

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Kingsley Park to Close April – September 2014 for Critical Restoration Work, Public Information Session to be Held Before Groundbreaking

Cambridge, MA – The Cambridge Water Department (CWD) will begin Phase I of The Kingsley Park Restoration Project at Fresh Pond Reservation on April 1, 2014, kicking-off a much-needed overhaul of the park. To protect the public's safety and for the restoration's success, Kingsley Park will be closed from April 1 – September 1, 2014. The CWD is also asking for the public's cooperation in keeping all dogs leashed while on path detours, and to stay out of fenced vegetation recovery areas once the park is re-opened. CWD will hold a public informational meeting regarding the project before work begins at Kingsley Park.

This multi-phased project aims to preserve and improve the historic, recreational, and ecological resources of Kingsley Park. Targeted during this first phase are improvements to accessibility, pathways and benches, irrigation and drainage, native species habitat, historic overlooks, and the addition of discovery zones for children. The Water Department understands that the closure is inconvenient, but the restoration is necessary for the long-term health of the Reservation.

Over the past century, Kingsley Park has been used intensively for recreation and is visited by several hundred people on a busy day. However, Kingsley Park's ultimate function – like the all of Fresh Pond Reservation – is to be a protective buffer around Fresh Pond, Cambridge's raw drinking water supply. The high volume of use at Kingsley Park has impacted its ecological health and water protection capacity, as well as its recreational infrastructure. The project has been vetted through extensive public and design processes, which began in 2011, and is a high priority of the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan.

To address recreational needs at Kingsley Park, the restoration work will include:

- re-grading pathways to make them universally-accessible,
- replacing worn-out benches,
- repairing degrading masonry at the base of the historic overlooks,

- replacing the aging swing-set with a natural, free-play area for children, and
- re-surfacing the Upper Loop with Flexi-Pave™, a recycled and pervious concrete alternative.

To remediate rising ecological stresses on Kingsley Park, the restoration work will include:

- removal of invasive plant species – which have impaired the woodland habitat – and re-planting with over 500 native trees and shrubs,
- aerating and augmenting the soil, which is suffering from erosion and severe compaction,
- reinforcing steep hillsides with rock swales to reduce erosion and improve drainage, and
- updating the irrigation system for better water-efficiency.

Updates on the Kingsley Restoration Project and the upcoming public meeting are available on the CWD projects webpage at www.cambridgema.gov/water/projects . The public can also follow the CWD on Facebook and Twitter for real-time updates related to the Cambridge water supply and Fresh Pond Reservation. Concerned community members are encouraged to contact CWD staff at (617) 349-6489 or fpr@cambridgema.gov.

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