



**For Immediate Release
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WHAT'S NEW IN THE STATE PARKS FOR SUMMER 2007

The summer recreation season is just around the corner, and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has exciting recreation opportunities available throughout the Commonwealth's 450,000 acres of state and urban parks and watershed lands.

On May 19, DCR launched an exciting new outdoor adventure game, *The Great Park Pursuit*. The game will run for six weeks, every Saturday through June 23, and will be held at a different state park each week. Teams earn points by participating in each event, and teams that participate in five out of the six weeks will be eligible to win grand prizes, such as camping and kayaking gear, donated by Eastern Mountain Sports. *The Great Park Pursuit* is part of the national *No Child Left Inside* campaign, which encourages people, particularly families with children, to spend less time on sedentary pursuits like video games and television, and more time actively enjoying the great outdoors. For more information, see www.greatparkpursuit.org.

In late June, DCR will complete the Cape Cod Rail Trail Rehabilitation Project, and the full trail will be reopened to the public. The trail has been widened, repaved, and made safer for users, among other improvements. In addition to rail trails like the Cape Cod Rail Trail, DCR has many trails and paths for a wide range of activities, including hiking, walking, mountain biking, horseback riding and more. A full list of DCR trails can be found at www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/trails.htm.

DCR will offer many interpretive programs and special events at its parks throughout the summer. A list can be viewed online at www.mass.gov/dcr/events.htm.

DCR's groundbreaking, nationally renowned Universal Access Program (UAP) will be offering two new accessible boating programs: sailing at Community Boating on the Esplanade in Boston and kayaking at Spot Pond in the Middlesex Fells in Stoneham. An Accessible Recreation Fair will also be held at Artesani Park in Boston on June 2. For more information about UAP, including a full list of summer adaptive recreation opportunities, see www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/index.htm.

All DCR campgrounds (with the exception of the Boston Harbor Islands) have opened for the season, including October Mountain State Forest in Lee which now offers yurt camping (yurts, canvas sided cabin-like structures that can accommodate 4 to 6 people, are also available at

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Nickerson State Park, Otter River State Forest and Shawme-Crowell State Forest). Due to construction on its historic parkway, Mount Greylock State Reservation will only offer hike-in camping this season. More information on DCR campgrounds can be found at www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/camping.htm; for reservations, call 877-I-CAMP-MA or visit www.reserveamerica.com.

For regular visitors, DCR offers an Annual ParksPass, which entitles the bearer to free parking at over 50 facilities in the Massachusetts state parks system that charge a day-use parking fee. The pass is \$35 for Massachusetts residents and \$45 for non-residents. Many town libraries throughout the Commonwealth now have a ParksPass that patrons can check out like a book, as part of the Use Nature As Your Library program. Senior citizens are also entitled to a free ParksPass with proof of age and Massachusetts residency. For more information, see www.mass.gov/dcr/parkspass.htm or call 617-626-1250.

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