



**For immediate release  
December 14, 2010**

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617-626-1453**

**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES  
START OF THE WINTER RECREATION SEASON  
WITH “FIRST DAY” HIKES IN 14 PARKS**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will sponsor free “First Day” family hikes in 14 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 include the tough and sturdy chickadees, state bird of Massachusetts, and wild turkeys, the state game bird. Watch for bald eagles near open water bodies, and keep an eye out for deer sightings, squirrels (of course!), and if you’re lucky, a red fox or fisher.

If there’s snow on the ground, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Pocket Guide to Animal Tracks can help identify which animals may have passed by:

[http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/wildlife/publications/tracks\\_guide.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/wildlife/publications/tracks_guide.pdf)

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. Binoculars always come in handy, and do 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 will last about two hours. Participants are urged to arrive half an hour early to register. For details, visit [www.mass.gov/dcr/events.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/events.htm).

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

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600  
Boston MA 02114-2119  
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax  
[www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr)



Deval L. Patrick  
Governor

Timothy P. Murray  
Lt. Governor

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

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

## **GREATER BOSTON**

### **Breakheart Reservation, Saugus**

Noon

Meet at the Visitors Center. Enjoy free clam chowder, coffee and hot cocoa.

### **Blue Hills State Reservation, Milton**

1 p.m.

Meet in the Houghton's Pond Parking Lot and follow signs. Free soup will be served at noon.

### **Neponset Greenway, Dorchester**

Noon

Meet at 475 Neponset Avenue (behind Pope John Paul II Park). Parking is available at the main and rear parking lots at the park.

## **NORTHEAST**

### **Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield**

10 a.m.

Meet at the park headquarters.

### **Walden Pond State Reservation, Concord**

1 p.m.

Meet at the Thoreau House Replica

Also, from noon-2 p.m., join historian Richard Smith at the Thoreau House Replica, where he will answer questions and talk about Henry David Thoreau's life at Walden Pond.

## **SOUTHEAST**

### **Waquoit Bay Estuarine Research Reserve, Falmouth**

1 p.m.

Meet at the Visitors Center

### **Ellisville Harbor State Park, Plymouth**

1 p.m.

Meet in the Parking Lot off Route 3A

### **Borderland State Park, Easton**

1 p.m.

Meet at the Visitors Center

## **CENTRAL**

**Purgatory Chasm State Reservation, Sutton**

1 p.m.

Meet at the Visitors Center. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m.

**Wendell State Forest, Wendell**

11 a.m.

Meet at the warming room in the park headquarters  
Enjoy a one-mile hike and the outdoor skating rink.

**Holyoke Heritage State Park, Holyoke**

1 p.m.

Meet in the Visitors Center lobby

**WEST**

**Mount Greylock State Reservation, Lanesboro**

1 p.m. Meet at the Visitors Center

**Granville State Forest, Granville**

10:30 a.m.

Meet at Headquarters

**D.A.R. State Forest, Goshen**

10 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](http://www.mass.gov/dcr). Contact us at [mass.parks@state.ma.us](mailto:mass.parks@state.ma.us).*