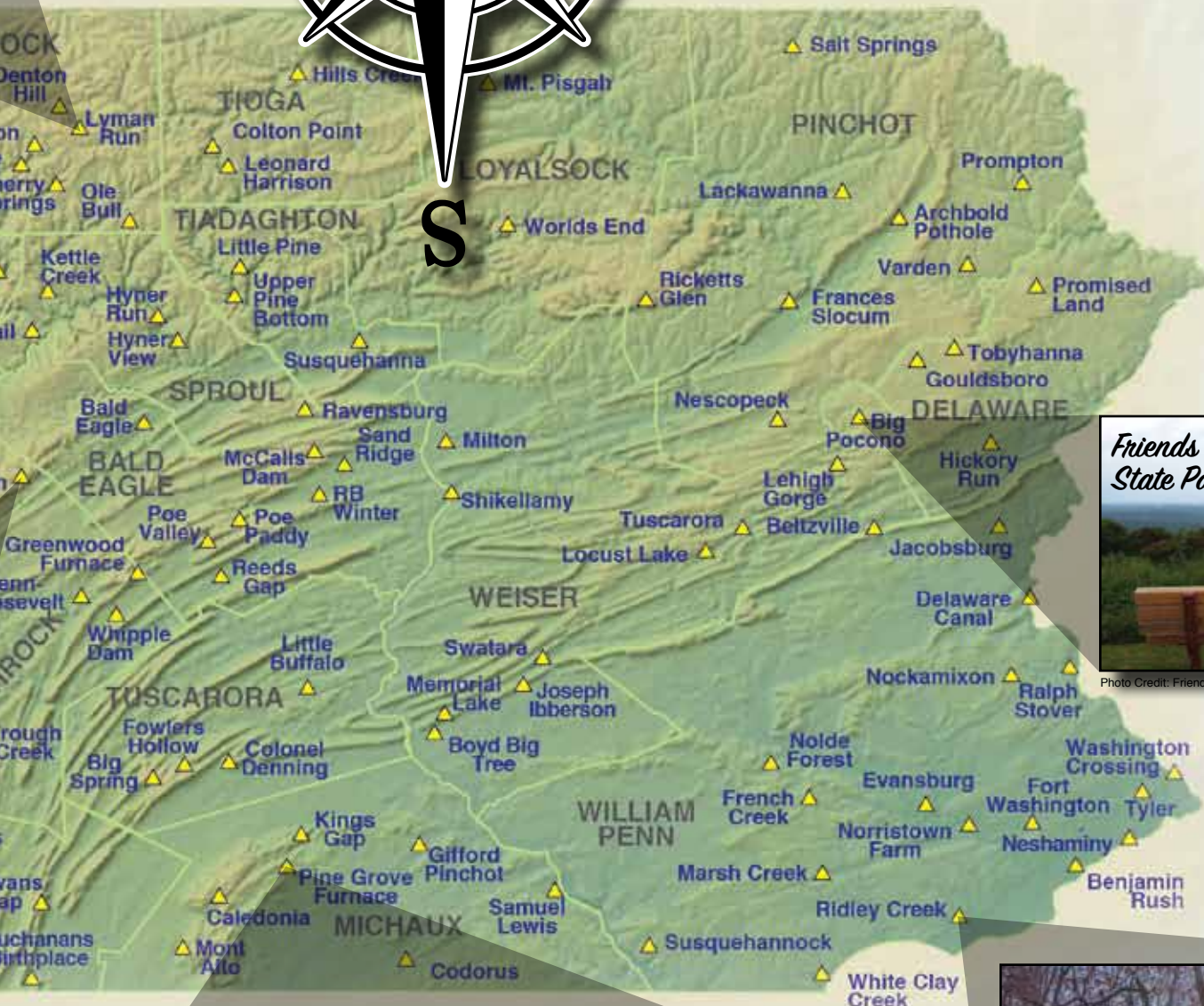


N 2016

Annual
Report

*Guided By Our Goals:
A Road Map
to Success*



*Friends of Big Pocono
State Park*



Photo Credit: Friends of Big Pocono State Park

Photo Credit: Marci Mowery



Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park



*Friends of Ridley Creek
State Park*

Photo Credit: Friends of Ridley Creek State Park



Photo Credit: Amanda Trimmer, Michaux State Forest

VISION
Building the voice for
Pennsylvania's state parks
and forests.

MISSION
PPFF's mission is to inspire
stewardship of Pennsylvania's
state parks and forests through
public engagement in volunteerism,
education, and recreation.



Thoughts on 2016 • Thoughts on 2016 • Thoughts on 2016 • Thoughts on 2016

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*Marci, Joe and Izzy hiking
in Caledonia State Park.*

Despite the advancement in technology and the dawn of the digital age, I am still a map person. To me, maps hold promises of adventures yet to be had or jog memories of fun times exploring a new area. I learned to read a map in my eighth grade social studies class. To this day I credit Mr. Smith for giving me the best gift possible – an opportunity to explore beyond my current boundaries.

In 2014, PPFF embarked on a strategic planning process to design our road map for the next five years. We solicited input from donors and members, friends groups leaders and DCNR staff, to ensure that the map that we were creating was relevant to the needs of not just our parks and forests, but to the citizens of the Commonwealth. We reviewed current research and reports, fine tuning our plan until we had one in which we could all be proud.

In this annual report, we explore the map that you helped to create for the long-term investment in our state parks and forests, and how our successes are really your successes.

*Yours in the Outdoors,
Marci*



Cindy at Penn Nursery and Wood Shop.

The dedication of a new trail bridge and other improvements at Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Cumberland County.

Donation of a hardwood tree planted by Gov. Wolf on Arbor Day at Pinchot State Park, York County.

Commitment of manpower and materials to renovate trail shelters in Laurel Ridge State Park, Somerset County.

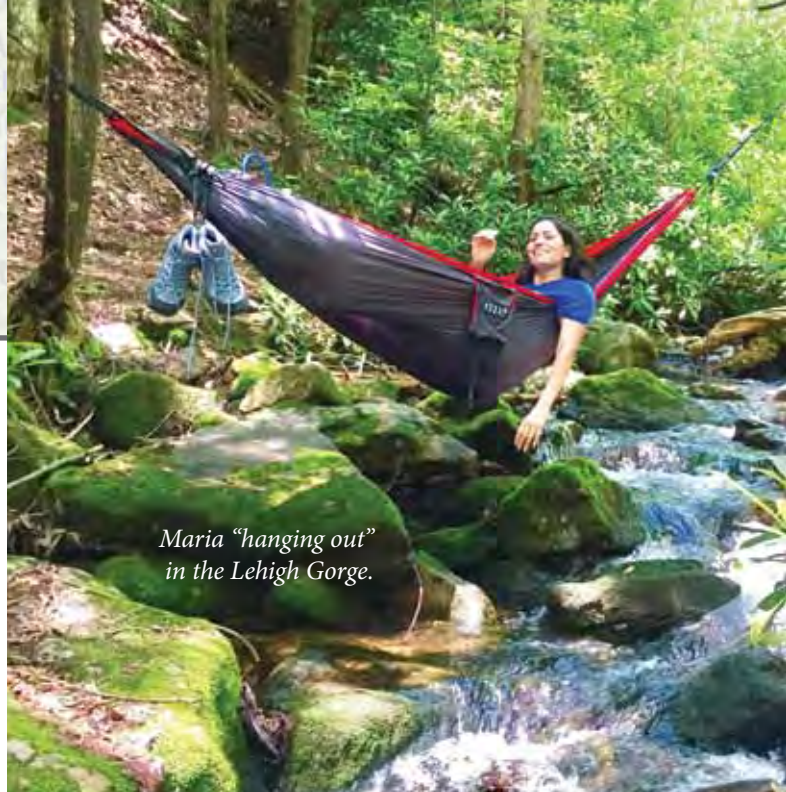
No matter where I travel, I see the “can do” spirit of volunteers meshing and complementing efforts of our hard-working staff in state parks and forests. Here, volunteerism of friends groups and the direction of the PPFF merge to make our public lands cleaner, brighter, and more welcoming to all. Bridge construction. Trail improvement. Graffiti removal. Where there is a need, and volunteers to help, you’ll find PPFF tackling the task.

Its support is unwavering as we, the stewards of Penn’s Woods, strive to provide parks that inspire; forests that support jobs and wildlife; and technical know-how that will create a greener Pennsylvania. We will continue to look toward our stalwart partner in conservation and recreation as we look to involve more young and diverse visitors in our state parks and forests.

With its growing number of committed friends groups, PPFF is a shining example of what a public-private partnership can accomplish. Working together, our staff and PPFF’s cadre of dedicated volunteers have accomplished so much in service of our mission to protect and enhance these wonderful lands entrusted to us.

Together, we have the work plan, the tools and the coworkers to accomplish so much! I look forward to another year of rewarding work with PPFF.

Cindy Adams Dunn
DCNR Secretary



Maria “hanging out” in the Lehigh Gorge.

Continuing to strengthen the well-being of our Pennsylvania parks and forests is the reason why I volunteer my time and donate to PPFF.

I grew up in Northeastern Pennsylvania and was blessed to have our parks and forests as my backyard. Even though my family didn’t have much financially to invest on vacations, spending our weekends in Beltzville State Park was of priceless value to us.

The treasures of our natural resources rely on us for their future. How often are you able to explore our great outdoors? What do you receive from your experiences in our parks and forests?

Personally, my time spent in nature is priceless and I am so thankful that all are welcome to enjoy our rich resources at no cost. The leadership DCNR and PPFF provide in safeguarding our parks and forests is only as strong as our grassroots and support from you.

Thank you for being a friend, steward, and supporter of our Commonwealth’s greatest asset: our parks and forests.

Maria Montero
PPFF Chair, Board of Directors

“Boulder Field was my first visit to a national landmark, which was a huge inspiration. The scenery is a natural formation and was an opportunity I couldn’t pass up.”

— Allyson Kusko,
First Place: Young Photographers, age 15-21





Guided by Our Goals

In 2015, you helped us to set our sights for the next five years through our strategic planning process (funded in part by a NEEF grant). Based on your input, we developed five overarching goals that are serving as a road map to our success. Keep turning the pages to see all that we've achieved together!



Photo: Xiaowei Zhang, Ricketts Glen State Park, 2016 PPFF Photo Contest Honorable Mention



Goal 1:

Expand the message on the value of and ways to engage in parks, forests, and recreation to increase participation, inform the public and decision makers, and build relationships with diverse partners.



Goal 2:

Engage the public in meaningful outdoor recreation to improve physical, emotional, and mental health.



Goal 3:

Increase volunteerism in Pennsylvania state parks and forests to 50 friends groups and 1,200 PPFF and Friends Chapter volunteers by 2020.



Goal 4:

Invest in transformative projects and events to enhance the state park and forest visitor experience.



Goal 5:

Strengthen the capacity of PPFF and the friends chapters through strategic investment of time, talent, and revenue.

Our Operating Values • Integrity • Excellence • Innovation • Collaboration • Conservation • Diversity • Inclusion • Sustainability

PPFF Tabled at or spoke at 70 events

PPFF & Friends combined hosted 140 special events

And reached 200,000 people

**2016
PPFF &
OUR
FRIENDS
BY THE
NUMBERS**

PPFF & Friends coordinated 1,745 service projects

Thanks to 3,000 volunteers

Who donated 67,479 hours valued at \$1,628,943*

Working to Improve How We do Business
For any nonprofit, success depends upon the ability to raise revenue, both restricted and unrestricted. To improve our development work, we received an anonymous donation to work with a consultant to audit our existing practices and make recommendations for improvement. We share all information with our friends groups through training to improve everyone's ability to better improve your state parks and forests.

"Just a quick note to formally thank you for your wonderful, genuine and heartfelt keynote address at the PA Wilds dinner."

— Deborah Dick Pontzer



PPFF Keeps You Informed – From Mailbox to Inbox to News Feed

Three times a year our print newsletter, Penn's Stewards, is delivered to nearly 3,000 actual mailboxes and 2,000 virtual ones, and has a reach of over 100,000 through links and shares.

With feedback from our readership, a yearly theme is chosen, and in 2016 the theme was the evolution of recreation with an eye toward communicating the legacy of conservation to Pennsylvanians of all ages. We took a fun approach – focusing on the beginnings of the very idea of "recreation" as the concept of free time grew, the evolution of the equipment people use to have fun, and finally a look at a very new "old" idea, that of "natural playgrounds."

By the same token, perhaps you are a fan of the bimonthly emailed newsletter, Explore PA, which adopted the theme of conservation legacy, with a dose of healthy outdoor living and volunteerism thrown in. Nearly 31,000 people receive these six-times-a-year messages from the Foundation.

Are you one of our 2,000 weekly Take Five/Fridays with Pam readers? This e-publication focuses on events and up-to-the-minute reporting of news across the parks and forests (and from PPFF), as well as behind-the-scene ideas on how to explore your state parks and forests. If you are not a subscriber visit www.PaParksAndForests.org and sign up soon!



PPFF in the Community

Dedicated to inspiring stewardship of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests and fostering partnerships, PPFF President Marci Mowery provided the keynote address at the Pennsylvania Wilds Annual Awards Dinner.



Photo credit: Marci Mowery

State Park, Caledonia State Park, an art festival, and several craft breweries.

Photo Contest and Tour

We asked, and you supplied! We had so many amazing photo entries to the annual Through the Season Photo Contest. The award-winning entries served as ambassadors of our parks and forests as they traveled the state, with a showing at the Capitol, followed by appearances at Sinnemahoning



Recruited Office Volunteers/Interns

At PPFF, we appreciate the service of interns and volunteers. In 2016, we had two interns who assisted with the Conservation Heritage Project and with outreach. We also recruited volunteers to assist around the office. Interested in getting involved? *Give us a call!*



Photo credit: DCNR

Restoration of Shelter Areas

One of the most unique camping experiences found in our state parks might be the Adirondack Shelters on the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. These three-sided shelters offer respite for the weary hikers. Shelters at the Route 653 shelter area recently received some TLC through a grant from REI Pittsburgh to PPFF and from funds from the Friends of Laurel Hill State Park. More than 40 shelters still need to be repaired. Consider investing in preserving this opportunity for your children and their children at: <http://bit.ly/lhhtsheltersfund>



"Thank you for helping to make the Indiana County Senior Expo a success. It was our largest turnout ever! The attendees were very appreciative of the information you provided."

— Sen. Don White, Rep. Dave Reed and Rep. Cris Dush

Thank You for Your Advocacy

Summer 2016 was a busy time for protecting your state parks and forests. HB 2013 – legislation introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature that would have opened these beloved natural resources to the development of offices, golf courses, amusement and water parks – seemed too harmful to gain any traction. But the bill, with its more than 50 sponsors, made it all the way to the House floor. **Calls were made. Positions written. Alerts emailed. And you were heard. The bill was defeated 123-77.** *Thank you for your hard work!*



Photo credit: C. Kaczmarek, Ohioyle State Park, 2016 PPFF Photo Contest Winner Nature's Colors

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation monitors legislation that might adversely impact our parks and forests. If you are interested in being engaged more closely with our advocacy work, sign up as a volunteer and we'll be in touch!

Iron Furnace Restoration

Through your support and a grant from the Allegheny Foundation, visitors to the Forbes State Forest enjoy viewing the newly restored Wharton Iron Furnace and interpretive panels. Visit the PPFF Facebook page to view a video of the furnace: www.facebook.com/PennsylvaniaParksAndForestsFoundation/videos



Photo credit: DCNR

Conservation Heritage Project

Truly a partnership project, the Pennsylvania Conservation Heritage project seeks to reconnect Pennsylvanians to their rich conservation legacy. The project made great strides in 2016, unveiling a new website (www.PaConservationHeritage.org), hosting three summits to explore missing stories, presenting programs across the state, and capturing stories from individuals like you about local conservation efforts. We continue to gather stories, so visit the website and learn more about how you can get involved.



Photo credit: Lindsay Stone, Pennbrook Middle School

Stewardship Poster and Video Contest

Removal of graffiti alone will not solve the problem plaguing our state parks and

forests. That's where PPFF's poster and video contest comes in. Thanks to the Alexander Stewart, MD Foundation and your support, middle school students from across the Commonwealth were challenged to create an original poster to educate and inspire people with its stewardship message. High school and college students created short videos telling an anti-graffiti, pro-stewardship message. Combating graffiti takes a team effort!



Board Member and Cherry Springs Dark Sky Fund Chair, Maxine Harrison.

Photo credit: DCNR

Senior Outreach

With your help, we attended 13 legislative senior expos and AARP Chapter events, reaching nearly 3,000 senior citizens to spread the word about the benefits of getting outdoors!



Photo credit: Mard Mowery



The History of Recreation

Our spring 2016 newsletter's lead story, "A Long Walk ...or a Short History of Recreation in Pennsylvania," took a look at how recreation evolved in our nation's history and how Pennsylvania's expansive natural areas gave people opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and learn new activities while discovering the outdoors as a place to play.

PPFF Friends Groups

Cherry Springs Dark Sky Association
 Friends of Beltzville
 Friends of Big Pocono
 Friends of Black Moshannon
 Friends of Buchanan
 Friends of Caledonia
 Friends of Canoe Creek
 Friends of Colonel Denning
 Friends of Cook Forest
 Friends of Cowans Gap
 Friends of Delaware/Promised Land
 Friends of Goddard
 Friends of Greenwood Furnace
 Friends of Keystone
 Friends of Kings Gap
 Friends of Laurel Hill
 Friends of Little Buffalo
 Friends of Lyman Run
 Friends of Milton
 Friends of Mont Alto
 Friends of Mt. Pisgah
 Friends of Nockamixon
 Friends of Nolde Forest
 Friends of Ohiopyle
 Friends of Oil Creek
 Friends of Parker Dam
 Friends of Pinchot
 Friends of Pine Grove Furnace
 Friends of Prince Gallitzin
 Friends of Ridley Creek
 Friends of Ryerson Station
 Friends of Shawnee
 Friends of Shikellamy
 Friends of State Line Serpentine Barrens
 Friends of Varden Conservation Area
 Friends of Weiser State Forest
 Friends of White Clay Creek
 Friends of Yellow Creek
 Laurel Mountain Volunteers

Friends' Greatest Accomplishments/Challenges

Every year, the Chapters' annual reports tell the story. Consistently, their most serious challenge is finding new members and volunteers. From helping at events, to cutting and stacking firewood (one of the most lucrative of those fundraisers) to maintaining a Facebook page or website, there is something for anyone to do! Through it ALL, they boast marvelous accomplishments:

- **Successful events** – fun runs, art and music, women in the outdoors days
- **Halloween and fall festivals** – showcases for the dynamic energy in each unique chapter
- **Amazing infrastructure projects** – trails and bridges, playgrounds, amphitheaters, benches, stairs and railings, gardens, boat launches and docks – the level of building expertise continues to amaze
- **Outreach and communications** – often the most challenging of the challenges for small groups, several chapters were able to launch successful regular newsletters, update (and in some cases create) an online presence, and appear at local community meetings and events to spread the message of the great work they do and the beauty and enjoyment to be found in their parks and forests.

Looking to get more involved? Find or help create a friends group near you!

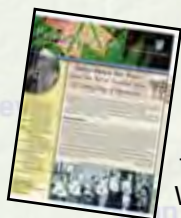
Photo credit: Marci Mowery



Retreats Strengthen Friends' Missions

Friends group leaders from across the state gathered twice in 2016 to share lessons, ideas, and to develop skills to improve fundraising, attract more volunteers, and to be a voice for our state parks and forests.





The Evolution of Recreation

In our summer 2016 newsletter's lead story, "*Miles Down the Trail: How Far We've Travelled Since the Early Days of Recreation*," we placed an emphasis on the fact that when it comes to enjoying the outdoors – fashion and equipment might change – but the fun is timeless! We took a look at the early days of activities such as hiking, bicycling and canoeing and how they evolved and grew in popularity over the years in our state parks and forest.

Inspiring Outdoor Play

The value of play – and the value of play outside – is an ingrained part of the Foundation's mission. Playgrounds are often the first exposure a young family has to our state parks and forests, and seasoned park users see them as a safe and valuable part of their summer camping or beach getaway. In 2016, new playgrounds popped up like wildflowers across the state through the efforts of friends groups:

Caledonia • Canoe Creek • Oil Creek • Pinchot • Shikellamy



And let's not forget Natural Play areas, which reconnect children to nature by encouraging imaginative play using items found in nature, such as the play area at Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center, supported by the Friends of Nolde Forest.



Photo credit: Friends of Shikellamy State Park

Photo credit: Chickadee Nature Discovery Area

Funding Helped Restore Rare Ecosystem

The restoration of the State Line Serpentine Barrens had help in 2016 through support from the McLean Contributionship and donors like you!

Working with PPFF, the friends group received funding to purchase new equipment to restore this rare ecosystem.



Stewards of Penn's Woods Kick Off

In 2016 the Stewards of Penn's Woods program was launched for people and businesses interested in stewardship of our state forest land. Be it litter removal



Photo credit: DCNR

or trail maintenance, these collective efforts improve the visitor's experience and protect our environment. The program kicked off with work days in the Michaux and Cornplanter state forests. Volunteers removed more than 150 bags of trash, 18 tires, miscellaneous metal, a swing set, a crock pot and cinder blocks.

Sharing Expertise

Working closely with state parks and forests, and the hundreds of volunteers that engage with them, provides the Foundation with an on-the-ground perspective that comes in handy during advisory meetings. PPFF sits on the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Technical Advisory Committee where we are working to advance the goals of the plan; on the Recreation Advisory Committee; and with Get Outdoors Pennsylvania where we are a Flagship Partner.



Graffiti Busters

Like you, we at the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation believe that our state parks and forests need to both be and be perceived as being safe and inviting. Unfortunately, tagging and party areas impact our interaction with the natural world. With the help of DCNR, PPFF identified 37 hotspots of graffiti on our public lands across the state. Volunteers – a.k.a. Graffiti Busters – took on a few of these spots in 2016, beginning with the largest location, Hammonds Rocks in Michaux State Forest. More than 6,500 square feet of graffiti covered this 500 million year old rock outcropping. The Graffiti Busters next took on Beam Rocks and Cove Rock in Forbes State Forest. With the help of volunteers and 40 students from the University of Pittsburgh, more layers of paint were removed. Your donations helped to make these areas enjoyable places for families to explore once again.



"I am appreciative that you were willing to share with the audience the problem of graffiti affecting our state parks and associated natural resources."

– Katie Hess, South Mountain Partnership Director

Staff and Volunteer Training Improve Visitor Experience

In 2016, empowered state park and forest volunteers learned new skills in workshops focusing on chainsaw safety, trail maintenance, and food safety. Funded through private donations, a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and through the Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society, these workshops improve the visitor experience while conserving our natural resources.



Plein Air Art

Does nature inspire your artistic side? With the

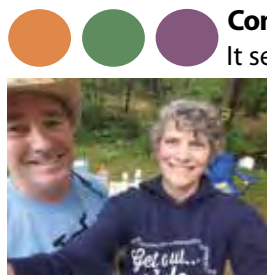


help of many, the first Plein Air Art Event captured the beauty of Hammonds Rocks. Artists of all styles – from painting to photography to poetry – were invited to come out to capture the beauty of the area. Now THAT is painting in nature that we can support!

Photo credit: Amanda Trimmer

Connecting Through Social Media

It seems like everyone is on social media these days ... and so are you! Lovers of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests significantly increased our followers on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in 2016. These platforms offer ways to share photos, information, and action alerts from our end, and allow you to share snapshots of your visits to our state parks and forests. In addition to the PPFF social media accounts, search for PPFF President Marci on Twitter and Instagram. *Have a favorite friends group? Bet you can find them on Facebook!*





Embracing the Good Ol' Days of Outdoor Play

"Coming Full Circle: Creating Natural Playgrounds," was the lead story in our fall 2016 newsletter, and reminded us of the good ol' days when kids grew up playing outside all day – getting dirty and having fun. Fortunately, natural playgrounds are popping up throughout our state parks and forests, igniting the concept of natural play among the younger generations (and older generations, as well) and bringing them back to nature and the joys and wonders of playing outdoors.



Gateway Community Initiative

Simply put, a gateway community is any community next to public lands. The goal of

the Gateway Community Initiative is to make sure the state parks and forests and the communities that are the "gateway" to them form an unbreakable partnership for the benefit of both. For example, towns near a state park or forest can introduce a region's heritage and history through attractions, museums, and events. Thanks to a grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, PPFF supported this effort in 2016 by launching a Gateway Community project in Ligonier, in the heart of the Laurel Highlands. Working with a team of civic and municipal leaders and directors from Linn Run and Laurel Ridge state parks and Forbes State Forest, the Foundation helped develop:

- Marketing materials
- Enhanced websites
- A new regional map
- A mobile-based walking tour
- Vehicular signage
- Open houses for community

Learn more by visiting our website at: www.PaParksAndForests.org/initiatives/gateway-communities



REI Funds PPFF Projects

Recreation Equipment Incorporated, or REI as many of us know them, supported two projects through the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation in 2016. The first provided funds to interpret the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the Forbes State Forest. The second, provided for native tree and shrub plantings around the newly constructed amphitheater (also funded by REI), at Shawnee State Park.

Amphitheater Restoration

Thanks to the Friends of Prince Gallitzin, who invested time, money (\$24,000), and energy, the park amphitheater underwent a complete overhaul with the restoration of benches, lighting, new concrete flooring, and landscaping. This huge undertaking also included improving the drainage around the structure for long-term viability.



Infographics Make Big Impact

Eye-catching and powerful, an infographic is an increasingly popular way to convey a message. PPFF produced several in 2016 on subjects like the economic benefits of the parks and forests and the health benefits of volunteering (the perfect intersection of our diverse mission).



Photo credit: Dot Monahan, M.K. Goddard State Park



Light on Screen, Heavy on Outdoors

With school-free summer days, it seems like a daunting task to find something for kids to do with their time. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a maximum of one to two hours of screen time daily for children over the age of two, but the average American child spends 40 hours a week in front of some kind of screen. That's more time using electronics than anything other than sleep! "Light on Screen, Heavy on the Outdoors" provided online (yes, we realized the irony of this!) offered fun ideas of outdoor activities to help limit screen time without too much of a fight from kids. Families were flying kites and playing "kick the can" all over the Commonwealth!



PPFF Becomes EarthShare Member



EarthShare, a nationwide network of the most respected environmental and conservation charities in the U.S., recently named Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation as a new benefiting member. As one of EarthShare's newest members, PPFF will be participating in employee engagement and workplace giving programs across Pennsylvania and across the country so employees can easily support Pennsylvania's state parks and forests through their workplaces. **We are very excited to be invited to participate in the 2017 SECA Campaign!**



Winter Trail Grooming

In December, Friends of Oil Creek hosted their Annual Ski Swap and kicked off another year of cross country ski grooming on the park's lovely trail system. Their hard work benefits skiers and hikers who use the trails throughout the winter.



Little Tinicum Island Clean-Ups

Located in the Delaware River, Little Tinicum Island provides a unique habitat for a wide variety of plants and birds. Sadly, it also serves as a strainer, capturing litter and debris that floats down the Delaware onto its banks. Illegal activity, such as the construction of structures and placement of camps, also detracts from the wildness of this special environment. Volunteers took to the island twice in 2016 to gather debris, removing more than 20,000 pounds between the two clean-ups!



"With great appreciation Ocean Conservancy recognizes Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation for outstanding and dedicated service to the International Coastal Cleanup and commitment to achieving trash free seas."

— Andreas Merkl, CEO, Ocean Conservancy



Patriots Day

Complete with bagpipe music, Friends of Mt. Pisgah hosted their Third Annual Patriots in the Park celebration in September 2016.



Promoting Parks and Forests

Communities large and small across the commonwealth benefit from their proximity to state parks and forests. To spread this message, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation and key partners attended the annual Association of Chamber Executives meeting in State College. Joined by our partners at REI, Penn State (economics of parks and forests), state parks and forests, and Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society, the three days included ample opportunity to interact and discuss our parks and forests.



Photo credit: Marc Mowery

EITC Tax Credit Program

Businesses looking to support environmental education through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program may donate to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, an educational improvement organization.



Photo credit: DCNR

Kids on a field trip to Nolde Forest for One Bird-Two Habitats, an environmental education program that teaches how changes in our ecosystems impact migratory birds, which is made possible thanks to the EITC Tax Credit Program.

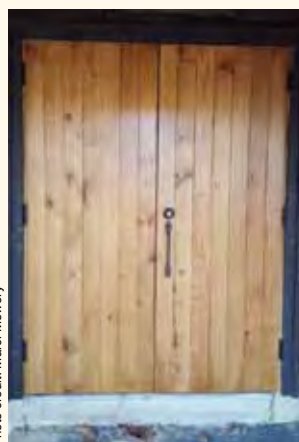


Photo credit: Marc Mowery



Photo credit: Marc Mowery

Restoration of CCC Structures

The craftsmanship of the maintenance staff at Laurel Hill State Park and the skills of a local mason contributed to the restoration process of the group of Civilian Conservation Corps Camps at Laurel Hill State Park. With your support and a grant from the Allegheny Foundation, the public will soon be able to experience the camps in new ways.

"Thank you for another spectacular Parks and Forests Foundation Banquet. Everyone we spoke to enjoyed the evening. It was a superb celebration. It has been an honor to serve on the Board of Directors of PPFF under your outstanding leadership."

—William C. Forrey

2016 PPFF Banquet Winners

• Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award • Rob Wonderling

Rob Wonderling has dedicated much of his career as a public servant – from his tenure as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Transportation in the Ridge administration to his time as a state senator to his current role as President of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia. Most fitting about Rob receiving this award is that he came to PPFF's board in 2006 at the invitation of Cliff Jones himself.

• Ibberson Government Award • Penn Nursery

Named after William Penn, Penn Nursery and Wood Shop is located on a 330-acre facility in the Seven Mountains Region. In addition to producing more than a million bare seedlings annually for use on state forest lands, it also recently produced 600 picnic tables which will be used on state forest and park lands across Pennsylvania.

Note: In fall 2016, Penn Nursery became the Mira Lloyd Dock Resource Conservation Center.

• President's Award • Greenwood Furnace State Park Complex

From the glistening beach waiting for visitors to the newly created warming hut for winter recreationists – evidence of the care given by the crew at Greenwood State Park Complex abounds. This includes a new rustic stone wall built for improved day use parking at Whipple Dam Beach and improvements made to the Whipple Lakeside Trail.

• Park of the Year Award • Gifford Pinchot State Park

Maintaining a 2,338-acre full-service park is no small undertaking even in the best of conditions. With key personnel changes, the 2015 season presented many challenges to park staff at Gifford Pinchot State Park. Nevertheless, they continued to provide exceptional services to the park visitors, setting an example of true teamwork.

• Forest of the Year • Tuscarora State Forest

Dedicated to ensuring the long-term health of its 96,006 acres, Tuscarora State Forest enjoys a vibrant forest management operation. This includes operating its own recycling program, assisting in the documentation of golden eagles in Pennsylvania and restoring many of its Civilian Conservation Corps-era bridges and culverts.

• Volunteerism Education • Pam Karhan

Cherry Springs State Park's excellent astronomy programming is due in great part to Pam Karhan's contribution as a volunteer. A dedicated member of the park's Dark Sky Team, she assists environmental education specialists with Night Sky programming, operates telescopes, and guides visitors around the park's star filled skies.

• Volunteerism Improvement • Ridge Runners

Running just over 70 miles from the Youghiogheny Gorge near Ohiopyle to the Conemaugh Gorge near Johnstown, the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail (LHHT) represents the best of Western Pennsylvania scenery and terrain. Likewise, the Ridge Runners represent the best in trail volunteerism. This dedicated group tackles everything from trail re-routing around sensitive areas to erosion control to footbridge replacement.

• Volunteerism, Individual • Stephen Smetana

An active volunteer with Nesciopeck State Park since the 1990s, Stephen Smetana logs approximately 350 hours of service annually by participating in numerous projects throughout the park which include maintaining, repairing, and monitoring wood duck boxes, assisting with guided hikes, and sharing his interest in GPS and geocaching.

• Volunteerism, Group • The S.O.N.S. (Save Our Native Species) of Lake Erie

Organized in 1981, The S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie helps conserve and protect Lake Erie's natural resources through programming and providing funds to improve fishing opportunities for visitors. Their efforts have included donating over 100 fishing poles and equipment to Presque Isle State Park, helping construct over 300 fish habitat structures, and funding several Eagle Scout projects.



Penn Nursery



Ridge Runners



Stephen Smetana



S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie



ExtraGive

This year you gave extra for the ExtraGive and Giving Tuesday! Thanks to Appalachian Brewing Company in Lititz for featuring a Smokey Bear Burger. We will be visiting there again for the 2017 ExtraGive.

Moving Ahead with Grateful Appreciation

Continuing the legacy of our state parks and forests depends upon the time, talent, and financial support of people like you. Our work does not happen in a vacuum. We listen to your needs, we react to changing events, and we constantly monitor threats to our state parks and forests. While we try to thank each of you throughout the year for your support, know that we are always grateful for your commitment to keeping our parks and forests award-winning gems for today and future generations. We applaud your willingness to speak up with passion for conserving our state lands, and for rolling up your sleeves to help where it is needed. We are proud to work with you and to call you our friend and donor.

To protect individual privacy, we do not list all of our donors.

We would like to recognize the following foundations, government grants, and corporate supporters:

Business/Corporate Donors

Adept Consulting
AT & T
Buchanan, Ingersoll and Rooney
Canoe Susquehanna
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia
Columbia Kettleworks
Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association
Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau
Dawood Engineering
Dominion
Eddie Bauer
Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park
George Ely Associates
Graphics and Design
Integrity Bank

Langan Engineering & Environmental Services
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau
Mushroom Festival
Penn Cumberland Garden Club
Pennsylvania Cleanways/Keep PA Beautiful
SAP America
Saul Ewing
Somerset Trust Company
S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie
South Mountain Partnership
Stahl Sheaffer Engineering
Stell Environmental Enterprises, Inc.
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Williams
Woolrich

Foundations/Grants

Alexander Stewart, MD Foundation
Fayette County Tourism
Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds
Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation
National Road Heritage Corridor
New Belgium Brewing Company
Pennsylvania American Water
Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society
PNC Bank
Recreation Equipment Incorporated, REI
The Foundation for Enhancing Communities

Government

Department of Community and Economic Development
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

As well as all of our fabulous silent auction donors.

Planned Giving

What do you see when you imagine the future? At the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation we see a world where people of all ages are leading happier and healthier lives through access to parks and forests. And we know the way we plan today is what builds the future of tomorrow.

As a friend of Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation (PPFF), you can help us plan better through Planned Giving. Planned Gifts make it possible for you to significantly impact the future even if you don't consider yourself rich. *And there's more good news—some gifts can be made without any cost to you today.*

Planned Gifts provide a way for you to:

- Name PPFF as a beneficiary under your will or trust. It can be a specific percentage or a dollar amount.
- Include PPFF as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy your family no longer needs.
- Add PPFF as the beneficiary of a retirement account (*which could possibly save your loved ones in estate or inheritance taxes!*).
- Donate a gift of cash or stock now and receive guaranteed income for life. (*Seriously. Income for life. It's called a Charitable Gift Annuity.*)

These gifts require only a minimal amount of paperwork, but they make a maximum impact. Contact us to learn how to build the future you imagine through the plan you make today or visit www.PPFFConservationLegacySociety.org.

Making a Difference, Together

In 2015, through public input, PPFF identified the barriers that prevent people from visiting our state parks and forests. The number one barrier? Transportation. To combat this, PPFF received a challenge grant from The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) out of Harrisburg. **For every three new dollars raised in 2017, TFEC will donate one dollar towards a fund that we've established to provide bussing scholarships for schools, community groups, and senior centers for active programming in our state parks and forests.**



Photo credit: Kristin Holland



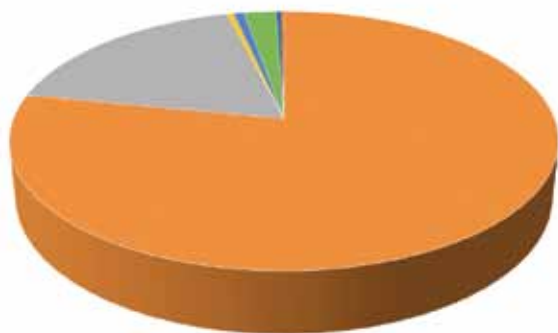
Photo credit: Brian M. Hare



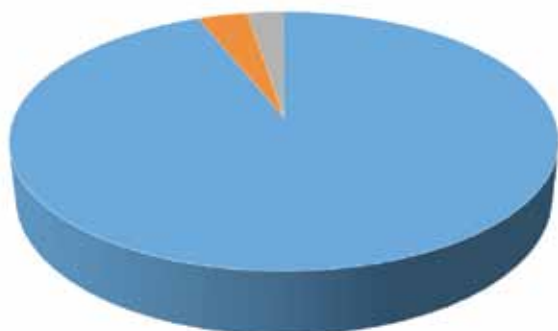
Photo credit: Claire Kaczmarek

2016 FINANCIALS

- Contributions
- Grants
- Friends Groups
- Passport Sales
- Project Administration
- Programs
- Investments
- Net Realized Gain
- Other



- Program Services
- Fundraising
- General and Administration



Support and Revenue 2016 for PPFF, Friends Groups, and Park/Forest Projects

- Contributions (restricted and unrestricted)\$835,261
- Grant Income (project restricted)\$192,129
- Friends Group Fees\$4,640
- Passport Sales\$8,065
- Project Administration\$23,615
- Programs.....\$3,400
- Investment Income\$2,098
- Net Realized Gain on Stock- \$414
- Other Revenue.....\$3,887
- **Total \$1,072,681**

EXPENSES

- Program Services\$1,179,689
 - Friends Groups
 - Park and Forest Needs List
 - Photo Contest
 - Stewards of Penn's Woods
 - Outreach/Education/Events
 - Constituent Programs
 - Conservation Heritage Project
 - Accessibility/Barriers Removal
- Fundraising\$44,139
- General and Administration\$32,259
- **Total Expenses \$1,256,087**

The complete audited financial statement for the year ending December 31, 2016 is available by contacting Marci Mowery at mmowery-ppff@pa.net.

Funding for the annual report is made possible through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Community Conservation and Partnerships Program.

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Photo Credit: Friends of Ohiopyle State Park

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PENNSYLVANIA
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FOUNDATION

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Photo Credit: Friends of Lyman Run State Park

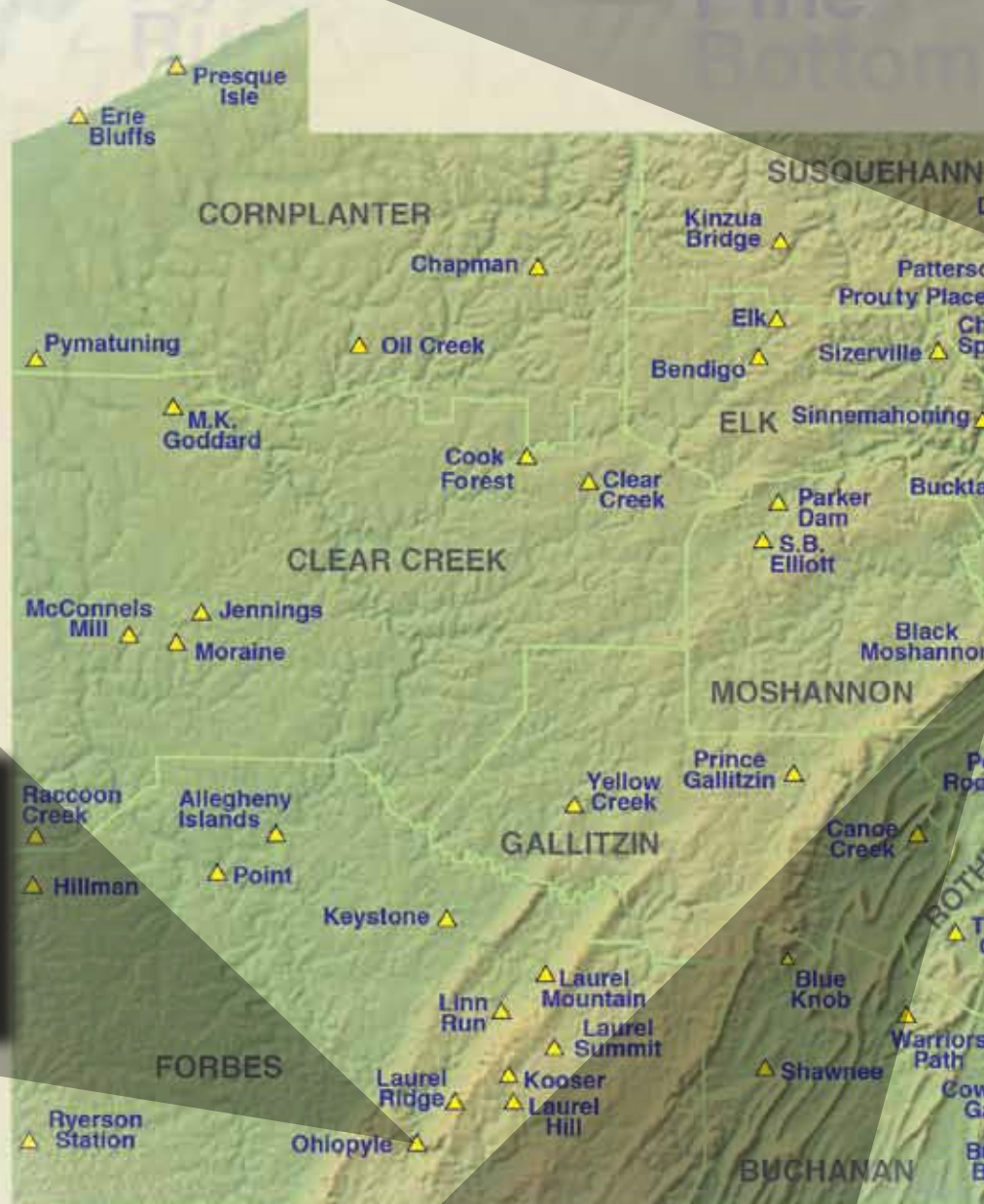


Photo Credit: Friends of Black Moshannon State Park