



Pennsylvania
Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources

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**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Launches
New Statewide Volunteer System to Expand Access to Outdoor
Service Opportunities**

New platform makes it easier than ever for Pennsylvanians to volunteer in parks and forests across the Commonwealth.

Volunteers play a key role in keeping our public lands running — helping care for facilities, improve visitor experiences, and maintain trails so they stay safe and accessible for everyone — and in 2025, state parks benefitted from more than 56,000 volunteer hours on more than 3,300 individual projects.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources manages Pennsylvania's 124 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forestlands, which are free and open to the public every day.

Philipsburg, PA – The **Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)** has launched a new, streamlined [Conservation Volunteer system](#) designed to connect more Pennsylvanians with service opportunities across the Commonwealth's 124 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forestland.

Yesterday, **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn** visited [Black Moshannon State Park in Centre County](#) alongside local and state leaders to highlight the impact of volunteers on public lands and discuss the new online system, which modernizes how DCNR engages volunteers by simplifying sign-ups, standardizing processes, and automatically tracking hours and milestones. Volunteers can earn rewards as they reach service benchmarks, including free camping and cabin stays in state parks and forests, and the system makes it easier for individuals and groups to sign up — building on the more than 56,000 volunteer hours contributed to state parks across 3,300 projects in 2025 alone.

Since taking office, **Governor Shapiro and his Administration** have worked to modernize state government and deliver services that are easier and faster for Pennsylvanians. Those efforts are also driving economic growth — with **new data showing Pennsylvania's outdoor recreation economy grew by \$1.5 billion and added 9,000 jobs in 2024**, reaching \$20.4 billion in total impact and supporting more

than 177,000 jobs across the Commonwealth. The sector continues to outpace national growth, reflecting the Shapiro Administration's investments in parks, trails, and outdoor recreation infrastructure.

"Pennsylvania's parks and forests are some of our greatest assets — and they rely on dedicated volunteers to keep them thriving," said **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn**. "This new system makes it easier than ever for people to get involved, give back, and connect with the outdoors while helping us care for these spaces for future generations. We are grateful to the individuals and groups who spend time each year picking up trash, maintaining trails, and supporting events outdoors. Thank you for your service to our beautiful natural spaces."

Volunteers play a critical role in maintaining and improving public lands — from repairing and maintaining trails to supporting campgrounds, enhancing visitor experiences, and promoting healthy forests. DCNR is unveiling the new system during a month-long recognition of volunteer contributions across the Commonwealth, including the work of Friends groups supported by the **Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF)**.

"We are grateful to the individual volunteers and our Friends groups for their consistent, dedicate service to supporting public lands," said **PPFF President Marci Mowery**. "These amazing people donate their time and talent, working alongside state park and forest staff, to help make Pennsylvania's state parks and forests some of the best natural spaces in the country, and we thank them for their service."

"Our volunteers are the backbone of Keystone Trails Association," said **Holly Smith, executive director of the Keystone Trails Association**. "In 2025 alone, 196 dedicated individuals showed up across 27 Trail Care events, contributing 3,793 hours of service valued at \$122,438. Their dedication is what makes KTA's work possible."

DCNR encourages Pennsylvanians of all ages and backgrounds to get involved. Volunteer opportunities include trail maintenance, campground support, facility improvements, environmental education, and conservation projects, including

- Maintaining and improving all trails to ensure safety, accessibility, and sustainability.
- Caring for recreational facilities, such as pavilions, playgrounds, gardens, and picnic tables.
- Assisting with campground upkeep, including campsite maintenance, trash cleanup, and serving as a campground host.
- Promoting healthy forests through tree planting, community education, and sustainable land management.

The new system allows DCNR to automatically track logged volunteer hours and subsequent rewards as milestones are reached. Those rewards include a social media

badge for anyone who volunteers and additional perks for reaching benchmarks, including:

- 100 hours: 1-night free state forest camping
- 250 hours: 2-night free state park camping
- 500 hours: 5-night free state park camping
- 1,000 hours: 2-night/3-day free state park cabin stay

A [downloadable guide](#) is available to assist volunteers with signing up for the new system to connect to volunteer opportunities. More information and frequently asked questions about the Conservation Volunteer system is available on the [Conservation Volunteer](#) website.

Black Moshannon State Park is PPF's 2026 Park of the Year. Visit DCNR's website for more information about [Black Moshannon State Park](#) and check out [DCNR's Calendar of Events](#) for the latest happenings on public lands.

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