



Pennsylvania  
Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Celebrates Outdoors for All in Lancaster

*More than 30 Central Pennsylvania outdoor recreation and conservation organizations came together to offer hands on activities, opportunities to get out on the water, education, and community connection at the event.*

*Two more Outdoors for All events are scheduled for August in Harrisburg and Pittsburgh.*

*The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources manages Pennsylvania's 125 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forestlands, which are free and open to the public every day.*

**Lancaster, PA** – Today, the **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)**, local officials, and community organizations gathered at Reservoir Park in Lancaster to celebrate the Commonwealth's third annual *Outdoors for All* celebration.

"Outdoors for All is about connecting DCNR to the energy and community spirit that happens when people and organizations come together to celebrate the simple joy of being outside," said **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn**. "Events like this show what access to the outdoors can mean for people, from the sense of belonging it creates to the mental and physical benefits that come from connecting with nature. This is what Outdoors for All is all about, and it is why DCNR is committed to making sure every Pennsylvanian can enjoy the outdoors in a welcoming and meaningful way."

DCNR held the [2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Outdoors for All Day event at Culliton Park in Lancaster](#), and Saturday's Outdoors for All event brought together more than 30 organizations at Reservoir Park.

DCNR is funding the Master Plan to reimagine Lancaster's oldest park and is proud to support the Friends of Reservoir Park and the City of Lancaster as they work with the surrounding community to gather input for the plan through Outdoors for All activities. Visitors enjoyed interactive activities, environmental education, games, music, yoga, dance, food, and many more outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental justice themed offerings.

"Lancaster City residents deserve access to safe and welcoming green spaces where they can connect with nature and each other, and Reservoir Park is such an important gathering place for our community," said **City of Lancaster Mayor Jaime Arroyo**. "As we work to shape the park's future, events like Outdoors for All Day bring neighbors together and give us the opportunity to gather meaningful input from the community so that the park truly reflects the wants and needs of the neighborhood."

Participating organizations included several City of Lancaster offices dedicated to neighborhood, community, and environmental causes, along with groups such as Conestoga River Club, Core Services Associates, Domestic Violence Services of Lancaster County, DJ Paul Arteta, Kennett Outdoors, Keystone Trails Association, Lancaster Bird Club, Lancaster County Office of Aging, Lancaster County Parks and Rec Environmental Education Center, Lancaster Public Library, Paradise Electric Bikes, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, Ramp Up Skateboarding, Raven Ridge Wildlife Center, Side Street Mission, Softie Whirl Ice Cream Truck, The Mix at Arbor Place, Yoga in the Park, YWCA Lancaster, Pool and Yard Games, the Office of Governor Josh Shapiro, Paying It Forward, Department of Environmental Protection, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, the School District of Lancaster and many others committed to expanding access to outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental justice.

"Let's Go 1-2-3 is excited to work with so many great partners for this impactful event that brings nature and recreational activities to underused city parks like Reservoir Park," said **Lydia Martin, Director of Community Engagement for Let's Go 1-2-3**. "This special event offers people of all ages and means easy access to free park activities and resources while celebrating Lancaster's beautiful parks and greenspaces. Together we can help shape the future of Reservoir Park by providing feedback to the upcoming master plan."

DCNR has invested more than \$13 million in water conservation and recreation access initiatives in Lancaster County since 2016. [Pennsylvania's 2026 River of the Year](#), the Conestoga River, was recently honored for its scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and for the conservation work of the Conestoga River Club to dramatically improve the water quality of the waterway.

"We're excited to partner in bringing Outdoors for All Day back to Lancaster and into our home park" said **Meg Martin, Chair of Friends of Reservoir Park**. "This has been a great opportunity to learn about water access and connect with so many wonderful people in this community."

### **Celebrating Outdoors for All**

Outdoors for All Day is recognized each year on the third Saturday in July to highlight Pennsylvania's commitment to welcoming, inclusive access to nature for all residents and visitors. **July is Outdoors for All Month**, expanding the celebration into a

statewide series of events that bring together recreation, conservation, and environmental organizations. What began as a single celebration in Pittsburgh in 2024 has grown into four events across the Commonwealth.

These events also reflect DCNR's Broader *Mosaic* initiative to strengthen community connections and ensure all people are represented and welcomed on Pennsylvania's public lands. This year's theme highlights the importance of expanding water access and creating more opportunities for water recreation. **Upcoming free events will take place in Harrisburg and Pittsburgh:**

- August 8 – [Harrisburg](#), **Italian Lake Park**, 2960 N 3rd St, Harrisburg, PA 17110
- August 15 – [Pittsburgh](#), **Allegheny Commons Park**, West Ohio Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15212

All events run from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM and are supported by regional organizations and municipal leaders including the **City of Harrisburg**, **Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy**, **Outdoor Inclusion Coalition**, and the **City of Pittsburgh**. All events will have Spanish and American Sign Language interpreters onsite to provide free language interpretation services for attendees.

### **Accessibility and Inclusion in State Parks and Forests**

DCNR continues to expand accessible recreation opportunities across Pennsylvania through **new infrastructure, improved trip [planning tools](#), and enhanced visitor resources**. The agency recently launched **expanded accessible recreation website pages that outline accessibility features at more than 100 state park and forest locations** and include a new search tool to help visitors find facilities that fit their needs.

"The City of Lancaster is thrilled to welcome DCNR's Outdoors for All Day to one of our beloved parks," said **Stephen Campbell, City of Lancaster Director of Public Works**. "Events like this show how access to nature by people of all ages and abilities strengthens community health and connection. We're especially grateful to Let's-Go 1-2-3 for its ongoing partnership with Lancaster County Community Foundation, the City of Lancaster and the School District of Lancaster in the Saving Nature in Youth Centered Spaces project for environmental education, and in helping make this celebration possible. It is events like these that continue to elevate Lancaster for all who live, work, and play here."

On the ground, [new improvements](#) include **communication boards, colorblind glasses, Handy Talker communication cards**, and other tools to support visitors with diverse abilities and communication needs. DCNR also continues to invest in accessible trails, boat launches, playgrounds, wildlife viewing areas, hunting areas, and other recreation sites. **Pennsylvania now offers more than 120 miles of ADA accessible trails in state parks and 82 miles in state forests**, with additional projects underway.

## Investing in Communities Through Statewide Recreation and Conservation Grants

DCNR's **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)** provides funding for local governments and nonprofit organizations to support recreation and conservation projects. Grants help communities develop and rehabilitate parks, plan and build trails, protect land and water resources, conduct conservation planning, and strengthen regional partnerships.

Since 1995, DCNR has invested nearly **\$1.5 billion into more than 10,000 outdoor-related projects** in Pennsylvania. In 2026, the Shapiro Administration [announced](#) a nearly **\$82 million investment in new state funding** to support [more than 295 recreation and conservation projects](#) across Pennsylvania. These investments align with DCNR's [2025-29 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#): [Outdoor Places, Shared Spaces](#), which outlines a roadmap to improve outdoor access, equity, and sustainability throughout the Commonwealth and meet the outdoor recreation needs of Pennsylvanians.

In 2025, these grants enabled the development or rehabilitation of **165+ parks**, the protection of **7,155 acres for recreation and habitat**, and the construction or rehabilitation of **nearly 70 miles of trails**, including closing **eight Priority Trail Gaps**.

Since the program began, **more than 440,000 acres** have been permanently protected, **40 percent of local parks** have received funding, and over **90 percent of Pennsylvanians live in a municipality with at least one DCNR grant project**.

If a nonprofit organization or local government is interested in applying for a C2P2 grant, DCNR staff are available to assist with questions, site visits, and guidance on preparing competitive applications. Applicants are encouraged to [contact their regional advisor](#) before starting a proposal. For more information visit [DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program webpage](#).

## Outdoor Recreation and Pennsylvania's Growing Economy

The outdoor recreation industry contributed **\$20.4 billion** to Pennsylvania's economy in 2024 — representing 2 percent of the state's GDP. Under Governor Josh Shapiro's leadership the sector supports **more than 177,000 jobs** and generates **\$9.5 billion in wages**, [according](#) to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

With more than **14,000 miles of trails**, **6,500 local parks**, **125 state parks**, and **2.2 million acres of forest land**, Pennsylvania boasts one of the largest public trail systems in the eastern U.S. — positioning the Commonwealth as a leader in four-season recreation, a hub for active tourism, and making it [The Great American Getaway](#).

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