

Pennsylvania's state parks and forests are engines of economic strength and businesses located near them frequently benefit from "location, location, location."

The COVID-19 Pandemic affected all of us in profound ways. For Pennsylvania's state parks and forests, it meant an increase in visitor numbers across the board which also meant, in the case of many of these small ventures, an increase in business.

The Foundation is happy to share their stories.

Boat and Snowmobile Dealership Thrives in 2020

F&S Yamaha & Marina (FSYamaha.com), a boat and snowmobile dealership in Spring Grove, has been family owned and operated since 1987, and 2020 was their biggest dollar year yet! In a year where so many businesses suffered, recreation sales have been through the roof. Our state parks and forests saw record numbers of visitors in 2020, and F&S is located just outside of Codorus State Park.



In early March when parks closed due to the pandemic, visitors lost access to the slips at Lake Marburg, a 1,275- acre lake in Codorus State Park. This closure negatively affected aspects of F&S's business like hauling and maintenance. After parks opened again, F&S was back on track to reach their highest sales year yet.

Andy Sell, who is the jack-of-all-trades at F&S (his father owns the place), is happy to see people enjoying the outdoors. "It's encouraging to see people out and about in the parks. Thank goodness they opened the parks. I hope they never close again." said Sell.



Sell encourages legislators to invest in state parks and forests. He estimates that 50% of their sales come from park visitors and enthusiasts. Customers have mentioned the waning quality of the dock at Lake Marburg, saying maintenance or replacement is needed. Unfortunately, it is the same for many parks across the state; their maintenance needs increase, while their state budget decreases. An investment in state parks and forests is an investment in local business, an investment in the local economy.

Investing in state parks and forests help nearby small businesses like F&S Yamaha & Marina. To learn about ways that you can help support Pennsylvania's parks and forests, visit the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation website at PAParksAndForests.org.