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State of Rhode Island

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

24-10

July 25, 2024

WAIVER OF STATE BEACH USER FEES AND RECREATIONAL SALTWATER FISHING LICENSE REQUIREMENT ON GOVERNOR'S BAY DAY

WHEREAS, 2024 marks the 35th anniversary of Governor's Bay Day, which began in response to the release of nearly 300,000 gallons of oil into Narragansett Bay after the tanker World Prodigy ran aground on Brenton Reef off Newport, Rhode Island on June 23, 1989;

WHEREAS, in response to this environmental catastrophe, the people of Rhode Island came together to create Governor's Bay Day in the same year, with the purpose of celebrating the beauty of Narragansett Bay, raising awareness about its fragility, and highlighting the threats it faces from environmental degradation;

WHEREAS, Governor's Bay Day continues to uphold its original intent by promoting the appreciation and enjoyment of the natural treasures of Narragansett Bay, including its pristine waters, flourishing fisheries, sandy beaches, and historic parks, while also educating the public about the importance of environmental stewardship and the ongoing challenges in preserving these resources;

WHEREAS, everyone who enjoys Rhode Island's parks, beaches, and outdoor spaces has a responsibility to keep them clean, to take personal responsibility for their trash, and are encouraged to take the Litter Free Rhode Island pledge to protect our unique natural resources;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is committed to promoting and expanding outdoor recreation in the State;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's magnificent public beaches are one of our State's most treasured natural resources enjoyed by residents and visitors alike;

WHEREAS, our State's ample saltwater fishing areas provide a great way for families and friends to experience the thrill of recreational fishing;

WHEREAS, Narragansett Bay is a vital natural resource that supports our water-based economy and its critical business sectors;

WHEREAS, the State's waters provide abundant and diverse local seafood, nourishing our families and strengthening our economy;

WHEREAS, protecting and promoting Narragansett Bay and its surrounding watersheds are top priorities of the State;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island state beaches and parks attract more than 9 million visitors each year and generate an estimated \$315 million in consumer spending annually, which contributes significantly to the State's annual \$7.0 billion tourism industry;

WHEREAS, there are around 175,000 recreational anglers in Rhode Island, and recreational saltwater fishing adds more than \$130 million to the economy annually;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island General Laws § 42-17.1-9.1 permits the Director of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to establish appropriate parking fees for state beaches;

WHEREAS, the Director of DEM, consistent with Rhode Island General Laws § 42-17.1-9.1, may, from time to time, waive parking fees for all state beaches;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island General Laws § 20-2.2-5 permits the Director of DEM to establish a free-fishing day where a license is not required for recreational saltwater fishing; and

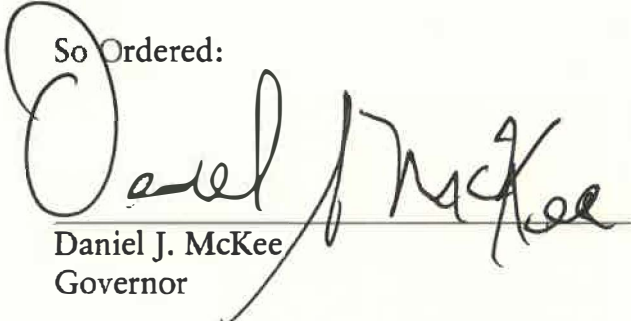
WHEREAS, the Director of the DEM wishes to waive state beach parking fees on Bay Day and designate Bay Day as a free-fishing day for recreational saltwater fishing.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANIEL J. MCKEE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island, do hereby order as follows:

1. All Rhode Island state beaches will be open to the public free of parking fees on Sunday, July 28, 2024.
2. Recreational saltwater fishing shall be permitted in the marine waters of Rhode Island without possession of a recreational saltwater fishing license from Friday, July 26, 2024, through Sunday, July 28, 2024.

This Executive Order supersedes Executive Order 23-09 and shall take effect immediately upon the date hereof.

So Ordered:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. McKee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Daniel J. McKee
Governor