

Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation Announces 2026 Award Winners; Registration Now Open for May 12 Celebration

CAMP HILL, PA, UNITED STATES, March 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF) will celebrate conservation leaders from across the Commonwealth at its 17th Annual Awards Banquet on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at Little Buffalo State Park.

The annual event honors individuals, volunteers, businesses, and public servants whose leadership strengthens Pennsylvania's 124 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forestland. The evening also features a silent auction benefiting efforts to remove barriers to outdoor recreation — helping ensure that Pennsylvania's public lands are welcoming and accessible to all.

"This banquet is more than a celebration — it's a reminder that stewardship is powered by people," said Marci Mowery, President of PPFF. "When volunteers, professionals, advocates, and businesses work together, we create parks and forests that serve everyone."

2026 Award Recipients

Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award
Dr. Andrew Mowen

For shaping the future of parks and recreation through influential research, statewide impact, and mentorship of generations of professionals.

Joseph Ibberson Government Award

JOIN US
FOR THE ANNUAL PA PARKS & FORESTS
FOUNDATION AWARDS BANQUET



MAY 12 | 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM | LITTLE BUFFALO STATE PARK

HONORING THE PEOPLE THAT MAKE A
DIFFERENCE THROUGH THEIR WORK AND
VOLUNTEERISM

REGISTER NOW (OR DONATE) AT:
PAPARKSANDFORESTS.ORG/EVENT/PPFF-AWARDS-BANQUET-2026



Annual Banquet Save the Date

Dr. Silas Chamberlin

For research, leadership, and collaboration that have not only helped York County, but communities across Pennsylvania, connect public spaces with economic vitality and community well-being.

Chairwoman's Award

Outdoor Inclusion Coalition

For leadership that has expanded access to outdoor spaces by building partnerships and amplifying underrepresented voices across Pennsylvania.

President's Award

Jennifer Marsh

For leadership that has advanced outdoor recreation as an economic driver by connecting trails, parks, and public lands to strengthen Bedford County's economy and communities.

Park of the Year

Black Moshannon State Park

Black Moshannon State Park brings people together while making nature, history, and its extraordinary bog ecosystem welcoming and accessible to all.

Forest of the Year

Buchanan State Forest

Buchanan State Forest is being recognized for collaborative management— transforming challenges into partnerships, building high-quality trails, and expanding inclusive access so more people can enjoy and care for public lands.

Volunteer of the Year (Individual)

June Morgan

For dedicated volunteer service that has enriched Kings Gap by caring for the mansion gardens and curating the Music on the Mountain series.

Volunteer of the Year (Group)

Friends of Ridley Creek State Park

For volunteer leadership that contributes hundreds of hours each year to maintain trails, support park staff, and strengthen the Ridley Creek State Park community.

Education Award (Group)

Friends of Colonel Denning State Park

For connecting people to the park in joyful ways that build community, encourage stewardship, and deepen appreciation for Pennsylvania's public lands.

Improvement Award (Individual)

Chad Zimmerman

For commitment to building more than 17 miles of hand-built trail in Buchanan State Forest.

Improvement Award (Group)

Mid-State Trail Association's Bald Eagle State Forest Bridge Flash Crew

Recognizing dedication and teamwork by rebuilding critical trail infrastructure, contributing hundreds of volunteer hours, and strengthening both the Mid State Trail and the community that sustains it.

Young Volunteer Award

Eric Torikian

For modeling a positive force for both trail stewardship and youth engagement in the park.

Young Volunteer Award (Group)

Keystone Mountain Bike Team

For their commitment to working with others to maintain and improve the Lackawanna State Park trail network while modeling leadership, stewardship, and service to the broader community.

Registration and Sponsorship

Tickets are now available for \$50 per person. Sponsorship opportunities include award sponsorships, table sponsorships, and support for accessibility-focused initiatives highlighted during the evening.

Approximately 175 conservation leaders, volunteers, business partners, and park professionals are expected to attend.

To purchase tickets or learn more, visit:

PAParksAndForests.org/event/banquet-2026/

or call 717-236-7644.

About the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation supports Pennsylvania's 124 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forest by coordinating volunteers, advancing public engagement, and securing private support. With more than 45 chapters statewide, PPFF inspires stewardship to sustain and enhance the Commonwealth's public lands. To learn more about PPFF, visit <https://paparksandforests.org/>.

Marci J. Mowery

Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation

+1 717-236-7644

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