

### *Like Father Like Son?*

Much has been written lately about the possibility of closing thousands of acres of spectacular Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) land to the public. The basic premise as I understand it is due to a loophole in the state's recreational liability statute that leaves the MDC vulnerable to potential lawsuits.

Three generations of my family have grown to love the recreational opportunities that MDC land provides: whether taking walks with the family or simply enjoying the beautiful sights, we have grown to value the fact that few water companies in Connecticut provide as much access to great outdoor activities as does the MDC.

One of my father's favorite activities throughout the years was organizing and hosting the annual "Awesome Egg Hunt" at the West Hartford Reservoir. This MDC event welcomed thousands of kids and their families who thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful MDC land while searching for eggs and raising money for charity.

Here's the thing - I am president of the non-profit Farmington River Watershed Association ([frwa.org](http://frwa.org)) and dad, Albert Reichin, is the MDC commissioner (and former MDC chairman) from Bloomfield. Do we always see eye-to-eye? Often - but not always.

However, this issue hits so close to home that we both want to state clearly that we are in favor of providing public usage - and urge the legislature to move swiftly to eliminate the loophole to ensure this access.

Parts of the MDC land cross the Metacomet/New England Trail (the nation's newest national scenic trail); the property is host to educational events, high school track meets and fundraising walks and runs for various causes; and it's clear that the MDC land is a critically important place to many people for various reasons, and we want to keep it that way.

If you'd like to get more involved with efforts to close this liability loophole for towns and entities like the MDC, please contact former FRWA executive director and current Connecticut Forest & Park Association Executive Director Eric Hammerling at 860-346-2372 or [ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org](mailto:ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org); or you may sign an online petition at [www.savethemdctrails.org](http://www.savethemdctrails.org).

Sincerely,

Matthew and Albert Reichin and Families