



**For immediate release
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**PATRICK ADMINISTRATION ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS
TO VISIT DCR CAMPGROUNDS
FOR GREAT VACATION OPPORTUNITIES**

The Patrick Administration is encouraging residents across the Commonwealth to take advantage of the innumerable camping opportunities in state parks from the Berkshires to Boston and Cape Cod.

“Few things in this world are sweeter than sleeping under the stars – except maybe a fresh ‘smore by the campfire,” said Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Rick Sullivan. “I would urge everyone to get outside, enjoy the sights and sounds of nature, and give camping a try.”

Camping is an affordable way to take a family vacation. For Massachusetts residents, campsite fees at the 28 DCR campgrounds range from \$8 to \$15 a night, depending on the location and amenities. At the end of the day, around the picnic table or campfire, some of the best stories are told, songs are sung, and games are played with family and friends.

As part of its commitment to improving state parks, the Patrick Administration devoted more than \$30 million for storm water management and hazardous waste removal at state parks last year. Funds for the Commonwealth’s improvement of state parks come from the \$1.7 billion Energy and Environment Bond Bill passed in 2008. In addition, \$56.9 million was allocated to purchase land for DCR parks and reservations.

DCR offers visitors the chance to spend the night in a tent, trailer, RV, cabin, or yurt, depending on the park. For those new to camping, staying in a yurt is often the best way to start. Yurts, which can accommodate 4 to 6 people, have canvas sides and a wood floor and come equipped with beds, tables, and chairs. Campers must provide their own bed linens and eating utensils.

A four-person yurt is \$30 per night; a six-person yurt is \$40 per night. Five DCR parks offer yurt camping: Nickerson State Park in Brewster, October Mountain State Forest in Lee, Otter River State Forest in Baldwinville, Shawme-Crowell State Forest in Sandwich, and Wells State Park in Sturbridge.

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For back-packing enthusiasts, the campground at Mt. Greylock has been converted to a hike-in facility beginning this season. For the last two seasons, the 22 campsites have been a de facto car-free area because the roads to the top of Mt. Greylock were closed for construction. To access the campground, campers had to hike 2.5 miles up the mountain.

Nonetheless, the area saw a steady flow of campers. Following a public meeting last November, DCR decided to maintain the Mt. Greylock campground as hike-in only.

“Throughout DCR’s system of campgrounds, there are only two – one on the Boston Harbor Islands and one on Washburn Island in Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve on Cape Cod – where a family can camp in a car-free environment,” said DCR Commissioner Sullivan. “We frequently hear from campers that they would like a camping experience that is not as challenging as backpacking on the Appalachian Trail but is more challenging than walking from their car to the picnic table. We believe the Mt. Greylock Campground is the perfect opportunity to offer that experience.”

For a complete list of DCR campgrounds, fees, and reservation information, visit www.mass.gov/dcr, click on “activities” and then “camping.”

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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, dams, and parkways. 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.