

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIR THON

news release

www.massenvirothon.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local teens to compete in Mass. Envirothon on Thursday, May 25th at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, Uxbridge

Climate change in your community is 2023 current issue

UXBRIDGE, Mass., May 3, 2023 – For the past school year, high school students across the commonwealth have been studying climate change in their community, assessing climate change vulnerabilities and assets, researching nature-based solutions, interviewing people who make decisions, and thinking about how to include those who have not yet joined the conversation.

They'll present their findings at the 36th annual Massachusetts Envirothon competition on Thursday, May 25th at the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge, Mass. The approximately 120 students from 18 Massachusetts communities will also test their knowledge of the area's soils, forests, water, and wildlife as part of the competition.

At this outdoor field event, teams will rotate through four "ecostations" where they will answer written questions and engage in hands-on activities such as soil analysis, wildlife habitat assessment, tree identification, and water quality measures. Each team will have 5 participants and schools had an option to bring a 2nd team.

At the fifth station, the Current Issue, each team will give a 15-minute presentation on "Climate Change in Your Community" to a panel of judges. Teams have been researching the Current Issue in their own community in preparation for their presentation. Each panel of judges includes concerned citizens and environmental professionals from government agencies, non-profit organizations, academia and private industry. Teams were asked to craft a proposal for the highest priority action their community should take to address climate change and identify what specific next steps will be required to make it happen.

"These teams work hard getting to know their local ecosystems and how their communities depend on them. We test their scientific knowledge, but we also like to hear their stories about how they have gotten muddy, cold, and tired, and otherwise had fun and fallen in love with nature in their neighborhood. The best hope for the future comes from engaged, scientifically literate citizens who care about their communities and the environment," said Kelley Freda of the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Water Supply Protection and former chair of the Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee.

"The Envirothon is more than just a competition about environmental knowledge. Many teams have taken what they've learned and put it to work in an action/service project in their community. The program aims to prepare the next generation for the stewardship work that needs to be done," said **Freda**. "And this annual competition actually becomes a festive gathering of the environmental community of Massachusetts. At informal lunchtime roundtables, teams will share stories from their

(more)

EnviroTreks – places they visited, people they talked to, outdoor experiences, and service projects – during the past year.”

The overall winning team will have the opportunity to represent Massachusetts in the [North American Envirothon](#), which will be held July 23-29 in Tantramar, New Brunswick, Canada.

The 2023 Massachusetts Envirothon is made possible through the contributions of partnering agencies and organizations, including financial support from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs, the U.S. Forest Service, the Massachusetts State Grange, Smithfield Foods, Soil Scientists of Southern New England, Green Newton, Wegman’s supermarkets and local conservation districts.

Fifteen federal and state environmental agencies, conservation districts, non-profit organizations, higher educational institutions, and businesses provide expertise and help organize the event. Dozens of volunteers will also be on hand on May 25th to handle all the event logistics from setting up tents, tables and chairs, checking-in teams, serving food, scoring tests and cleaning up.

For more information on the Massachusetts Envirothon visit www.massenvirothon.org.

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2023 PARTICIPATING TEAMS (as of May 19, 2023)

- Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, **Acton**
- Brockton High School, **Brockton**
- David Prouty High School, **Spencer**
- Doherty High School, **Worcester**
- Fitchburg High School, **Fitchburg**
- Frontier Regional School, **S. Deerfield**
- Lexington High School, **Lexington**
- Millbury Jr./Sr. High School, **Millbury**
- Minuteman High School, **Lexington**
- Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, **Fitchburg**
- Newton North High School, **Newton**
- Norfolk County Agricultural High School, **Walpole**
- Oliver Ames High School, **North Easton**
- Reading Memorial High School, **Reading**
- Shepherd Hill Regional High School, **Dudley**
- Somerset Berkley Regional High School, **Somerset**
- Springfield Central High School, **Springfield**
- Springfield International Charter School, **Springfield**