



January 9, 2015

RE: Walden Pond Open Water Swimming

Dear Friends,

Over the last several months, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has engaged representatives of the open water swimming community, the Walden Pond Advisory Board, public safety officials, and representatives of the boating and fishing community to develop a plan that formally recognizes open water swimming as a recreational activity at Walden Pond. The plan outlines rules and best practices and includes a self-assessment, safety protocol for visitors who choose to swim in unguarded open water at the Pond. The plan also balances the different recreational uses of the Pond.

On Tuesday, October 28, 2014 DCR held a public meeting to review, and solicit input on proposed plans entitled "Draft Rules and Best Practices for Open Water Swimming at Walden Pond" and "Draft Open Water Swimming Self-Assessment". The public was invited to provide additional input to DCR through November 21, 2014 by emailing DCR at DCR.Update@state.ma.us; the comments that were received thereby can be viewed at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings>.

At this juncture, DCR is pleased to announce the adoption of a final plan for open water swimming at Walden Pond, effective immediately. This plan is reflected in the attached Final Rules and Best Practices and Self-Assessment documents, which are also posted on DCR's website at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-north/walden-pond-state-reservation.html>.

Key to the success of this plan will be a robust program of public communication and information for all visitors and recreational users of Walden Pond. DCR will continue to consult with our Walden Pond stakeholders as we develop public communications and outreach strategies and implementation of open water swimming at the Pond. Signage regarding the plan will appear at the Reservation by Memorial Day. We will also continue to monitor all recreational uses of the Pond to assess the need for any future revisions to the plan.

DCR is grateful to the many individuals and group representatives who participated in the development of an open water swimming plan for Walden Pond and we look forward to our continued collaboration to support the various recreational uses of the Pond.

Sincerely,



John P. Murray
Commissioner

