



Annual Awards
To Be Presented at the Annual Banquet
Little Buffalo State Park
May 12, 2026

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation recognizes outstanding service, programs and places which remind us of the exemplary work being done in parks and forests, by both staff and volunteers, to improve Pennsylvania's quality of life and to protect our natural assets for future generations. We invite you once again to help us celebrate the importance of parks and forests by nominating a park, forest, or Friend that you think exemplifies the best of the best.

***Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award**—This top honor recognizes an outstanding contribution to the protection and/or enhancement to the park and forest system in Pennsylvania.

Past recipients: *Civilian Conservation Corps members, Rose Eshelman Chase, Joe Healey, William Forrey, Robert Griffith, Senator Franklin Kury, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Caren Glotfelty, Linda McKenna Boxx, Rob Wonderling, Paul Felton, Cindy Adams Dunn, Larry Williamson, Marcus Schneck (posthumously), Pennsylvania Forestry Association, Dwight Lewis Lumber Co./Lewis Lumber Products*

***Joseph Ibberson Government Award**—The Ibberson Government Award is given to a person or department at any level of government to recognize their work in the stewardship of Pennsylvania's state park and state forest systems.

Past recipients: *DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis, Jerry Walls, Greg Schrum, DCNR's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Team, DCNR's Forest Assessment Team, James Grace, Representative William Adolph, Bushkill Township (Northampton County), Norman Lacasse, Penn Nursery, Maryann Haladay-Bierly, Kate Harper, Dan Devlin, Mike Piaskowski, Wayne Kober, Chris Kemmerer*

***President's Award**—The President's Award is designed to recognize outstanding citizens or businesses who have made an impact in protecting open space, conservation, outdoor recreation or volunteerism.

Past recipients: *Judith L. Schwank, Recreation Equipment Incorporated, Borough of Ohiopyle, Yellow Creek State Park, John and Jan Halter, Ralph Harrison, Deloitte, LLP (Philadelphia Office), Greenwood Furnace State Park Complex, The Graffiti Busters, PA Wilds Conservation Landscape/PA Wilds Center, REI (National Award)/United by Blue (State Award), Jack Stefferud (Individual)/Cook Forest Multi-Sensory Trail (Project), Purple Lizard Maps, Steve Stroman*

***Chairman's Award**—The Chair's Award is designed to recognize outstanding citizens or businesses who have made an impact in protecting open space, conservation, outdoor recreation, or volunteerism.

Past recipients: *New Trail Brewing Company, Barbara Barksdale, Keith Russell*

Park of the Year—The Park of the Year Award is designed to recognize a park for their exemplary or innovative work in any or all of the following: customer service; education, programming (e.g. events), or recreation; stewardship of the natural, cultural or historic assets; and/or accommodation of special needs of visitors.

Past recipients: *Pymatuning State Park, Moraine State Park, Sinnemahoning State Park, Nockamixon State Park, Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Kinzua Bridge State Park, French Creek State Park, Prince Gallitzin State Park, Point State Park, Gifford Pinchot State Park, Shawnee State Park, Cook Forest State Park, Laurel Hill State Park Complex, R.B. Winter State Park, Neshaminy State Park, Hills Creek State Park Complex*

Forest of the Year—The Forest of the Year Award is designed to recognize a forest district for its innovative and exemplary work in both forest management and recreation for a wide range of activities which include: the ability to provide opportunities for healthful, low-density recreational opportunities

that are compatible with maintaining the integrity of forest ecosystems; to provide information and assistance to the public while ensuring public safety; and to promote and effectively use volunteers to enhance the Bureau of Forestry's recreational programming, planning and development activities.

Past recipients: *Forbes State Forest, Tioga State Forest, William Penn State Forest, Michaux State Forest, Susquehannock State Forest, Elk State Forest, Tiadaghton State Forest, Gallitzin State Forest, Buchanan State Forest, Tuscarora State Forest, Weiser State Forest, Rothrock State Forest, Bald Eagle State Forest, Pinchot State Forest, William Penn State Forest, Loyalsock State Forest*

Volunteerism Awards—Up to three awards per year can be given for recognition of achievements made by PPF chapters, individuals or volunteer groups. Awardees are chosen from all nominations by a PPF committee made up of PPF board and non-board members. These awards honor organizations or individuals that have made a lasting, positive impression on the park or forest that they serve and that have advanced the mission of the PA Parks and Forests Foundation and the DCNR. The three award categories are:

1. **Volunteerism Award:** The winner attracts and nurtures volunteers and actively engages them in a wide range of projects, logged in significant volunteer hours in proportion to the size and location of the park or forest, or has developed an innovative volunteer program.

Past recipients: *Friends of Codorus State Park, Mountaineer Search and Rescue, Friends of Ohiopyle, Friends of Prince Gallitzin, Friends of Mt. Pisgah, Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy (the Covers of the Forbes State Forest), Nockamixon Trail Group, Gifford Pinchot State Park, Friends of Nolde Environmental Education Center, Helen Maurella, SONS of Lake Erie, Stephen Smetana, Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve, The Over the Hill Gang, Don Litten, Patti and Jamey Hutchinson, Margarita Caicedo (Individual), Lackawanna State Park Trail Care Crew (Group), Charles Pinardi (Individual), Eastern PA Climbers Alliance (Group)*

2. **Improvement Award:** The winner has completed capital improvement projects that benefited the park or forest and or users, provided ongoing maintenance or improvements to trails, buildings, etc. or innovatively protected the natural or cultural heritage of the park or forest.

Past recipients: *The Miller Family, Friends of the Delaware Canal, Friends of Shikellamy, Friends of Ridley Creek, Tom Scully, Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens, Paul Yost and the Friends of Milton State Park, Kathy and Gary Diegan, Warren Renninger, Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail Ridge Runners, Boy Scout Troop 345, Gifford Pinchot Disc Golf Club, Clarion County Chapter-North Country Trail Association (Group)/Donna and Ron Hirt (Individuals), Nittany Mountain Biking Association, Gary Kirk (Individual), Friends of Michaux (Group), Paul Yost*

3. **Education Award:** The winner provides ongoing educational support or programming, provides a stewardship message through events and programs, and/or organizes events that support the park and/or the gateway communities.

Past recipients: *Cherry Springs Dark Sky Fund, Friends of Laurel Hill State Park, Friends of Colonel Denning, Friends of M.K. Goddard State Park, John Salvetti, Gwen and Bud Wills, Pat and Carl Leinbach, Promised Land State Park's Nature Arts and Crafts Program Volunteers, Friends of Black Moshannon State Park, Pam Karhan (Cherry Springs Dark Sky Association), Friends of Mount Pisgah, Tom and Marilyn Fye, Friends of Washington Crossing, Wayne Sierer, Michael Teeter (Individual), Cook Forest French & Indian War Encampment Officers Corps (Group), Allen Dieterich-Ward*

Young Volunteer of the Year—This award recognizes a significant contribution to a park or forest by a person under the age of 25. The contribution could be in volunteer hours, a significant project, an innovative idea, or more.

Past recipients: *Paul Mickle, Hailey Freeman, Ellie Davis, Kayce Bobnar, Katie Gustafson, Sarah Reeping, Angelica Brill, Hung Pham, Mikayla Traini*



NOMINATION FORM
Nominations Must Be Received by
December 15, 2025

Details of Nominator

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

Nomination Category: _____

Details of Nominee

Nominee Name: _____

Key Contact Name (if Organization): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

Based on the award description, please provide a short statement that demonstrates why the nominee deserves the award. Limit statements to less than 1,000 words.

Feel free to attach up to four pictures. Award winners will be asked to supply additional images for program.

Return to: Marci Mowery, President
Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation
704 Lisburn Road, Suite 102
Camp Hill, PA 17011
Email: mmowery-ppff@pa.net
Deadline for nominations is: December 15, 2025