

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIR THON

www.maenvirothon.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Massachusetts Envirothon slated for May 13 at Otter River State Forest, Baldwinville

Some 250 Bay State high school students from more than 40 public and private schools and youth organizations across the commonwealth will demonstrate their environmental knowledge when they compete in the 23rd annual Massachusetts Envirothon on Thursday, May 13th at Otter River State Forest in Baldwinville, Mass.

At the outdoor field competition event, teams of five students will rotate through four "ecostations" where they answer written questions by performing hands-on activities such as soil analysis, wildlife habitat assessment, tree measurement, and identification of water insects.

Each team will also give a presentation on their research into this year's designated current environmental issue before a panel of judges that includes environmental professionals from government agencies, non-profit organizations, academia and private industry.

The 2010 Current Issue is "**Groundwater Protection**," which teams are researching now in their own community. Through their research, students will develop an understanding of the importance of urban and environmental planning to protect groundwater as a sustainable resource in terms of quantity and quality. Teams will identify plans and actions that have been adopted and implemented by their community, and recommend groundwater protection opportunities they believe their communities should pursue.

"Clean water is a basic right of every citizen, and that makes groundwater one of our most precious resources," Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles said. "I congratulate Envirothon organizers for focusing this year's competition on groundwater protection and I look forward to hearing what students have come up with. I'm ready to be impressed."

Otter River State Forest, managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), is a popular camping and day-use facility in a beautiful area of north central Massachusetts. Some of the forest area was cleared in the nineteenth century for small farms. After the state acquired the land, it was reforested with groves of pines that were planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The vegetation is now a transition zone between three forest types: oak and hickory, northern hardwood, and the pines. The forest is home to numerous wild flowers and shrubs, deer, chipmunks, catbirds, warblers and vireos.

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"We are delighted to be hosting this year's Envirothon at Otter River State Park," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., "Groundwater protection is an increasingly critical issue, and it's great that these young people are studying and thinking about it and preparing themselves to be the next generation of stewards."

Teams prepare for the Massachusetts Envirothon throughout the year through field study, community investigations, and workshops. Teams can earn Community Research and Community Action awards by documenting their hard work. The winning team will have the opportunity to represent Massachusetts in the Canon Envirothon, the North American competition. For more information on the Massachusetts Envirothon visit www.maenvirothon.org.

"This is a great opportunity for students to test their knowledge and skills related to water, forest, soils, wildlife, and current environmental issues, and to meet other students from across the state who are also concerned about the local environment" said Mass. Envirothon Committee Chair Will Snyder of the University of Massachusetts Extension

Fifteen federal and state environmental agencies, conservation districts, non-profit organizations, higher educational institutions, and businesses provide staff time and resources for the program and help organize the event.

The 2010 Massachusetts Envirothon is made possible with the financial support of the Environmental Business Council of New England and the U.S. Forest Service, and contributions from partnering organizations, area land trusts and conservation districts.

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Massachusetts Envirothon 2010 - REGISTERED TEAMS as of this release date.

- Acton-Boxborough Regional High School
- Barnstable High School
- Bedford High School
- Boston College High School
- Bristol County Agricultural High School
- Chelmsford High School
- David Prouty Regional High School
- Doherty High School
- Greater New Bedford Voc-Tech High School
- Greenfield High School
- Groton Dunstable High School
- Hoosac Valley High School
- Hopkinton High School
- Leicester High School
- Lexington High School
- Lunenburg High School
- Middleborough High School
- Millbury Memorial Jr. Sr. High School
- Mohawk Trail Regional School
- Monson High School/Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary
- Mt. Everett Regional School
- Newburyport High School
- Newton North High School
- Nipmuc Regional High School
- Old Rochester Regional High School
- Oliver Ames High School
- Pioneer Valley Regional School
- Provincetown High School
- Quabbin Regional High School
- R.C. Mahar Regional School
- Rockport High School
- Salem High School
- Somerset High School
- South Hadley High School
- Southeastern Regional School District
- Springfield Central High School
- Sutton Garden Club
- Sutton High School
- Taconic High School
- Tahanto Regional Middle-High School
- Tantasqua Regional High School
- Weston High School/Land's Sake