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## City Splash 2015 Brings Out Boston's Bathers

*Local residents, community leaders enjoy a dip in the Charles River during first of two specially permitted annual events.*

BOSTON—Thursday, July 30, 2015—[The Charles River Conservancy \(CRC\)](#), in partnership with the [Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation \(DCR\)](#), welcomed 400 members of the public to join two Charles River Community Swims this summer. In its third annual year, the Charles River Community Swims, known as City Splash 2015, had unprecedented success.

“Taking a dip in the Charles after work should become a tradition,” said Renata von Tscharnner, President and Founder of the Charles River Conservancy. “After such successful events this summer, the Charles River Conservancy plans to increase the number of permitted swim events for City Splash 2016 as well as seek a more permanent or regular space for this recreational opportunity by 2018.”

Public swimming is not currently allowed in the Charles River outside of permitted events. This summer's events special annual events permitted by MassDCR and operated with public safety in mind.

Both events—the first on July 14 and the second on July 25—were met with excitement by participants seeking a unique experience on the shores of the Esplanade and drew over 400 enthusiastic swimmers, including local community leaders.

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs [Matthew Beaton](#) joined swimmers during the first event on July 14 to take his own jump into the Charles River.

While treading water, Beaton said he hoped the City Splash events would help the Charles River shed its “dirty” reputation: “[The water is] perfectly clean, and there’s no reason why folks can’t swim in it! However, this is a special event with safety officials here, and we encourage the public to not abuse that ability to swim in the Charles. Hopefully someday, we have the opportunity to open up full public access.”

Beaton was the first Cabinet-level member of any administration to swim in the Charles River since then-[Governor William Weld took an unannounced running leap into the River](#) in August of 1996, just moments after he signed the [Rivers Protection Act](#).

The second public and permitted event was accompanied by a swim themed costume competition. Swimmers expressed their enthusiasm for being able to swim in the Charles by jumping in wearing a wide array of custom-made swimwear.

The Charles River Conservancy's first ever Community Swim on July 13, 2013 marked the first public swim in the Charles River in more than fifty years. Recreational swimming has been prohibited in the Charles since the 1950's, when a growing awareness of the health risks posed by pollution in the Charles caused the beaches and bathhouses lining the river to close. After years of environmental health initiatives, most notably the [Clean Charles River Initiative](#), swimming is now allowed through permitted events such as the Charles River Conservancy's Community Swims and the annual Charles River Swimming Club's One-Mile Swim Race, which began in 2007.

Event partners include: the Charles River Watershed Assoc. (CRWA), the Charles River Swimming Club, Community Boating, Inc., Mass. Water Resource Authority (MWRA), and the Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH).

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**About the Charles River Conservancy:** The Charles River Conservancy is dedicated to the stewardship, renewal, and enhancement of the urban parklands along the Charles River, for the enjoyment of all. The Conservancy promotes the active use and vitality of the parklands, increases recreational and cultural opportunities, and works to ensure the beauty and integrity of this extraordinary public resource.

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