

## **Duxbury Beach Access Update**

*May 28, 2020*

Over sand access to Duxbury Beach will resume on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. Please read the information below for details regarding the status of the beach, access to the beach, beach stickers and how beach operations will be handled and our responsibilities as members of the public to help keep one another safe while visiting the beach.

### **Beach Status**

As of May 28, 2020, there are 22 active piping plover nests on Duxbury Beach. It is important to understand that additional plovers may continue to arrive to the beach. Plovers are still considered a Threatened Species (the level just below Endangered) by Federal and State Fish and Wildlife, and their protection is mandated by both State and Federal laws. There are also 3 areas of active least tern nesting on Duxbury Beach. Least Terns are listed as a Species of Concern under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act by the Massachusetts State Fish and Wildlife, and their protection is mandated by State law. We expect an increase in nesting activity for both species in the coming weeks and this will result in ORV access likely being reduced or closed at some point.

It is important to note that these are wild animals and therefore are unpredictable and susceptible to tidal over wash, predation, and mortality from exposure to severe weather, as well as unpredictable movements throughout their habitat on the beach. ORV (Off Road Vehicle) and pedestrian restrictions related to plover chicks last until they have fledged (which can be more than 35 days), meaning these restrictions may or may not be incrementally altered. Many of these restricted areas may overlap to an extent in both space (area) and timing (time until chicks can fly) and may change based on movement of the chicks.

### **Beach Access**

As mandated when restrictions occur, the maximum ORV (Off Road Vehicle) limits may be reduced (below 250 Resident and 250 Non-Resident max ORVs allowed when no restrictions are in place) on the front beach to maintain compliance with the Duxbury Beach Management and Conservation Plan, and to maintain public safety and order.

The hours for daily over sand access will be from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. All vehicles must be off the beach by 8:00 p.m. each day. Beach staff will be instructing beachgoers at 7:30 p.m. that they must begin leave at that time.

On Friday, only the area from the Second Crossover oceanside south will be available for ORV access with an ORV capacity of approximately 220 total vehicles (110 residents and 110 Non-Residents). It is also likely that there could be some closures due to monthly high tides throughout the beach season. Beachgoers should monitor the following social media outlets for current beach status information:

Beach Operations Twitter - [https://twitter.com/DPD\\_Beach\\_Ops](https://twitter.com/DPD_Beach_Ops)

Beach Operations Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/DPDBeachOps/>

Duxbury Beach Park Twitter - <https://twitter.com/duxbeachpark>

Duxbury Beach Reservation Twitter - <https://twitter.com/DuxburyBeachRes>

If the over sand area is at capacity, there is limited overflow parking for non-residents at the North end of the Duxbury Beach Park (Blakeman's). Those with resident ORV stickers may park in the resident parking lot. Beach staff will be able to provide patrons with directions to these parking areas upon arrival.

Please note that parking spaces are limited and access is provided on a first come, first served basis which can matter greatly if the weather is favorable for beach-going conditions. However, no over sand vehicles will be allowed south of the parking lot prior to 8:00 a.m. each morning. Beachgoers in ORVs arriving prior to 8:00 a.m. must wait in the parking area until they are told to proceed by beach staff. Vehicles waiting to access the over sand areas may not block traffic or access to parking. Also, no vehicles will be allowed on the back road south of the Second Crossover and all pullouts are currently closed due to shorebird activity.

## **Beach Stickers**

Duxbury Beach is a privately-owned beach which the Town leases a portion of from the Duxbury Beach Reservation. The means of gaining vehicular access to the beach and the associated parking areas is through the sale of a non-refundable sticker for the patrons arriving in their vehicles to visit.

Until June 15, 2020, access to the ORV portion of Duxbury Beach will be provided to those persons who purchased a sticker last year (prior to the March 31, 2020, expiration date). After June 15, 2020, all beach patrons will be required to have purchased a non-refundable sticker and affixed it to their windshield directly under the rearview mirror. Since it may take the Town's sticker vendor a few days mail the sticker to the purchaser (usually 2 to 3 days), a copy of a receipt showing that payment has been made will allow beach patrons to have access to the ORV area of Duxbury Beach until the sticker has arrived and it has been affixed to the vehicle's front windshield.

Once the new non-refundable sticker pricing schedule has been established, 2020 stickers will go on sale on Thursday, June 4, 2020, via the Town's website:

<https://www.town.duxbury.ma.us/duxbury-beach/pages/beach-parking-permitsstickers>

If individuals purchased a sticker last year and they no longer have it, beach staff will accept a copy of the receipt indicating that payment was made for a sticker. If you have any questions about a sticker purchased last year, please contact the Treasurer/Collector's office at (781) 934-1100 ext. 6001.

## **Public Health and Safety Guidelines**

On Monday, May 18, 2020, Governor Baker provided the citizens with a re-opening plan for a number of facilities, institutions and amenities. Part of that re-opening plan included recreational facilities such as Duxbury Beach.

The Town of Duxbury, in concert with the Duxbury Beach Reservation, are committed to ensuring that all state and local mandates are adhered to by beach patrons. It's up to all of us to help keep Duxbury Beach open and safe. While enjoying Duxbury Beach this summer, patrons must:

- Maintain social distancing of at least 6' feet when moving about, waiting for bathrooms, and interacting with staff
- Maintain social distancing of at least 12' feet between groups when seated on the beach

- The state's social distancing guidelines require that each vehicle parked on the over sand area of the beach must leave at least a 15' feet between another vehicle. Signage indicating this requirement has been installed at the beach entrance and at both crossovers.
- Wear a face covering when social distancing is not possible
- Limit groups to 10 people or less
- No organized games/ball playing
- Behave appropriately with others and staff - we are all in this together
- Limit time spent unloading and loading your vehicle in the parking lot

The Duxbury Beach Reservation and the Town of Duxbury are taking the current situation very seriously and we cannot not tolerate any action that may compromise the health and safety of staff or other beach patrons. Failure to comply with these restrictions will result in ejection from the beach. If it is found that the public as a whole cannot adhere to these new restrictions and guidelines, additional measures may need to be implemented including further restrictions and potentially the closure of the beach. Please remember, the continued safe and appropriate use of this wonderful natural resource is up to all of us.

Additional updates regarding Duxbury Beach will be provided as more information becomes available and/or the status of either further re-opening or restrictions are implemented.