



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

The Arsenal  
Central Park  
New York, New York 10065

Adrian Benepe  
Commissioner

September 25, 2009

Over the last year, the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (“Parks”) convened a special advisory committee to study our rules regarding large events on the Great Lawn in Central Park. The committee found the existing rules to be justified and offered some helpful recommendations, which we plan to codify through the City’s administrative rules process. We anticipate that the rules will be finalized in time to address events for the 2010 season.

Specifically, Parks agrees with the study’s recommendations that 5,000 people can be accommodated in the Turtle Pond lawn area and 50,000 on the Great Lawn oval. In addition, Parks believes, based upon recent events on the Great Lawn, that 5,000 more attendees can be allowed as overflow on the small lawn panels both east and west of the Great Lawn oval, for a total of 60,000 people.

Parks also agrees with the committee’s recommendation that one additional large-scale event on the Great Lawn is possible, and would allow the additional event in the time frame of September 15 through October 1 since the fall is both a popular time for events and also because the risk of damage to the lawn and disruption of sporting events is significantly less than in the spring.

Finally, Parks will adopt the committee’s recommendations that more information be provided regarding a decision to cancel an event. We will amend our rules to include the factors that will be considered prior to making such a decision. They will include the possibility of lightning, rainfall (including forecasted, current, or cumulative), and soil saturation levels, or other turf health and field conditions.

These changes will allow an enhanced capability for accommodating large events, whether musical performances or demonstrations, while preserving one of the city’s most important sports and passive recreation spaces.

Sincerely,

Adrian Benepe