NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Department of Environmental Conservation

For Release: Friday, June 26, 2020

DEC Announces Additional Campgrounds Will Open July 1 to Existing Reservations

Many DEC State-Managed Lands Now Open to Overnight Camping

Campers Encouraged to Follow Guidelines to Help Prevent Spread of COVID-19 While Enjoying Beauty of Adirondacks and Catskills

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced that additional DEC campgrounds in the Adirondack and Catskill parks will open on July 1 to existing reservation holders for the 2020 season. To maintain social distancing and reduce the density of facilities and protect visitors, DEC is not accepting additional reservations or walk-in camping for the 2020 season at this time. Only existing reservations for all DEC campgrounds will be honored. Please visit DEC's website for the latest updates on DEC campgrounds and information about each facility.

DEC Campgrounds to Open July 1:

Adirondack Park Campgrounds and Day Use Areas

- Ausable Point Campground & Day Use Area
- Brown Tract Campground & Day Use Area
- Caroga Lake Campground & Day Use Area
- Crown Point Campground & Day Use Area
- Eighth Lake Campground & Day Use Area
- Fish Creek Pond Campground & Day Use Area
- Forked Lake Campground & Day Use Area
- Golden Beach Campground & Day Use Area
- Hearthstone Point Campground & Day Use Area
- Indian Lake Islands Campground & Day Use Area
- Lake Eaton Campground & Day Use Area
- Lincoln Pond Campground & Day Use Area
- Little Sand Point Campground & Day Use Area
- Meacham Lake Campground & Day Use Area
- Moffitt Beach Campground & Day Use Area
- Northampton Beach Campground & Day Use Area
- Paradox Lake Campground & Day Use Area
- Point Comfort Campground & Day Use Area
- Rogers Rock Campground & Day Use Area
- Rollins Pond Campground & Day Use Area

- Sacandaga Campground & Day Use Area
- Saranac Lake Islands Campground & Day Use Area
- Sharp Bridge Campground & Day Use Area
- Taylor Pond Campground & Day Use Area
- Tioga Point Campground & Day Use Area
- Wilmington Notch Campground & Day Use Area

Catskill Park Campgrounds and Day Use Areas

- Beaverkill Campground & Day Use Area
- Devils Tombstone Campground & Day Use Area
- Kenneth L Wilson Campground & Day Use Area
- Mongaup Pond Campground & Day Use Area

Reopening Fire Towers and DEC Lands to Camping

In addition, State Lands that were temporarily closed to camping will allow overnight camping beginning Friday, June 26, with the exception of Evergreen Pond (Ossian State Forest, town of Ossian, Livingston County), Peekamoose Valley in the Catskills, Otter Creek Horse Trail (Independence River State Forest, town of Glenfield, Lewis County), and Sugar Hill Recreation Area (Sugar Hill State Forest, town of Orange, Schuyler County). Day use is allowed at Sugar Hill State Forest, but the fire tower, gate off Tower Hill Road, and facilities (bathroom, water, campsites) at the fire tower area remain closed. Peekamoose Valley will allow camping starting July 1. Otter Creek and Sugar Hill are expected to open to camping later this summer. Please check DEC's website for the most up-to-date information.

DEC has temporarily stopped issuing permits for backcountry camping for groups of 10 or more. As of June 11, DEC resumed issuing permits for groups of fewer than 10 people who would like to stay for more than three nights at one location on state lands. DEC is also temporarily restricting lean-to use to members of a single household at a time.

DEC-controlled fire towers (with the exception of Sugar Hill) are also reopened to visitors.

For more information on open facilities, visit DEC's camping page. For information about campgrounds operated by the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation visit the NYS Parks camping webpage (link leaves DEC website).

Campground Safety

According to the NYForward guidance (link leaves DEC website) for the reopening of New York State, campgrounds must take precautions to ensure campers maintain appropriate social distancing and adhere to proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols, including but not limited to maintaining six feet of distance between campers, unless wearing an acceptable face covering, and excluding persons from the same household who are camping together. Visit Reserve America for details.

Prospect Mountain Veterans Memorial Highway Day Use Area

Prospect Mountain Veterans Memorial Highway will open July 1, and remain open seven days a week between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, DEC is taking the following precautions:

- The shuttle will not operate;
- Picnicking will be prohibited, and the picnic pavilions will not be available to rent;
- Restrooms will remain closed; and
- View scopes at the pull-offs and on the summit have been dismantled.

Visiting New York State's Public Lands during the COVID-19 Response

New York State is encouraging people to engage in responsible recreation during the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis. New York State DEC and State Parks recommendations for getting outside safely incorporate guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health for reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

While enjoying outdoor spaces, please continue to follow the CDC/NYSDOH's guidelines for preventing the spread of colds, flu, and COVID-19:

- Stay home if you are sick, or showing or feeling any COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever, coughing, and/or troubled breathing;
- Practice social distancing. Keep at least six (6) feet of distance between you and others even when outdoors;
- Wear a mask when you cannot maintain social distancing;
- Avoid close contact, such as shaking hands, hugging, and high-fives;
- Wash hands often or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol when soap and water are not available; and
- Avoid unnecessary contact with surfaces that are often touched, such as doorknobs and handrails.

DEC and State Parks also encourage visitors to state parks and state lands, and other parks to:

- Use common sense when visiting the outdoors. Stay local within your region because some amenities like public restrooms and restaurants may not be open.
- Visit in small groups limited to family members and members of your own household. Maintain a distance from others while in places where people tend to congregate, such as parking lots, trailheads, and scenic overlooks.
- Know before you go. Plan ahead and make a list of alternate destinations. Beaches and trailheads will be busy. Many state beaches and parks will quickly reach capacity limits on nice weather days. Check parks.ny.gov, and 511.org for park capacity closure alerts.
- Choose a time to visit when beaches, trails, and parks are likely to be less crowded, such as a weekday or earlier in the day.
- Park responsibly in designated areas only.
- Avoid games and activities that require close contact, such as basketball, football, or soccer.
- Do not share equipment, such as bicycles, helmets, binoculars, balls, or Frisbees.
- If parking lots are full, please do not park along roadsides or other undesignated areas. To protect your safety and that of others, please choose a different area to visit, or return another time or day when parking is available.
- Practice 'Leave No Trace.' Respect parks and state lands and take out whatever you bring in, including disposable gloves, wipes, masks, and toilet paper.
- Stay home if you're sick or if part of a vulnerable population.
- Be patient. Accept that this summer, you may have to adjust how you enjoy the outdoors to help keep yourself and others healthy and safe, even if it means changing your plans to visit a public space.
- New Yorkers over 70 years old or with a compromised immune system should not visit public spaces, including those outdoors. These New Yorkers should remain indoors or spend time in the backyard or other personal outdoor space, pre-screen visitors by taking their temperature, and require visitors to wear masks.
- Visitors to the Adirondack and Catskill Parks are reminded to always follow the Hiker Responsibility Code and avoid busy trailheads. Find trails less traveled and visit when trails may not be as busy during daylight hours. DEC also encourages New Yorkers to be safe and sustainable when recreating outdoors. Learn more about how you can protect natural spaces when exploring outdoors by following the seven principles of Leave No Trace (leaves DEC website). Additional information is available on the DEC website.

DEC Is Hiring Campground Staff

DEC is seeking seasonal campground staff with all levels of experience and skill sets, including supervisors, security, maintenance, and cleaning staff, and booth workers. If interested, please send an email to campinfo@dec.ny.gov.