

State and Local Officials Re-Open Course #1 at Historic Ponkapoag Golf Course

In 1936, Ponkapoag Golf Course Became the First Public Golf Course in America

Canton - October 23, 2015- Today, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Carol Sanchez joined with local officials and stakeholders at Ponkapoag Golf Course, which is located within the Blue Hills State Reservation in Canton, to officially reopen the historic Course #1. Recently, DCR invested over \$5 million in improvements to the historic Donald Ross designed course to rehabilitate the holes that had been closed since 2003 due to flooding.

“As the country’s first public golf course, Ponkapoag Golf Course has played a historic role in expanding recreational opportunities for all citizens of the Commonwealth,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. “With these improvements, the more than 60,000 annual visitors will be able to enjoy Course #1 as Donald Ross envisioned it in 1930.”

In 1925, the owners of the Redmond Farm in Canton commissioned the Donald Ross Golf Design Company to build nine golf holes, and then in 1930, construction began on an additional 18 holes. Donald Ross designed 27 of the 36 holes at Ponkapoag in the 1920s and 1930s, which opened to the public in 1936. Nine more holes were added in 1956 that had been designed by Ross’s protégé, William Mitchell.

“The restoration of historic Course #1 at Ponkapoag Golf Course serves as an excellent example of the Baker-Polito Administration’s dedication to preserve unique and unparalleled recreational opportunities for all to enjoy,” said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez. “By pairing golf course improvements with habitat restoration, DCR has ensured that visitors will be able to enjoy Ponkapoag for generations to come.”

Construction on Course #1 began in April 2014 and was completed in early October 2015. Noted golf course architect Brian Silva oversaw the restoration project, and followed Ross’s original design as much as possible. Silva was guided by the golf course legend’s own handwritten notes from the late 1930s.

“After years of neglect, we have recently invested millions of dollars into the Ponkapoag Golf Course, and today marks a significant milestone in our efforts to restore this historic public course to its former glory,” said State Senator A. Brian Joyce (D-Milton).

“The Ponkapoag Golf Course is a wonderful resource for residents. Not only is it affordable, but the effort by DCR to restore this historic course adds to its appeal,” said Representative William C. Galvin (D-Canton). “I am confident these numerous investments will attract experienced and novice players to Ponkapoag.”

Improvements to Ponkapoag’s historic Course #1 include:

- The removal of hazardous trees and invasive overgrowth;
- The improvement of drainage, such as, dredging of drainage swales and ditches, raised fairways;
- The installation of new storm water infrastructure;
- The construction of a new irrigation pond;
- The installation of an automated irrigation system;

- The reconstruction of all 18 tees;
- The reconstruction of greens #3-#8; #11, #12, #13;
- The full reconstruction of holes #3, #7, #8, #12, #14; and
- The restoration and re-shaping of all bunkers.

Prior to today's formal opening of Course #1, DCR's Universal Access Program demonstrated adaptive golfing in partnership with the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Adaptive Sports Program. DCR's Universal Access Program is dedicated to providing outdoor recreation opportunities in Massachusetts State Parks for visitors of all abilities.

###

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

Follow DCR on Twitter..... twitter.com/MassDCR

Follow DCR on Instagram..... instagram.com/MassDCR/

View videos on You Tube..... www.youtube.com/MassEEA

View downloadable photographs on Flickr www.flickr.com/photos/masseea/sets/

Visit The Great Outdoors blog..... www.mass.gov/blog/environment

Visit our website..... www.mass.gov/dcr

251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114 — (617) 626-1250 office / (617) 626-1351 (fax)