

DATE

For Immediate Release

For additional information contact NAME

at PHONE NUMBER or EMAIL



2018 MARKS THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S STATE PARKS AND FORESTS – HERE'S WHY THAT'S IMPORTANT

CITY, PA – The name of friend group, the non-profit partner of state park/forest name wants you to be involved in a statewide celebration. 2018 marks the 125th anniversary of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests, and there are many ways for you to get involved. But first, a refresher on why these public lands are so important.

Pennsylvania has 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forest land. In 2009, our state park system was named the BEST in the nation by the National Recreation and Park Society, and our state forests are national certified sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council.

There are more than 40 million annual visitors to Pennsylvania state parks and forests, generating more than \$1 billion a year for our economy through visitor purchases of hotel rooms, dinners, souvenirs, and other amenities. In fact, a 2012 study by Penn State University showed that the return on taxpayer investment in our state parks alone was estimated at nearly \$12.41 for every \$1 invested.

But it's not just the economics that are important. Spending time in our state parks and forests is great for your health. Studies show that outdoor recreation reduces stress, anxiety and depression, lowers the risk of obesity, helps regulate blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and reduces your risk of cardiovascular issues. Thankfully, there are many recreational opportunities at state park/forest name to keep you healthy, including X, Y, and Z.

State park/forest name and the other state parks and forests do so much for us, how can we help them?

The friends group is always happy to welcome new members. Volunteers can assist with trail maintenance, event planning, fundraising, and much more. Whether you have an hour a month to give, or an hour a week, there is a role for you. You can also donate funds to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, requesting that it go toward projects at state park/forest name. Online donations can be made at www.paparksand-forests.org.

As part of the 125th anniversary celebration, the friends group is organizing the following activities and events that you are encouraged to attend:

- Event 1 (example could be a birthday party for the park/forest)
- Event 2 (example could be a special speaker/presentation)
- Activity 1 (example could be a walk or scavenger hunt)

“Insert quote here from one of the friends group members, talking about why the anniversary is important to them and why the public should get involved.”

To learn more about the Pennsylvania state parks and forests 125th anniversary celebration and find out how you can help, visit www.paparksandforests.org.