



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **First Lady Shapiro Joins DCNR Secretary Dunn for Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps Visit at French Creek State Park**

**Elverson, PA** – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn was joined by First Lady Lori Shapiro today for a visit with members of the [Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps](#) Youth Crew at French Creek State Park.

The PA Outdoor Corps is a signature program within DCNR that was created in 2016. More than 1,200 young people have participated the program, which provides opportunities for paid work experience, job training, leadership skill development, and environmental education to help corps members become successful stewards of our natural resources and conservation leaders. The corps is managed by DCNR and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and is supported through funding provided by the Department of Labor and Industry, as well as private philanthropic partners.

"I'm inspired to see young people in the Commonwealth getting their hands dirty to protect our natural beauty and gaining job skills for their future careers," **First Lady Lori Shapiro said**. "In our family, we love getting out to Pennsylvania state parks and enjoying Pennsylvania's natural beauty, so it's a pleasure to join the Outdoor Corps and recognize those who do hard work to maintain our parks and public spaces."

The corps offers young people the opportunity to serve on a team and complete conservation projects that protect, enhance, and restore Pennsylvania's public lands. It also teaches participants about public service and provides job skills, interpersonal communications, and ethics to prepare them for the modern workplace.

In 2016 the program started with just five youth crews. This year there are 26 crews with 181 participants across the Commonwealth:

- Sixteen 6-week youth (age 15-18) crews based in: Allentown, Altoona, Bradford, Chambersburg, Erie; Greensburg; Harrisburg; Hazleton; Norristown; Pittsburgh (two crews: community and American Sign Language); Reading; Renovo; Ridgeway; Wellsboro; Wilkes-Barre; Williamsport; and York.
- Ten 10-month young adult (age 18-25) crews are based in Altoona; Dubois; Harrisburg; Meadville; Pittsburgh; Wilkes Barre; and Williamsport. Statewide Natural Resource and Cultural Resource crews round out the adult crews.

"I enjoy these visits with the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps and am happy to spend time with future leaders," **Dunn said**. "We at DCNR are hopeful that this summer experience provides the spark that creates lifelong conservationists. We also recognize that it is important to provide our

youth opportunities to learn and build skills they can take forward into whatever career path they choose to follow. Thank you to DCNR and SCA staff that keep this incredible program running each year, as well as our partner agencies that support its operations.”

Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps members this year are working in more than 100 parks, forests, and communities across the state on projects including:

- Trail work
- Habitat enhancement
- Improving park and forest assets such as buildings, drainage structures and landscaped areas
- Tree planting
- Storm damage restoration
- Inventorying trees planted in communities

[Alumni of the PA Outdoor Corps](#) have obtained employment with conservation organizations including DCNR, SCA, National Parks Service, National Forest Service, and other conservation organizations, thanks in part to experience with the corps.

For more information about the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps visit the [DCNR's website](#).

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