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**DCR LAUNCHES THIRD ANNUAL
“GREAT PARK PURSUIT”**

*Outdoor adventure game challenges all ages
to disconnect from cyberspace and reconnect with open space*

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is launching its third annual Great Park Pursuit, a summer-long series of free family adventures in Massachusetts state parks. This year, families will design their own Park Pursuit adventures with activities they choose.

“We envision the Great Park Pursuit as a first step in building the next generation of environmental stewards,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “The Great Park Pursuit gives participants a sampling of what our more than 450,000 acres of state parks offer on a daily basis. Let’s not let television and the Internet replace wonderful, traditional activities like hiking, fishing, and biking.”

During each of the first two years of the Great Park Pursuit, several hundred families participated across the Commonwealth. They hiked to beautiful views, learned to fish, pitched a tent, roasted s’mores, discovered secrets of the past, rode in horse-drawn wagons, and much more.

This year’s program will run July 10 through Sept. 12. DCR parks across the Commonwealth will host Great Park Pursuit activities at various times and locations throughout the summer.

Teams are challenged to participate in six programs in several themed categories by Sept. 12th. Categories include “Into the Woods,” “Go Wild,” “Explore the Night” and more. They will step back in time, discover secrets of the coast, and get to know the night sky.

Teams will collect special program stickers at each participating DCR park and chronicle their adventures on the team card that they download from the DCR website. They can also track their adventures with stories and photos on their personal Great Park Pursuit homepage.

Great Park Pursuit teams can be families, but they can be other groups of adults and children, too. Each team must include at least one person 18 years or older and at least one person under 18.

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The rise in childhood obesity, diabetes, and heart disease is a growing national crisis. The health and well-being of children is critical. Outdoor experiences in early childhood can help children get on the path to a healthy and active lifestyle, and create the next generation of stewards of our parks and natural resources.

The Great Park Pursuit is free, but teams must register to be eligible to win the prizes. For more information, visit www.greatparkpursuit.org.

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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.