



COVID-19 Advisory for Volunteering within the Massachusetts State Parks System*

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) works with partners throughout the Commonwealth to protect and enhance the state's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. By working together, we are able to foster a sense of shared stewardship of the state parks system. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the agency has developed guidelines to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

It is critically important that all groups coordinating land stewardship activities adhere to the below guidance for the safety of all participants, agency staff, and visitors of state parks. Recently, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs [issued guidance](#) for Phase 3 of the Baker-Polito Administration's reopening plan, which includes land stewardship activities, such as clean-up events and community service projects. DCR has expanded on these standards to aid organizations as they coordinate these activities.

Pre-event Registration:

- All participants must submit the DCR Volunteer Waiver form to the agency. The form must be downloaded and submitted with an electronic signature via email at least 24 hours before the start of the event.
- Organized land stewardship activities should be planned in advance with proper registration of participants in order to manage capacity. Onsite registration cannot be offered.
- Coordinators of land stewardship activities must ensure the event is consistent with social distancing and group size guidelines. Groups are limited to 12 or fewer individuals, including participants, staff, and instructors. There may be more than one group of 12 people at one time, provided that adequate social distance and group separation of at least 20 feet can be maintained.
- Arrangements with on-site DCR staff for the removal of trash bags and other collected debris must be made prior to the start of any land stewardship activities.

During Event:

- All participants of land stewardship activities should provide or be provided their own face mask or facial covering in order to participate in the program. DCR is not responsible to provide face coverings.
- All equipment, tools, and materials should be disinfected before and after use in accordance with CDC guidelines. Furthermore, participants should not share equipment, tools, or other materials.
- The duration of land stewardship projects should not exceed two hours on any given day.
- Alcohol-based sanitizer must be on-site and available for participants to use.
- Participants must adhere to social distancing guidelines of at least six feet between individuals.
- Food and drinks should be brought from participants' homes and not shared with individuals outside of one's household.

Furthermore, the agency reserves the right to end any land stewardship activities on DCR property early if participants and organizers are not adhering to the above guidelines or for any other reason.

* Attachment to Volunteer in the Parks Release Form – Revised 7/27/20