

# It Takes A Village

*Working Together to Ensure the Future*

By Marci Mowery,  
PPFF President

*"We cannot accomplish all that we need to do without working together."*

*~ Bill Richardson, American politician, author, and diplomat*

If you have ever attended a presentation where I am speaking, you may have heard me say, "It takes a village to ensure the success of our state parks and forests." With 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forest land, constant needs exist for investments of time, talent, and capital from not just park and forest staff, but the public at large.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation was founded to address some of these needs. In 2019, we'll celebrate our 20th anniversary! How quickly time flies!

Over the next few pages, I'd like to share with you some ways that your investments in PPFF are working and how collectively we are addressing needs in our state parks and forests.





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## Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps

What if we had a way to both break the cycle of youth unemployment AND foster a more meaningful connection for our young people to the outdoors? Actually, we do. The Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps program hires teams of adolescents and young adults to improve local green spaces and recreational areas. By completing projects that protect natural places and increase access to nature for others, members make tangible and lasting contributions to

the community while increasing their connection to nature, building job skills, developing communication skills, and learning about conservation.

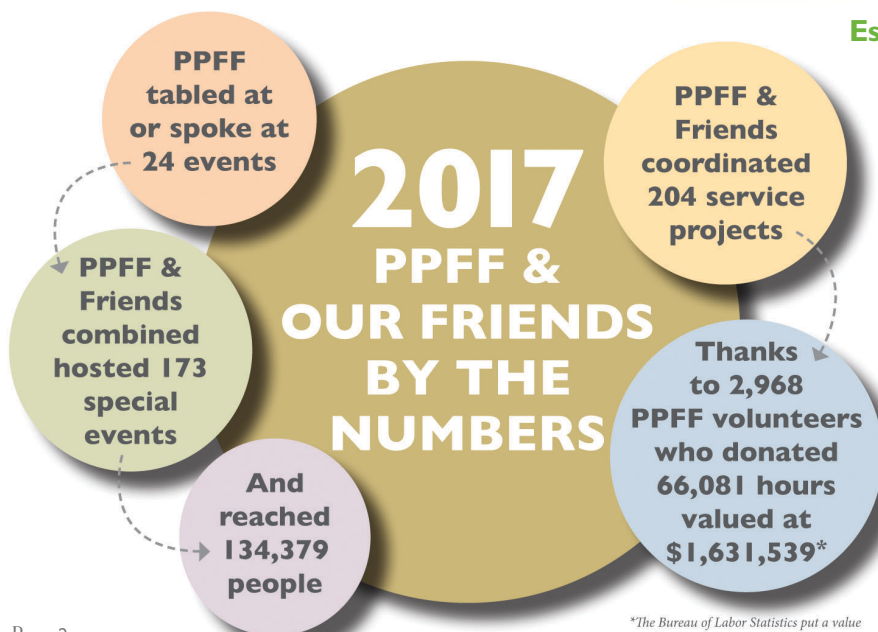


Photo credit: Bill Walliser

Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps members building a bridge at Goddard State Park.

**Program Components:** The Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps has two components: 1) A 7-week summer program for youth between the ages of 15 to 18, and 2) A 10-month program for young adults ages 18 to 25. With your support and a generous grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, for the second year, an investment was made in the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources program. In 2018, crews in Meadville, St. Mary's, and Uniontown accomplished the following:

- The Meadville Crew helped protect the environment and improve visitor experiences with the trail improvements at Maurice K. Goddard and Pymatuning state parks, invasive species removal and streambank stabilization.
- Visitors to the Kinzua, Sizerville and Parker Dam state parks benefited from improved trails and campgrounds, while habitat improvement projects were the focus of the St. Mary's crew at Elk State Forest.
- A crew from Uniontown advanced the restoration of the Laurel Highland Hiking Trail by building four firewood storage shelters along the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, while at Laurel Hill State Park they rehabilitated three Civilian Conservation Corps-era shelters, built three Adirondack-style shelters, and rehabilitated over one mile of trail. This crew, which worked for 10 months as opposed to the 7-week summer crew, also addressed storm damage at Ohiopyle State Park by replacing bridges and rehabilitating trails. Habitat improvement included invasive species suppression at Ryerson Station and urban tree inventories in Connellsville.



## Establishment of Friends Groups and Volunteerism

The PPFF family continues to grow with the establishment of additional Friends groups, including the Friends of Rothrock State Forest, Weiser State Forest Roaring Creek Tract, and the Lackawanna State Park Trail Care Crew. Friends groups across the state are making a difference through stewardship days, financial investments, and events. Visit page 10 to see some recent projects.

Stewards of Penn's Woods Volunteers steward pre-agreed upon places on a schedule that works for them. These volunteers monitor restored areas to ensure graffiti does not reappear, clean vistas and trailheads, and remove litter.

\*The Bureau of Labor Statistics put a value of \$24.69 on volunteer labor in 2017.



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## The Needs List

At the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, one of the contributions donors can make is the investment in what we call "The Needs List." This list, maintained on our website at [www.PaParksAndForests.org/support/parks-forests-needs-list](http://www.PaParksAndForests.org/support/parks-forests-needs-list) outlines projects, materials, equipment, and repairs that need donor support. Items range from the large—placing a CXT restroom at a trailhead or day use area (\$100,000), to the small—an iPad for educational programming.

Over the years, your support enabled items on the needs list to be check marked as "Finished!" Such examples include when Hammonds Rocks was restored to its natural beauty or

when children could explore streams to learn about aquatic life. Yet the list remains active, and in this 125th anniversary of our parks and forests, we reach out to you, park and forest fans, to help us fund 125 projects on the list over the next five years.

Below are a few examples of projects on the list. Have extra craft supplies laying around that you'd like to donate? Great! Want to purchase an item with a donation earmarked for the project? We can make it happen! Interested in a project but can't fund it all—a donation towards that project will move it forward or we can work with you to establish a peer-to-peer fundraising event!



The popular dog walking parks at Boyd Big Tree and Ibberson Conservation areas need a pet fountain to keep our furry friends hydrated on those hot summer days. Weighing in at \$4,000 each, these fountains also serve the humans that accompany them.

NEEDS



The investment of native plants (trees, shrubs, and perennials) not only reduces the negative impact that invasive species and torrential rains have on vegetation and streambanks, they shade waterways, provide buffers between campsites and beautify an area. With over \$400,000 needed for projects across the state, a fund has been established at <http://bit.ly/parkandforestneedsnativeplants>



Duties of the campground hosts at French Creek State Park could be facilitated with the acquisition or donation of a golf cart.

NEEDS



Photo credit: Mary Soderberg

NEEDS

Playground improvements and additions foster a child's social skills, imagination and creativity, thinking and problem solving, competence and confidence, and physical and mental health. <http://bit.ly/pastateparkplaygrounds>



# NEEDS

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Photo credit: DCNR

Stream study would become a bit less messy and expand to more seasons with the donation of 20 pairs of waders for use at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center.

Vernal pond protection may be as simple as acquiring a gate in the Michaux State Forest for \$2,000.

Photo credit: Michaux State Forest



# NEEDS

Benches in Gallitzin State Forest would enable tired hikers and visitors to rest their legs.

DCNR staff install a bench at the Babcock Picnic Area of Gallitzin State Forest.

Photo credit: Jocelyn Brumbaugh, The Tribune-Democrat



# NEEDS

Photo credit: Pam Metzger



Cyclists at Tobyhanna State Park would benefit from a bike repair station/bike parking for \$1,500.

### Be a Part of Our Village!

These are but a few of the items found on the needs list. Visit our website to learn more or give us a call about your favorite park or forest and we'll help find the project that best meets your goals. There is no question that "it takes a village to ensure the success of our state parks and forests," and we want that village to include YOU!

## YES! Let's tackle the **NEEDS** list together!

Enclosed please find my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to address a project at: \_\_\_\_\_

Please also accept my membership to continue to allow the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation to invest in conserving our state parks and forests.

To become a PPFF member, fill out the information below and mail this form in an envelope to:

☐ \$25 Single Membership ☐ \$35 Family Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check enclosed (made payable to PFF)

☐ Bill my credit card (Card#: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CV: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code associated with card: \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ Bill my credit card: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ My company's matching gift form is enclosed.

PA Parks & Forests Foundation  
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# NEEDS