



**For immediate release
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**DCR CELEBRATES START
OF THE WINTER RECREATION SEASON
WITH “FIRST DAY” HIKES IN 16 PARKS**

BOSTON - The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will sponsor free “First Day” family hikes in 16 state parks across the Commonwealth on New Year’s Day, as a way to connect children and parents with the great outdoors even – or maybe especially – in winter.

“What better way to kick off the New Year than with a hike at a state park?” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “Think of it as the start of a new and healthy lifestyle, for the whole family. Please join us outdoors on New Year’s Day.”

First Day hikers can expect to be surrounded by the quiet beauty of nature in winter, with views and vistas unimpeded by foliage. Wildlife that might be spied along these walks will almost certainly be the tough and sturdy chickadees, state bird of Massachusetts, that are among the few birds that do not fly south for the winter.

In preparation for each hike, pay close attention to the details of starting time and location. Dress warmly; wear layers of clothing and sturdy, warm hiking boots or shoes, as well as hats and gloves; bring water. In the event of inclement weather, please call 617-626-1450 after 3 p.m. on December 31 for any possible cancellations.

All hikes will be led by park staff members and last about two hours. Participants are advised to arrive about half an hour early to register. For details, visit www.mass.gov/dcr/events.htm.

DCR’s First Day Hikes will be in the following regions and locations:

CENTRAL

Hampton Ponds State Park, Westfield 1:00 p.m. Meet in the Main Parking Lot

Moore State Park, Paxton, 12:00 p.m. Meet in the Parking Lot

Purgatory Chasm State Reservation, Sutton, 1:00 p.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

Wachusett Mountain State Reservation, Princeton, 12:00 p.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

GREATER BOSTON

Breakheart Reservation, Saugus, 12:00 p.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Timothy P. Murray
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Ian A. Bowles, Secretary, Executive
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

Blue Hills State Reservation, Milton, 1:00 p.m. Meet in the Houghton's Pond Parking Lot and follow signs. Free soup will be served at Noon

Castle Island, South Boston, 12:00 p.m. Meet at Murphy Memorial Rink

Revere Beach Reservation, Revere, 1:00 p.m. Meet at beachside at Eliot Circle

NORTHEAST

Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield, 12:00 p.m. Meet at Headquarters

Walden Pond State Reservation, Concord, 1:00 p.m. Meet at the Thoreau House Replica

SOUTHEAST

Waquoit Bay Estuarine Research Reserve, Falmouth, 1:00 p.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

Ellisville Harbor State Park, Plymouth, 12:00 p.m. Meet in the Parking Lot off Route 3A

Borderland State Park, Easton, 10:00 a.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

WEST

Mount Greylock State Reservation, Lanesboro, 1:00 p.m. Meet at the Visitor Center

Granville State Forest, Granville, 10:00 a.m. Meet at Headquarters

D.A.R. State Forest, Goshen, 11:00 a.m. Meet in the Day Use Area off Route 112 Main Parking Lot

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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.