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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Enjoy Free Summer Fun on the Neponset

Boston Natural Areas Network presents 33 free events throughout the summer

BOSTON, MA – June 30, 2010 – 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 African drumming and dance 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 16th year, the Festival offers 33 free events with new activities and locations added to perennial favorites like canoe trips, outdoor movies, children's performances, bike rides, photography workshop 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. *The complete calendar of festival events includes:*

Martini Shell Inaugural Event this Summer - a fun family event with performances and activities for all ages! The 50-year-old band shell has been completely renovated. New park features including a river overlook will be unveiled. Stay tuned for date and details!

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Greenway Triple Play – Discover the Neponset Greenway by Bike, Canoe or on Foot!

Join Neponset Greenway Council members, BNAN and MA DCR on these special guided programs to learn about the history of the Greenway effort, the newly created path and the vision to complete the trail. Join us for one or all three programs!

Bike the New Greenway: Martini Shell to Mattapan Square *Opening this Summer!*

Wednesday, July 14 – 6:00 p.m. Meet at Martini Shell, Truman Parkway, Hyde Park
We'll have two groups to ride this new section, including a family-friendly group. Bikes & helmets available to borrow! Registration required.

Canoe the Future Greenway: Mattapan Square to Central Ave. *Currently in planning!*

Saturday, July 24, 10:00 a.m. Meeting location will be determined pending river levels in July
Get a view from the river of the mile long trail gap in the trail between Mattapan Square and Milton.
Paddling experience and registration required.

Walk the Dorchester/Milton Path: Central Ave. to Pope John Paul II Park

Wednesday, August 11 – 5:30 p.m. Meet at Central Ave. and River St., Lower Mills, Dorchester.
On this easy walk, learn the story behind the beautiful murals and amazing transformation of this parkland from a railway corridor, landfill, drive-in theater and more. Registration required.

Family Movie Series

Sponsored by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Watch a movie under the stars every Tuesday and Thursday night 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 6 – August 24

Martini Shell, Truman Pkwy, Hyde Park

Thursday Nights at Sunset

July 8 – August 26

Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Blvd, Dorchester

Ranger Recreation Fun!

Kids! Join a DCR ranger one hour before movies every other week to enjoy nature exploration, crafts and other activities.

Martini Shell - July 6, 20 & August 3, 17

Pope John Paul II Park - July 8, 22 & August 5, 19

**Especially for Children Series - Ryan Playground, River Street, Mattapan
Co-sponsored by the Mattapan Community Development Corporation**

Thursday, July 8 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Come meet the exotic critters of **Rainforest Reptile Shows**. Enjoy this fun opportunity to learn and get up close and personal with alligators and more!

Thursday, July 15 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. **Cornell “Sugarfoot” Coley** will entertain, teaching hand-drum rhythms and bursts of high energy African, Latin/Caribbean and Brazilian dance.

Thursday, July 22 – 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. **Bonaparte the Magician** will dazzle and delight audiences of all ages with his unique blend of amazing magic, hysterical comedy and much more!

Thursday, July 29– 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Storyteller **Valerie Stephens** offers up interactive tales, songs and games from West Africa, the Americas and Caribbean with lessons and fun for all to enjoy.

Canoe Trips

Co-sponsored by MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Basics for Beginners - Mother Brook Mill Pond – Knight Street, Hyde Park

Sunday, June 27 – 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. & 12:00 p.m. Curious about canoeing? The Mother Brook Mill Pond is a perfect spot to learn basic paddling skills. Beginners only please! **Registration required.**

Morning Estuary Paddle – Neponset Landing, Hilltop Street, Dorchester

Saturday, July 10 – 10:00 a.m. Enjoy a canoe trip upstream into the estuary, highlighting local history along the way. Paddling experience required. **Registration required.**

Paul’s Bridge Paddle - Brush Hill Road and Neponset Valley Parkway, Milton/Hyde Park

Sunday, August 1 – 1:00 p.m. We’ll launch from this historic bridge and enjoy the lush vegetation on this section of the river. Paddling experience required. **Registration required.**

Evening Lower Mills Paddle – Milton Landing, Wharf Street, Milton

Friday, August 6 – 5:30 p.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.**

More Basics for Beginners - Mother Brook Mill Pond – Knight Street, Hyde Park

Sunday, August 15 – 1:00 p.m. & 2:00 p.m. If you missed the beginners program at the start of the summer, here’s another chance to learn. We’ll practice basic paddling skills around the Mill Pond. Beginners only please! **Registration required.**

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Arts & Nature Workshops

Neponset Watercolor

Wednesday, July 28 – 5:30 p.m. Martini Shell, Truman Parkway, Hyde Park
Cathy Garnett of MA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation will instruct the group in basic watercolor technique, using the surrounding trees and river as our subjects. Supplies provided, bring your own folding chair. **Registration required.**

Fowl Meadow Photography

Sunday, August 8 – 4:00 p.m. Meet at Paul's Bridge parking area, Neponset Valley Pkwy & Brush Hill Rd, Hyde Park/Milton
Join Readville photographer Martha McDonough to learn photo composition while exploring the flora, fauna and vistas of Fowl Meadow. Bring your own camera. **Registration required.**

Sponsors: Boston Natural Areas Network, Neponset River Greenway Council, MA Department of Conservation & Recreation, Mattapan Community Development Corporation, MA Cultural Council, Alice Willard Dorr Foundation, Merck Family Fund, Anonymous 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.

Reptile Show: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/0agermi8sk.JPG>

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>