



**For immediate release
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DCR REOPENING LONGFELLOW BRIDGE SIDEWALK

Spectators will be allowed on popular July 4th viewing spot this summer

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is reopening the upstream sidewalk on the Longfellow Bridge after federal inspections determined that recent repairs have ensured its safety. The upstream sidewalk, next to Cambridge-to-Boston vehicle traffic, is a popular viewing spot for spectators during the July 4 Boston Pops concert and fireworks on the Esplanade.

DCR will reopen the sidewalk Friday morning, June 12.

In June 2008, DCR closed the sidewalk after an inspection found a support beam in need of immediate repair. During the work, pedestrians were detoured to the opposite sidewalk, which has remained open. In the interest of public safety, the entire bridge was closed to spectators last year on the Fourth of July.

“Completing this work well in advance of July 4th has been a truly remarkable accomplishment,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “We know Fourth of July spectators were disappointed last year when they couldn’t watch from the bridge, and we are delighted to be able to open the bridge for them this year.”

With the reopening of the sidewalk, the Longfellow Bridge is now fully open to vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Last week, inspectors from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted a field inspection of the sidewalk repairs on the bridge. In a June 9, 2009, letter to DCR Commissioner Sullivan and Massachusetts Highway Department Commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky, FHWA Division Administrator Lucy Garliauskas wrote, “We found that the repairs done are acceptable and the FHWA concurs with MassHighway’s decision to open the Longfellow Bridge upstream sidewalk to pedestrian traffic.”

During the Patrick Administration, DCR has spent more than \$12.5 million on repairs and inspections at the Longfellow Bridge since August 2007. Nearly 210 tons of new steel have

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been installed under the roadbed, including 275 new steel posts, 472 jack beams, 621 stringers, and 9 floor beams.

NEL Inc. of Georgetown, which did the repairs under the traffic lanes of the Longfellow, also repaired the upstream sidewalk. The work involved repairing and replacing the steel supports underneath the walkways.

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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.