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Gouveia, Susan

From: Masser, Michelle
Sent: Tuesday, October 06, 2015 11:48 AM
To: Canning, Sean; Nelson, Frank
Cc: Gouveia, Susan
Subject: FW: NJDEP Press Release - Ramapo Mountain Closure
Attachments: Ramapo Mountain Closure -- P86.pdf

CORRESPONDENCE

Michelle Masser
Township Clerk

PO Box 450
204 Flanders Drakestown Road
Budd Lake, NJ 07828
clerk@mtolivetwp.org

From: Rogers, Joseph [mailto:Joseph.Rogers@dep.nj.gov] **On Behalf Of** Randazzo, Cindy
Sent: Tuesday, October 06, 2015 11:44 AM
To: Randazzo, Cindy <Cindy.Randazzo@dep.nj.gov>
Subject: NJDEP Press Release - Ramapo Mountain Closure

Dear Municipal Clerk:

Please see the attached NJDEP Press Release concerning the closure of Ramapo Mountain State Forest due to Black Bear Activity.

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
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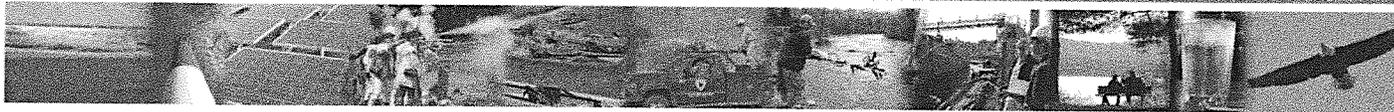
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DEP NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Crisis Hotline, Governor
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor
Bob Martin, Commissioner



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2015

Contact: Lawrence Hajna (609) 984-1795
Bob Considine (609) 292-2994
Caryn Shinske (609) 984-1795

RAMAPO MOUNTAIN STATE FOREST REMAINS CLOSED FOLLOWING REPORTS OF BLACK BEAR ENCOUNTERS *BLACK BEAR SUSPECTED IN ENCOUNTERS TRAPPED, BUT FOREST WILL REMAIN CLOSED AS A PRECAUTION*

(15/P86) TRENTON – All access points to Ramapo Mountain State Forest will remain closed through at least the end of the week as a precaution resulting from black bear activity in the area, most recently involving five people followed closely by a bear in two separate encounters over the weekend.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife on Monday captured and euthanized a bear that biologists believe was the bear involved in the encounters but, out of an abundance of caution, numerous traps will remain in place and will be monitored by Division of Fish and Wildlife personnel.

On Saturday, DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife State Conservation Officers and State Park Service were notified of two different bear-human encounters at Ramapo. Three female hikers reported being pursued by a bear. They came upon a male hiker and his dog. The four escaped unharmed.

The second encounter, which occurred later in the day, involved a bear following another male hiker on the park's Yellow Trail. According to the hiker, the bear repeatedly approached and swatted at him. The hiker fought back with pepper spray. The bear continued to pursue the hiker, before relenting near a pedestrian bridge that crosses Route 287. The hiker was uninjured and no contact was made by the bear.

Two weeks earlier, on Saturday Sept. 19, a pair of hikers was closely followed by a potentially aggressive black bear at the forest, a 21-year-old woman and a 7-year-old boy. A third park visitor also came within close proximity of the same bear, which stopped about 15 feet from the man and his dog. The bear paced for several minutes before backing away, according to the visitor.

Division of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers, Wildlife Control Officers and State Park Police canvassed the park all day Sunday, when the park was first closed. Traps were set at that time and a portion of the forest was closed to hiking. Division personnel have also been keeping area police apprised of developments.

In most cases, encounters between people and bears end without incident. However, black bears are wild animals and the Division of Fish and Wildlife reminds the public that it is very important for people who live in or visit New Jersey's bear country to be alert to their presence, especially when hiking.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife offers the following tips when hiking in bear country:

- Never feed or approach a bear.
- Make your presence on the trail known by speaking loudly, singing, clapping your hands, or making other noises.
- Remain calm if you encounter a bear. **DO NOT RUN FROM IT.** Do not make direct eye contact with the bear, as this may be perceived as a challenge. **SLOWLY BACK AWAY.**
- Make sure the bear has an escape route.
- If the bear continues to follow you or is otherwise undeterred, make loud noises by yelling, blow a whistle, bang pots and pans, or use an air horn, if available. Make yourself look as big as possible by waving your arms. If you are with someone else, stand close together with your arms raised above your head.
- If a bear stands on its hind legs or moves closer, it may be trying to get a better view or detect scents in the air. It is usually not a threatening behavior.
- The bear may utter a series of huffs, make popping jaw sounds by snapping its jaws and swat the ground. These are warning signs that you are too close. Slowly back away, avoid direct eye contact and do not run.
- Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" when cornered, threatened or attempting to steal food. Stand your ground, avoid direct eye contact, then slowly back away and do not run.
- Black bear attacks are extremely rare. However, if one does attack, fight back. Do not "play dead."
- **If you see a bear, in particular one that does not show much fear, immediately contact local police or the Department of Environmental Protection's hotline at (877) 927-6337, or (877) WARN-DEP.**

For more information on black bear behavior, biology and tips, visit:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/bearfacts.htm>

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