

# The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation Applauds Governor Shapiro's Commitment to State Parks and Forests

CAMP HILL, PENNSYLVANIA, THE UNITED STATES, March 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Governor Shapiro's proposed investments in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests include increased staffing, increased investments in maintenance and infrastructure, increased capacity to build climate resiliency, improved emergency response, and watershed protection. It also funds a new Office of Outdoor Recreation.



"The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation applauds Governor Shapiro's proposed budget, announced on Tuesday," said Brad Mallory, Chair of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation. "His budget and budget address not only recognized the important role that state parks and forests play in the physical, mental, and emotional health of Pennsylvania, but his proposed investments in state parks and forests will also help the economy of the state."

"We at the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation were encouraged when we heard the budget address," said Marci Mowery, President of the Foundation. "Governor Shapiro's expansion of funding to address critical needs benefits all Pennsylvanians."

What are these needs and why are they critical to the future of our parks and forests? In 2019 the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation released a report (The Legacy of Pennsylvania's State Parks & Forests: [The Future is in Our Hands](#)) looking at the maintenance and infrastructure needs in Pennsylvania's parks and forests. This need currently stands at \$1.4 billion.

DCNR is responsible for over 2.5 million acres of Commonwealth lands, which include both state park and state forest facilities and resources. This land mass is two times the size of the state of Delaware. These lands contain a range of vital infrastructure necessary to maintain and support DCNR's mission of conservation and recreation. These lands supported over \$37 million visitors in 2022--visitations which are KEY to Pennsylvania's economy, particularly rural economies.

Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated that making a long-term investment in state parks and state forests is a prudent and valuable strategy for enhancing Pennsylvania's economy and quality of life.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account for Pennsylvania had a GDP value of \$13.64 billion, supporting 151,531 jobs and contributing \$6.7 billion in compensation. Pennsylvania has the sixth-largest outdoor recreation economy in the nation, supported by a combination of exceptional recreational assets, a generally diversified economy, and strong retail, manufacturing, and tourism sectors.

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