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Bureau of Parks and Lands

March 26, 2020: Select Coastal State Parks Closed Due to Overcrowding

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) today announced that, with the support of Governor Janet Mills, it is taking additional proactive measures to protect the health and safety of Maine people from the threat of COVID-19.

Effective Friday, March 27 at 12:01 am, the following Midcoast and Southern Maine coastal State Parks and beaches are closed until April 8: Reid State Park, Popham Beach State Park, Fort Popham, Fort Baldwin, Kettle Cove State Park, Two Lights State Park, Crescent Beach State Park, Scarborough Beach State Park, Ferry Beach State Park, and Mackworth Island. (Note that the closure could be extended depending on the spread of the potentially deadly virus.) [Read Full Press Release](#)

March 26, 2020 Update

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry know that during these stressful times, everyone wants to get outside and recharge. One challenge we all face right now is how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly during this civil state of emergency. [Get tips for how to safely spend time outside.](#)

March 24, 2020 Update

Visitors can help keep state parks, public lands, and land trust trail systems safe and clean by following these best practices

- Plan a visit to a nearby park or other conservation trails for a short, local visit.
- Avoid crowded parking lots and railheads.
- Obey all park signage and respect park employees.
- Use the bathroom before you visit; bathroom facilities may be limited or closed.
- Bring a disposable bag and carry out all trash.
- Clean up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in the trash.
- Avoid activities that put you at greater risk of injury, as first responders are limited because of the COVID-19 response.

To help avoid exposure to COVID-19 and still enjoy the outdoors:

- Don't hike or recreate in groups – go with those from within your household and adhere to physical distancing (retain a distance of at least 6' apart, per CDC guidelines).
- Carry hand sanitizer and use it often.

- Avoid touching your face, eyes, and nose.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue and promptly dispose of the tissue.

Stay home if you are sick or exhibiting any viral symptoms.

March 20, 2020

Message from Bureau of Parks & Lands Director Andy Cutko

Our State Parks are special places all of the time, and for Maine people needing to get outside during the COVID-19 pandemic, our Parks are meeting an urgent need. Of course, with the ongoing and rapidly changing coronavirus pandemic, we must operate all State Parks with the top concern being the safety and health of our visitors, staff, and volunteers. With the COVID-19 situation being fluid, our State Parks are currently open with curtailed services for day-use only. Everyone in the Bureau of Parks and Lands is focusing on health and safety, and we will continue to update the information below and strive to post adequate signs and other notices in the parks to inform and keep visitors abreast of park management decisions.

Maine State Parks Are Open With Curtailed Services

How might Maine State Park experiences be different because of COVID-19?

With schools and businesses closed and closing, our State Parks are seeing above-average use for this time year. In some cases, especially with good weather, we expect several parks to be at capacity, particularly our coastal parks, including Reid, Popham Beach, Wolfe's Neck, Bradbury Mountain, and Crescent Beach. With increased numbers comes the need to be extra vigilant and follow precautions advised by Maine CDC Director, Dr. Nirav Shah. Dr. Shah's guidance includes frequent washing of hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and hot water, coughing and sneezing into tissues, and promptly disposing of the tissue, and avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth. Perhaps most important is to avoid gatherings of 10 or more people and practicing social distancing of at least six feet, from person to person. For the latest MCDC guidance, visit their [website](#).

Curtailed Services Advisory

- **Maine State Park day-use areas are open to the public**, hours of operation are 9 a.m. to sunset, unless otherwise posted.
- **Park events and programs are canceled** – BPL planning personnel will reconvene in the coming months to assess the opportunity of rescheduling for 2020.
- **Park fees:** Please place the entrance fee in the pay station
- **Playgrounds are closed until further notice**
- **Park access may change without notice**

We want to assure our guests that we are monitoring the situation closely and doing all we can to protect our staff and the public.

Ch. 57: Logging and Forestry Education Grant Program: Draft Rules & Public Hearing

March 26, 2020 Public Hearing Canceled

Reposted for Written Comment Only

The Bureau of Parks and Lands is updating the rules regarding the Logging and Forestry Education Grant program. The purpose of the logging and forestry education grant program is to provide grants to eligible education programs to develop loggers capable of working on the State of Maine's public reserved lands. You may comment in writing by emailing comments to doug.c.reed@maine.gov. Comment deadline for the draft rules is April 24, 2020.

- [Ch. 57 Draft Rules - Revisions Marked \(PDF\)](#)
- [Ch. 57 Draft Rules - Clean Version \(PDF\)](#)

2020 Camping Reservations

Family Camping sites (one family* or group of 6 or fewer people)

- [Online and Call Center Reservations](#)
*A Family = Parents and all their unmarried children.
- [Campground Maps and Photos](#)

Group Camping sites (for 7 or more people, including children)

- [Locations, Reservation Information, and Phone Numbers to call](#); no online reservations taken.

Group Picnic Areas and Shelters

- [Locations, Reservation Information, and Phone Numbers to call](#); no online reservations taken.

Untold Secret: Maine Public Lands

Explore the unbelievably beautiful Maine Public Lands. These are magical places in Maine—and they belong to all of us. [Watch the new 21-minute short film, or in segments, to begin your virtual journey and plan for your visit to Maine Public Lands.](#)

Look to the Stars - Telescopes and Star Gazing at Maine State Parks

In this [Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund](#) supported project, the Bureau of Parks and Lands is partnering with [Cornerstones of Science](#), U-Maine's [Emera Astronomy Center](#) and Maine astronomers and trained naturalists to develop and offer star gazing programs at 12 Maine State Parks for campground guests and park visitors. The grant will be used to purchase twelve telescopes and star kits, two iPads with star apps, and astronomy books, plus hold a night sky training session and practical for park staff and program presenters at the Emera Astronomy Center.

These star gazing programs will connect visitors to Maine's natural heritage during a time when many fear to be outside, the nighttime. And, viewing the stars has the inherent ability to make people think outside themselves, to wonder about their place in the universe. The experience through this project will connect star gazers with the importance of the stars for navigation by humans and animals, and the importance of natural places, such as State parks, in helping preserve starscapes.

Look for these star gazing programs during the summer of Maine's bicentennial, 2020. They will be announced in the bureau newsletter and program calendar.

So Rememeber to *Give When You Play!*

When you choose to play the Maine Lottery, choose the ticket that gives back to Maine's natural heritage through the [Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund](#). Ask for it by name. The current ticket is Big Bucks. Thank you!

Parks & Historic Sites: Days & Hours

Parks may be visited year-round, from 9:00 a.m. to sunset daily unless otherwise posted. [Fees](#) are collected at the booth by staff or through self-service stations.

For current status:

Please [call the park or historic site directly](#).

Park Amenities, such as water, restrooms and buildings, are shut down for the winter season as dictated by weather. Primitive toilets may be available at some locations.

Parking - Most parks and historic sites are not plowed during the winter due to seasonal staffing. A few parks are only plowed when the manager is on duty.

- [Mini Guide \(PDF 112KB\)](#)
- [Park brochures & publications page](#)

ATV Trails Update

[View and subscribe to our list of ATV Trail Notices](#) and check in with local clubs for the most up to date trail condition information.

Drone, Unmanned Aircraft (UAS) Policy

The general use of drones (UAS) is prohibited in Maine State Parks, Historic Sites, or DACF Boat Launches without direct oversight and guidance of an approved law enforcement agency or by the issue of a Special Activity Permit.

- [Drone Unmanned Aircraft Policy \(PDF 19KB\)](#)
- [Previous](#)
- [Next](#)
- [Camping](#)



Upcoming

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- [quid State Historic Site](#)
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Upcoming Public Meetings

- March 20, 2020 - April 26, 2020: [Public Comment: Ch. 57: Logging and Forestry Education Grant Program Public Hearing](#)
- June 19, 2020 : [Forest Legacy Committee Meeting](#)

Credits

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