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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Enjoy Free Summer Fun on the Neponset

Boston Natural Areas Network presents 31 free events throughout the summer

BOSTON, MA – June 27, 2011 – When you are wondering what to do this summer, think about a refreshing canoe trip down the Neponset River, or pulling up your folding chair to watch an outdoor movie. How about a morning of music, live animals or storytelling with the kids, or a exploring the newest sections of the Neponset River Greenway with family and friends? These events and more are all free and part of the annual, summer-long Neponset River Greenway Festival.

Hosted by Boston Natural Areas Network and the MA Department of Conservation & Recreation for the 17th year, the Festival offers 31 free events with new activities and locations added to perennial favorites like canoe trips, outdoor movies, children's performances, bike rides, art workshops and more.

The *Neponset River Greenway Festival* events will be held on both weekend and weekday dates at parks in Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park and Milton. All events are free and open to the public.

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The complete calendar of festival events includes:

Family Movie Series

Sponsored by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Watch a movie under the stars Tuesday and Thursday nights at two parks on the Neponset. Bring a blanket, chair and popcorn for a family movie that begins at sunset.
Visit www.bostonnatural.org to find out what's playing.

Tuesday Nights at Sunset
July 5, 12, 19, 26 & Aug 2, 9
Martini Shell, Truman Pkwy, Hyde Park

Thursday Nights at Sunset
August 4, 11, 18, 25
Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Blvd, Dorchester

Summer Fun on the Neponset

Sponsored by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Saturday, July 16, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Blvd., Dorchester
Join the Park Rangers for fun activities for all ages – including arts and crafts, kite flying, disc golf, canoeing, K-9 demonstrations and much more!

Especially for Children Series - Ryan Playground, River Street, Mattapan

Every Thursday morning in July enjoy this series of kid-friendly performances – from musicians to live animals to storytelling – and stay a little longer for a dip in the park's wading pool! Check www.bostonnatural.org or call 617-542-7696 for performance schedule.

Thursday, July 7 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Thursday, July 14 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Thursday, July 21 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Thursday, July 28 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

August Active Thursdays

Set aside an hour every Thursday in August for an activity to keep you healthy at Pope John Paul II Park. Meet at playground sunshelter near the Gallivan Blvd. entrance.

Thursday, August 4 – 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Walk the Greenway to Tenean Beach. This round trip walk will get you back to the park in time to catch the movie at sunset if you like.

Thursday, August 11 – 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Walk the Greenway to Central Ave. On this round trip walk we'll go by new habitat plantings at the park, and get you back in time for the sunset movie.

Thursday, August 18 – 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. PJP Power Loop with Disc Golf. Put your walking shoes on for a cruise around the park and get your throwing arm ready to try putting frisbees at a tee.

Thursday, August 25 – 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Sunset Yoga & Stretch. Doing beginner-friendly yoga and stretching outside along the river will be a nice way to end the day.

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Canoe Trips Co-sponsored by MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Neponset River by Boat and Train – 7 Brush Hill Road launch, Milton near Mattapan Square

Sunday, July 10 – 1:00 p.m. We'll paddle downstream and then hop the trolley back to discover the rich history of the area. Paddling experience required. **Registration required.**

Estuary Paddle – Neponset Park, Hilltop Street, Dorchester

Saturday, July 30 – 10:00 a.m. Discover the ecologically important Neponset Estuary as we paddle upstream and explore its inlets. Paddling experience required. **Registration required.**

Lower Mills Paddle – Milton Landing, Wharf Street, Milton

Sunday, August 14 – 11:00 a.m. We'll paddle up to the falls at the old Baker Chocolate mills and out into the salt marshes. Paddling experience required. **Registration required.**

Music & Arts at Martini Shell

Martini Shell Park, Truman Parkway, Hyde Park Sponsored by MA DCR

Air Force Band of Liberty Concert

Sunday, July 31 – 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Enjoy world class musical entertainment in the great outdoors. The Air Force Liberty Band fosters America's rich national heritage by blending music and patriotism. Let your spirit soar during this free concert for all!

Summer Arts Fest

Saturday, August 6 – 12:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m. Join the DCR rangers and the Menino Arts Center in Hyde Park for this fun interactive arts festival for all ages. Chalk art, stamp printing, tattoo you, group mural, and bead making. Fun for the whole family.

Hyde Park Jazz Fest

Saturday, September 3 – 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Back by popular demand! Celebrate Labor Day weekend with a jazz festival featuring local award winning artists. Bring a blanket and a picnic basket to enjoy this relaxing end of summer serenade.

Special Programs

Greenway Geology Walk

Wednesday, July 13, 6:00 p.m. Meet at Milton T stop downstairs. Ever wondered about the rocks along the trail and riverbanks? Les Tyralla, registered geologist, will be our guide on this easy walk that passes a number of interesting outcrops in Lower Mills. **Registration required.**

Mattapan Greenway Connections Walk

Thursday, July 21, 6:00 p.m. Meet at Mattapan Square T Station. We'll do a 5K walk from Mattapan Square along River Street and the Greenway trail to Dorchester, learning about efforts to complete the trail in this area. Co-sponsored by Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition.

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Neponset Watercolor Workshop

Monday, July 25, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Baker Square River Trail, behind 1243 Adams Street, Dorchester
Cathy Garnett of MA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation will instruct the group in basic watercolor technique, using the surrounding trees, mill buildings and river as our subjects. Supplies provided, bring your own folding chair. **Registration required.**

Nature Sketching Workshop

Wednesday, August 10, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. City Natives, 30 Edgewater Drive, Mattapan. Nature artist Anne Schmalz will introduce participants to sketching the natural world, flowers and vegetables at this garden and nursery along the river. Supplies provided, bring your own folding chair. **Registration required.**

Star Party on the River

Friday, August 19, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m., Hutchinson Field, Adams Street, Milton (Rain/Cloud Date: Saturday, August 20)

Join astronomy enthusiasts from the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston for a closer look at the night sky including the Summer Triangle, Saturn, double stars and more. Bring a blanket or chair, bug spray and a flashlight. All ages welcome. Hutchinson Field is a property of The Trustees of Reservations.

Sponsors: Boston Natural Areas Network, Neponset River Greenway Council, MA Department of Conservation & Recreation, MA Cultural Council, Merck Family Fund, The Boston Foundation, The First Parish Church in Lincoln

All Programs are FREE For more information or to register for a program contact: Boston Natural Areas Network at 617-542-7696 or info@bostonnatural.org For more events visit www.bostonnatural.org

Boston Natural Areas Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together local residents, partner organizations, public officials and foundations to preserve, expand, and enhance urban open space, including community gardens, greenways, and urban wilds. For more information about the organization, becoming a member or the calendar of events, visit www.bostonnatural.org or call 617-542-7696.

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EDITORS:

The following links bring you to Neponset River Greenway Festival photos you can download to accompany this press release.

Outdoor Movie: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/g5263c1s0g.jpg>

Canoeing: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/dc7ymbyo84.jpg>

Watercolor: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/ucno9sm4g0.jpg>

Nature Walk: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/j0pjchegco.jpg>