

## **PPFF/Legislature Proclamation/Resolutions for the 125th**

### **INTRO**

- Thanks to PPFF, our legislators and Governor Tom Wolf for proclaiming May 23-30 PA State Park and Forest Week.
- INTRO SELF

### **FORETHOUGHT**

- 1893 GOV Pattison- Forest Reserve and a state park
- Since then there have been many legislators, Governors, bureaucrats and professional that have had a hand in developing the best state park system and state forest system in the country.
- They saw the great value our public lands bring to the Commonwealth.

### **VALUE**

- Health- Physical and mental. 40M visits annually in parks alone.
  - Air quality and carbon sequestration
  - Water Quality- Dept of Forest and Waters. We have a long way to go in cleaning up our waterways and public lands play the key role in doing so.
  - Environmental Education for hundreds of thousands annually of visitors and school kids annually.

### **RECREATION**

- Hunting-2.2M SF, 80% SP 300,000 acres,
- hiking and biking, ATVs, Snowmobiles- thousands of miles of trails
- camping -6300 campsites, from primitive to a Nature Inn
- boating and kayaking- lakes, streams, ponds,
- mountains and a sea shore. Urban-Point and Benjamin Rush -serve all citizens
- Nature watching- birds flora and fauna- Cook Forest old growth
- The list goes on

### **BUSINESS**

- 121 state parks= \$1.2B annually, Private businesses within and outside parks depend on a viable system- Gold Medal Award winning system
- Outdoor recreation- PA 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in outdoor spending
- Forestry over \$17B in the forest products industry in state and private lands- 13% SF
- During the Great Recession, your state forests kept businesses alive due to the 140 year sustainable forest model
- Diverse and disbursed recreation. The biggest block of green between NYC and Chicago

### **FUTURE**

- Great celebration of our past successes- PA Forest and Parks are also key for the Commonwealths Future.
- Being Relevant in a fast-changing society is difficult

- Penn Parks For All
- The New Penn's Woods- 21<sup>st</sup> Century services
- CCC-= to the POC- Youth Investment in Conservation

#### **YOUR ROLE**

- I ask each and every one of you to figure out what your role is in developing a forest and park system for the future and generations yet to come.
- Help plan for and act upon a system for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One that adheres to our legislatively mandated mission
- Conserve the wild character of our public lands
- Biological diversity
- Pure water
- Recreation
- Habitat for plants and animals
- Sustainable high quality timber
- Environmentally sound use of our mineral
- Serve as an outdoor classroom for environment education

#### **FINALLY**

- It needs to Comport to our Constitutional obligations to provide for
- Clean Air
- Pure Water
- And the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment.

Thank you and thanks again to Marci and PPF for your leadership in volunteerism, our legislators and Governor Tom Wolf.