

# Florida State Parks Foundation celebrates Volunteer Appreciation Month

*Volunteers contributed more than 1 million service hours in 2022-23*

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, April 5, 2024

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- The Florida State Parks Foundation today celebrates April as Volunteer Appreciation Month and applauds the thousands of volunteers who donate their time, talents and energy to Florida's 175 award-winning state parks, trails and historic sites.

Nearly 20,000 registered volunteers combined for a total of 1,038,878 service hours in fiscal year 2022-23. Florida State Parks volunteers span a wide variety of ages and abilities, and volunteering opportunities are available in each of the Florida Park Service's "big five" management responsibilities: visitor services, administration, resource management, protection and maintenance.

"The Florida State Parks Foundation was born out of a desire to serve our state parks, and volunteerism is at the heart of all we do," said Kathleen Brennan, president of the Foundation's board of directors. "It is always a good time to celebrate and thank our state parks volunteers, but it's extra special



From left, Gil Ziffer, Julia Gill Woodward, Chuck Hatcher, Kathleen Brennan and Lynn Cherry celebrate volunteers at Falling Waters State Park in Chipley, Florida, on April 3, 2024.



The Fort Mose Historical Society receives an award during a volunteer appreciation event at Colt Creek State Park on March 15, 2024.

to recognize them during Volunteer Appreciation Month.”

Earlier this week, Brennan, fellow board members Lynn Cherry and Gil Ziffer and Foundation CEO Julia Gill Woodward joined Florida State Parks Director Chuck Hatcher at the Florida Park Service’s District 1 (Northwest/Panhandle region) volunteer awards event at Falling Waters State Park in Chipley.

Nearly 100 people gathered at the park, home of the state’s largest waterfall, to enjoy lunch and an awards presentation. The Foundation sponsors this and four other such events in the Northeast, Central, Southwest and Southeast regions each year.

“We absolutely love volunteer awards season,” Woodward said. “It is always inspiring to be around so many people who love state parks, and each year we are blown away by what individuals and volunteer groups achieve in their parks.”

Volunteering opportunities are available in Florida State Parks year-round. Regularly scheduled volunteering positions include:

- Ranger station attendant.
- Park maintenance assistant.
- Special event coordinator.
- Tour guide or program leader.
- Invasive plant removal.
- Beach, waterway or trail rover.
- Internships.

Parks with overnight accommodations may also need park resident campground hosts. Visit Florida State Parks’ official volunteer portal for more information.

“Our volunteers are a big reason why we have the best state parks in America,” Hatcher said. “We are grateful to everyone who volunteers, and we encourage anyone looking to make a difference in their community to consider volunteering at their closest state park.”

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