



EarthWatch Rhode Island



Topic: Free and Low Cost Family Fun This Summer

Date: Sunday, June 22, 2008

Location: Lincoln Woods State Park, Lincoln, RI

Looking for free and low cost, local family fun this summer? Then play the *Rhode Island Great Outdoors Pursuit*! The game begins this **Sunday, June 22** at **Lincoln Woods State Park**.

Background

Rhode Islanders, especially children, are spending more time indoors, watching television, playing video games and surfing the internet. The result is that their activity levels have declined and their body weights have increased. A national *No Child Left Inside* initiative is underway in many states and, in January, Governor Carcieri and numerous partners launched the *Healthy Weight in 2008* campaign in Rhode Island to encourage citizens to become more active and eat healthier in an effort to reverse the trend.

As a *No Child Left Inside* supporter and a *Healthy Weight in 2008* partner, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management is launching the *Great Rhode Island Outdoors Pursuit* to reconnect families with the outdoors, encourage more physical activity, build the next generation of environmental stewards and showcase state parks and forests.

The timing of this initiative could not be better, as many Rhode Islanders are looking for free and low cost activities close to home this summer because of high gas prices and current economic conditions.

Game Details

The game will take Rhode Island families or teams to up to seven different state parks and forests this summer. Over a 10-week period, teams will be challenged to visit different state forests and parks where they will participate in outdoor adventures such as hiking, biking, fishing, geo caching, etc. Events will be either guided or self-guided. Guided events will include numerous activities such as fishing, hiking, biking and nature walks led by DEM, game partners and exhibitors. A self-guided event allows teams to visit a designated park whenever they can during the 10-week period and engage in an activity on their own.



Kayaking is one activity that families will experience during the course of the RI Great Outdoors Pursuit.

Teams will receive points for participating in each event and will be eligible for prizes of outdoor equipment, donated by local retailers, at the **finale on August 24**. Prizes include: 1st Place - a complete camping gear and vacation package; 2nd Place - a kayak and a \$125 gift certificate for kayak lessons; and, 3rd Place - a bike.

Registration is free. While on-line registration is no longer available, families who would like to enter a team can register at the kick-off event on Sunday. Teams must consist of a minimum of two members, with one member over the age 18 and one member under the age of 18. The full 10-week schedule and game rules are a posted on the program website: www.riparks.com.

Support for the project comes from numerous game partners, including Eastern Mountain Sports, Hasbro, Inc., Kids First, REI, Rhode Island Department of Health, United HealthCare, Wal-Mart and Whole Foods Markets.

Event #1 Detail: Lincoln Woods State Park, Sunday, June 22, 10-3 p.m.

The kick-off event takes place this **Sunday, June 22, 2008** at Lincoln Woods State Park. at 10:00 a.m. with a day full of family activities and fun at **Lincoln Woods State Park in Lincoln**. Families are invited to enjoy the park by participating in any number of activities including guided walks, hikes and geology tours, rock climbing, reduced-rate kayak rentals and kayak demonstrations, make and take arts and crafts, and fishing and fishing instruction. Families will also enjoy free healthy snacks and drink samples, music and raffles and give-a-ways. Health and wellness information will also be available.

Interview: Steven Wright, Superintendent of State Parks, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management provided an overview of the program and details of RI Great Outdoors Pursuit.



Steve Wright being interviewed about the RI Great Outdoors Pursuit at Lincoln Woods State Park.