Gouveia, Susan

From: Lashway, Lisa
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2014 3:00 PM
To: Canning, Sean; Gouveia, Susan
Subject: FW: NJDEP Press Release - First Day Hikes
Attachments: First Day Hikes-- P143.pdf

Lisa Lashway
Mt. Olive Twp. Clerk
973-691-0900 Ext. 7291
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PO Box 450
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

From: Cindy Randazzo [mailto:Cindy.Randazzo@dep.nj.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2014 2:56 PM
To: Cindy Randazzo
Subject: NJDEP Press Release - First Day Hikes

Dear Municipal Clerk:

Please see that attached NJDEP Press Release regarding First Day Hikes in State Parks and Natural Areas.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Cindy W. Randazzo
Director
Office of Local Government Assistance
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
401 E. State Street
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402
Office: 609-633-7700

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NEWS

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
P. O. Box 402, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402
www.state.nj.us/dep
Bob Martin, Commissioner

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Dec. 22, 2014

CONTACT: Larry Ragonese (609-292-2994)
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Bob Considine (609-292-2994)

CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION INVITES STATE RESIDENTS TO JOIN IN "FIRST DAY HIKES" AND OTHER FREE EVENTS AT STATE PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS ACROSS NEW JERSEY

(14/P143) TRENTON – New Jersey residents can kick off the New Year with some fun, healthy and free outdoor activities to be offered statewide on Jan. 1 by the State Park Service as part of the annual America's State Parks First Day Hikes initiative.

New Jersey Park Service staff and volunteers will conduct 19 free guided hikes, walks, interpretive tours, plus two bike rides and even a horseback ride at locations in 12 counties across the state, from Cape May to Warren and Sussex counties, on New Year's Day.

The state version of this national initiative offers individuals and families an opportunity to begin the New Year by connecting with the outdoors and learning about New Jersey's natural treasures. First Day events allow residents to get outside, exercise, enjoy nature, learn some local history, and welcome the New Year in a healthy manner with family and friends.

"These First Day activities offer a great way to start the New Year by reconnecting with nature and exploring the wide variety of activities and amenities that all of our state parks and natural areas offer," said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin. "Our experienced park staff and volunteers welcome this chance to share a great outdoor experience, to show off our great state park system, and to encourage residents to come back to our parks during all seasons of the year."

"We are thrilled to offer a wonderful range of First Day hikes and events as part of this national effort to awaken people to the health benefits of being outdoors,'' said Mark Texel, Director of the State Park Service. "We invite you to experience the quiet beauty of our parks and historic sites in winter while benefiting from the company of a knowledgeable state park guide or volunteer."

New Jersey's state parks, forests and recreation areas boast many beautiful settings for year-round outdoor recreation. Each First Day event will offer an opportunity to explore the natural and cultural treasures with nature-oriented treks, history-themed interpretive tours, and guided horseback and mountain biking at a state park close to home. Park staff and volunteers will lead the hikes, which will range from a mile-long, accessible walks to an all-day 15-mile hike.

Events will be held at locations in Atlantic, Burlington, Cape May, Essex, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren counties. A list of all First Day events is below. All events are free, but some require pre-registration. Also, some of these events are weather dependent. Full details for each hike can be found at www.njparksandforests.org.

- **Bass River State Forest, Forest Sampler**; 10 a.m., (609) 296-1114, Ocean County, Bass River Township, Burlington County
- **Belleplain State Forest, 1st Day East Creek Trail Hike,** 10 a.m., (609) 861-2404, Cape May County, Woodbine
- **Belleplain State Forest, 1st Day Mountain Bike Ride,** 11 a.m., (609) 861-2404
- **Cheesequake State Park, New Year Hike,** 1 p.m., (732) 566-3208, Middlesex County, Old Bridge Township.
- **D&R Canal State Park at Mapleton Preserve, First Day Hike,** 11 a.m., (609) 683-0483, Middlesex County, South Brunswick Township.
- **Franklin Parker Preserve, New Year's Grand Slam Ramble,** 10 a.m., (609) 412-3394, Burlington County, Woodland Township.
- **Grover Cleveland Birthplace, History Hike**, 11 a.m., (908) 236-2043 or (908) 619-6651 Essex County, Caldwell.
- **Kittatinny Valley State Park, Paulinskill Valley Rail Trail 30th Annual New Year's Day Hike** (at Footbridge Park), 10 a.m., pbk123@aol.com, Warren County, Blairstown Twp.
- **Kittatinny Valley State Park, Paulinskill Valley Rail Trail, 5th Annual Horseback Ride** (at Halsey Farm), 10 a.m., (973) 600-5997 or gldg@embarqmail.com, Sussex County, Newton
- **Monmouth Battlefield State Park, Battlefield Interpretive Tour,** 11 a.m. (609) 448-6355, Monmouth County, Manalapan Township.
- **Monmouth Battlefield State Park, First Day Amble,** 12 p.m., (732) 462-9616
- Monmouth Battlefield State Park, First-Foot First Day Hike, 1 p.m., (732) 462-9616
- **Rancocas State Park, First Day Hikes at Rancocas,** 11 a.m Burlington County, Hainesport Township section; and 1 p.m. Westampton Township section. (609) 265-5858
- **Ringwood State Park, First Day Hike,** 1 p.m., (973) 962-7031, Passaic County, Ringwood Borough.
- **Round Valley Recreation Area, New Year's Hike**, 10 a.m., (908) 236-6355, Hunterdon County, Lebanon Township.
- **Washington Crossing State Park, First Day Hike: From Ferry to Ferry**, 10 a.m., (609) 737-2515, Mercer County, Hopewell Township.
- **Waterloo Village, Waterloo – A Place of New Beginnings,** 1 p.m., (609) 203-4140, Sussex County, Byram Township.
- **Wharton State Forest, Batsto Village Walk, 10:30 a.m.,** (609) 704-1910, Atlantic County, Hammonton
- **Wharton State Forest, First Day Bike Ride, 10:30 a.m.,** (609) 567-4559
- **Wharton State Forest (Atsion), New Year's Day Hike,** 10 a.m., http://meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey-Hiking , (609)351-2789, or (856) 767-8064, Burlington County, Shamong Twp.
- **Warren (County) Highlands Trail, New Year's Hike: From Phillipsburg to Merrill Creek Reservoir in Harmony Township, Warren County;** 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., (908) 343-8374.

AND ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 3:

- **Princeton Battlefield State Park, Battle of Princeton Minute by Minute Walk**, 7 a.m., (609) 921-0074, Mercer County, Princeton Township.

Additional details about registration, hike locations, difficulty and length, terrain and tips regarding proper clothing can be found at http://www.njparksandforests.org/parks/first_day_hikes.html

First Day Hikes originated more than 20 years ago at the Blue Hills Reservation, a state park in Milton, Massachusetts. The program was launched to promote both healthy lifestyles throughout the year and year-round recreation at state parks. It was introduced as a national initiative in 2012.

"Last year, we hosted nearly 28,000 people who hiked 68,811 miles in our state parks across the country as part of America's State Parks First Day Hikes," said Priscilla Geigis, President of the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD). "Think of it as the start of a new and healthy lifestyle, for the whole family. Whether you're staying close to home or traveling, join us at one of America's State Parks on New Year's Day."

New Jersey's state parks have participated from the beginning of the First Day Hikes nationwide program, growing from 7 hikes in 2012, to 22 events across the state for Jan. 1, 2015.

For more information about New Jersey State Parks and Forests, please visit: http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/. The Official Facebook page for New Jersey State Parks, Forests and Historic Sites can be found at: https://www.facebook.com/NewJerseyStateParks

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