



PENN'S STEWARDS

News from the Pennsylvania Parks
and Forests Foundation

Fall 2008

State Parks are Going Green—Kristen Hand, DCNR

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Bureau of State Parks has recently embarked on a "Green Parks" initiative to analyze individual park's carbon footprints while also improving habitat. Sounds great, but how are the parks doing it and how will this affect your park experience? And what is a carbon footprint?

Carbon Footprints

According to the website *carbonfootprint.com*, a carbon footprint is a measure of the impact our activities have on the environment, and in particular, climate change. It relates to the amount of greenhouse gases produced in our day-to-day lives through burning fossil fuels for electricity, heating and transportation. To calculate a carbon footprint, we add together our personal use of fossil fuel, such as for home heating, along with fuel used to produce the goods and services that we utilize, like this computer at which I type.

A few of the parks leading the way in this effort to incorporate green practices are Yellow Creek, Prince Gallitzin, and Black Moshannon. Yellow Creek State Park was the first designated green state park. The designation means that the park underwent a pilot climate survey to identify sources of carbon emission. The information is then used to modify visitor patterns and overall park management to reduce the carbon footprint.

Land Management

To begin, green parks incorporate land management practices that cut back on excessive mowing and encourage native grasslands and meadow habitat. While to the uninformed eye these may seem like neglected fields, in actuality they provide desperately needed habitat for birds such as juncos, towhees, and several species of sparrow. Less mowing also means lower carbon emissions.

Camp site rehabilitation, another tool, creates more natural environments, that screen campers while providing cover for birds and other wildlife. These natural spaces encourage native plant species on which wildlife depends and increases storm water infiltration. Rehabilitation has the added bonus of keeping your neighbors from walking through your campsite on the way to

the bathroom. Once established, native campsite buffers take less time to maintain, are friendlier to the environment, and free staff to spend time enhancing other facilities and trails. For example, Prince Gallitzin State Park has a bike trail that circles the campground and is perfect for any avid 10 year old with a BMX bike looking for some excitement.

Conserving Energy



Windmill installed at Prince Gallitzin State Park helps to reduce the park's annual electric costs.

Photo: Prince Gallitzin State Park

Energy conservation in park buildings provides another avenue for reducing carbon emissions. Black Moshannon State Park has gone to great lengths to study their buildings by conducting energy audits. Audits lead to energy saving measures, decreased consumption through proper energy management and upgraded technology. Even the bathrooms at Black Moshannon are "green." By using motion sensors tied to the lighting and heating system you are guaranteed to have a pleasant bathroom experience whether it is the middle of the day or 4 o'clock in the morning. Energy star appliances, compact fluorescent bulbs, low flow water devices, sky lights, and heat recovery ventilators make these facilities state of the art in green technology without losing any of their rustic charm.

Not only is saving energy beneficial to the environment, it can result in savings that can be used to improve the park for visitors. In 1999, the annual cost for electric service at Prince Gallitzin was averaging \$90,000 per year. In 2008, annual electric costs dropped to \$56,000 a year. Much of these cost savings can be attributed to an electrical conservation ethic established at the park by Chief Treatment Plant Operator Don Yeagle. Don made it his mission to learn where the park was wasting energy and worked with the utility company to lower costs for seasonally used buildings. The park staff have recognized Don as a real innovator and motivator, and that's why he is known as "Doctor Kilowatt!" Each morning Don records electric output from the 10 Kilowatt windmill and 2 Kilowatt solar panel to verify proper operation. Since installation in May of 2007, the windmill reduced electrical consumption at the park office by 24%. The most rewarding aspect of energy savings for park staff is

—Continued on page 6

From the President—Marci Mowery

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Marci Mowery

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The newsletter is published by the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation. To be added to the mailing list, or to comment, contact Marci Mowery at mmowery-ppff@pa.net.

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I don't want to be the one to say it, but Kermit the Frog was wrong when he said "It isn't easy being green." Perhaps he meant the color, not living by conservation principles, as today, many individuals embrace the process of being green.

Like the color green, there are many shades of conservation—from simple steps like turning off the water while you brush your teeth to purchasing locally grown foods to driving a hybrid vehicle. Every step, no matter the shade, positively influences not only the health of the planet, but human health, as well.

This issue of Penn's Stewards is dedicated to conservation. It starts by looking at what state parks and state forests are doing to protect and conserve resources and wraps up with ideas that you might try at home. In reading the following pages, you will find that conservation doesn't mean giving up what you enjoy. In fact, by simplifying our lives, we often find a renewed sense of spirit and a connection to the earth and each other.

As you read on, you may find information that surprises you in a newsletter from an organization dedicated to our state parks and forests. Why would we be talking about "Buying Fresh, Buying Local", when it comes to your food purchases? How does supporting local artisans protect state parks and forests? Read on to learn how these

activities, and more, can help make Pennsylvania a better place to live, to work, and to play.

This year, in honor of being green, consider giving a monetary donation to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation in the name of a friend or loved one as a holiday gift. We will send the gift recipient a card on your behalf. Your donation will support the creation of new friends groups, whose efforts are conserving and protecting our state parks and state forests. Learn more about the work of friends groups in the story on page 4.

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, I want to express my appreciation to staff at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for their tireless efforts to manage parks and forests for all to enjoy, while protecting the natural resources we all hold dear. I would like to express my gratitude to the countless volunteers who give of themselves to make our parks and forests better. I want to thank the Pennsylvania General Assembly for continuing to see the value of our state parks and forests. Finally, a thank you to you, our supporters and friends, for believing in the work of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation. Together, we are making a difference.

My best to you this autumn and during the approaching holiday season.

Yours in the Outdoors

—Marci

President's Pick—Recipe

Breakfast Couscous—Serves 6

At home, mix in sealable bag:

- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar or honey
- 1/4 cup walnuts, almonds, sunflower seeds or other nuts
- 2 tablespoons powdered milk
- ¼ cup raisins, dates, dried apricots, dried apples or other fruit chopped
- 2 cups couscous
- 2 T butter flakes (found in the spice section of your grocery store)
- ½-1 teaspoon cinnamon
- dash of nutmeg

On Trail:

- 4 cups water
- Bring water to a boil and add remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. When water is gone and mixture has fluffed up, it is ready to serve.

We are pleased to welcome John Eastlake as a regular contributor to this column. John is a retired Forester who worked in Idaho and the Tiadaghton State Forest here in Pennsylvania.

This October 19th marks the Anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps Pepper Hill Fire, a terrible tragedy.

This arson fire occurred in a very remote and rugged area of Cameron County, in the Elk State Forest, on October 19, 1938. The Pepper Hill fire was one of several that was started along Route 872, about 4 miles SW of Sinnemahoning State Park. The CCC camp at Hunts Run (S-132) had been alerted and sent two crews to the area. One of the crews was led by Gilbert Mohney, a PA Department of Forest and Waters foreman. There were 22 CCC boys in his crew.

Unfortunately, everything went wrong with the fire. A sudden wind change forced the fire behind the crew. The very steep terrain and a side hollow acted as a chimney and Mohney plus seven of the CCC boys perished. The 14 other boys escaped by running uphill and skirting the header. Some of them climbed trees, three climbed a rock and one ran downhill through the fire.

He was burned badly, but survived. Ironically, it rained hard that night and put the fire out.

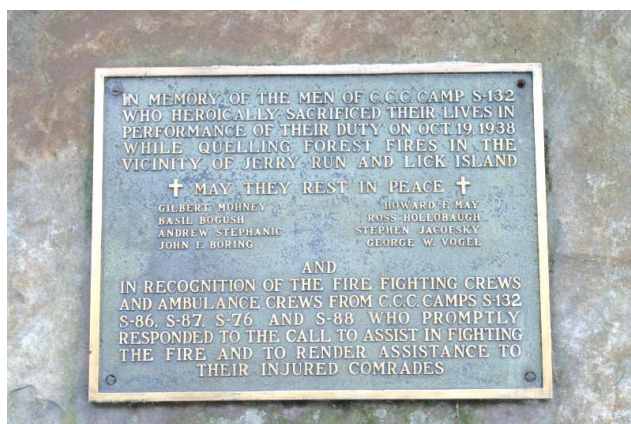
The three fellows who had survived by being on the rock all had the first name of Andrew. I have been able to find and talk to two of these fellows. The first was Andrew Shenal of Adah, PA, who said that “somebody” helped him up on the rock by extending the handle of a fire fighting tool. The next day, I got lucky and found the “somebody”, Andrew Majorsky of Latrobe, PA. He said that he was the first one on the rock and had extended a brush axe. The third fellow was Andrew Gaydos. I have not been able to locate him yet.

Several generations of the Majorsky family have an interest in what their Father and Grandfather had done.

Andrew’s son, also Andrew, was listed in the computer white pages. The CCC Andrew had a cell phone and wasn’t listed, but his boy connected us. His daughter, Lisa Majorsky, looked the Pepper Hill Fire up on the internet. It’s up to the next generations to keep this CCC Legacy alive.

Andrew Majorsky now has Andrew Shenal’s phone number and that will have to be a great reunion!

The Bureau of Forestry just recently found the rock at Pepper Hill and constructed a trail to it. They call it the Survivors Rock.



The Wayside Memorial, just several miles SE of Emporium on Route 120 pays tribute to the CCCers. Photo: John Eastlake

Give a Gift that Lasts a Lifetime...and Beyond!

What better way to honor the memory of a loved one, mark a special milestone or celebrate a holiday, than to make a gift to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation!

PPFF is the premier foundation supporting Pennsylvania’s parks and forests. Establishing friends groups, engaging people in outdoor recreation, education and volunteerism are just a few of the ways your gift will help us to continue to build a culture of stewardship for our public lands.

For a gift of \$25 or more, the recipient will receive a letter stating the gift was made in their name (or to the family in memory of a loved one), along with a State Park collector pin.

To give a gift, make your check payable to PPFF and send along with the attached form to:

PPFF, 105 N. Front Street, Suite 305
Harrisburg, PA 17101

This gift is from:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

My gift is to recognize the following individual(s):

This gift is given (please circle one):

In honor or memory of; a birthday gift or anniversary;
celebrating a holiday; or other _____

The gift card should be sent to the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Spotlight on Friends of Colonel Denning

Colonel Denning State Park



Fall sets in at Doubling Gap Lake at Colonel Denning State Park. Photo: Judi Fasick, Friends of Colonel Denning

Located in north central Cumberland County, Colonel Denning State Park encompasses 273 acres of woodland and sits in what is known as "Doubling Gap" — the "S" turn where Blue Mountain doubles back on itself. It is also adjacent to the Tuscarora State Forest where you can view the "S" turn from the Doubling Gap Vista.

The park was named for Sergeant William Denning — an American Revolution veteran who became known for his wrought iron cannon design which was manufactured at Washingtonburg Forge (now Carlisle Barracks) just outside of Carlisle, PA. His design produced a cannon that was less likely to fail during firing than the traditional iron cast models. No one knows by whom, or when, the designation of "Colonel" was added to his name. Denning lived out his life near Newville, PA and is interred at Big Springs Presbyterian Church. The monument at his grave site reads: "Blacksmith and Forger of Wrought Iron Cannon."

Colonel Denning became an official state park in 1936. Like most of Pennsylvania's state parks, it was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps after being first developed as a state recreation area in 1930.

Numerous recreational activities are available including swimming in the 3.5-acre Doubling Gap Lake and hiking on the 18 miles of trails.

—continued on page 5

Stepping up to Bat

In May, while the Friends of Colonel Denning were having a work day, our Park Manager, Brett Fromm, told us that we had lost our EIT. This is our environmental educator who works at the park during the camping season and who coordinates all the public programs. Needless to say, we were all dismayed at the thought of not having the programs that our campers and local residents so enjoy and look forward to each summer.

We decided on the spot that we would not let this happen. Most of the Friends are

also Camp Ground Hosts from June thru August—a volunteer job that has its own set of responsibilities. *However, we were going to make sure that Colonel Denning had programs this summer!*

The friends worked together to see who could fill in and we came up with a plan. Jim and Shelley Ryan, along with their two children, hosted in June. Shelley called previous speakers and arranged to have two each month. They also had games, movies, and crafts for the campers. Sam and Judi Fasick handled activities for July and also had games, movies, and crafts, along with a visit from Smokey Bear during the 4th of July weekend. On the two weekends with no scheduled speakers, Sam and Judi did their own program on wilderness first aid. Next up were the August camp hosts, George and Doris Stewart, who also had games, movies, and crafts, with the Fasicks providing another first aid program. Paul and Phylis Gipe, who are almost always in residence at the park, helped to cover sales of firewood and ice when the current hosts were not present. They are tireless workers, and also helped with the programs.

Needless to say, it was a busy summer! We were doing all this on top of our

regular hosting duties and while running a booming business of firewood and ice sales for the Friends. It is hard, seemingly never ending work, but that is what the Friends group is all about—working together to make the visitors experience a positive and memorable one so that they return again. The thanks and appreciation shown by the campers and the Park Manager makes it all worth while!

Fire and Ice

The Friends of Colonel Denning started selling firewood in June, 2007. The wood comes from downed trees in the park and

two Friends donated the use of their splitters, making the sales of almost \$1000.00 last year, all profit.

This year, we were able to purchase our own splitter through the PPFF grant program and outside donations solicited by our Treasurer, Doris

Stewart. Doris put together a presentation package for prospective donors, highlighting the importance of keeping foreign wood out of the park to prevent the movement of exotic pests.

With a successful firewood sales program underway, Shelley Ryan worked on getting ice sales established. She found a local merchant and we purchased a used, slightly dented ice machine. With the profit from the ice sales, we have already made back our investment!

Enhancing and Conserving

On Earth Day this year the Friends planted 40 trees which we purchased for the Park. We also planted other trees and plants that we received for helping PPFF with the Garden Expo in Harrisburg last March.

The Friends and the Park are working on refurbishing the Nature Pond located by the nature center. We'd like to add a small



Without their seasonal educator on-hand this summer, the Friends stepped in to provide programs and activities for campers and other park visitors. Photo: Judi Fasick

waterfall and fountain, put in a circulating pump, and surround it with native plants. We are working on getting an estimate and plan from a professional and then will apply for a grant from PPFF to help cover some of the costs. Our goal is to get the project underway by next spring.



Smokey Bear stops for a photo with the Friends of Colonel Denning during Community Days.
Photo: Judi Fasick

Since we were founded, we helped to install a handicap-accessible fishing pier requested by a family whose father was handicapped and loved to fish there. The project got underway, but unfortunately the father passed away before it was completed. The family had covered the expenses of building the pier, and in lieu of flowers, they requested donations be sent to the Friends group or the family's church. We received \$350 in memorial contributions which we then used to purchase a bench that now sits near the pier.

Raising Awareness

For the past three years, the Friends hosted a craft show. Last year, we combined it with environmental education and had the Fish Commission, Smokey Bear, crafts for kids with our naturalist, and the local fire

company. We've been able to promote the group by providing information about the friends at various events like the annual Community Day held at the park. We also continue to raise funds by selling the park tags and our Friends group t-shirts.

The Friends look forward to many prosperous years, and many more projects for the Park. If we can be of any assistance to other Friends Groups with information or advice, please contact us at:

fasick@embarqmail.com.

—Judi Fasick, Secretary, Friends of Colonel Denning State Park, contributed this article.



The Fasick's at the PPFF booth at the Garden Expo in Harrisburg. Photo: Ellen Zeph

PPFF thanks the Friends of Colonel Denning for their annual help at the Harrisburg Garden Expo! We invite other friends groups to come and take part in this event, but we are also looking for any and all volunteers who can help build and staff the exhibit. Call the PPFF office (717) 236-7644 or email Marci Mowery, mmowery-ppff@pa.net if you would like to help. The 2009 Garden Expo is set for March 12-15 in Harrisburg.

You Can Help!

- ◆ **Volunteer** your time and expertise—join the Friends!
- ◆ **Support** the Friends by making a financial contribution.

To Make a Contribution

Make checks payable to PPFF (please write 'Colonel Denning State Park' in the memo line of your check) and mail to:

Sam and Judi Fasick, 150 Juniata Parkway East, Newport PA 17074

For more information: Contact Judi and Sam Fasick (717) 567-2013; (717)645-2056 or fasick@embarqmail.com

—Colonel Denning State Park, continued

The trailhead for the 105-mile Tuscarora Trail is located in the park.

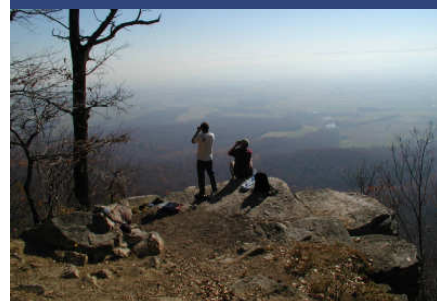


Photo: Audubon PA

For a spectacular scenic vista of the Cumberland County valley, take the Flat Rock trail out to Flat Rock (photo above).

During designated seasons, you can fish for trout on the lake and hunting is allowed on many acres of the park during established seasons.

If it is camping that you enjoy, there is a 52-site tent and trailer campsite available for rustic camping. Day visitors can take advantage of over 200 picnic tables, charcoal grills (available in some areas), and two picnic pavilions that may be reserved up to one year in advance. A concession stand sits below the beach at the lake and sells refreshments on weekends and summer holidays from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

During the winter, cross country skiing is allowed on existing road and trails, and weather permitting, there is ice skating on the lake.

A visitor center is open during the summer months and features exhibits about plants, animals and minerals that are found in the park. A variety of programs, walks, and youth activities are offered for visitors during the camping season.

You can find more information about Colonel Denning State Park at visitPaParks.com.

Simple Ideas for Holiday Gift Giving

—*Marci Mowery*

Give the gift of time

Coupons for chores, tickets to see a play together, coupons for a lesson in how to make your world famous cookies, etc.

Give the gift of talent

What skills or talents do you have that you can share with others, such as teaching how to knit, appraising an antique, helping to navigate the computer, and more.

Give the gift of nature

Purchase state park gift certificates, plan an outing, purchase outdoor gear to encourage outdoor pursuits.

Give donations

In addition to making a donation to PPFF in the name of a family member or friend, there are many other non-profits that allow you to plant a tree, build a bridge, provide chickens, school supplies, etc.

Give from your kitchen

Create mixes, meat rubs, jams, jellies, salsa and more. There are many websites that provide creative ideas for gifts from the kitchen.

Check out these websites for more ideas:

Center for a New American Dream

www.newdream.org/holiday/index.php

Green Living Ideas

Greenlivingideas.com/gifts/green-giving.html

the public perception that we are doing our part as a state agency to conserve energy and lead the way.

New technology is also becoming available as companies try to keep pace with the desire for greener goods. Yellow Creek State Park recently purchased the first propane powered mower sold in the state. Manufactured by Envirogard and marketed by Krigger and Company in Gibsonia, PA, the mower uses North American propane fuel and burns cleaner and is much more fuel efficient than a regular mower. The park also installed a new Evinrude E-TEC boat motor on their patrol boat that uses less fuel and has ultra-low emissions.

Biodiesel fuel in park vehicles; smaller, more fuel efficient cars; and the use of hybrid vehicles are other steps taken to reduce impacts on the environment.

Green Construction

Visitors to several state parks might see new construction using green building practices.



Solar panels installed at Prince Gallitzen State Park.

Photo: Prince Gallitzen State Park.

The Tom Ridge Center at Presque Isle Park is state of the art and rates a Gold Certification rating from LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The visitor center at Ricketts Glen State Park uses a geothermal heat pump and recycled content materials.

The best part about many of the initiatives taken by parks is that you can easily incorporate them into your own home. Consider planting native flower beds in place of extended lawn. A home energy audit can cut back on heating bills. Check out the Energy Star website for some great tips on conserving

energy around the home. Refer to the article on the “Buy Fresh Buy Local” campaign to learn more about eating habits that benefit the environment (*see page 8*).

For more information on all of these topics and how you can take conservation personally log on to www.iconservepa.org. Just one step, whether large or small, can make a difference.

—*Dan Bickel, Chris Reese, and Ken Bisbee, of the DCNR, contributed to this article.*

‘Green’ Gift Giving—*Kristen Hand, DCNR*

The holiday season is right around the corner and I am one of those people that loves to shop for presents. I must admit it isn’t just the heart felt beauty of expressing my love for a person through a small material token—it is the ultimate hunting trip—the thrill of finding the coolest thing at the best price.

There is no denying it, I am a consumer. I try to fight the urge the rest of the year and be conscientious about buying what I need, but when it comes to the holiday season I cash in my brownies points and go shopping! The good news is that there are ways to shop green, and if you’ve never done it before, holiday shopping is the perfect excuse and a fine time to dive in.

There are four words in my green shopping

mantra: *Recycled, Local, Handmade, and Fair-trade.*

Recycled—Buying products made from recycled materials is SO important. Putting soda cans in the recycling bin is only part of the circle. We, as consumers, need to help close the loop. Glass sun catchers, jewelry and rubber mulch are all product that can be made out of recycled products. Check out Close the Loop at www.closesthe-loop.com for some great gift ideas.

Buy Local—Look for local artisans and craftsman for unique present, gift certificates to restaurants, or tickets to a play or museum. This helps the local economy while saving gas and cuts back on carbon emissions.

—*Continued on page 7*

Try Geocaching! Geo~what? The word comes from 'Geo' for earth, and 'cache' for a hiding place.

Never heard of geocaching? That's okay, as it is a young sport, started in 2000! Geocaching is a treasure hunt using the same satellite technology used in car navigation systems.

The 12 billion dollar system is provided, all you need is the hand held Global Positioning System (GPS). Units start for under \$100 and some can be used for car navigation and hiking. Geocaching is great family fun, and combines the use of computers, technology and the great outdoors.



Geocaching is fun for all ages. Photos: DCNR

To get started, buy or borrow a GPS unit. Next collect a few clues about your geocache. Enter a zip code at www.geocaching.com. I entered 15559 for Schellsburg and selected Annabelle's Cache in Shawnee State Park. Be prepared for a wide selection of geocaches, as the website listed over 600,000 options of various difficulty. Pick one that works for you and print. Enter the provided "lat/longs" into your GPS unit. This is the latitude and longitude of your geocache as listed on the cache's website. To learn how to do this, read the owner's manual OR attend a Get Outdoors PA program at a Pennsylvania state park or forest (the second choice is my preference).

Prepare for your adventure with good shoes and weather appropriate clothes, and tell

someone where you plan to go. Park your vehicle in a prominent location, and mark your parking spot, so that you can find your way back. Geocachers are helping to keep parks beautiful by collecting litter so take along a litter bag, water and some nibblin'crackers. And always take a map, compass, whistle, knife, and first aid kit.

Use your hand held GPS unit to "follow" the directional arrow to the hidden waterproof container or "cache."

When you are within 30 feet of the cache, don't depend only on the GPS unit, but use your eyes and clues provided to find

the container. Typical caches contain a log-book and "treasure," usually toys or items of nominal value—one rule, "Take some stuff. Leave some stuff." (When you return home you can also log your success into the website!)

This activity is more high tech navigation than the breadcrumbs left by Hansel and Gretel. It adds an element of fun and kids really enjoy it! Variations of this hide and seek activity exist and "virtual geocaches" have no waterproof container waiting for you to find, but you will find something like a great view, monument, waterfall, etc.

Geocaching merges high tech equipment with the valuable simple pleasure of time in the natural world, exploring things as you go along.

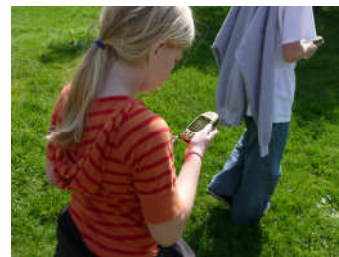
Find Out More

Visit the following websites for more information on geocaching.

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/geocaching.aspx>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geocaching>

<http://www8.garmin.com/outdoors/geocaching/>



—Gary Smith is the Regional Manager for State Parks Region 3, which encompasses southern Pennsylvania

'Green' Gift Giving—continued from page 6

Handmade—A gift of something made by hand is a great way to show someone you care. It is easy to find a variety of handmade gifts thanks to a great website called ETSY www.etsy.com.

Fair-Trade—If you have someone on your list with a flare for the eclectic, then fair-trade products are what you need. Fair-trade

products are gifts from across the globe with certification that it was bought and made using fair business practices. 10,000 Villages is a Pennsylvania based company that specializes in fair-trade products.

These are just a few ideas to start you down your green shopping path while having a great time indulging in guilt free holiday shopping.

Buy Fresh Buy Local: Linking Local Food, Farmland and Conservation—Susan Parry, Capital RC&D

For More Information

Visit www.buylocalpa.org to find a CSA, farmers' market, farm stand, or local food outlet near you and look for the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* trademark in your community.

For additional information regarding the Capital Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, contact the office at (717) 724-0009 or check out the website at www.capitalrcd.org

From concerns over food safety and childhood obesity, to support for family farmers and the environment, the “market” is growing for locally-produced foods. As residents of Pennsylvania, we are among some of the most fortunate in the country. We are surrounded by small family farms working hard to produce high quality foods that nourish us and tickle our taste buds. When we purchase locally-produced items, we do so much more than just feed ourselves and our families. We create a stronger local economy and support small farms so that they can remain in operation. We “vote” with our dollars. Plus, we help to preserve the beauty of open spaces in our communities.



Shopping for local produce at the seasonal Farmer's Market in Harrisburg.

Buy Fresh Buy Local is a national campaign of FoodRoutes Network to promote locally-grown foods and is led in the state by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA). In the south central region, the Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council is the project sponsor. “The Campaign envisions a future with more farmers working the land, resulting in vibrant and sustainable local communities in which fresh, delicious, local food is abundant and accessible to all” states Susan Richards, Program Manager for the Capital RC&D.

Each of the groups partnering in this effort has an interest in supporting agriculture in the state and reminds the public of the plentiful and delicious products available. According to the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* campaign, buying local provides a number of benefits, including: superior taste and freshness, stronger local economies, and a healthier environment through reducing fossil fuel usage and protecting open space. Most food consumed in the United States travels an average of between 1,500-2,500 miles from field to plate, resulting in approximately 120 million tons of carbon diox-

ide emissions each year. Buying locally produced foods, reduces fossil fuel dependence, carbon dioxide emissions and use of excessive packing materials.

Keeping local farms economically viable is critical to preserving beautiful landscapes in the rural areas (also known as “foodsheds”), surrounding towns and urban centers. When we make farming more profitable, we help to make selling farmland for development less attractive, ensuring that local land is utilized for farming well into the future.

Buying local keeps dollars circulating in your community and increases local food security. Getting to know the farmers who grow your food

builds relationships, which are the foundation of strong communities. With each local food purchase, you ensure that more of your money spent on food goes directly to local farmers. Another benefit of eating locally-produced food is the higher nutrient levels that can be retained in produce. As soon as fruits and vegetables are picked, they begin to degrade; nutrients are lost while our food is shipped to us!

Conservation and agricultural groups are beginning to create valuable partnerships to focus on the need for education and community outreach to raise the awareness about the value of conservation and its connection to our lives. The knowledge of where our food comes from can be quite empowering and can instill an intrinsic value to the land that we all cherish. We can also partner to bring back the corner grocery within the city that sells fresh rather than processed food.

This is a chance to make real, concrete change and to build the market for local foods: We invite you to become a member of the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* initiative, or start a campaign in your community today.

—*Written and adapted by Susan Parry, Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Coordinator*



Conserving Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens

Page 9

When is boulder more than a boulder? When it protects a rare serpentine ecosystem.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, working with the Bureau of Forestry, William Penn Forest District, the Friends of the Serpentine Barrens, and the staff and volunteers of Boy Scouts of America Camp John H. Ware, III and Camp Horseshoe, recently learned the value of boulders. Repeated encroachment by ATVs on sensitive serpentine lands at the Goat Hill Plant Sanctuary in southern Chester County, was accelerating erosion and destroying a fragile ecosystem. When we began looking at options to reduce access to the property, we learned that not just any boulder would do. Serpentine lands must maintain a tight pH balance in order to survive. Limestone boulders, the natural first option, could alter the

pH, thereby changing the character of the soil and plant community. We needed serpentine boulders.

Enter Penn/MD Materials, a local quarry who donated serpentine boulders. And enter with them, Stowe Landscaping, a company from Rising Sun, MD, who assisted volunteers and

staff in moving and placing the boulders in this first of several steps to reduce ATV encroachment.

To encourage more hiking, the Trail Care Crew from Keystone Trails Association worked during a very wet weekend to clear a trail researched by Friend of Serpentine Barrens volunteer Mike Bertram, working with District Forester Joe Frassetta. Additional

volunteers, working with BSA youth and adults, provided trail clearing, placed gates, and marked boundaries in late September.

Much can be accomplished when we work together.



Serpentine Boulders help deter ATV use on fragile lands at Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens in Chester County.
Photo: Joe Frassetta



Volunteers clear trails at Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens. Photo: Joe Frassetta



District Forester Joe Frassetta (left), PPF President Marci Mowery, and KTA Executive Director Kurt Ashenfelter take a break from trail building at Goat Hill. Photo: Dick Martin

Great Pa Outdoor Challenge

The first annual Great Pennsylvania Outdoor Challenge occurred between September 12 to September 30, 2008. The Challenge offered participants the opportunity to set a personal goal to help raise funds for state parks and forests, as well as build awareness of exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities available in Pennsylvania. The event, sponsored by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, and supported with prizes donated by Recreational Equipment, Inc, Commerce Bank, and Odwalla, was well received in this, it's first year.

We had 31 activities across the Commonwealth—star gazing parties, weekend kayaking trips, and geocaching were but a few of the adventures. Forty members of Montgomery County Boy Scout Troop # 98, hiked a portion

of the Conestoga Trail, stopping to perform a service project at Susquehanna State Park. The Lenker Family of Camp Hill biked 17 miles on the Stoney Creek Rail Trail. The Confluoizies of



Troop 98 resting after hiking on the Conestoga Trail as part of their GPOC. Photo: Bob Trejo

Confluence peddled the Great Allegheny Passage. The Design Devils out of State College participated in an assortment of activities. Chuck and Suzie Thomas kayaked three different locations, one each weekend. Funds were raised for the Foundation, for keeping the night skies dark, for

trail signs at a state forest, for Ohiopyle Friends Group and for Friends of MK Goddard. To learn more about the adventures, or to support one of the challenges, visit: www.firstgiving.com/ppff.

Set your calendars for 2009, for the second annual



Great Pennsylvania Outdoor Challenge. Can't come up with an idea for a challenge? Then join one of the planned events at a state park or a state forest. In 2009, we will be extending the dates of the challenge to encompass more weekends, as well as the 10 year anniversary of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation. Watch your spring newsletter for more details, or send your email address to mmowery-ppff@pa.net to be placed on the email list.

Elect to Conserve in October



Cast a vote for Pennsylvania Parks and Forests this fall! Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and its iConserve Pennsylvania initiative to build widespread interest in conservation and remind everyone, that as individuals, we play a

critical role in the future of Pennsylvania's natural resources. Our actions—whether large or small—make a difference.

As a unique promotional effort for the initiative, DCNR is hosting an online election where Pennsylvanians can select their favorite conservation cause to receive a \$5,000 cash prize. Five of iConservePA's founding PA iCons—real people doing real conservation—have been

selected to be candidates in the statewide election, each representing a different conservation cause and organization.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation is one of those organizations and our cause is stewardship as represented by **Norm LaCasse**, our candidate and we hope yours, too.

Go to www.iConservePA.org in October and cast your vote for Norm. Help PPFF win \$5,000, which we will use to establish more friends groups, and plant trees, making your parks and forests even better! When you vote, you'll be entered to win a Backyard Conservation package consisting of a Spruce Creek Rainsaver rain barrel and Tumbleweed composter courtesy of the Spruce Creek Company.

So remember, Norm's our man and voting closes on November 4!

Cherry Springs Receives Award

Stargazers and astronomers from far and wide gathered at Cherry Springs State Park to view the cosmos under unusually dark skies, said to be among the least light-polluted skies in all of Pennsylvania. The skies are dark not just because of the rural character of the area but also because of the effort of several dedicated people.

To recognize the work of these individuals, a presentation was made during the Black Forest Star Party on September 6, 2008. The Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council presented a plaque to Harry P. "Chip" Harrison, Park Operations Manager of the Hills Creek State Park Complex, and his wife, Maxine Harrison, Director of the Cherry Springs State Park Dark-Sky Fund Association.

The plaque recognized their steadfast adherence and active promotion of the principles of responsible outdoor lighting at Cherry Springs State Park, as contained in the Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide and promoted by the Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council.

The Harrisons have established and enforced standards in the park for low levels of glare-free lighting that operates only

when needed. They have worked with local legislators to get lighting ordinances passed and provided educational materials for use by residents and businesses in the vicinity. Their efforts were recently recognized by the International Dark-Sky Association in designating the Park as a Gold Tier International Dark-Sky Park, the first to be so designated in the U.S.

The Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council, Pennsylvania Section of the International Dark-Sky Association, is a not-for-profit volunteer organization. Its aim is not only to protect the night sky but also to promote the use of energy-efficient lighting and protect the citizens of Pennsylvania and its natural environment from the negative consequences of bad lighting. The Council has worked with many communities across the state to enact protective ordinances and provide educational materials for citizens. Their website, www.POLCouncil.org, contains useful information on good lighting practices, including model lighting ordinances.

— Stan Stubbe, POLC President, polcouncil@cs.com, or 610 326-1402.



Cherry Springs Park Manager Chip Harrison, and his wife, Maxine Harrison, Director of the Cherry Springs Dark Sky Fund Association accepted the award from the PA Outdoor Lighting Council.

Deer hunting is a popular activity on Pennsylvania's 2.1 million acres of state forest and more than 400,000 acres of state park lands. Managed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, this land collectively forms the largest block of public hunting acreage in Pennsylvania.

Hunting is an important part of Pennsylvania's cultural fabric. Hunters are not only one of the largest recreational user groups on state forest land, they also play a valuable role in keeping forests healthy.

The Role of Deer in the Forest

As stewards of Pennsylvania's state forests, the department's Bureau of Forestry has a mission to ensure the long-term health, viability, and productivity of the Commonwealth's forests and to conserve native wild plants. DCNR is concerned about the lack of adequate regeneration—the growth of young trees and other plants that make up the future forest—in many areas of the state. Because deer rely heavily on this “browse” for their diets, they can significantly impact the capacity of the forest to renew itself if their population is not in balance with habitat conditions. When the appropriate balance is achieved, both the forest and the deer benefit. Deer are healthier, have larger antlers, higher reproductive rates, better winter survival and heavier weights. Healthy forests can support a broader variety of plant species and habitat for many different wildlife species, such as bear, wild turkey, and song birds.

Forest Habitat Conditions

DCNR continually monitors forest habitat conditions as this is the most dependable way to measure progress in balancing deer populations. Recent efforts have achieved some noticeable results. In some areas, young trees are thriving, as well as an assortment of other plants such as wildflowers and shrubs.

A continued effort balances deer populations in these areas is necessary to avoid erasing these positive but fragile gains.



Large-racked bucks such as these are known to inhabit the far corners of state forest lands where hunting pressure is often light. Deer grow bigger with larger antlers in healthy habitat.

Many acres of forest, however, fail to show significant recovery. These areas are often in the northern part of Pennsylvania, where the habitat is poor and the forest cannot support many deer. Here, hunting plays a vital role in restoring habitat.

State Forest Hunting Opportunities

Hunters provide a valuable ecological service to Pennsylvania, helping to achieve a healthy forest habitat. Virtually all of state forest land is open to deer hunting, and hunters, with valid licenses and tags, have a wide range of hunting experiences available to them.

Hunters can find additional opportunities on DCNR's Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) tracts. These tracts are located on both state forest and state park lands. These are areas where DCNR is focusing efforts to enhance habitat conditions. They offer hunters the opportunity to harvest additional antlerless deer with a valid DMAP tag.

—Article and photos:
DCNR, Bureau of Forestry



Hunters can find plenty of opportunities on 2.1 million acres of state forest and 400,000 acres of state parks open to hunters.
Photo: Jim Hyland

Additional Information

For more information, e-mail askdcnr@state.pa.us or visit us on the web at:

www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/deer/index.aspx

Here, hunters can find information about DCNR DMAP areas, Hunting Habitat Maps, access roads opened for hunting season, as well as state forest and park public use maps.

DCNR offers hunters with disabilities special motorized vehicle access in designated areas. (To qualify for this program, a person must have a permanent disability that severely restricts the ability to walk.) For more information, call (717) 783-7941.



One sign of a healthy balance between the deer population and available habitat is the presence of many different kinds of tree seedlings, shrubs and other plants in the forest understory. Many wildlife species benefit from such a condition.



PENN'S STEWARDS
Newsletter of the Pennsylvania
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**Elect to Conserve! You can help
PPFF win \$5000! See page 10.**

Award Nominations Due

**Nominations are due December 12 for the
2009 Park and Forest Awards.**

The third annual Parks and Forests Award banquet will be held on May 5, 2009 at the Harrisburg Country Club. Award categories include:

- ♦ Keystone Legacy Award
- ♦ Government Award
- ♦ Park of the Year
- ♦ Forest of the Year
- ♦ 3 Friends Groups Awards — for Volunteerism, Improvement and Education.

To submit a nomination, please visit our website: PaParksAndForests.org or contact Marci Mowery, (717) 236-7644, mmowery-ppff@pa.net for an application.

Receive the newsletter on-line

You can elect to receive the PPFF newsletter electronically. When the newsletter is posted on our website, you will receive an email notification with the link. Save paper while saving PPFF some postage! Let us know via email that you would like to receive notification of the PPFF newsletter on-line instead of via the post office. Put **“Get newsletter Online”** in the subject line of your email message and send your request to Marci Mowery:

mmowery-ppff@pa.net

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