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DCR HONORS ARTISTS WHO PAINTED “IRON RANGERS” IN STATE PARKS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has scheduled a celebration to honor the 13 artists who donated their time and talent to paint wildlife and landscape scenes on metal contribution containers, known as Iron Rangers, in 17 state parks.

The event is scheduled for Friday, December 11, 2009, at 11 a.m. at DCR’s Elm Bank Reservation in Wellesley.

DCR has installed 170 Iron Rangers at 111 state properties across the Commonwealth. The 42-inch-high, steel containers are designed to accept financial contributions from park users that are then used to fund educational programs and conservation projects in the state parks system through the Conservation Trust.

The Iron Rangers generate a total of about \$20,000 annually. When painted, they attract further attention and patrons contribute more generously. In some cases, donations have more than doubled over the previous year after an Iron Ranger has been painted.

“This program is an important part of DCR’s larger effort to improve park service and enhance the visitors’ experience while promoting partnerships in the parks,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “By facilitating contributions to the Conservation Trust, the Iron Ranger program also highlights DCR’s message of ‘It’s Your Nature.’ We thank all the artists very much for the time and effort and talent that they put into this project.”

The Iron Ranger Painting Program provides an opportunity for artists to display their work in a DCR park while helping to enhance the look of the Iron Rangers, and thus, of the park itself. Although artists are not paid for their work, they are invited to sign the back of the Iron Ranger and leave business cards and brochures with park personnel to distribute upon request. To date, 54 Rangers have been painted during the five years of the Iron Ranger Painting Program.

The Iron Ranger Painting program, now in its fifth year, advances DCR’s priorities of investing in the parks and properties and strengthening partnerships. The artists have given the

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Iron Rangers a fresh new look, which has generated increased interest in and support for the state's parks, beaches, and forests.

The artists being honored, and the DCR park where they painted an Iron Ranger, are:

Milt Brightman of New Bedford, Horseneck Beach State Reservation, Westport;
Erik Bunker of Pembroke, Chestnut Hill Reservation, Brighton and Elm Bank Reservation, Wellesley;
Laura Cenedella of Uxbridge, Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park, Millville;
Howie Green of Boston, Carson Beach and Castle Island, South Boston;
Jennifer Huberdeau of Adams, Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, Lanesborough;
Charlotte Kaplan of Somerville, Pittsfield State Forest, Pittsfield;
Pamela Learned of Danvers, Red Rock Park in Lynn Nahant Reservation, Lynn;
Anita Murray of Wakefield, Breakheart Reservation, Saugus and Middlesex Fells Reservation, Stoneham;
Tova Speter of Cambridge, Hatch Shell on the Esplanade, Boston, and Spectacle Island, Boston Harbor;
Marcella Stasa of Upton, Upton State Forest, Upton;
Anastasia Starcher of Fall River, Fall River Heritage State Park, Fall River;
Ann Sussman of Acton, Leominster State Forest, Princeton;
Karen Young of Hull, Nantasket Beach Reservation, Hull

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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.