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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Governor Signs Executive Order Closing All State and County Parks and Forests in Response to COVID-19

*Extension of Public Health Emergency declaration for
30 more days among latest directives*

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (April 8, 2020) – Four Executive Orders have been signed by Governor Phil Murphy, each one pertaining to a different aspect of the State's efforts to control the spread of COVID-19.

First, a 30-day extension of the State's current Public Health Emergency, first declared on March 9, will take effect. This is to ensure the State can continue to take appropriate steps to protect the public health and welfare of residents. Unlike the State of Emergency which was also declared by the Governor on March 9, a Public Health Emergency declaration expires after 30 days unless extended.

Next, citing instances of social distancing guidelines being ignored, the Governor has ordered the closing of all State and county parks and forests. "Take a walk or a bike ride in your neighborhood, or any park in your town that is open," suggested Murphy. Municipal parks make their own determinations about remaining open or choosing to close, and are not impacted by this Order.

The final two Orders involved directives with certain school districts. One order extends deadlines for districts (including New Brunswick's) whose April elections were postponed until May 12 to ensure there is enough time to certify their budgets and make necessary staffing decisions for the following school year. The second order waives the 2019-2020 school year assessment requirements for students in grades 8 and 12 to ensure that no student is left behind or unduly penalized due to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

The signings were announced Tuesday as part of the Governor's daily COVID-19 update in Trenton.

The City of New Brunswick is the county seat for Middlesex County and home of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the world headquarters for Johnson & Johnson and two globally-renowned hospitals. New Brunswick is an educationally-focused City as well as "The Healthcare City."

All of New Brunswick's developments provide seamless access to major transportation lines and an extensive dining scene and an arts district, located in its bustling downtown. The City is focused not only on bringing in new residents and businesses, but also on improving the lives of every one of its residents.

For more information, please visit www.cityofnewbrunswick.org.