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DURHAM, N.H. - The University of New Hampshire has asked the N.H. Department of Environmental Services to temporarily suspend consideration of its application for a wetlands permit in conjunction with proposed enhancements at its recreational facility on Mendum's Pond.

“The Barrington Board of Selectmen has requested that the university submit the project to the Barrington Planning Board for consideration and comment. We understand the importance of being a good neighbor and look forward to working with the planning board,” said Paul Chamberlin, executive director of UNH Facilities Planning and Design.

Under RSA 674:54 Governmental Land Uses, the university is not obligated to notify the municipality of any proposed use of property within its jurisdiction unless the change is a substantial change in use or a substantial new use. While UNH does not consider the proposed work at its recreational facility a substantial change, the community has expressed a desire to provide input on UNH's planning.

“This is consistent with the spirit of the RSA, and we are happy to agree. Since the community's input may result in changes to the work that is the basis for our current wetlands permit application, suspending consideration of our permit is prudent,” Chamberlin said.

The use of the UNH Recreational Area at Mendum's Pond has doubled since 2000. UNH believes it has an obligation, as stewards of the property, to respond to the increased use and is concerned that, if not addressed, the increased use will have undesired impact on the natural environment.

In reviewing its current plans, UNH will test them against the objective of balancing access and conservation: access to allow the natural beauty and scenery to be shared with the UNH community and residents of Barrington, and conservation to assure that the natural resources are allowed to flourish.

Editors: Paul Chamberlin, executive director of Facilities Planning and Design, is available to answer questions at 603-862-4452.
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