

National Association of State Parks Foundations Conference Stresses Importance of Volunteers

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LONGWOOD, FL, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

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Volunteering is a great way of supporting state parks and there are always volunteer opportunities. So, if you want to make a difference in your state, now is the time to step up and volunteer.”

Marci Mowery, Chair, NASPF

“That is why it is important that we give state park foundations and their volunteers the tools they need to conserve and steward the nation’s state parks, which are acknowledged as among the best in the world,” said Marci Mowery, chair of the National Association of State Parks Foundations.

“Our upcoming virtual national two-day conference (October 13-14) will do just that. It will include nationally recognized speakers presenting sessions on volunteerism pre- and post-COVID, fundraising, inclusive recreation best

practices, insurance and liability insights, and using economic studies for messaging. There will also be a presentation on doing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility the right way,” she said.

State parks have never been more popular, and many are experiencing record visitation. State parks get more than 809 million visitors a year, which includes over 61.6 million overnight users, and state parks generate over \$100 billion for local and state economies.

Nationwide there are over 8,950 state parks and managed areas covering 19.29 million acres. This includes state parks, recreation areas, natural areas, historic areas, environmental education areas, scientific areas forests, fish and wildlife areas, and other miscellaneous areas. There are more than 10,230 trails stretching 46,500 miles. There are 226,530 campsites, 8,730 cabins, 1,122 group facilities and 1,112 lodges with 5,769 rooms.

Volunteers work cooperatively with park staff in a variety of roles, both in formal "Friends of " relationships and informally through volunteer events. Volunteers provide connections to users

thus providing insight; sharing their time and talents; and helping accomplish necessary tasks. Volunteers may be involved in trail maintenance, stewardship projects, educational programming, fundraising, event planning, and more.

“Volunteering is a great way of supporting state parks and there are always volunteer opportunities year-round. So, if you love your state parks and want to make a difference in your state, now is the time to step up and volunteer,” she said.

The National Association supports statewide volunteer organizations and provides a national voice as advocates for all state parks.

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