassing on these properties. Please feel free to enjoy those properties in Town that welcome the public.

Thanks for your cooperation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas D. Mulcahy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Thomas D. Mulcahy
Chief of Police