



For immediate release
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**SEVERAL DCR RECREATION AREAS WILL BE UNSTAFFED
THIS SEASON DUE TO BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

Maintenance and other seasonal staff will be reduced

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will not be able to staff several state parks and forests this season due to the financial challenges facing Massachusetts. The facilities will remain open, though parking and restrooms will not be available and swimming will not be allowed.

In addition, swimming will not be allowed at several other DCR ponds.

At each affected facility, DCR will direct park visitors to other nearby parks and beaches that offer similar recreational opportunities.

“It is unfortunate that this agency will not be able to keep all our parks and forests fully staffed this season,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “But in these difficult and trying economic times, we remain committed to offering recreational opportunities to everyone.”

In reducing staffing levels this summer, Massachusetts joins state park systems across the country forced to make cutbacks because of reduced budgets. New York State reportedly will shorten hours at many facilities, while Georgia, Illinois, and Utah also have faced significant budget cuts.

Current projections indicate that DCR’s Fiscal Year 2010 budget could be 6 percent to 11 percent below the current year’s. In order to manage with reduced funding, DCR plans to have about 330 fewer seasonal staff members this year than last, more than a 15 percent reduction in the seasonal work force. In addition, because of a statewide hiring slowdown, a number of recently vacated, full-time staff positions have not been filled. Nonetheless, DCR remains committed to maintaining its parks and forests to the highest standards possible, and will do everything possible to avoid diminished maintenance and upkeep.

Several DCR areas that will not be staffed this season are located near larger recreation areas that will be fully staffed. DCR will post information on the agency’s website and at each park describing the other parks and directing park users to them.

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These DCR parks and campgrounds will not be staffed this summer and swimming will not be allowed:

Ashland State Park, Ashland: DCR recommends nearby Hopkinton State Park in Hopkinton.
Chester Blandford State Forest, Chester/Blandford: DCR recommends Tolland State Forest in East Otis.

Lake Lorraine State Park, Springfield: DCR recommends nearby Chicopee Memorial State Park in Chicopee Falls.

Streeter Point Recreation Area, Sturbridge: DCR recommends Chicopee Memorial State Park in Chicopee Falls.

Windsor State Forest, Windsor: DCR recommends nearby Savoy Mountain State Forest

Swimming will not be allowed in these DCR ponds this summer:

Berry Pond in Harold Parker State Forest, North Andover: DCR recommends Salisbury Beach State Reservation in Salisbury.

Dean Pond in Brimfield State Forest, Brimfield: DCR recommends Chicopee Memorial State Park in Chicopee Falls.

Fearings Pond in Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth: DCR recommends College Pond in Myles Standish State Forest.

Additionally, the campground at Massasoit State Park in Taunton will be closed this summer to accommodate electrical repairs. Special interpretive programming will be available. Camping is available at nearby Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth

Before traveling to a specific destination, park visitors are encouraged to check the DCR website (www.mass.gov/dcr) for further information or call the listed park number.

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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. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

