



**Acting Commissioner Jim Montgomery Talking Points  
Stewardship Council | Saturday, November 9, 2019  
DCR Water Supply Protection HQ | 180 Beaman Street, West Boylston, MA 02119**

## **Welcome**

- Good morning and welcome to DCR's Water Supply Protection Headquarters, a place where the dedicated and talented DCR staff do important work for the Commonwealth.
- I would like to formally introduce myself; my name is Jim Montgomery and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.
- I joined DCR in 2016 as Director of Administration & Finance. Prior to that time, I was Director of Emergency Medical Services for the City of Boston (Boston EMS).
- I was elected Mayor of my hometown of Taylorville, Illinois and served from 1997 to 2005.
- I came to Boston to attend the Harvard Kennedy School and earned a Master in Public Administration (MPA).
- My wife Elizabeth and I have four adult children and we live in Roslindale.

## **Welcome to Friends Groups**

- We are all here today because we believe a life outdoors is a life well lived and we care deeply about our Commonwealth's park system.
- Parklands provide additional benefits to communities and regions, such as:
  - Increasing recreational opportunities to incorporate a healthy, active lifestyle;
  - Strengthening regional and community bonds;
  - Increasing resident property values;
  - Attracting additional tourists;
  - Providing alternative modes of transportation; and,

- Supporting small businesses, while also increasing access to the natural world.
- Through the efforts of our Friends groups, the residents and visitors of Massachusetts have the opportunity to experience a first class state-parks system.
- Friends groups share in the stewardship of our parklands and work collaboratively with us here at DCR to achieve shared goals.
- DCR is grateful for the strong partnership we have with each-and-every group here today.
- After all, if you want to go far, go together.
- As your Acting Commissioner, I want to welcome our Friends groups here today and say thank you for your continued support.

### **Public Meetings**

- With increased interest in alternative modes of transportation, it is important that the DCR continue to assess opportunities to build neighborhood connections while restoring historical landscapes.
- With that in mind, on Monday, October 21, the DCR hosted a public meeting to provide designs for the rehabilitation of Lowell Memorial Park in Cambridge.
  - The designs, at 30% completion, proposed improved sidewalks and pathways, new landscaping and native plantings, and the restoration of historic elements of the park.
  - The agency will continue working with the design firm, the City of Cambridge, and stakeholders to review public comments and address next steps.
- If you're interested in receiving information regarding these public meetings, please reach out to my office, and we can send you the materials and/or the presentations.

### **Opening of Barbara Colby Playground**

- Yesterday, DCR completed the reconstruction of the Barbara Colby Playground at Tenean Beach in the City of Boston.
- The \$420,000 project relocated the playground to higher ground as the old facility was prone to flooding.
- The new, relocated playground features new surfacing, and durable play equipment for 2- to 5- and 5- to 12-year olds.

- Additionally, the playground has new site amenities such as benches, pathways, landscaping, and two new fully accessible parking spaces.
- DCR and the Baker-Polito Administration are pleased to continue to support communities by making significant improvements to playgrounds.

### **Veterans Day Free Parking**

- In mere days, the Nation will be celebrating Veterans Day.
- In honor of those who have served and continue to serve our country, parking fees will once again be waved for all park visitors.
- Additionally, during the upcoming holiday, interpretive programming will be offered at some state parks.
- The Commonwealth has a long and storied military history.
- I encourage residents and families to get outside and visit one of our many state parks, where you'll find important cultural sites that bring our shared military history to life.

### **Go Green on Black Friday**

- I am pleased to say DCR's annual, "Go Green on Black Friday" campaign is fast approaching. All parklands will be open for the holiday and many state parks will host guided hikes.
- Details of Go Green hikes will be available in the coming weeks as the holiday approaches.
- The Baker-Polito administration is proud to offer new and creative ways for residents to experience the outdoors.
- "Go Green" hikes are a wonderful way for visitors to enjoy a hike after Thanksgiving traditions as an alternative to joining the Black Friday crowds.

### **Blue Hills Deer Hunt**

- The DCR continues to consider best practices for agency management plans in many areas.
- In consultation with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, DCR announced the 2019 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan.

- DCR and MassWildlife are implementing a controlled hunting plan in 2019 that enhances the archery hunt while reducing the number of days and acres included in the shotgun hunt.
- Similar to last year, the 2019 plan features two phases of hunting in the reservation, including permitted archery hunting in designated areas of the reservation during the month of November and a two-day shotgun hunt in early December.
- In addition, while 1,616 acres have been removed from the shotgun hunt, this area has been added to the archery hunt.
- All areas included in this year's hunts have already been opened to either shotgun or archery hunting in prior years.
- The archery hunt is currently ongoing until November 27, 2019 while the shotgun hunt is scheduled on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, and Thursday, December 5, 2019.
- As you may know, under legislative mandate, DCR is required to implement a management plan where deer overpopulation is negatively impacting forests, water resources, or plant growth on department owned land.

### **Snow and Ice Prep**

- Lastly, I would like to mention the continued preparations DCR is conducting ahead of this winter weather season.
- The DCR snow and ice fleet will be ready for the 2019/2020 storms! Each asset receives a 90 point inspection and many see preventative maintenance actions.
- Salt sheds will continue to receive shipments and additional salt orders and deliveries are occurring over the next few weeks.
- DCR is working with all of our state and local partners to best serve each region of the commonwealth through this month.

### **Closing**

- It has been a pleasure speaking to you and thank you for coming.
- I also want to say thank you to our dedicated DCR staff who work tirelessly to make sure visitors have a great experience within our state parks.
- Thank you for joining me on this brisk Saturday ahead of Veterans Day!