



**For immediate release**  
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## **DCR DELAYS OPENING OF OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE TRAILS**

*Winter storm damage clean-up continues*

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has postponed the opening of off-highway vehicle trails in western and central Massachusetts while storm damage clean-up continues.

Many DCR parks suffered extensive damage from the December ice storm that struck the central and western parts of the state. Numerous trails are blocked by debris, hanging limbs, and other dangerous conditions. DCR crews and contractors, as well as many volunteers, are working to clear debris from day use areas, campgrounds, and miles of trails.

While that work is in progress, DCR has decided to delay the traditional May 1 opening of the off-highway vehicle riding season on trails in Beartown State Forest, October Mountain State Forest, Pittsfield State Forest, and Tolland State Forest. Off-highway vehicles include all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, and off-road vehicles.

DCR officials hope to be able to reopen trails in late May, and will notify the public when that happens. Also, the openings will be posted on the DCR website: [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr).

“We realize how popular these trails are for off-highway vehicle users, and crews are doing their best to get the trails ready,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “We appreciate the patience of trail users, and especially appreciate all the help they have given us in getting the trails ready.”

Volunteers from the Appalachian Mountain Club, Appalachian Trail Committee, Berkshire Trails Council, New England Mountain Bike Association, New England Trail Riders Association, the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts and other groups have been indispensable in helping DCR restore the Commonwealth’s trail systems for the enjoyment of all users.

Trails for off-highway motorcycles only at Wrentham, Franklin, and F.Gilbert Hills State Forests and at Freetown State Forest will open as scheduled: Wrentham, Franklin, and F.Gilbert Hills on May 1, and Freetown on May 4.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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*The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr). Contact us at [mass.parks@state.ma.us](mailto:mass.parks@state.ma.us).*