

Penn's Stewards

News from the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

Summer 2022 Newsletter



The mission of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation is to inspire stewardship of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

Vision: To be the trusted voice and advocate to sustain and enhance Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

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Photo by Mike Lipay

Seen 'em All Challenge

By Christian Alexandersen

By 2016, Mike Lipay had been hiking in Pennsylvania's parks and forests for more than 50 years. He spent decades on trails, content to explore the nooks and crannies of the woods around his Western Pennsylvania home.

Then he heard about the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation's Passport. The spiral-bound book enables participants to track their visits to public lands with stamps. Inspired and determined to see more of this big, beautiful state, Lipay made plans to visit all 121 state parks and 20 forests.

He began exploring the parks and forests as he always had, alone on hikes. The first park he visited was Keystone State Park in Westmoreland County. Lipay, who lives in Plum, said what he enjoys most about his time in Pennsylvania's public lands is the solitude.

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President's Message

Marci Mowery



I am writing this from Fowlers Hollow State Park, where my husband and I have been serving as volunteer campground hosts during the month of April. Joe is retired, so he is there for most of the week. I join him on the weekends. Together we have witnessed spring unfolding. Although today feels more like winter than spring—we woke to ice on the dog bowl.

It's a weekday, odd for me to be here. But with much writing to do, this seemed like a quiet place to finish up. Not so. The first 12 sites—which are electric—are more than half full. Many of the sites are occupied by families—including our youngest camper this week—a newly-turned one year old who tests her walking abilities on the uneven forest floor.

I came on a weekday not only to write, but to decompress. We are down a staff person (we will miss Jen!), the news of the world overwhelms, deadlines demand, and we learned yesterday that a scammer is calling people representing themselves as PPFF (Note: We NEVER call to solicit funds.) I needed time in nature to reset my brain.

And reset it did.

Reducing stress is the most common response that people give for why they spend time outdoors. Perhaps you, too, have found deeper breaths and improved attitudes after a day in nature.

With 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forest, there are plenty of places to find quiet or calm. The lead story of this edition of *Penn's Stewards* shares stories of those who have visited all 121 parks. Perhaps it will inspire you to visit a new location.

I ask you to think about what parks and forests mean to you....and how different your life would be if you didn't have access to them. What would be missing? What memories would not have been created? Is the threat of losing these special places enough for you to reach out to your elected officials to encourage them to support investing in their maintenance and repair? Turn to page 17, to see how we make it easy for your voice to be heard.

I finished reading Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweet Grass*, a collection of essays on the natural world told through the lens of Indigenous stories and her background as botanist. Ms. Kimmerer talks about the reciprocity we have with the natural world. "Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us."

Continued from page 1...

"Even when you meet people along the trails you still feel this overwhelming sense of calm and peace, like you're all alone," Lipay said. "You get a feeling of what it must have been like for the early settlers and explorers to visit Penn's Woods."

On a visit to Prince Gallitzin State Park in Cambria County he encountered the sprawling Glendale Lake. The 1,635-acre lake with its 26 miles of shoreline was too beautiful to just see from the shore. So, Lipay bought an inflatable kayak and came back to see the park in a different way.

Ever since then, he takes his kayak whenever he goes to a park with a lake. Later, he took up snowshoeing. That way, he was able to enjoy the parks and forests 365 days a year.

After each visit, he would visit a park office to get a stamp. Each of the Passport pages slowly getting filled. Almost always he explored the parks and forests alone. Whether it was kayaking around a lake or hiking through the woods, he was able to enjoy his solitude.



Photo by Mike Lipay



Photo by Mike Lipay

Some things just lend themselves to a challenge. People climb mountains "because they're there." They visit all 50 states or read the 100 best novels or eat 10 hot dogs at one sitting because it's county fair time. The Pennsylvania State Parks & State Forests Passport offers the same — and certainly more healthy — kind of natural challenge.

Visit each and every one of those parks and forests for the See Them All Challenge. From tiny treasures like McCalls Dam State Park to the gigantic lake at Pymatuning State Park, from the highest point in Pennsylvania in the Forbes State Forest to the Delaware State Forest's Pine Lake Natural Area just think of the adventures you'll have.

If you'd like a little taste of what to expect check out the **video slide show** prepared by DCNR retiree Kenneth Brubaker with help from DCNR on the See Them All Challenge page at PaParksAndForests.org



However, he was joined by family and friends at times. Lipay fondly remembers the trip he took with his son on a visit from Arizona. They had watched the meteor showers from Cherry Springs State Park, Pennsylvania's first dark sky park. The Potter County park is popular with stargazers and amateur astronomers. Then, they kayaked down Lyman Run.

"That was exciting," Lipay said. "If you've never experienced the Leonids from Cherry Springs then you've never really seen them."

In 2021, he visited Glen Ricketts State Park. The huge 13,000-plus acre park is best known for its 22 named waterfalls — including the 94-foot Ganoga Falls. The park provides some of the most beautiful scenery in all of Pennsylvania. A fitting end to his five-year journey.

His Passport filled to the brim with stamps from public lands around the commonwealth, he had visited all 121 parks and 20 forests. He has Seen 'Em All.

Continued on page 4...



Photo by Mike Lipay

But just because his Passport was filled, didn't mean he was done. His journey encouraged him to spend more time visiting parks and forests in and outside of Pennsylvania.

"We live in an amazingly beautiful and diverse country, and the wilds are much more interesting places to visit than concrete buildings," Lipay said. "From the woods and waterfalls here in the east, to the deserts of the Southwest and colorful rocks of the Unita Mountains of Utah, and grandeur of the canyons in the west. Get out there and enjoy them, and maybe we'll meet up."

Lipay recommends more Pennsylvanians, especially kids, spend time in Pennsylvania's parks and forests. They serve as great places to unwind after a tough day at work or



Photo by Mike Lipay

school. And, he said, the more time you spend in nature, the more you understand our real place in it.

"It's important that we all do our part to keep our parks' and forests' beautiful legacy to future generations," he said.

Unfortunately, not everyone is as good a steward of our parks and forests.

"Over the last two years the parks have seen a large increase in the number of visitors, visitors who aren't treating the parks and forests with the love and respect they deserve," he said.

Litter, graffiti, unauthorized campfires. Lipay carries a garbage bag when he is out on the trails, to pick up trash and help keep Pennsylvania's public lands beautiful.

"If everyone would do this, the parks would be a much nicer place to visit, and a healthier place for our woodland friends," he said.

Lastly, Lipay urges parks and forest visitors to purchase a Passport. During their visits, they can get stamps, track their activities, write down animals and plants they see and complete special "Challenges." These challenges require a lot less effort than the full Passport. You can receive medallions for visiting specific vistas, going on certain trails and more. While parks often get more attention, he urged visitors to keep forests in mind when planning trips. Forests offer more rugged adventures than parks, he said.

No matter what, just go out and explore. Go on hikes. Go canoeing. Go make friends. Go find your peace and quiet. Go find your solitude.

"Having visited state parks in over 20 different states, people here don't know what a treasure they have," Lipay said.

Follow the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests News section of the website to read more of Christian's blogs, as he interviews other Seen 'em All Challenge completers, and writes about his own visits to Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

Christian Alexandersen ran one mile in each of Pennsylvania's 121 state parks in 2021 and has been sharing his stories and tips from his journey!

Underground Railroad Tracks Run Through Public Land

By Ben Carter, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Muhlenberg College

In the previous newsletter, Dr. Beverly Tomek, provided an excellent overview of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania. I bet you are wondering what this has to do with the Pennsylvania Parks. Well, I'll give you lots more detail in the next newsletter, but I hope this will provide enough information so that you are looking forward it.

Though I am early in my research project, I will demonstrate that the role of Pennsylvania parklands in the Underground Railroad, lies in their association with iron furnaces. You may know that iron furnaces and iron masters had a reputation for abolitionist sentiment and even direct participation in the Underground Railroad. Many of those same iron furnaces are within and around state park lands today. Ever wonder why? The key is charcoal. Yeah, that's right, humdrum, boring charcoal. Charcoal fueled rural iron furnaces and was produced on many thousands of acres around those furnaces. These charcoal lands, which Bernhard Fernow (third chief of the USDA's Division of Forestry and charcoal lands manager) called "waste lands" because they tended to be rocky and mountainous and, therefore, useless for agriculture. But, those same lands were ideal for harvesting trees and converting them into charcoal. Once no longer used for charcoal they were often donated or sold to the state (or other conservation groups).



Muhlenberg College Students stand on the remains of a collier's hut. French Creek State Park. Fall 2020. Photo by Ben Carter

What does this have to do with the Underground Railroad? Imagine a landscape that is patchy where one piece of land- lets say 20 acres- was cut last year, another the previous year, etc. Charcoal lands were reused after around 20-30 years of growth, but before then they were often a tangle of saplings, and young trees -great for hiding people and for avoiding people on horseback (like slave catchers). They were also littered with abandoned collier huts- small structures used by the colliers (a.k.a. charcoal burners) to live in while they made charcoal- also great for hiding people and avoiding others. Across much of southern (and even northeastern) Pennsylvania, small rural Black communities developed alongside these charcoal lands. I will discuss evidence that demonstrates that these communities were central to a portion of the Underground Railroad that is much more decentralized than is normally thought. The cities (both large and small) were extremely important for moving previously enslaved people across the landscape, but within and around our parks, we have another, less understood and discussed branch of the Underground Railroad that utilized the charcoal lands of Pennsylvania as its tracks.

Are you raising your eyebrows? Want to see the evidence? I'll talk about it more in the next newsletter, but until then, I hope you will keep your eyes out for evidence. You'll be surprised how prevalent it is in state-owned lands.



Cut stone near Black community of Six Penny Creek, French Creek State Park. Spring 2020. Photo by Ben Carter.

Skill Builder: Here's What I Always Keep in My Hiking Pack

By Christian Alexanderson, originally posted on the PPFF blog page [here](#).



One of the things I enjoy most about getting into a hobby is getting prepared for it.

If it's running, I spend hours trying to find the best shoes and clothes. I listen to podcasts about running and read books about running. It's often based on material "needs." I "need" this cool new hat. I "need" the perfect traveling running bag.

I've been this way my entire life. Getting prepared for the hobby was more important than taking part in or even enjoying the hobby. But that changed when I began running a mile in each of Pennsylvania's 121 state parks for my 121 In 21 Challenge. I began packing every weekend to run trails around the state. It no longer became about buying things to buy things, but rather actually being prepared.

Trail running gave way to hiking. And while there's a million ways to get carried away with hiking supplies – [check out ultralight thru hiking videos on YouTube](#) – I began developing a small kit to always keep on me. Not so that I could buy new things. Not so that I could look the part. But so that I could not be a burden on the trail. So that I could self-extricate in an emergency. So that I could come back home safely.

My small hiking pack – which is actually a large fanny pack – continues to evolve as I look to increase distance, discover new trails and learn more. This kit goes with me whenever I go for a hike, whether that be in a new national park or jaunt around a Pennsylvania state park.

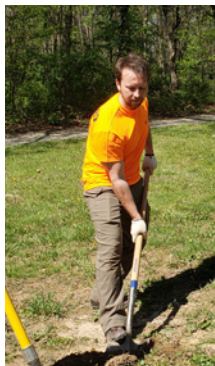
Here's what I have in my hiking kit:

- Water (around 40 ounces)
- First aid kit (Includes bandages, ointments, medications and more)
- First aid emergency guide
- Fire making kit (Includes lighter, wind/waterproof matches, fat wood, kindling and more)
- Sawyer MINI Water Filtration System
- Mylar emergency blanket/shelter
- Multi-tool
- Knife
- 15 feet of paracord
- 15 feet of Gorilla Tape
- Headlamp and flashlight with extra batteries
- Power bank and cord
- Emergency whistle
- Compact towel
- Sunscreen
- Thick trash bag
- Snacks

I also always have my fully charged cell phones (personal and work), car keys and hiking staff. What do you have in your essential hiking kit?

Good bye and Hello!

With this issue we bid farewell to Jen Dunlap, formerly Public Engagement Coordinator for the Foundation. But jumping in with all four feet and hands are Brian Swift, now Public Engagement Coordinator, and Jason Lenker, our summer intern. Jason is a sustainability major at Shippensburg University and will be working on completing the work begun last summer by Intern Angelica on the plants used by Freedom Seekers making their way north, as well as spreading the word on clean water and forested ecosystems at various festivals and events throughout the season. For the last ten years, Brian has been teaching in Colombia winning awards as Teacher of the Year and designing and improving English curriculum for middle school students in Cartagena. These skills are going to come in very handy indeed in the years ahead as we expand our reach to growing communities in Pennsylvania and making sure there is a place and an experience for everyone in our state parks and forests. Welcome aboard, Jason and Brian!



Guest Blogger Series

What do forests and fish have in common?

What PA parks and forests should you visit to view wildflowers?

How can you support the wildlife and ecosystems of the state parks and forests from your own home or community?

Find the answers to all of these questions and more in PPFF's guest blogger series! Simply visit the News page of our website (PaParksAndForests.org). While there, sign-up to receive our weekly e-news so you never miss a post!

NEW SERIES ALERT: Thanks to PPFF's regularly appearing guest blogger, Christian Alexandersen, we recently launched a new series interviewing the Outdoor Influencers of PA's parks and forests. Check out the Outdoor Influencers Spotlight blog posts and get inspired to spend more time outdoors or try a new outdoor hobby and get helpful information about PA's parks and forests along the way.



Our Mission

Mission is to inspire stewardship of Pennsylvania state parks and forests.

Our Vision

To be the trusted voice and advocate to sustain and enhance Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

#ILoveMyStatePark Week

Did you love your state park? The first I Love My State Park Week occurred May 8th to the 15th, 2022. An endeavor of the National Association of State Park Foundations (chaired by PPFF's President Marci Mowery) I Love My State Parks Week aimed to increase the visibility of state parks and raise awareness about their many benefits, engage new audiences and promote access, and connect with the public through personal testimonials, storytelling, and photos showing why these spaces are so important.

The United States boasts more than 8,500 state parks and forests covering 18.6 million acres with 52,600 miles of trails. Along with these beloved natural areas comes an army of Friends groups and fellow volunteers dedicated to caring for them.

With daily themes and a ready-to-go social media toolkit, NASPF encouraged all members, state parks foundations, friends groups, state park agencies, and partners to share and amplify the I Love My State Parks Week content on their own social platforms to increase engagement. "This first week was a soft launch," said Chair Marci Mowery, "and we were amazed by the participation. Some states passed proclamations regarding their state park systems and across the nation people joined in by posting images of them engaging in state parks using the hashtags **#ILoveMyStateParks**, **#ILoveMyStateParksWeek**, **#ILovePAStateParks**, and **#NASPF**."

Some states held events, such as in Pennsylvania where PPFF board members participated in two tree planting events.

The NASPF encourages park enthusiasts to continue to use the hashtags to document their visits to state parks across the nation. When visiting a Pennsylvania State Park include the **#ILovePaParks** on your social media platforms.

Mark your calendars for the 2023 event, which will extend from May 14 (Mother's Day) through May 21.

on our wish list

As pandemic restrictions ease, PPFF is getting back out on the road to parks and forests across PA. There are tree plantings, trail projects, workshops, and meetings once again filling the calendar.

What would make all that travel a bit easier? A camper van or small Class C RV!

If you have one to donate [or sell at a greatly reduced price], we would love to talk!

Contact Marci at 717-236-7644 or mmowery-ppff@pa.net.

and thank
you!



REMEMBERING HURRICANE AGNES 50 YEARS AGO - JUNE 21-24, 1972

An already rainy May and early June left PA vulnerable as Agnes made landfall in FL



The Governor's Mansion

Atmospheric upper level blocking pattern brought storm to a grinding halt over NE PA

By the time she departed, Agnes had dumped 19" of rain near Shamokin. Rest of the region received an average of 7"

Unprecedented river crests:
Reading: Schuylkill River at 31.5' - 16' above flood stage
Harrisburg: Susquehanna at 33.3' - 15' above flood stage
Chadds Ford: Brandywine Creek at 16.5' - 5' above flood stage

where were you
in '72?

In PA: \$2 billion in damage. 50 lives lost, more than twice any other state.

Although not the most deadly, by most accounts Agnes was Pennsylvania's worst natural disaster.

Mark Your Calendars!

September 24th kicks off the first-ever PA Healthy Lands Week!

The event, a collaborative effort among several organizations and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, features opportunities to engage in stewardship of places in the landscape from which we all benefit. For PPFF, that means our state parks and forests!

Keep an eye on our calendar for opportunities to engage in projects, lectures, on-line talks and more during the week of September 24th (also the start of National Public Lands Day) and October 2nd (also Walk in Penn's Woods). Keep an eye on the website HealthyLandsWeek.org as it evolves.



Plan Ahead! Continue the legacy of conservation of our state parks and forests for future generations through a bequest or life income gift to PPFF.

Did You Know? PPFF is able to accept your TAX DEDUCTIBLE donations of stock to support our work and/or projects in state parks and forests.

For more information visit www.PAParksAndForests.org

2022 Thru the Seasons Photo Contest: Clean Water and Forested Ecosystems

Calling all photographers, PPFF's annual Thru the Seasons photo contest is now open!

2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. In celebration of this milestone and in recognition of the importance of forests for water quality, the theme of this year's photo contest is Clean Water and Forested Ecosystems. Share with us your artistic view on the importance of clean water and the role of forests in a healthy watershed by submitting to the following categories:

Water Is Life
Raindrop to River
Forests

Caught in the Rain
Reflections
Young Photographers (ages 12-17)

The contest is open to amateur and professional photographers alike. All photos must be taken in a Pennsylvania state park or forest. The submission deadline is September 30, 2022. For full contest details, please visit paparksandforests.org.



Bringing Your Voice

Have you been to the PPFF Take Action Center? The Center, located on the Stewardship page of our website, tracks the legislative initiatives that PPFF follows. The Advocacy Committee of the Foundation approved a broad agenda of topics to follow that would affect Pennsylvania's parks and forests, either for the better or worse. The committee meets monthly to discuss issues and strategies; sometimes these strategies call on YOU, park and forest enthusiasts, to make your voice heard by contacting your elected officials.

PPFF supported a bill, championed by our partner, the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS), to provide for provisional hiring practices. How this relates to parks and forests most directly is the hiring of lifeguards by summer camps and public parks and pools. The legislation passed and was signed into law by Governor Wolf in February of this year.

We weighed in with a letter to the House of Representatives against legislation that would lift the moratorium on gas well leases, and allow for drilling in state parks and forests. While the bill passed the House, it has not moved in the Senate. We will continue to watch and oppose the bill.

PPFF has worked with partners at PRPS and Philadelphia & Recreation Parks to champion a bill that would reduce volunteer liability. The costs of liability insurance has become an obstacle for groups both large and small. The bill passed the House and we await movement in the Senate.

We continue to support SB 525 (Senator Gordner) and HB 2020 (Representative Culver) which would create a new Growing Greener by allocating a portion of the American Rescue Plan funds to the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. While SB 525 passed the Senate, it remains stalled in the House. HB 2020 has not moved out of the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee where it was assigned upon introduction. Governor Wolf's budget also contained funding for maintenance and infrastructure needs in parks and forests through utilization of the American Rescue Plan.

To understand voters' attitudes towards investing in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests, PPFF commissioned a poll. The polling questions presented information to ensure readers understood that with finite financial resources, when officials prioritize for parks and forests, other priorities don't receive funding.

The infographic on page 15 depicts the results of the poll. Overwhelmingly, Pennsylvanians across the state - of all political parties, of all ethnicities, of all ages and genders - support investing by a strong majority.

If you would like to make your voice heard, sign up for our occasional Action Alerts to be informed when votes are occurring. Log on at <https://ppff.news/signup> or scan the QR code. Encourage your friends to sign up as well. Let's make our voices heard for Pennsylvania's state parks and forests!



What's That Wednesday with PPFF's Student Volunteer

Follow PPFF's social media channels and learn something new about the flora and fauna of PA's parks and forests thanks to our student volunteer, Abbey Leibert. Abbey is a senior at Saucon Valley High School and has plans to attend college for Environmental Studies next fall. She's been researching Pennsylvania species and sharing weekly environmental education posts. A few of her latest creature features spotlight the Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Spring Beauty, Eastern Painted Turtle, Fowlers toad, and more. Stay tuned every Wednesday on PPFF's social media channels for fun facts about what you might find on your next outdoor exploration. Thank you, Abbey!

Celebrating the ERA

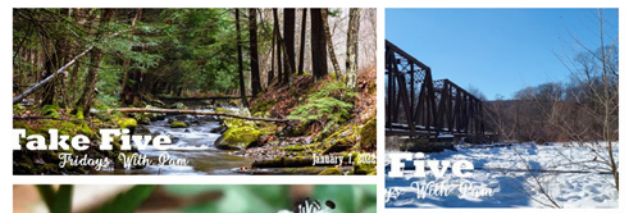
In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Environmental Rights Amendment to Pennsylvania's Constitution, PPFF hosted special incentives throughout 2021 to bring attention to this monumental piece of legislation. We received poems, essays, photos, and song submissions from Pennsylvanians around the state about what the ERA means to them. The compilation of these creative works is now available on [PPFF's website](https://www.ppff.org) (PaParksAndForests.org) as an interactive flipbook and a downloadable PDF.



Find out more each week
with Take Five/
Fridays with Pam
"The Outdoors in Your Inbox"

*Don't get it
yet?*

Sign up at
ppff.online/subscribe



Memorial or Honorary Gifts

You can honor the memory of a special person or joyous occasion while supporting PPFF's work in conservation, recreation, education, and volunteerism in our state parks and forests.

Download a form at
www.PAParksAndForests.org/support/ways-to-give



Projects to Support

Restoring a Historic Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Building at French Creek State Park

Pennsylvania state parks and forests are linked with the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which was a public work relief program for unemployed, unmarried men, ages 18 to 25 that ran from 1933 to 1942. During the time of the CCC, volunteers planted nearly three billion trees to reforest the country, constructed more than 800 parks nationwide, and worked on many other projects for the public good. Pennsylvania was second in the nation in terms of CCC recruits—with more than 190,000 serving over the nine years of the program.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF) is working with French Creek State Park to restore and modernize (add up-to-date HVAC and electrical systems) one CCC building to make it safe for use as an environmental education classroom and public-use space. This building is one of very few camp living quarters remaining across the country. It is rare that camp living quarters remain standing as often they were built as temporary accommodations during construction. By preserving this, a rare piece of Pennsylvania's and the country's history will be preserved.

French Creek State Park manager, James Wassell, said, "I think it's important to save these buildings to tell the full story of the CCC; not just what they built but how and where they lived in the camps and worked in the parks."

The total cost of the renovations and upgrades is \$40,450. Of that, PPFF has raised \$5,000 to-date. With your support, PPFF and park staff can restore this CCC-era building at French Creek State Park to be able to tell the CCC story to future generations, as well as make creative re-use of existing structures for park education programs. <https://ppff.gives/french-creek-ccc>



The roof of the CCC cabin collapsed unexpectedly while funds were being raised for the building preservation. Photo by DCNR



Building rehabilitation is underway due to the craftsmanship of state park staff. Additional funds are needed to complete the interior and create educational exhibits. Photo by DCNR



Restoring and Enhancing Habitat on Michaux State Forest

For years, foresters on Michaux State Forest in Cumberland, Franklin, and Adams counties have struggled to deal with the mix of invasive plant species that have grown on-site at the former Michaux Camp, impacting both the critical cultural resources and wildlife habitat there. In recent years, staff and volunteers have begun implementing a multi-year landscape-level habitat enhancement and restoration project that will benefit wild turkey, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and other wildlife species by varying the age class, patch size, and tree and plant species variety in the state forest, as well as by treating the invasive plants with herbicides and prescribed burns. All told, an estimated 200 acres will be improved through this effort.

The total budget for this project is \$176,021, of which \$139,751 has been raised so far from grants and state funding. Your financial help can close the final budget gap and help foresters in the Michaux improve forest quality not just for wildlife, but also for the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to the state forest. <https://ppff.gives/michaux-habitat-restoration>



Projects to Support

Building an Accessible Dock at Hills Creek State Park

PPFF has a long-term goal of making our state parks and forests more accessible and inclusive, in support of our broader goal of getting people outdoors. Studies by Penn State University show that approximately 15% of adult residents of Pennsylvania (approximately 1.6 million individuals) have some sort of disability and these disabilities can limit their outdoor recreation participation. In addition, Pennsylvania has an aging population, which sometimes means reduced mobility and balance challenges. When we opened the EZ Dock at Point State Park in Pittsburgh, we received a call from a woman who had thought her passion for kayaking was foregone, as she no longer could safely manage the ingress and egress of the kayak. She was so excited to have access to the water again.

We hope to create similar feelings for visitors to Hills Creek State Park in Tioga County, where we are fundraising to build an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible dock and kayak/canoe launch. As nearly 13.5% of the county's population under 65 years of age has some form of a disability, according to U.S. Census data, this new dock and launch will provide healthy outdoor recreational experiences for many people who would otherwise not have the opportunity that so many others have.



PPFF has placed similar docks at other locations in Pennsylvania—this would be the first in this area. Photo by Marci Mowery

The cost of the dock installation is approximately \$30,000. PPFF is currently applying for several grants to cover much of the cost, but will need the support of generous individuals to reach the full cost of acquisition and installation of the dock. Make the water accessible to all with your generous support.

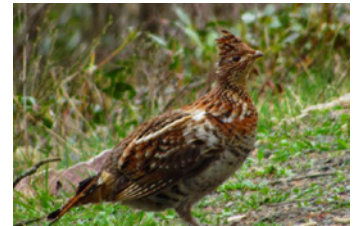
<https://ppff.gives/hills-creek-ada-dock>



Improving Pitch Pine and Scrub Oak Habitat on Bald Eagle State Forest

In recent years, foresters on Bald Eagle State Forest in Snyder, Union, Centre, Mifflin, and Clinton counties have been working to restore and improve approximately 800 acres of high-priority ruffed grouse habitat by planting pitch pine and scrub oak. Ruffed grouse is at risk of extinction from portions of its Pennsylvania range; populations have been in decline since the early 1980s. Grouse are most abundant in young forest (early successional) habitats (5-15 years old), which have also been in a steady decline since the early 1980s. Early successional habitat has gone from approximately 19.6% of total forest acres in Pennsylvania to now only 11.6%.

The new habitat is located at an elevation above which West Nile Virus does not survive. Grouse Eastern populations of Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) have been in a decades-long decline across the mid-Atlantic and southern



Grouse. Photo by © Ronald Lutz

Appalachian Mountains of the US. West Nile virus (WNV), which first arrived in the US in 1999, is suspected to have contributed to these declines based on decreased population indices since the arrival of WNV in Pennsylvania as well as on high, experimentally induced WNV-associated morbidity rates.

Working in coordination with the PA Game Commission, which is restoring habitat on nearby state game lands, forestry staff are monitoring the grouse population and making adjustments to how they manage and maintain the forests to ensure the best possible habitat for grouse (and other wildlife species) in the short- and long-terms.

This forest restoration project has a total budget of \$100,000, of which \$10,000 has been raised to date. While PPFF continues to seek additional grants and corporate support for this project, you can help by donating to this worthy habitat stewardship and restoration project.

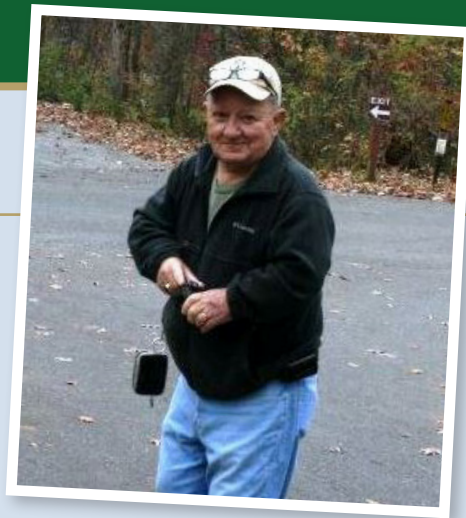
<https://ppff.gives/bald-eaglesf-grouse-habitat>



We Will Miss

Ted Prindle (1941-2021)

We learned belatedly this spring of the November passing of Ted Prindle, a founding member of the Friends of Pinchot and campground host for the park. As these things go, it was easier to find pictures taken BY Ted than ones OF him, but here's one on which a Facebook user wrote, "Campground hosts make camping at Gifford Pinchot fun!"



Partnerships



New Trail Brewing Wins Gold

Our Friends at New Trail Brewing entered the PA State Park Series for the 'Best Beer Series' category at the Craft Beer Marketing Awards, and we are excited to share that they brought home the Gold Crushie!



Mid Penn Bank Lunch and Learn

Our Friends at Mid Penn Bank invited PPFF President Marci Mowery to speak at a recent lunch and learn hosted in their Harrisburg office and broadcast the presentation to other locations. The topic explored the history of PA's parks and forests and how to enjoy them today. Thank you to Mid Penn for making a generous donation to support the Foundations work.



Pennsylvania Voters Likely to Support Investments in Parks and Forests



In a recent poll of likely Pennsylvania voters conducted by Susquehanna Polling & Research.

58% of those polled had visited a local or state park, trail or forest in the past 12 months.



79% of Pennsylvania likely voters agree state government should be doing more to invest in state forests to protect clean water and reduce flooding when told state forests serve as a natural filter to remove harmful pollutants in Pennsylvania streams, rivers and lakes.

67%

support tapping up to \$125 million of the remaining American Rescue Plan funds to address the backlog of projects in state parks and forests



66%

agree funding for outdoor recreation facilities, including park, trails, lakes and overnight facilities should be a **high priority** for state government, even when told that money available for parks and forests reduced money for other priorities.



Friends in Action



Friends of Trough Creek & Warriors Path:

Big logs were moved to help the Friends of Raystown Lake clear a portion of the Terrace Mountain Trail connecting to Trough Creek State Park.

Friends of Black Moshannon:

The lucky recipients of a \$5,000 grant from the GIANT Company, the park will be seeing some new kayaks and paddles in the water this summer and new skates on the ice



come winter. The equipment will be made available to the public via educational programs offered by the two park environmental educators.



Friends of Kings Gap:

The annual spring plant sale was held in person on May 7 and May 8.

Friends of Buchanan:

The Friends kicked off another year of trail work with a session on the Pipeline Trail near Route 30.



Friends of Colonel Denning: March winds blew away the Friends regularly scheduled work day; the postponement only gave them a bit more time to craft this lovely split rail entry for the trail from the day use area to the campground.

Friends of Davis Hollow Cabin:

Your overnight stays and a donation from a recent filming that occurred at the Davis Hollow Cabin, managed by the Friends of Davis Hollow Cabin, resulted in some improvements to the cabin including new lights, landscaping, and painting.



Photo by Jim Fennen

Friends of Cowans Gap: Another event making its return after a COVID hiatus was the Friends 5k with over 200 runners/walkers taking part.

Friends in Action



Friends of Mont Alto:

History is pretty much what it's about at Mont Alto, so the Friends' clearing of fallen trees and debris at the nearly 100-year old monument to the Mont Alto Furnace ironworkers was in keeping with the greater mission.

Friends of Michaux:

What filled three trucks and left behind a much cleaner Baltimore Road? The Friends and their partners from Shippensburg University on an Earth Day trash blitz.



Friends of Laurel Hill:

Earth Day saw several dozen volunteers cleaning up the Laurel Learning Lab in anticipation of preschoolers to come this summer. Some natural play features were also constructed including this more than life-size nest.

Friends of Pinchot:

Trees were planted, sensitive plants protected by fencing, trails were upgraded. That's an Earth Day at Pinchot State Park with Central PA Airstream Camping Club of Camp Hill, Berkley Environmental of Harrisburg, and Trulieve Medical Marijuana Dispensary of Camp Hill.



List of Friends

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 Davis Hollow Cabin
 Friends of Goddard
 Friends of Greenwood Furnace
 Friends of Kings Gap
 Friends of Laurel Hill
 Friends of Little Buffalo
 Friends of Lyman Run
 Friends of Michaux
 Friends of Milton
 Friends of Mont Alto
 Friends of Mount Pisgah
 Friends of Nockamixon
 Friends of Nolde Forest
 Friends of Oil Creek
 Friends of Ole Bull
 Friends of Parker Dam
 Friends of Pinchot
 Friends of Pine Grove Furnace
 Friends of Prince Gallitzin
 Friends of Ridley Creek State Park
 Friends of Rothrock
 Friends of Ryerson Station
 Friends of Shawnee
 Friends of Shikellamy
 Friends of State Line Serpentine Barrens
 Friends of Trough Creek & Warriors Path
 Friends of Tuscarora & Locust Lake
 Friends of Varden Conservation Area
 Friends of Weiser - Haldeman/Greenland
 Friends of Weiser - Roaring Creek
 Friends of White Clay Creek
 Friends of Worlds End
 Friends of Yellow Creek
 Lackawanna State Park Trail Care Crew

You Made it Happen

Improving Water and Air Quality

At PPFF, we take the function of trees very seriously, and with your support tree plantings continue in our parks and forests. This spring plantings occurred at Prince Gallitzin, Trough Creek, Warriors Mark, Black Moshannon, Shikellamy, Sam Lewis, and Susquehannock state parks, along with Michaux State Forest. Trees improve water quality, clean the air, reduce flooding, provide habitat and so much more!



Tree planting. Photo by Marci Mowery

Legislative Tours

PPFF President Marci Mowery joined DCNR Secretary Dunn and Deputy Secretary Norbeck and other speakers at Shawnee State Park to discuss the need for investments in state parks and forests. Recent work at the park included a new bridge—just one example of the types of projects that can be completed when funding is available.



Amanda Galvin, board member of the Friends of Shawnee, speaking at the event. Photo by Marci Mowery

Habitat for Woodcock

When approached by the Market Square Presbyterian Church in 2020 to provide an alternative to poinsettias at Christmas and flowers at Easter, we never envisioned that the funds received would create habitat for woodcock. Members of the church and staff from Merchology joined PPFF and Michaux Forest staff in planting the wildflower plugs purchased through congregation donations. Next step—raise funds for an ADA bird blind!



Volunteers planting. Photo by Brian Swift

Delivering the Message

PPFF volunteers delivered the results of a poll commissioned by the Foundation to members of the General Assembly. See the infographic on page 15 for the results of the poll. Consider sharing the infographic with your elected officials.



Delivering the Poll results. Photo by Jenna Behringer

Preserving the Past

Your support of a Preservation Assessment report on the 18th century Carroll Cabin, located in Forbes State Forest, set in motion a rehabilitation plan that kicked off in April. Watch the pages of the newsletter as the rehabilitation unfolds, interpreting 274 years of history.



Carroll Cabin. Photo by Marci Mowery

PENNSYLVANIA
State Parks and State Forests
PASSPORT

Tuscarora maps now in stock!

Jahebo Studio
Nature Curiosity

Jahebo Studio
Nature Curiosity

Jahebo Studio
Nature Curiosity

Jahebo Studio
Nature Curiosity

Pennsylvania Parks & Forests FOUNDATION

CONSERVE ENHANCE PROTECT

ppff.gives/onlinestore

WE ARE CELEBRATING

LATINO CONSERVATION WEEK
Disfrutando y Conservando Nuestra Tierra

July 16 - 24, 2022

LatinoConservationWeek.com

Got Art?

Got Art?

Why not try your hand at a paint by number thanks to the talents of artist Melodie Swartz-Higgins and the photographers who provide the inspiration for her designs?

Access the drawings at the PPFF website.

<https://ppff.online/paint-by-number>



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