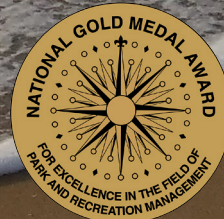


DELAWARE STATE PARKS

2016

Annual Report

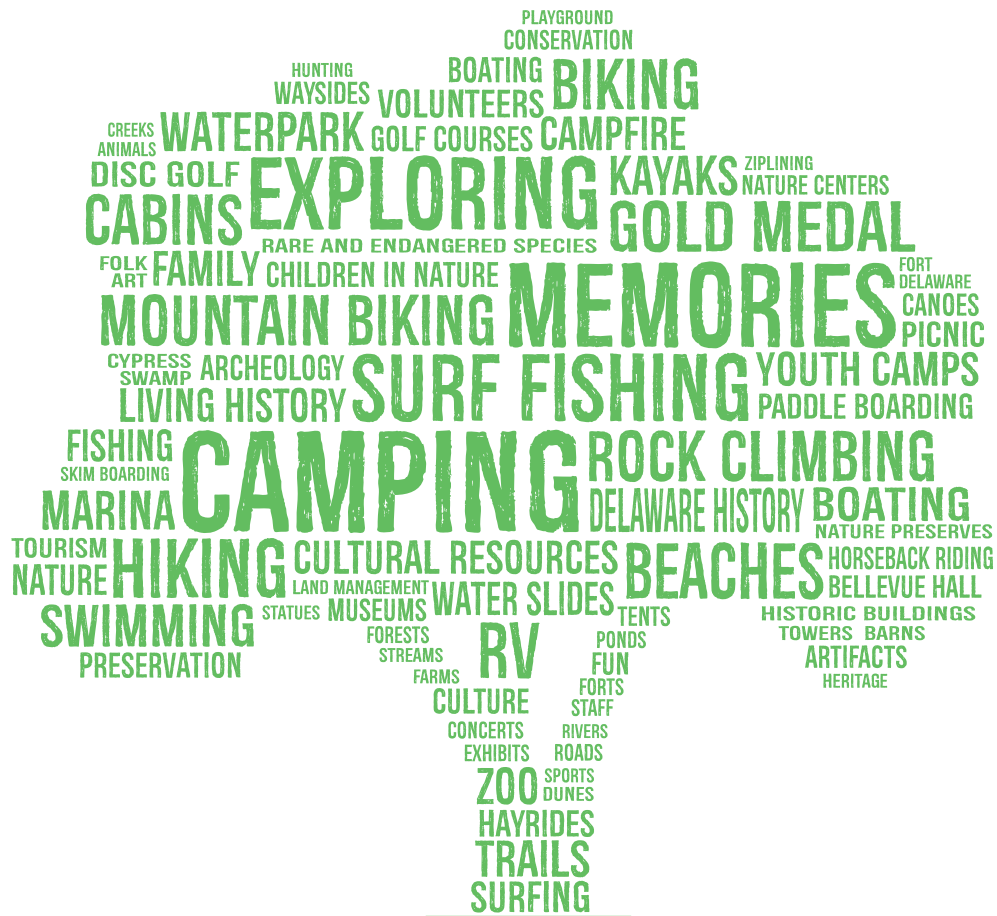
Voted America's Best



Delaware State Parks Annual Report

2016

Voted America's Best



DELAWARE STATE PARKS

by the numbers

5 MILLION +
VISITORS 

16
Parks 

26,071
Acres 

619
Buildings
on park land 

151
Miles
of trails 

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*The mission
of Delaware State Parks is to
provide Delaware's residents and
visitors with safe and enjoyable
recreational opportunities and open
spaces, responsible stewardship
of the lands and the cultural and
natural resources that we have been
entrusted to protect and manage,
and resource-based interpretive
and educational services.*

WHAT WE ARE

OUR PARKS AND PRESERVES

The Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation operates and maintains 16 state parks and related preserves and greenways throughout Delaware.

STATE PARKS:

Alapocas Run
Bellevue
Brandywine Creek
Cape Henlopen
Delaware Seashore
Fenwick Island
First State Heritage Park
Fort Delaware
Fort DuPont
Fox Point
Holts Landing
Killens Pond
Lums Pond
Trap Pond
White Clay Creek
Wilmington State Parks

PRESERVES:

Angola Neck
Auburn Heights
Beach Plum Island
Bellevue Woods
Brandywine Creek Valley
Cape Henlopen
Cedar Creek
Doe Bridge
Flint Woods
Fork Branch
James Branch
Lums Pond Woods
Murderkill River
Nanticoke River
Pea Patch Island
Rehoboth Bay Marshes
Thompson Island
White Clay Creek

MORE THAN PARKS

We also:

- Administer Delaware's land protection programs
- Provide educational and interpretive programs on natural and cultural resources
- Acquire and develop recreational lands and facilities
- Provide for the protection of natural areas
- Oversee and plan for statewide recreational needs

WHO WE ARE

OUR PEOPLE PUT US ON TOP IN FY16

A wide variety of knowledge and skills are required to keep Delaware State Parks running. Our full-time staff includes:

17  park superintendents and assistant superintendents

19  park rangers

5  animal keepers and zoo managers

48  electrical, mechanical, and maintenance staff

9  educators

11  administrative specialists

16  managers and administrators

1  director

Park Rangers

combine duties in law enforcement and protection of Delaware's natural resources and environment.

19 full-time Delaware State Park rangers handled over **3,000** complaints this year.

We have **583** casual/seasonal staff, including:

- **55** ocean lifeguards to protect swimmers at the Atlantic Ocean beaches
- **56** lifeguards to protect visitors at the Killens Pond Water Park



Delaware is the smallest state ever to receive the NRPA Gold Medal Award for Excellence in State Park Management.



WE WON A NATIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARD

The Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation was selected by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) as its 2015-2016 winner of the Gold Medal Award for Excellence in State Park Management. This highly sought-after honor recognizes state parks that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management, and community involvement. Delaware is the tenth recipient of the award.



WE HAVE OUTSTANDING STAFF

- **Sarah Zimmerman**, First State Heritage Park Superintendent, was honored with the Kent County Tourism Corporation 2016 Tourism Person of The Year Award for her efforts to bring partners together in the capital to highlight the incredible assets within the First State Heritage Park and Dover.
- **Sheila Linn**, Administrative Assistant at Brandywine Creek State Park, was selected as **Employee of the Year** because she exemplifies the consummate state park employee in her positive attitude, happy demeanor, can-do actions, care for co-workers, outstanding service to park visitors, and extensive knowledge of park resources. Sheila freely helps her co-workers, making their responsibilities easier by finding a contact or information, or going beyond her job duties to learn a nature education program. She completed the Clemson Supervisory Development Program, pouring her all into the course. She continues to show a commitment to better herself, her career in parks, the Division, and the parks themselves.
- DNREC officer **Bryan John** was recognized for his many years of service to the Beach Patrol. Bryan started as a beach lifeguard in 1989 and went on to serve as lieutenant, captain, supervisor, and finally as the supervisory ranger overseeing the entire Beach Patrol program until May 2016.





WE CELEBRATED OUR 65TH ANNIVERSARY

In 1951, the State Park Commission acquired its first properties: Brandywine Springs, followed by Trap Pond and Fort Delaware. Trap Pond State Park was the first to open to visitors. Parks were added steadily through the 60s and 70s as new lands were acquired.

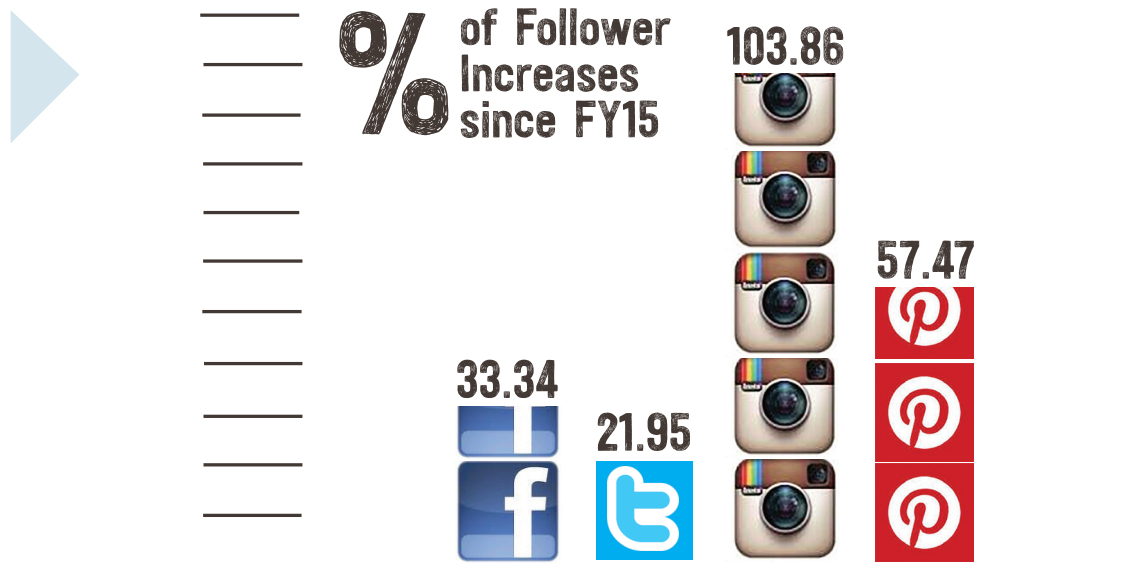
Killens Pond State Park was selected as Kent County Tourism's Attraction of the Year.



WE EMERGED AS SOCIAL MEDIA LEADERS

Social media has grown tremendously for the parks in 2016, with followers **up 34%**, from **21,672** in 2015 to **28,974**, across all four major social media outlets.

Delaware Today has recommended the Delaware State Parks Pinterest page as one of the top Delaware social media accounts to follow.



VOLUNTEERS

There are multiple ways people volunteer at Delaware State Parks. Some are members of the Friends group for a specific park, some are unaffiliated, and some are members of two new programs: AmeriCorps/Veterans Corps and Delaware State Parks Youth Conservation Corps.

The total impact of park volunteers is tremendous. In FY16, the assistance they provided was the equivalent of increasing overall state park staff by more than one-third (36%):

3,258 volunteers contributing **104,429** hours = **54** full time employees

Value: **\$1,044,290**¹

DELAWARE STATE PARKS YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS

During the nine-week summer program for youths between the ages of 16 and 25, the 23 YCC participants logged over 3,000 hours of volunteer work hours, along with about 1,500 career exploration and awareness hours. Supported by a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, participants worked on most aspects of running a park, including grounds maintenance, boat rental, program assistance, environmental stewardship, and administration. Program participants rated the program a

4.19 out of 5. 19% began the program considering a career in parks or environmental stewardship; by the end, 65% were considering this as their career path.



AMERICORPS/VETERANS CORPS

7 veterans served 7,097 volunteer work hours as members of the AmeriCorps/Veterans Corps team. Much of that work was on trails at White Clay Creek State Park, including installing and repairing waterbars on connectors between Creek Road and Twin Valley Trail, nicking, de-berming, armoring of low spots, trimming, and tree removal. Stihl donated equipment, including chain saws, pole saws, safety equipment, and training for the entire team.

¹Based on average seasonal wage of \$10/hour

FY16
volunteer
assistance
provided the
equivalent
of increasing
park staff by
36%.

"In the very best traditions of American civic engagement, the caliber of our parks is enabled by legions of volunteer citizens from across the state who spend countless hours, raise important funds and bring specific talents to the management of these gems. This model of successful private-public collaboration is worth study by policymakers for application in other areas."

*- Michael Fleming, Wilmington, in
The News Journal, Oct 18, 2015*



STIHL®



There are

14

Friends groups that actively support Delaware State Parks.

FRIENDS OF DELAWARE STATE PARKS

Friends groups are invaluable partners for our parks. These independent, non-profit organizations of community members are dedicated to assisting a particular park, helping with special events and programs, park maintenance, planning, fundraising, staffing the nature centers, and advocating for the park.

The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation - Supports Delaware Seashore State Park and the Indian River Life-Saving Station

The Delaware Zoological Society - Provides funding and staffing for the Brandywine Zoo

The Fort Delaware Society - Conducts tours and sponsors special events at Fort Delaware

The Fort Miles Historical Association - Committed to the preservation of Fort Miles Historical Area in Cape Henlopen State Park

The Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve - Maintains the Marshall steam car collection and miniature railway at the Preserve

The Friends of Bellevue State Park - Conducts fundraising, sponsors summer camp scholarships and the Summer Concert Series, and provides trail monitoring and cleanup

The Friends of Brandywine Creek State Park - Sponsors clean-up projects and provides environmental education scholarships

The Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park - Purchased a live Osprey Camera and sponsors the Park Pedalers Program

The Friends of Holts Landing State Park - Helps with trail maintenance, promotes Family Fun Nights, and advocates for the park

The Friends of Killens Pond State Park - Helps sponsor children's nature programs and the Summer Concert Series

The Friends of Lums Pond State Park - Helps with park maintenance and fundraising

The Friends of Old Dover - Sponsors the iconic Dover Days each spring and supports the First State Heritage Park

The Friends of White Clay Creek State Park - Staffs the nature center, monitors bluebird boxes, and conducts trail maintenance

The Friends of Wilmington State Parks - Conducts fundraising and helps with park maintenance

The Port Penn Area Historical Society - Helps attain funding and provides assistance with the Port Penn Interpretive Center

Trap Pond Partners - Sponsors an annual bike rally and provides scholarships for environmental education and funding for other park projects

THINGS WE DO

Since the Open Space law was passed in 1990, over 57,000 acres of the Delaware landscape has been protected from development.

FY16: A YEAR OF SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF DELAWARE

WE PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

Natural open space lands contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to Delaware's economy each year by providing areas for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife watching, and tourism. The diversity of plants, animals, and habitats found on these lands also provides invaluable services like cleaning our air, filtering our water, and maintaining the fertility of our soil.



The Land Preservation Office identifies areas of high ecological value and protects these areas by working with landowners who would like to protect their property from development and preserve it in perpetuity. Four state land management Divisions qualify for funding under the Open Space Program: the Divisions of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife (DNREC), State Forestry (Agriculture), and Historical and Cultural Affairs (State).

There are **619** buildings in the state park system.

WE MAINTAINED A WIDE VARIETY OF BUILDINGS

From a civil war fort and World War II bunkers to horse stables, historic homes, former church buildings, and even a football stadium, there is a wide variety of buildings that we manage in state parks, all requiring care and maintenance. The Division manages more historic structures than any other entity in the state of Delaware.

WE PROVIDED HOME COURSES AND FIELDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE SPORTS

Baynard Stadium in Wilmington State Parks is the home field for 5 high schools:

- Delaware Military Academy
- Howard High School of Technology
- St. Elizabeth High School
- St. Marks High School
- Salesianum High School

Our park trails serve most of the high school cross-country meets in Delaware, and White Clay Creek State Park is also the home course for the University of Delaware cross-country team. Killens Pond is the home course for five high schools and averages two dual meets per week from September through November. The park also served as the course for the Henlopen Conference and State Championship meets. Alapocas Run State Park is home to Wilmington Charter and St. Elizabeth lacrosse games and Salesianum rugby matches.

Almost **600** school sporting events took place in state parks last year.

Over \$28 million in matching grants has been awarded since 1988.

WE PROVIDED GRANTS

The Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails Program, formerly known as the Delaware Land & Water Conservation Trust Fund, was established in 1986 to provide funding for parkland and greenway conservation and for outdoor recreation facility development. City and county governments and park districts may apply for grant funding under the program.

In FY16, Delaware State Parks awarded over \$1.2 million in grants for 14 new projects,

providing land for a new park in Millville, age-appropriate playground equipment for parks in Ellendale and Delaware City, an observation platform and pavilion at Milford's Goat Island Natural Area, and the first sensory playground for children with autism in Delaware located at Glasgow Regional Park.



96

couples held their weddings at a state park in FY16.

WE HOSTED WEDDINGS

Popular spots for weddings include Bellevue Hall, the Judge Morris Estate at White Clay Creek, the Baldcypress Nature Center at Trap Pond, Delaware Seashore's Indian River Life-Saving Station, and Cape Henlopen.

Delaware STATE PARKS

HISTORIC ELEGANCE . RUSTIC CHARM . SEASIDE ROMANCE



Your Lifelong Adventure Starts Here

destateparks.com/events



EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

Delaware State Parks offer a variety of programs to educate all age groups about our environmental, historical and cultural heritage.

In FY16,
Delaware State
Parks delivered
7,800
programs
and tours to
414,372
adults,
schoolchildren,
scouts, and
day camp
participants,
for a total of
7,405
contact hours.

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

- More than **150,000** people attended over **3,000** free programs, accounting for **67%** of all program attendance
- **41%** of all state park programming is free
- More than **120,000** people visited state park nature centers in FY16
- **97,479** visitors undertook self-guided tours and explorations of state park nature centers and historic sites
- **92%** of participants reported enjoying the program they attended, and **94%** stated that they would attend another Delaware State Parks program

EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE

- **21%** of all park programs are delivered to school groups
- **1,589** school programs educated **39,555** school children, totaling **1,069** contact hours* and **42,284,295** impact hours**
- **2,070** Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts participated in **81** specially-tailored programs, for a total of **106** contact hours
- In FY16, **146** state park day camps provided nature-based experiences to **1,673** campers



* Contact hours = the duration of the programs (i.e., the amount of time participants are engaged with park staff)

** Impact hours = contact hours multiplied by the number of participants

Program Attendance FY16

	Number of Programs	Number of Participants	Contact Hours
Public Programs	6,050	227,854	6,230
Nature Center/Historic Building Visitation		97,479	
School Programs	1,589	39,555	1,069
Girl Scout and Boy Scout Programs	81	2,070	106
Summer Concerts	80	47,414	
FY16 Totals	7,800	414,372	7,405

HOW WE PAY FOR IT

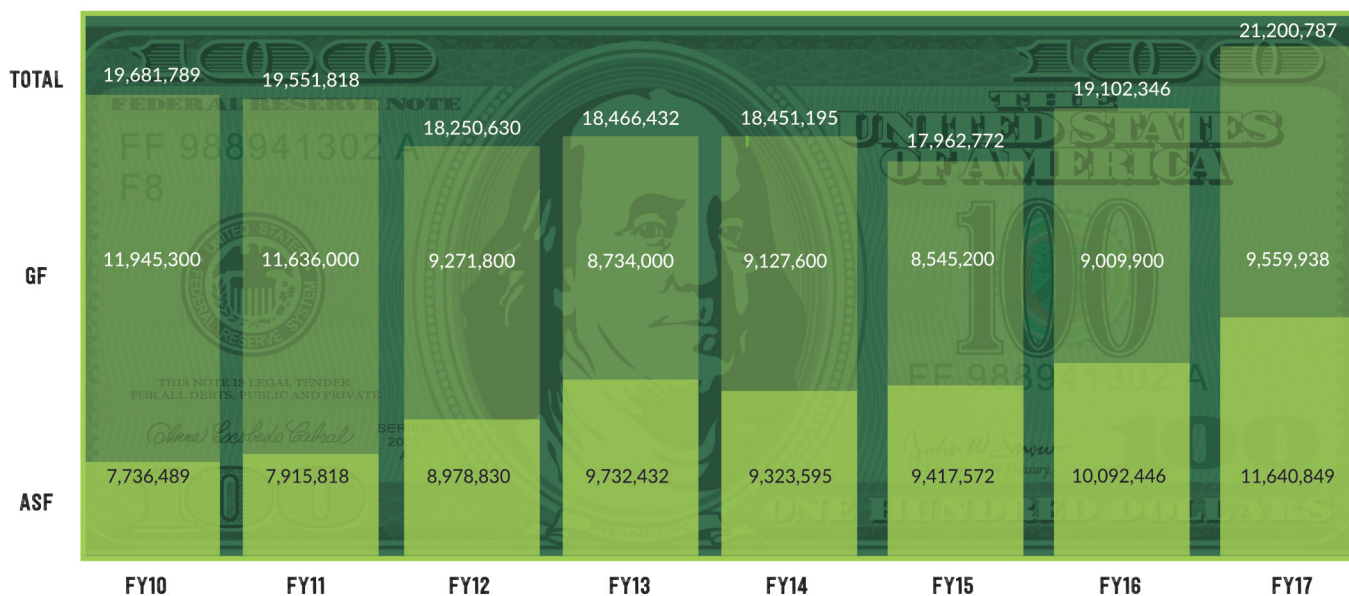
FUNDING THE PARKS

The Division of Parks and Recreation is primarily (65%) self-funded, which is unique within Delaware government. This requires the Division to project and manage a budget of fixed expenses with a revenue stream that fluctuates annually due to variables beyond our control. These include:

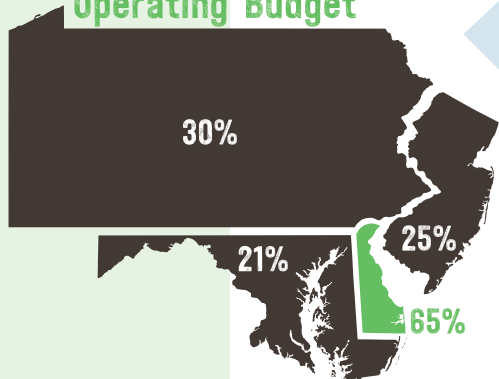
- Weather (rainy summer season, hurricanes, excessive heat, etc.)
- Gas prices and economic swings that affect the amount of discretionary money available to vacationers
- Carrying capacity limitations at ocean parks and other large revenue-generating management units

Annual increases in operating expenses and unfunded mandates are covered from fees and other revenue. A new fee structure went into effect in February 2015, the impact of which is seen in the large jump in FY16 revenues.

OPERATING EXPENSES

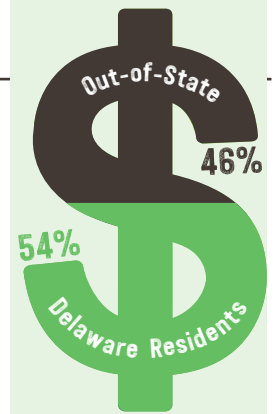
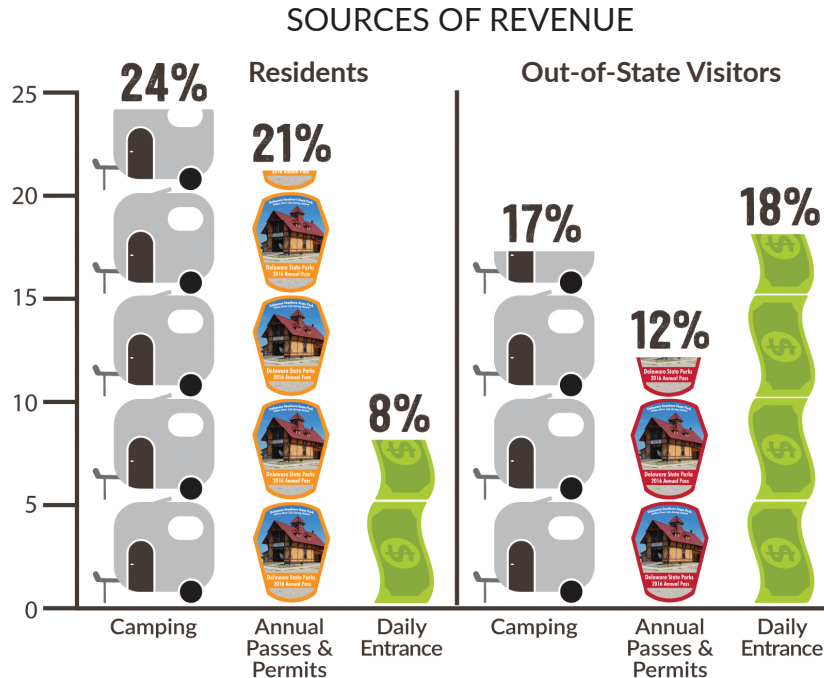


Self-Sufficient Operating Budget



In Delaware, most of the funds for operating the state parks come from park-generated revenue such as fees, permits, and passes. Only 35% of park operating funds comes from the state budget. This is quite different from our neighboring states.

Park fees address day-to-day operational expenses in the state parks and provide critical funding for deferred maintenance on buildings and utilities, and for replacement of aging equipment. **FY16 revenue from fees totaled \$9,166,865.**



Almost half of the revenue came from out-of-state visitors to the parks.

TAKING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH

In addition to fee revenue, Delaware State Parks has added innovative entrepreneurial sources of revenue.

Low-Digit Surf Tag Auction

Live and online low-digit surf tag auctions continued, capitalizing on Delawareans' love for low-digit license plates. **58** tags were auctioned including tag #1 for \$26,000. Total sales in 2016 raised **\$141,054.**



Market Rentals

Unused residences on park property can be reliable sources of income. The first rental, the **Seashore Beach** (the former Delaware Seashore park superintendent's house), required a total investment of **\$55,969** and has brought in **\$95,581** during its first three years as a rental unit. Given the success of the Seashore Beach rental, more market rentals are planned or under development.

Yurts, Cottages and Cabins

Yurts, cottages and new cabins have proven to be a good investment. They had a **72%** occupancy rate for the year.

State Park Concessions

Privately-owned concessionaires and partners run businesses at **21** state park locations, paying a negotiated percentage of their gross revenue back to the Division. Services provided include charter fishing, kayaking, horseback riding, food service, and a high-ropes adventure course.

Camping By The Numbers

- Camping generates over **40%** of park revenues
- Almost **329,527** people camped in tents, RVs, cabins, yurts or cottages across the state in FY16
- The **852** sites in our park system were occupied a total of **87,013** nights, for a year-round occupancy rate of **37%**

INVESTMENTS IN OUR PARKS

This past year has seen the completion of many projects that will enhance visitor experiences and strengthen our parks for years to come. The following are examples from throughout the park system.

- **Rocky Run Bridge at Brandywine Creek State Park**

The original bridge was deemed structurally unsound, so a replacement was built next to it. The new bridge opened in October; as part of the popular Creek Road Trail on the east side of the Brandywine River, it serves as the link between the park's Rockland Road and Thompson's Bridge parking areas.

Project Cost: \$450,000

- **Fishing Pier at Cape Henlopen State Park**

A repair and rehab of the 1,300-foot fishing pier was completed in May. Once 149 pilings were repaired or replaced, extensive decking repairs were completed for the pier, which provides habitat for fish and other marine life and services anglers, birdwatchers, and leisure visitors. Funding for the repairs included \$30,000 in Community Transportation funds from Representatives Dukes and Smyk, Speaker Schwartzkopf, and from Senator Lopez, in addition to a \$351,050 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Project Cost: \$1,020,120



- **Cabin Village at Cape Henlopen State Park**

Six new cabins opened in the spring, doubling to 12 the number of cabins in the park's "Cabin Village." The cabins feature screened porches, heat, and air-conditioning. Two new bathroom facilities also opened in the campground this spring.

Project Cost: \$873,255

- **Trails at Cape Henlopen State Park**

After winter storms severely damaged the Gordon's Pond trail, rendering it unusable in portions, it was repaired and reopened. Work on the Junction and Breakwater trail included maintenance and repair, as well as selective application of top dressing.

Project Cost: \$170,000

- **Boat Ramp at Holts Landing State Park**

A new state-of-the-art boat ramp opened in April. The double-load ramp doubles capacity and includes an ADA-accessible floating dock. A 60-foot-wide by 4-foot-deep channel that will accommodate boats up to 25 feet in length was dredged.

Project Cost: \$696,000

- **Waterpark Rehabilitation at Killens Pond State Park**

Four brand-new, state-of-the-art water slides were completed at the waterpark. The two new spiral slides and two speed slides are each mounted on a 54-foot-high platform, making them almost twice as high as the slides they replaced. Other improvements include an enhanced entry with colorful canopies, an enlarged queuing area to provide shade for customers waiting to enter the waterpark, and additional ticket booths to expedite the ticketing process. Accessibility improvements have been completed at the bathhouse and a new building houses the water filtration system that supports the slide complex and future improvements.

Project Cost: \$4,305,493

- **Assawoman Canal Trail at Delaware Seashore State Park**

The new one-mile Assawoman Canal Trail was completed and opened.

Project Cost: \$800,000

- **NVF Property at Auburn Heights Preserve**

Investments are being made to renovate and improve many aspects of Auburn Heights, including the park office, roads, and parking lots. Trails are in various stages of design and installation, and wetland installation is about to begin as part of the stream restoration project.

Project Cost: \$2,500,000

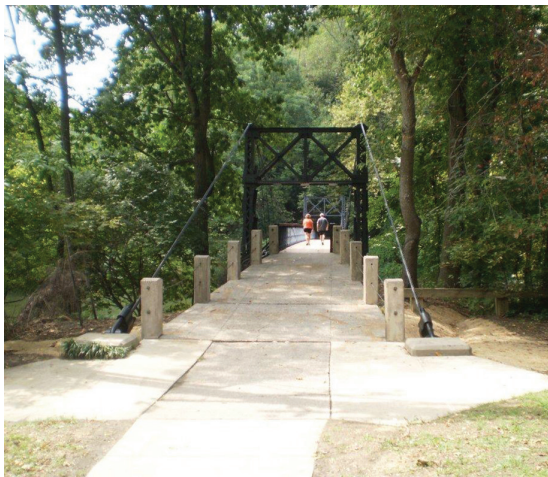
- **New Special Events Venue at Bellevue State Park**

The indoor tennis center was demolished for safety reasons, and a new special event venue was created adjacent to Bellevue Hall.

Project Cost: \$950,000

- **Eagle Ridge at Brandywine Zoo**

Eagle Ridge opened in 2016, transforming a hilly, multi-story area and making it fully accessible. It includes a new viewing platform and gently sloping walkway.



Project Cost: \$103,950, including a **\$30,000** donation from Simone Realty.

- **Swinging Bridge at Wilmington State Parks**

A resurfacing and structural repair of the iconic swinging bridge in Brandywine Park was completed and the bridge reopened.

Project Cost: \$650,000



SMALL BUSINESSES AT THE PARKS

17 businesses served as concessionaires within the parks in FY16, providing food, experiences, and tent rentals for park visitors:

"I went fishing this previous week and although it was slow, Captain Bob his mate were amazing. I can't wait to come back next year!"

- Amy Keefe, Birdsboro, PA about Hook'em and Cook'em Tackle and Seafood

"Go Ape' it's a tree top adventure course. 4 zip lines over water and about 35 obstacles! Greatest 55 dollars I ever spent!"

- Pebbles Antonsen, Bear, DE

"Over the top, and then some!"

- Curt K. New Castle, DE about Go Ape

"We went on a lark, went back 3 more times!"

- Ben S. Alexandria, VA about Coastal Kayak

Food vendors:

Hook'em and Cook'em Tackle and Seafood
Jay Vending (at Killens Pond, Cape Henlopen, and Delaware Seashore)
Jay Kay Snacks
Pineapple Catering
Hammerheads Dockside

Service vendors:

Coastal Kayak
Go Ape Treetop Adventure
Excellence Tennis Academy
Sunset Stables
Wellspring Farm
Lighthouse View Bait and Tackle
ProTrade
Forewinds Hospitality (Garrisons Lake and Deerfield)
Summit North Marina
Old Inlet Bait and Tackle

Total gross revenue for these businesses was over

\$5 million

This is not all the revenue earned by small businesses in the parks. Caterers, photographers, charter boats, camps, farmers, and other businesses generate revenue from operations in the parks. These revenue numbers, however, are not reported to the parks.



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with local and national businesses and associations enable Delaware State Parks to offer additional services and programming in our parks.

Summer Concert Series

Partner: Dogfish Head Craft Brewery

Delaware State Parks partnered with Dogfish Head to promote music and nature through the Summer Concert Series at Bellevue, Holts Landing, Killens Pond, Trap Pond, White Clay Creek, and Wilmington State Parks.



Mobility Mats

Partner: National Recreation and Park Association

Three 30-foot mobility mats allow those in wheelchairs and power chairs to access the beach from the boardwalk. The Division partnered with the National Recreation and Park Association using crowd-funding to purchase the mats for Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island State Parks.



National Recreation
and Park Association

Capital Campout

Partner: Coleman

Coleman sponsored and provided tents and camping equipment for families to borrow for the Capital Campout at Bellevue, Cape Henlopen, and Killens Pond State Parks. The campout is a National Wildlife Federation effort to get young people and families outside, particularly those who may not usually experience the outdoors. Additional support was provided by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, and Walmart and Chick-fil-A each contributed food to the events.



Official Park of University of Delaware Athletics

Partner: University of Delaware

The Division entered into a partnership with the University of Delaware and Go Ape to promote overnight camping and the treetop aerial adventure course at Lums Pond State Park. The effort included:



- A video by Coach Brock promoting Lums Pond at all UD home football games
- Inserts and marketing material for all season ticket holders and visiting schools
- A Delaware State Parks video posted on the university's athletic web page
- Fan zone setups, the Go Ape mascot, and the designation of Delaware State Parks as the official camping destination for UD athletics

Children in Nature

Partners: Numerous State and Federal Agencies

With its main goal to "Leave No Child Inside," Children in Nature (CIN) strives to give every child in every community opportunities to experience nature directly, connecting to nature's joys, lessons, and physical and mental benefits. Just as technology has made it easy for kids to be engaged online, CIN provides ways for kids and families to be engaged outdoors.



Delaware Beach Patrol Lifeguard Sponsorship

Partner: Wilmington University

A partnership with Wilmington University to strengthen the Delaware State Parks Beach Patrol offers a \$10,000 lifeguard scholarship and \$5,000 cash. The partnership is intended to enhance Wilmington University's visibility across Delaware, specifically at Delaware State Park beaches, and to unite the Wilmington University and Delaware State Parks brands to promote open spaces, education, recreation, and healthy living.



WILMINGTON
UNIVERSITY

MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Why is this an issue?

The Division of Parks and Recreation has a limited capital budget and \$160M in capital needs across our 16 parks. Examples of deferred maintenance and infrastructure projects include:

- Repair and paving of roadways and parking lots statewide
- Bathroom and comfort station repairs and upgrades statewide
- Accessibility improvements
- Preservation of historic structures, barns, and houses
- Repair or replacement of big-ticket infrastructure items, such as Cape Henlopen's fishing pier and sewage treatment plants

CARRYING CAPACITY AT THE BEACH PARKS

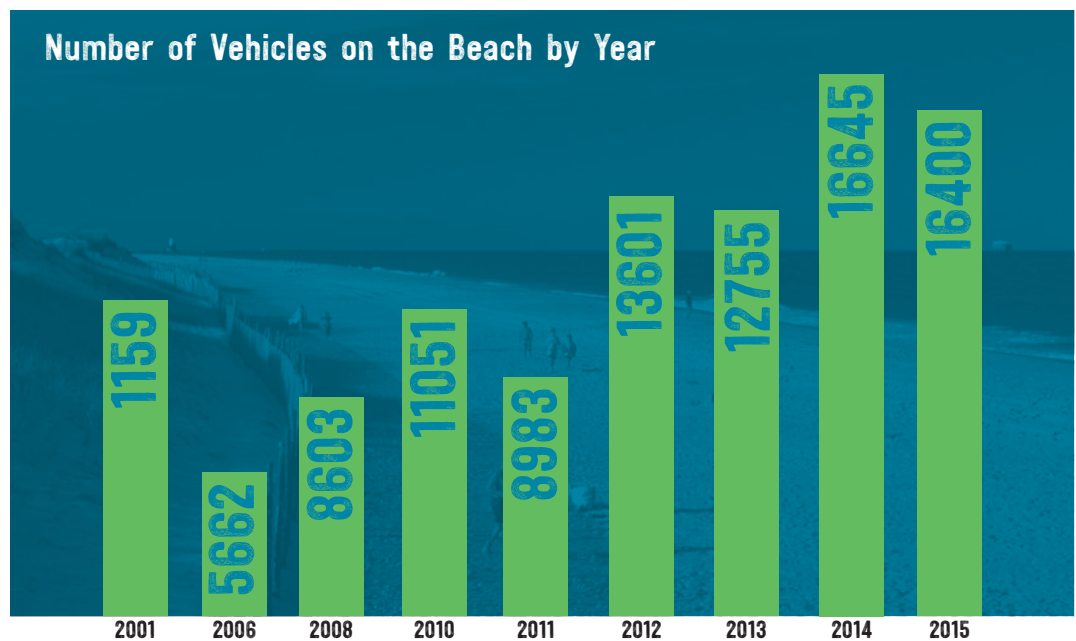
Why is this an issue?

Delaware Seashore, Cape Henlopen and Fenwick Island State Parks regularly fill their parking capacity and must turn vehicles away on summer weekends. These parks are the main revenue generators for the park system, and limited carrying capacity places a cap on the amount of revenue that comes in from these parks.

Carrying capacity for vehicles on the beach is also an issue. For safety and environmental protection, single-file surf-fishing beach parking was initiated in 2015. This change allows park rangers to efficiently respond to medical emergencies.

"I think that the open and honest communication between the Division of Parks and Recreation and the Delaware Mobile Surf-Fishermen is very strong. The open communication builds trust between both."

Bruce West,
President,
Delaware Mobile
Surf-Fishermen



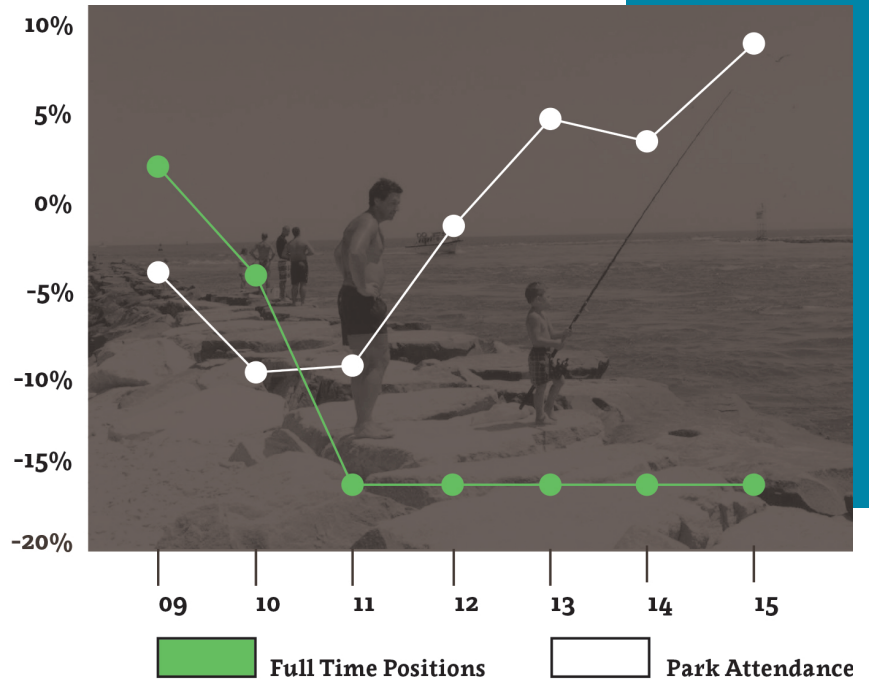
INCREASING NUMBERS OF VISITORS

Why is this an issue?

Park visitation has grown to over **5,000,000** people annually, an increase of a half-million visitors, while park staffing has remained unchanged since 2011.

Current Employee to Visitor

Ratio: **1** staff member for every **40,450** visitors



INVASIVE SPECIES

Why is this an issue?

Invasive plant species such as mile-a-minute weed, winged euonymus, and Japanese stiltgrass impact state parks throughout Delaware. Although some invasive species, such as Bradford pears, may be pretty to look at, they have negative environmental and economic impacts.

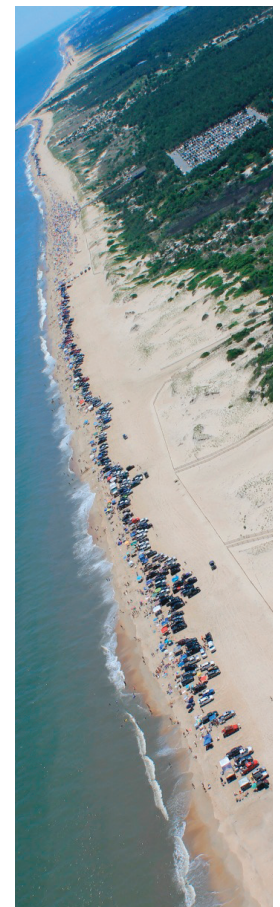
Invasive species outcompete our native species, in some cases to the point of extinction. They degrade the quality of the understory habitat and disrupt natural food chains. Invasives affect boaters and fishermen by degrading aquatic habitats and clogging waterways. In addition, invasive species can increase both soil erosion and fire hazards.

Due to limited staff and the cost involved in removing them and restoring the natural habitats, invasive species present a challenge in managing over 26,000 acres statewide.

STORMS

Why is this an issue?

Storms create management challenges on several levels. Repairs are required every year for boardwalks and access points damaged by storms. At times, repairs can be quite costly, such as with the replacement of sections of the Junction and Breakwater Trail. Management of depleted beaches and beach replenishment projects after large coastal storms demand staff time and money. Finally, closing a park for storms and cleanup in the aftermath results in lost revenue, particularly significant when coastal parks are closed during the key summer season.



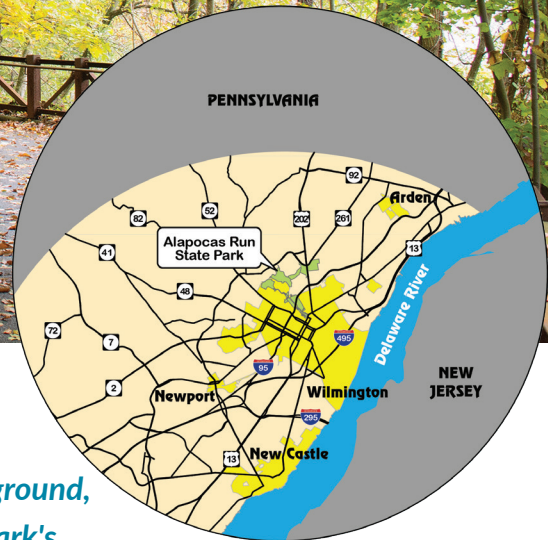
INFO BY PARK



“These are the people’s parks,
owned by young and old.”

-Harry S. Truman

ALAPOCAS RUN STATE PARK



Alapocas Run State Park is a lush getaway in the heart of Wilmington. It offers trails through fields and forest, Delaware's only natural rock-climbing area, and the innovative Can-Do Playground, which gives children of all abilities a place to play together. The park's Blue Ball Barn is the permanent home of the Delaware Folk Art Collection.

ALAPOCAS RUN at a Glance

 **359.28**
Acres

 **6.53**
Miles of trails

 **123,086**
Visitors

 **5/19**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff

 **120**
Volunteer hours

 **63/5,481**
Programs/Participants

 **4/47**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Northern Delaware Greenway Trail paving project was completed, connecting Alapocas Run to Wilmington State Parks. The trail winds through City of Wilmington and New Castle County parks into Bellevue and Fox Point State Parks.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Paw-Paw Folk Festival, an annual day of family fun, food, music, folk art and activities at the Blue Ball Barn, drew 630 people.

Delaware: A Brew Story, a brewing history lecture and craft beer tasting, brought 180 attendees and raised about **\$4,000** for multiple charities.

Brandywine Young Artists Exhibitions for elementary and secondary school students brought over 1,000 participants and attendees to the Blue Ball Barn.



Foodie Fridays, a series of benefits for various charities, began in May. A partnership with Peco Liquors and several Wilmington area food trucks, the first event drew about 450 people and raised **\$2,500** for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society-Delaware Chapter.



SPORTING EVENTS

Rugby is big at Alapocas Run

The park hosted:

- Delaware Men's Rugby Football Association regional high school and college tournaments
- Wilmington Men's Rugby Football Association regional tournament
- Wilmington Women's Rugby Football Association regional tournament
- Salesianum Rugby Club games

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Electric service to the maintenance facility
- Expansion of the automatic irrigation system to two of three athletic fields
- Expansion of parking facilities at the Blue Ball Barn
- Automated fee-collection system pilot program

Wilmington Charter and St Elizabeth's High School hold their lacrosse games at the park. The park is also home to Wilmington Lacrosse youth league games.

Odyssey Charter's soccer games are played at Alapocas Run State Park.

The Delaware Ultimate Frisbee regional tournament was held at the park.

PARTNERSHIPS

As part of the ongoing partnership with the Wilmington Rotary International Club, the 10th Anniversary Can-Do Committee was formed in January to plan for expansion and improvements to the Can-Do Playground. Dedication is set for 2017.

"I walk/run here every day I can. Love the parks, trails, athletic fields, can-do park for handicapped children... We are so lucky to have this wonderful park, golf course, fields and trails so close to where we live. LOVE IT!"

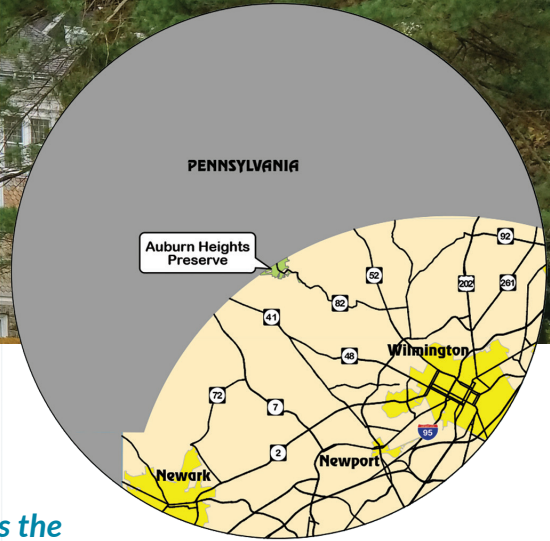
*- Linda W.
Wilmington, DE*



FRIENDS OF WILMINGTON PARKS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Wilmington Parks donated half of the proceeds they collected at *Delaware Brew Story* (\$1,627) to the Wilmington State Parks School Scholarship Fund. The Friends also provided staffing for the pawpaw tasting tent at the annual Pawpaw Festival.

AUBURN HEIGHTS PRESERVE



Auburn Heights Preserve is home to an 1897 Queen Anne Victorian mansion and the Marshall Steam Museum. The park also includes a 1/8-sized operating railroad system encircling the property. The collection of Stanley Steamer cars in the museum is the largest operating collection in the world.

AUBURN HEIGHTS
at a Glance

-  **246.78**
Acres
-  **2.18**
Miles of trails
-  **5,105**
Visitors
-  **3/3**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **623**
Volunteer hours
-  **56/928**
Programs/Participants

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Renovations and improvements to the park are being made to the park office, roads and parking lots, among many others. Trails are in various stages of design and installation, and wetland installation is about to begin as part of the stream restoration project.

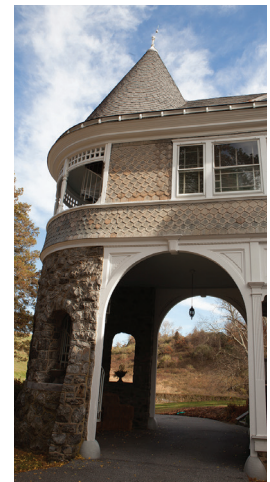
Project Cost:

\$2,500,000

A new retaining wall was constructed to protect the museum and carriage house from erosion damage.

A hazardous materials storage pad was constructed for safe storage of the fuels needed for steam car and train operation.

Major repairs were made to the 1897 **Marshall Mansion**, including to the roof, sunporch, third-floor exterior stairs, third-floor apartment, and masonry.



"Largest collection of Stanley Steam cars that you can learn to drive, a scale train that you can ride around the grounds on the open house days - and there is even a tunnel, they have an old DuPont Electric car they sell Popcorn that has been cooked by Steam, and it was very good!"

- TripAdvisor Review, January 2016

SPECIAL EVENTS

Auburn Heights Preserve's signature events are the ever-popular **Steamin' Days**, held the first Sunday of every month from June through November.

600 people attended the **Auburn Heights Invitational car show**, a Friends of Auburn Heights fundraiser. The August event raised **\$28,000.**

The park hosted its first wedding in July and is drawing increasing attention and interest in special event rentals.



Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

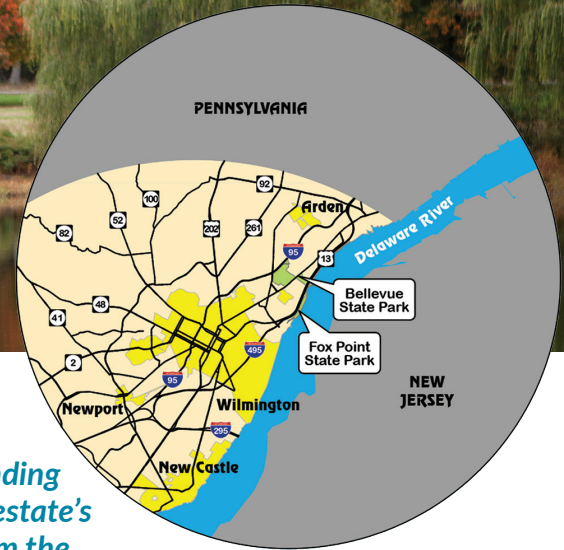
- Parking lot construction and lighting to facilitate evening events
- Long-term solution to fire suppression
- Restroom upgrades

 Friends of
Auburn Heights Preserve Inc.

FRIENDS OF AUBURN HEIGHTS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Auburn Heights' capital campaign to expand the Marshall Steam Museum has received major gifts of nearly **\$500,000.**

BELLEVUE AND FOX POINT STATE PARKS



Once an elegant estate belonging to the prominent du Pont family, Bellevue State Park features Bellevue Hall, tennis courts, equestrian stables, gardens, and a 1½-mile fitness track surrounding a picturesque pond. Visitors can stroll the grounds, explore the estate's small arboretum, take in a summer concert, or just get away from the hustle and bustle of Wilmington.

Fox Point State Park gives the entire family a relaxing outing to stroll, picnic, or just watch the boats go by on the Delaware River. Horseshoe pits, a volleyball court, and a children's play area are some of the more active pursuits available. The park serves as the northern terminus of the 90-mile-long Coastal Heritage Greenway, which stretches south to Cape Henlopen State Park and highlights Delaware's natural, cultural, and recreational diversity. Fox Point is also the eastern-most point of the Northern Delaware Greenway.

BELLEVUE
at a Glance

- 330.05**
Acres
- 11.02**
Miles of trails
- 427,120**
Visitors
- 10/47**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
- 7,871**
Volunteer hours
- 710/37,346**
Programs/Participants
- 44/512**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Indoor Tennis Center was demolished for safety reasons and a new special event venue was created adjacent to Bellevue Hall.

Project Cost:

\$950,000

The dam overflow inlet was removed and replaced.

Project Cost: **\$300,000**

A new paddock was added for the stables, and two others were repaired.

The exterior of Bellevue Hall was repainted.



SPECIAL EVENTS



The **Vendemmia da Vinci Food & Wine Festival** brought **2,000** attendees to Bellevue to sample great Italian wines and food while enjoying a beer garden, live entertainment, and even a handcrafted wine and homemade gravy contest. The Festival was voted the Top Outdoor Festival in the state of Delaware.

The **Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Walk for a Healthy Community** attracted **1,500** attendees on June 4. The walk is an annual fundraiser that **benefits over 25** local health and human service agencies.

More than **100** campers participated in the **2nd Annual Delaware Capital Campout**, held simultaneously at Bellevue, Killens Pond, and Cape Henlopen State Parks in June. Participating families learned outdoor skills during the campout, which was sponsored by Coleman and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, with food contributed by Walmart and Chick-fil-A.

Bellevue's Summer Concert Series offered **37** free concerts attracting **31,700** attendees. The largest turnout was for the Jimmy and the Parrots family fun concert night, with **3,000** attendees.

The **American Heart Association Walk and Family Day** at Bellevue drew **4,000** attendees.



The **Delaware Coastal Cleanup at Fox Point** on September 19 drew **50** volunteers to pick up trash along the riverfront. The event was part of the 29th annual Delaware Coastal Cleanup.

Faithful Friends 5K drew **600** attendees to Bellevue to support Faithful Friends Animal Society. Participants ran in either the 5k or the 1-mile Mutt Mile with their dogs.

The **American Diabetes Association walk** on September 27 brought **300** attendees to Bellevue.

"This park has lots to offer in a fairly small space. Nice trails that aren't too strenuous, a running track, lots of picnic tables, pavilions, and fishing in the pond are among the options. A private stable operates here, so that adds to the atmosphere. Its a great place to take a break in a busy life."

-TripAdvisor Review, August 2015

SPORTING EVENTS

Cross-country meets are held at Bellevue State Park for Brandywine and Mount Pleasant High Schools, Wilmington Friends, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Wilmington Christian schools. The Catholic Conference and Joe O'Neill Invitational meets are also held at the park.

Bellevue State Park is the indoor track training space for Padua High School during the winter months, and Mount Pleasant High School sports teams regularly run and practice in the park.

PARTNERSHIPS

Yes U Can USA donated 2 handicapped-accessible tricycles (one hand-cranked, one foot-powered) to Bellevue for the free bike rental program. Performance Bicycle of Newark donated time, talent, and parts for the maintenance of the tricycles.

The Urban Bike Project worked with Bellevue to service the fleet of bikes in the bike rental program. They performed routine maintenance on all 15 of the bikes.



FRIENDS OF BELLEVUE STATE PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Friends of Bellevue raised over **\$85,000** in grant funds for the Mt. Pleasant Parsonage and Meeting House at Bellevue State Park.

The Friends raised **\$2,235** for park improvements at their *Rock@Bellevue* fundraiser, which drew **500** attendees. Other Friends projects include:

- Funding to hire 3 summer interns
- Pond water-quality improvements, including three solar-powered aerators, a floating wetland, and signage to explain the system, through a **\$28,200** Community Water Quality Improvement Grant
- Raising **\$18,000** for the Music Garden to memorialize Tim Ross and to provide a better venue for lunchtime concerts, and for day camp and programming space

The Friends of Bellevue also support the park's summer concert series, provide scholarships for summer camps and funds for school programs, do regular highway cleanups along Marsh Road and the Marsh Road/Carr Road intersection, and conduct monthly trail monitoring and cleanup.

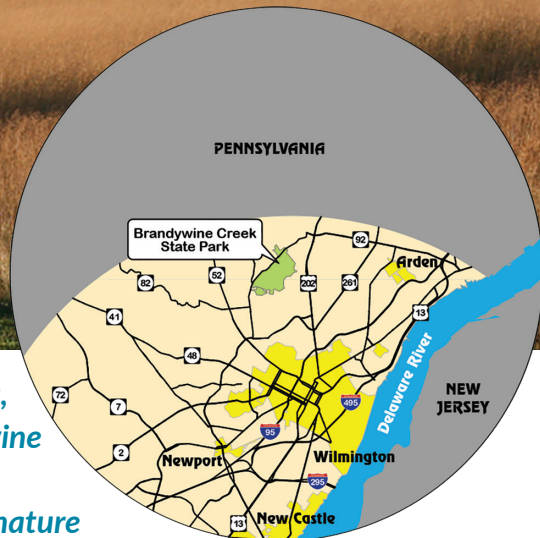
Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- *Paving of parking lots, roadways, Phase II roads, and parking lots at Fox Point*
- *Renovations of all public restrooms and an increase in the size of the main restroom*
- *Development and construction of a restroom facility to support the Figure 8 Barn and Hunter Barn for special events.*
- *Renovations to historic buildings*



BRANDYWINE CREEK STATE PARK



Brandywine Creek State Park is home to many different habitats, from rolling hills and meadows to the forested banks of Brandywine Creek. The variety of birds and wildlife at the park, particularly during the fall hawk migrations, makes this a prime location for nature lovers and birdwatchers. Popular activities include hiking, mountain biking, and leisurely summertime canoe or tubing trips down the creek.

BRANDYWINE CREEK at a Glance



952.02
Acres



18.74
Miles of trails



182,476
Visitors



5/21
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



8,073
Volunteer hours



172/5,173
Programs/Participants



24/213
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Rocky Run Bridge replacement was completed and opened in October. The bridge is part of the popular Creek Road Trail on the east side of the Brandywine River and links the park's Rockland Road and Thompson's Bridge parking areas.

Project Cost:

\$450,000

The trail running south of the Rocky Run Bridge and the parking lot were paved.



SPORTING EVENTS

Various sporting and charity events were held at the park, including Ramsey's Revenge Mountain Bike Race, Xterra cross-country race, Adventure Geek Productions race, and the Delaware Charity Challenge with **300** participants.

Brandywine Creek serves as the home cross-country course for Ursuline Academy and Concord, A.I. DuPont and Brandywine High Schools, with a total of 31 meets at the park during the season.



Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Replace failed composting restrooms at Thompson's Bridge
- Make structural investments in two historic barns
- Repair road culverts, road paving, and parking lots
- Make the bathrooms at the park office ADA-compliant and available outside of office hours



"Awesome park with great trails and lots to see! The entire area is kept spotlessly clean and groomed. The nature center is so cute and the staff is very friendly. The trails are moderate difficulty due to the terrain and inclines so it is a good work out. One of my fav parks in the area!"

- L. N.
Chadds Ford, PA

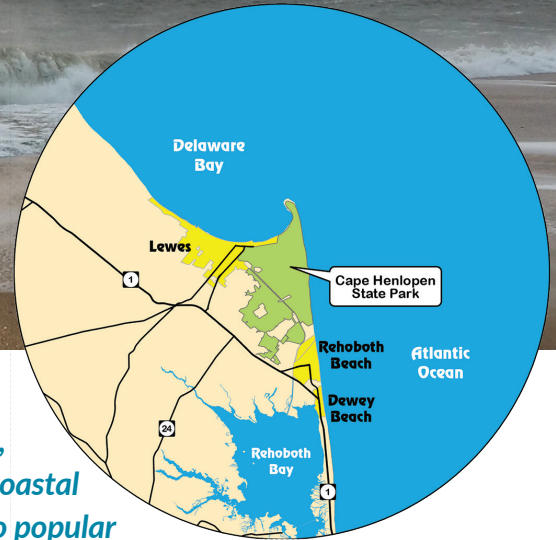
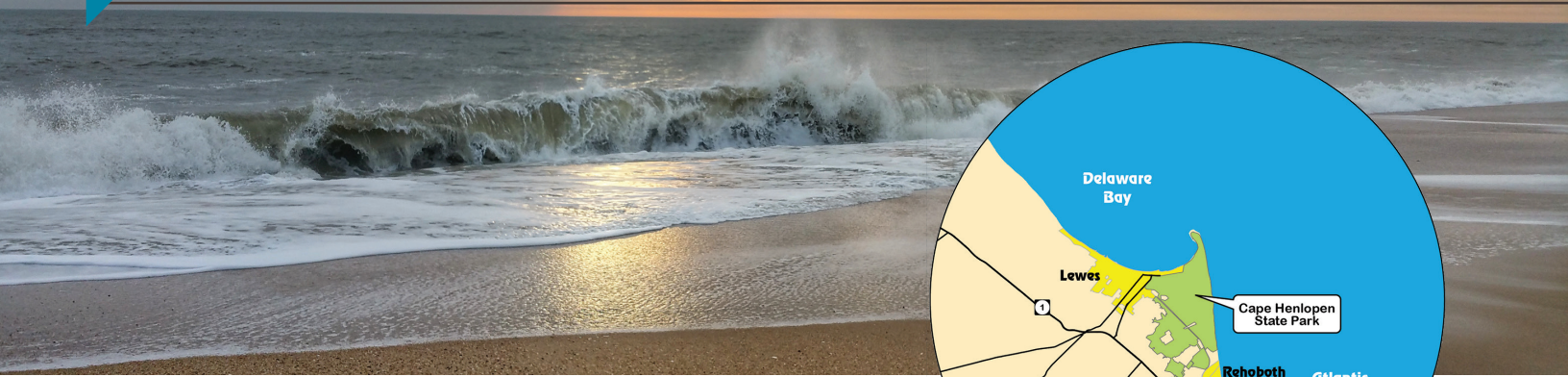


The Friends of Brandywine Creek champion volunteerism, education, and stewardship at the park. Fundraising this year included a Halloween pumpkin-carving contest.

PARTNERSHIPS

Brandywine Creek State Park is an active partner with the National Park Service's First State National Historic Park, Delaware's first national park. Brandywine Creek has assisted the National Park Service with land maintenance, and the two parks are finalizing the ability to share maintenance equipment resources.

CAPE HENLOPEN STATE PARK



Delaware's largest state park lies along the Atlantic Ocean, providing beautiful beaches, coastal dunes, trails, pine woodlands, and military history. The Cape's Great Dune is one of the highest coastal points between Cape Hatteras and Cape Cod. The park is home to popular swimming beaches, a family campground, a fishing pier stretching into the Delaware Bay, and the Seaside Nature Center, which hosts year-round activities for all ages and houses salt-water aquaria and a gift shop.

CAPE HENLOPEN at a Glance

 **5,298.23**
Acres

 **20.02**
Miles of trails

 **164**
Campsites

 **1,731,613**
Visitors

 **15/81**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff

 **24,572**
Volunteer hours

 **699/23,969**
Programs/Participants

 **10/108**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK



A **\$1,000,000** two-phase repair of the park's 1,300-foot fishing pier was completed in May, the largest capital investment to date in the World War II-era landmark. The pier services anglers, bird watchers and leisure visitors, and provides habitat for fish and other marine life. Extensive decking repairs were completed and 149 pilings were repaired or replaced. Funding for the repairs included \$30,000 in Community Transportation Funds from Representatives Dukes and Smyk, Speaker Schwartzkopf, and Senator Lopez, in addition to a \$351,050 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Six new cabins opened in the spring, doubling to 12 the number of cabins in "Cabin Village." The cabins have heat and air-conditioning and feature screened porches. As the occupancy rate for cabins at Cape was 97.4% over the 5-month key season (May through September), these are a great addition to the park's portfolio.

A portion of the cost of the cabins was raised through a successful Kickstarter campaign, set to raise both **\$4,000** and public awareness of the new cabins. The campaign actually raised **\$5,742** over the 30-day period, far exceeding expectations.

Two new bathroom facilities opened in the campground this spring. With the occupancy rate for all camping/cabin facilities over 95% during the key season, these were an important addition.

Project Cost:

\$873,265, including bathrooms and cabins.



SPECIAL EVENTS

The park was home to six major charity events – **Autism Walk, Kidney Walk, Tommy Ten Miler/Daffodil Dash, Cancer Support Center Survive and Thrive 5k, DEFeet Breast Cancer**, and the **Beth Coltman Memorial Ultimate Frisbee Tournament**. This year was the 10th annual Autism Walk, and participants were photographed on the parade field breaking a Guinness world record by creating the world's largest human puzzle piece. The Inaugural Tommy Ten Miler and Daffodil Dash 5k were held on April 23, benefitting the Sussex Consortium Autism Program and the Tunnell Cancer Center.

2,100 people attended the **48th Annual Kite Day Festival** in April. This long-running event, held on Good Friday each year in partnership with the Lewes Chamber of Commerce, features flying contests and food vendors.

"Cape Henlopen is #1 of 48 things to do in Lewes, and the #2 attraction in Delaware."

- TripAdvisor

"Fort Miles is #5 of 48 things to do in Lewes."

- TripAdvisor

"Gordon's pond is #2 of 63 things to do in Rehoboth."

- TripAdvisor

"I have traveled both coasts of the US and have to say that this is one of the greatest beaches on the East Coast. In addition to a public beach with lifeguards, snack bar, and restrooms in season, there are miles of spectacular hiking/biking trails that give you plenty of beautiful vistas and glimpses of the local wildlife and birds. The Gordon Pond Trail is by far the best hiking and biking trail for those who want to be active. Don't miss Herring Beach away from the crowds for a glimpse of the surfers."

- TripAdvisor Review, April 2016

The annual **Children's Fantasy Trail** offered Halloween activities for youth and children, including pumpkin-carving events and a jack-o-lantern walk in the woods. Taking place over three evenings in October, the Fantasy Trail attracted over **3,000** attendees.

Nearly **20 road races** were held at Cape Henlopen, from 5ks to half- and full marathons and triathlons. The park also hosted a **Wilmington Rugby Tournament, Ultimate Frisbee Tournament**, and sports camps such as the **Mid-Atlantic Field Hockey Camp**.

23 weddings were held at the park in FY16.

More than **100** campers participated in the **2nd Annual Delaware Capital Campout**, held simultaneously at Cape Henlopen, Killens Pond, and Bellevue State Parks in June. During the campout, the families learned to fish, set up a tent, build a campfire, and observe wildlife, along with other activities such as hiking and canoeing. The campout was sponsored by Coleman and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, with food contributed by Walmart and Chick-fil-A.

FRIENDS GROUPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Cape Henlopen have had their largest impact through the Park Peddlers Program, now 20 years old. Friends are involved in acquiring, maintaining, and publicizing the Borrow-a-Bike program. Dedicated FOCH members also volunteer at park events such as the Children's Fantasy Trail, movie nights, marathons, and many other events that help raise funds for park projects.

The Fort Miles Historical Association raised **\$61,000** and pulled off a major coup when it saved one of the 16-inch guns from the USS Missouri from the scrap heap. The Missouri was the battleship on which Gen. Douglas MacArthur accepted Japan's surrender on Sept. 2, 1945, thus ending World War II. The gun was installed as part of the Artillery Park for the Battery 519 museum. The Association's work was enhanced with \$36,000 in Community Transportation Funds contributed by Representatives Smyk and Schwartzkopf and by Senator Lopez for the Fort Miles artillery.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Sewer treatment plant upgrades to ensure environmental compliance
Project estimate: \$5,000,000
- Replacement of WWII-era roadways, including Fort Miles' roads, parking, and accessibility
- Replacement of 25-year-old storm-damaged parking lots
- Major renovation and potential expansions of the main beach comfort station in response to increased visitation
- Planning for replacement of the fishing pier
- Nature center renovation or replacement



DELAWARE SEASHORE STATE PARK



Delaware Seashore State Park borders the Atlantic Ocean and the Delaware Inland Bays with six miles of coastal shoreline. Over two million visitors come each year to enjoy the guarded swimming beaches, saltwater fishing, camping, and many other watersports and outdoor recreation activities.

DELAWARE SEASHORE at a Glance

-  **1,970.05**
Acres
-  **6.7**
Miles of trails
-  **359**
Campsites
-  **1,248,865**
Visitors
-  **28**
Lifeguards
-  **12/72**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **4,929**
Volunteer hours
-  **637/20,651**
Programs/Participants

FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The North Inlet Campground reopened in March, 2015 after being closed for almost ten years during construction of the Indian River Inlet Bridge. The brand-new 81-campsite facility boasts RV hookups, a modern bathhouse, and a designated laundry building.

Delaware Seashore's campgrounds had a total of **32,941** campers registered for **37,613** nights for RV, cabin, and tent sites. Memorial Day weekend saw all the campgrounds filled to capacity, a first for the region.

Great weather during the summer led to record-breaking crowds at all the Delaware Seashore beaches. On 4th of July weekend, over **6,000** vehicles entered the park. Revenue for that weekend alone came to almost **\$58,000**. This represented an increase of **\$6,827** over 2015, which had enjoyed similar weather.



At the Indian River Marina:

A new clean diesel (Tier 4) engine forklift capable of handling larger vessels replaced the 11-year-old marina forklift. A backup camera was installed for increased safety.

Cost: \$250,173

Marina gas pumps and fuel lines were overhauled and repaired.

Cost: \$106,290

In response to visitor requests, a new display monitor was purchased and added to the scale system, allowing crowds at tournaments to view the weights of the fish being weighed.

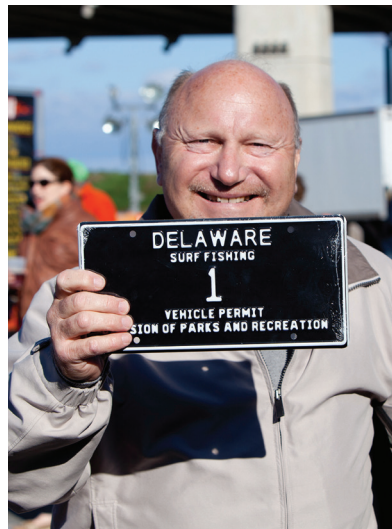
Cost: \$1,780

The snack concession facilities at Tower Ocean and South Inlet received new countertops, screen doors, interior painting, and light fixtures.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Delaware Seashore hosted the **Kansas City Barbeque Society competition**, with participants and their families staying at the campground, as part of the **“Booooo-B-Que by the Sea”** event in October, 2015. Proceeds from the event benefited the Children in Nature program. Included in the “Booooo-B-Que by the Sea” event was the second **live auction of low-digit surf plates**.

Plate #1 sold for **\$26,000.**



The Seafood & Arts Festival welcomed over **65** artists who brought their nautical handmade and/or recycled artwork to the Indian River Marina for a fun-filled day. The event attracted over **4,000** attendees.

With over **75** participants, the **Kids Catch-All Fishing Tournament** raised over **\$5,500** for the Lyme Disease Association of Delmarva, Inc.



A wide variety of sporting events are held at the park, from the **Skim USA South Side Shoot Out** to the **Delaware Coastal Running Festival, Booooo-B-Que 5k Walk/Run, Bike to the Bay**, and fishing and soccer tournaments.



26 weddings were held at the park. The Indian River Live-Saving Station hosted 13, three were held at the Indian River Marina, and 10 more took place at various locations around the park. Beach wedding revenue is placed in an enterprise account that is used for maintenance and repair on the historic structure and funds the seasonal historical interpreter.



“The many programs and activities taking place at Delaware Seashore State Park accent the rich maritime history and ecology of coastal Delaware and make it fun. The natural beauty of the park’s barrier island setting makes it memorable. The park is a huge attraction that contributes to Sussex County’s \$1.7 billion tourism economy.”

*– Scott Thomas,
Executive Director,
Southern
Delaware Tourism*

TRAILS

New ADA-compliant walkways and promenades now safely connect the North Inlet and the South Inlet, and a spectacular pedestrian walkway spans the new Inlet Bridge.

The new one-mile Assawoman Canal Trail was completed and opened.

Project Cost: \$800,000



PARTNERSHIPS

The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation received a **\$25,000** check from the Crystal Trust for restoration of Fire Tower #3.

Through a crowd-sourcing fundraiser, ADA-accessible mobility mats were installed at Towers Ocean and South Inlet. These allow visitors with limited mobility to get from the boardwalk onto the sandy beach.

VOLUNTEERS

Delaware Seashore was the first park to take advantage of the new Veterans’ Corps program. Corps members performed skilled labor for the park, including replacing the decking at the South Inlet Day Area beach bathhouse boardwalk.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

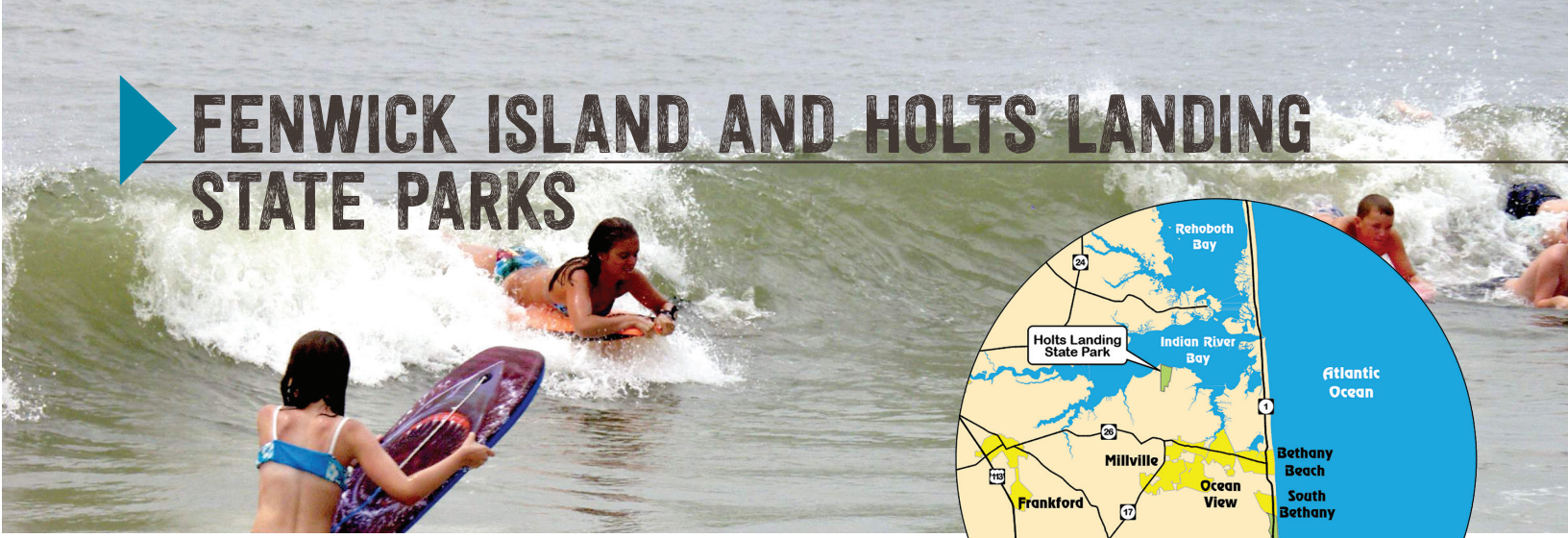
- WiFi for campgrounds and marina
Project estimate: \$150,000
- Towers Ocean parking lot repaving
Project estimate: \$250,000
- New drystack roof
Project estimate: \$250,000

“I simply want to thank those people with the Delaware State Parks who helped plan and create Delaware Seashore State Park. I have been spending time on the Delaware shore for 60 years and the wonderful trails for hiking and biking (Prickly Pear, Fresh Pond, others) have greatly added to my joy in life. To see the care you’ve given to the natural world and to share the park with so many other people is uplifting. Thank you so much for your hard work to preserve and care for this park. Please pass my gratitude on to those in relevant positions in the agency. Thank you very much.”

–Betsy Taylor, Takoma Park, MD



FENWICK ISLAND AND HOLTS LANDING STATE PARKS



Fenwick Island State Park has three miles of beautiful beaches along the Atlantic Ocean, and bayside access points along Little Assawoman Bay.

Holts Landing State Park is a 205-acre facility popular with locals and visitors alike for its quiet location. Providing both a crabbing pier and access to the Indian River Bay from one of the last public boat ramps along the inland bays, it's a great spot for fishing, hiking, and picnicking.

FENWICK
at a Glance

-  **378**
Acres
-  **3.4**
Miles of trails
-  **247,776**
Visitors
-  **12**
Lifeguards
-  **8/21**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **15/127**
Programs/Participants

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

A new state-of-the-art boat ramp opened at Holts Landing in April. The double-load ramp allows twice the capacity as the previous set-up and includes an ADA-accessible floating dock. A 60-foot-wide by 4-foot-deep channel was dredged to accommodate boats up to 25 feet in length.

Project cost:
\$696,000

A new deluxe stone fire pit was built near the pavilion and new soccer goals were installed on the nearby recreational field.

The snack concession facilities at Fenwick Island were upgraded, receiving new countertops, screen doors, interior painting, and light fixtures.



HOLTS LANDING

at a Glance



203
Acres



2.7
Miles of trails



6,075
Visitors



2
Casual Seasonal Staff



382
Volunteer hours



12/228
Programs/Participants

"This place is a hidden gem. The water was clean and warm (in June) with great waves for body surfing and just relaxing. The beach itself has fine sand and is very wide. Very low key and laid back."

- Tripadvisor review, June 2016



Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Fenwick Island parking lot paving
- Holts Landing boat ramp parking and parking lot
- Fenwick Island bathhouse roof replacement
- New playground at Holts Landing
- Holts Landing trail connector/marsh boardwalk
- Holts Landing comfort station upgrade

SPECIAL EVENTS

FY2016 marked the **50th anniversary of Holts Landing State Park**. The milestone was celebrated with Family Fun Nights that included free concerts and other activities.

A wide variety of special events are held at the parks, from sports events such as the **Second Chance Paddleboard Event** and **Ocean to Bay Bike Tour** at Holts Landing, to weddings on the beach at Fenwick Island.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Fenwick Island Lions Club donated a new beach wheelchair.

Through a crowd-sourcing fundraiser, ADA-compliant mobility mats were installed at Fenwick Island to assist visitors with limited mobility to go from the boardwalk to the sandy beach.



FRIENDS OF HOLTS LANDING STATE PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Eagle Scout candidate Thomas Polk worked to build and install four benches along the Sea Hawk Nature Trail.

Chuck Schonder, President of Friends of Holts Landing State Park, received the Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2015 Delaware State Fair.

FIRST STATE HERITAGE PARK



First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first "urban park without boundaries," linking cultural and historic sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. Each site of the First State Heritage Park has a wealth of stories associated with it and the sharing of these stories is a highlight for the park's visitors.

HERITAGE PARK at a Glance



8,988
Visitors



2/8
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



2,095
Volunteer hours



1,067/30,892
Programs/Participants

SPECIAL EVENTS

First State Heritage Park's signature event — the **6th Annual 18th Century Market Fair** — drew a crowd of **1,797** people to The Green and its Dover surroundings.



Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Outbuilding restroom and brick walkway at the Bell House
- Bell House brick front step and railing
- Bell House perimeter fence

"Everything about our field trip was perfect yesterday! The students loved it and the teachers felt like it was so well planned. Thank you for all that you did (on very short notice!) to pull the field experience together to help us learn what life was like in the past and compare it to life today to see how things have changed over time. The students really like seeing their artwork which was in display in the Biggs Museum. They all feel like royalty now! Our parent chaperones were amazed by the Johnson Victrola Museum and the Biggs Museum. They had no idea that Dover had such wonderful museums and that they are free for the public!"

*-Patti Sandy
1st Grade Teacher*

PARTNERSHIPS

First State Heritage Park is now a partner with the National Park Service on The Green in Dover. The Green has been designated as one of seven sites making up the First State National Historical Park. State park staff provide the interpretative programming that takes place on and around The Green.

Students from Caesar Rodney High School directed and starred in *Revealing the Ridgelys*, using a script provided by First State Heritage Park. The play took place at The Old State House Museum, the John Bell House, the Biggs Museum of American Art, and on The Green, drawing over **350** attendees.

Eighth grade students from Campus Community School worked with park interpreters to get firsthand experience creating and delivering programming. They created a walking tour of their own, which they then gave to first-graders from their school.

The winter concert series at the Old State House, a partnership with Delaware Friends of Folk, drew over **559** people to 4 concerts. The concert series was funded by a grant to Delaware Friends of Folk from the Kent County Fund for the Arts.

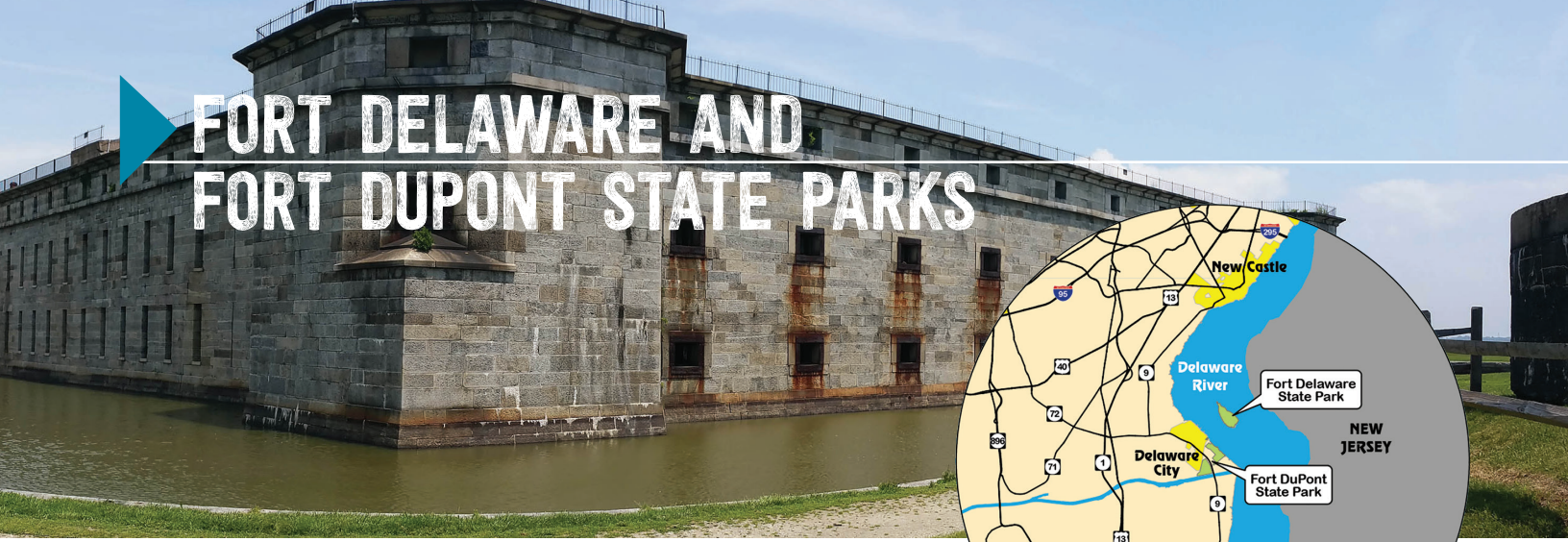


First State Heritage Park partnered with the Lenape Tribe of Delaware during the month of September to host the Lenape Homecoming on The Green and several programs at the park, drawing significant media attention from both the News Journal and Delaware State News.

Independence Day 2015 coincided with First Saturday. The park partnered with the City of Dover to present activities throughout the day and into the evening.



FORT DELAWARE AND FORT DUPONT STATE PARKS



Fort Delaware was used to house close to 33,000 Confederate Prisoners of War (POWs) during the Civil War. The fort's living history programming offers visitors the chance to experience life in 1864. Its location, Pea Patch Island, is also home to a large heron rookery that provides outstanding viewing opportunities for birders.

During World War II, Fort DuPont served as a training base and also housed German prisoners of war. Both forts tell the story of Delaware's importance in defending our coast.

FORT DELAWARE/DUPONT at a Glance



SPECIAL EVENTS

Associated Builders and Contractors held their annual **crab feast** at Fort DuPont for the first time. They sold over **2,400** tickets, with a portion of the funds going to the Mud Run benefiting the Leukemia Research Foundation of Delaware.

The Diamond State Base Ball Club, a member of the Mid Atlantic Vintage Baseball League, considers Fort DuPont its home turf. Around **5** home games are played on a field near the riverfront, with one **special game** at Fort Delaware State Park.



The Delaware Federation of Polish Americans held a **plaque commemoration** on September 20 for Captain Stanislaus Mlotkowski, who served at Fort Delaware during the Civil War. Dignitaries among the **100** attendees included the Consul General of the Republic of Poland.



PARTNERSHIPS

The American Birding Association now offers programming and birding cruises at and around Pea Patch Island.

Diamond State Ghost Investigators partnered with Fort Delaware for the Paranormal Adventure Programs in October.



SIGNIFICANT STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Interpreter blacksmith **Willis Phelps** received the 51st Annual Freedom Fund Award presented by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Wilmington Branch. Willis received this award both on behalf of his excellent interpretation of life in 1864 at Fort Delaware State Park and also for his work with Heritage Productions.

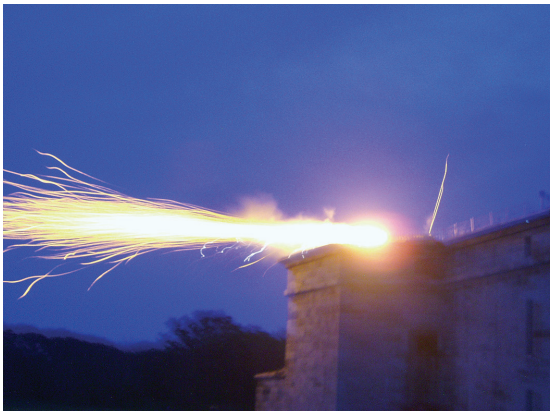


Critical CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Fort Delaware masonry repairs
- Island tram path repair and resurfacing
- Building and maintenance of a landing site on the island
- Replacement and bracing of pilings at the Pea Patch Island ferry landing
- Pavilion construction on Pea Patch Island
- Cleaver House stabilization in Port Penn

At Fort DuPont:

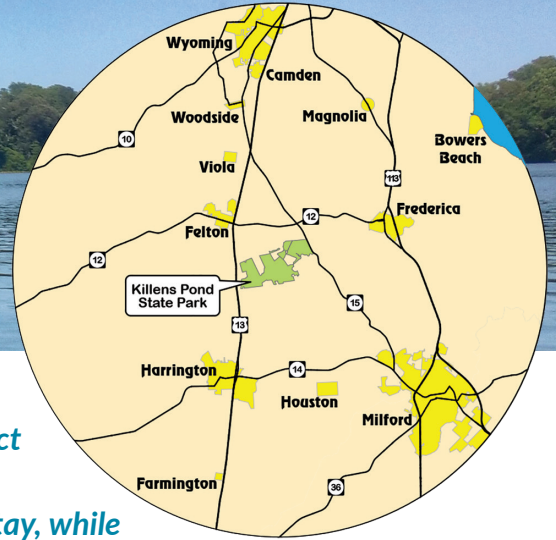
- 1905 guard house restoration



"I felt compelled to write to you about our guide "Sean." He was exceedingly professional, knowledgeable, and engaging for the entire hour or so that we spent with him. There were children as well in this group and he consistently involved them in the tour features – provoking their imaginations just as he did ours."

- Libby Mahaffey

KILLENS POND STATE PARK



Natural and recreational opportunities abound at Killens Pond State Park. The park's centerpiece is the 66-acre millpond, perfect for boating and fishing. A wooded campground, cabins, and the very popular Pondview Cottage invite visitors to a relaxing stay, while the Killens Pond Water Park offers resort entertainment in a natural setting.

KILLENS POND
at a Glance

- 1,441.15**
Acres
- 12.07**
Miles of trails
- 87**
Campsites
- 239,281**
Visitors
- 8/112**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
- 9,279**
Volunteer hours
- 430/9,650**
Programs/Participants
- 8/106**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Four brand-new, state-of-the-art water slides were installed at the water park. Two new spiral slides and two speed slides are each mounted on a 54-foot-high platform, making them almost twice as high as the slides they replaced. Other improvements include an enhanced entry with colorful canopies, an enlarged queuing area to provide shade for customers waiting to enter the water park, and additional ticket booths to expedite the ticketing process.

Accessibility improvements have been completed at the bathhouse and a new building houses the water filtration system supporting the slide complex and future improvements.

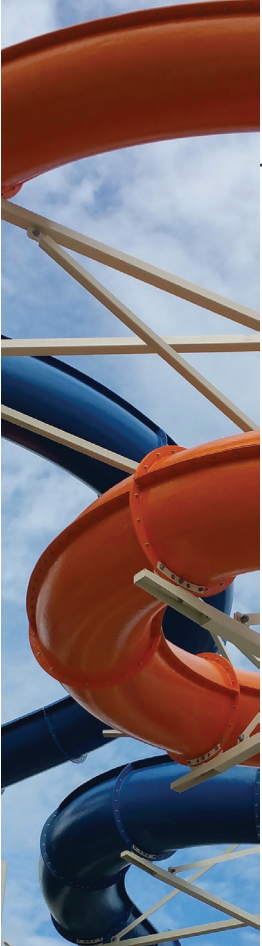
The water park's sound system was replaced thanks to **\$24,141** in Community Transportation Funds provided by Representative Outten and Senators Bushweller, Lawson, and Bonini.

Project Cost:
\$4,305,493

Repairs made to the Killens Pond dam will help maintain higher water levels in the pond during a severe drought.

50-amp electrical service was added to loops C and D in the campground and fire rings are being replaced with stone fire pits in the cabin area.

Fork Branch Nature Preserve in Dover received **\$100,000** in Community Transportation Funds from Representative Scott and Senator Bushweller for trail construction and **\$18,000** for signage from Representative Lynn. The estimated completion date is September 2017.



SPECIAL EVENTS

More than **100** campers participated in the **2nd Annual Delaware Capital Campout**, held simultaneously at Killens Pond, Bellevue, and Cape Henlopen State Parks in June. During the campout, families learned to fish, set up a tent, build a campfire, and observe wildlife, along with other activities such as hiking and canoeing. The campout was sponsored by Coleman and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, with food contributed by Walmart and Chick-fil-A.

A Donut Dash and SPCA Walk/Run drew over **250** participants to the park.

3 local/regional **disc golf events** were held, the largest being the Hound Dog Howler.

More than a dozen **fishing tournaments** were held at the park.

SCHOOL SPORTING EVENTS

Killens Pond is the home cross-country course for 5 high schools, averaging 2 dual meets a week from September through November. The park also served as the course for the Henlopen Conference (16 schools) and State Championship (50 schools) meets.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Trail around the pond, including a separate bridge off of Killens Pond Road and over the spillway
- Additional phases of the waterpark, to include the splash park/kiddie area, new concession building, new guard house, and entryway
- Full hookups and expansion of the campground pads for larger RVs
- Boat ramp repairs and courtesy dock

Killens Pond State Park was selected as Kent County Tourism's Attraction of the Year.



FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Killens Pond continue to be great supporters of the summer concert series through sponsorship and donations. Last year, the Friends gave more than **\$2,000** to the summer concerts and also sold ice cream and drinks.

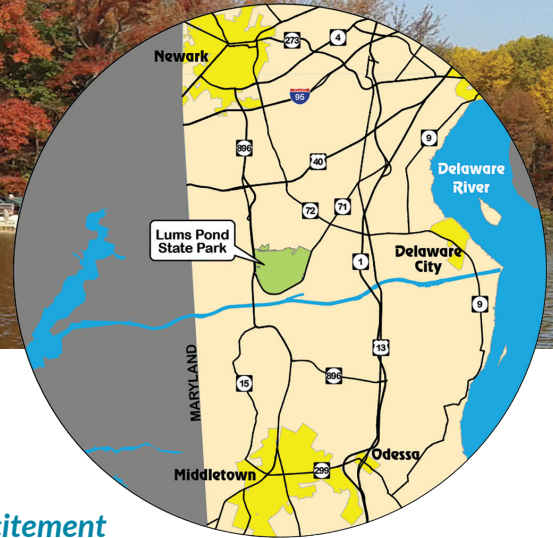
The Friends continue to lead volunteer projects like trail cleanups, scarecrow-making programs, and holiday programs.



"I can't believe this wonderful place is 15 mins away from my house in Magnolia! It's got a decent sized water park for the kids, and a lovely hiking trail that I trekked today with my baby jogging stroller. There are cabins in the woods near the pond, grills for BBQing in the woody park area. I'm a lover of nature and I was not disappointed. :)"

*- Mika B.
Magnolia, DE*

LUMS POND STATE PARK



A dense forest of oak, poplar, and other hardwoods surrounds Delaware's largest freshwater millpond at Lums Pond State Park. This is one of the First State's most diverse parks, offering everything from the a relaxing paddle around the pond to the excitement of a first-class ropes course, making it a perfect day trip or a fun family camping destination.

LUMS POND at a Glance

 **1,791.24**
Acres

 **17.52**
Miles of trails

 **81**
Campsites

 **370,485**
Visitors

 **8/31**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff

 **5,280**
Volunteer hours

 **117/1,976**
Programs/Participants

 **18/179**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

A **\$5 million+** campground renovation, which included adding full-hookup sites, a new bathhouse, and five new walk-in tent sites, was completed and opened to the public in June.

A mural, *Wildlife of Lums Pond* by Dan Gotel, was commissioned; it now covers one side of the nature center. It depicts animals and insects that can be found in the park.

Go Ape Treetop Adventure, the park's ropes course concessionaire, built a Conestoga cabin for use as an office.

Major improvements were made to trail surfacing, creating a better walking and riding experience for hikers, bikers, and horses.



"I live about a mile up the road and took an adventure to the park, found out about this new thing called "Go Ape" it's a tree top adventure course. 4 zip lines over water and about 35 obstacles! Greatest 55 dollars I ever spent! I suggest leaving time to do the course... 3 hours should be good, bring lunch or something you'll be hungry after."

- Pebbles Antonsen

SPECIAL EVENTS

Venture Outdoors Fest included camping out overnight in one of the park's day-use areas. The goal of the festival was to introduce more young adults to nature. The event included instruction on tenting, boating, stand-up paddleboarding, horseback riding, and the ropes course.



The Delaware Charity Challenge Event, a team-based 5K run/walk/adventure race in its second year, raised over \$24,000 for numerous charities ranging from Girls, Inc. to Meals on Wheels and Faithful Friends.

Local sports teams using the park's facilities included the Bear-Texans youth football team, Delaware United Cricket League, and local schools that practice on the tennis courts and held 21 meets on the cross-country course.



Event-goers at the **Zip + Sip Craft Beer Festival** were invited to try out the GoApe Adventure Course before heading over to the craft beer festival tent. The event netted over \$12,000 and was considered a huge success by vendors and attendees.

PARTNERSHIPS

Delaware State Parks entered into a partnership with the University of Delaware and Go Ape to promote overnight camping and the high ropes aerial adventure course at Lums Pond State Park. This included:

- A video by Coach Brock promoting Lums Pond at all UD home football games
- Inserts and marketing material for all season ticket holders and visiting schools
- A Delaware State Parks video posted on the university's athletic web page
- Fan zone setups, the Go Ape mascot, and the designation of Delaware State Parks as the official camping destination for UD athletics.

A new cricket field was installed in Area 3 through a partnership with the Delaware United Cricket League. Cricket matches take place almost every weekend, with a final match at the end of the season.

Naturalist Austin Conley worked with the Boy Scouts to set up a Scout Venture Crew that meets monthly to plan activities and volunteer projects that benefit the park.

FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

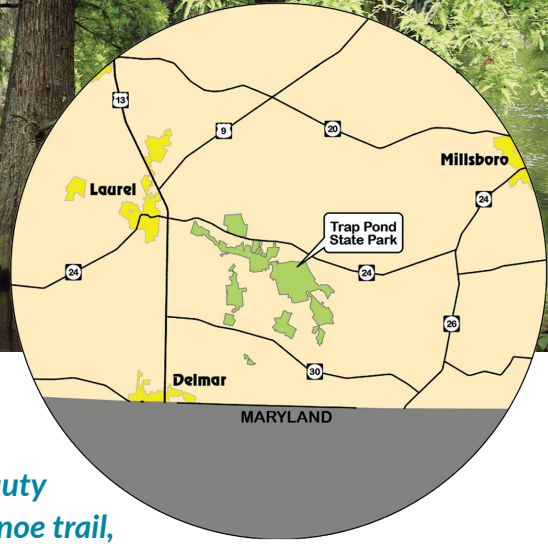
The Friends of Lums Pond led clean-up projects, weed removal from parking lots and, working with scout groups, installed benches in the dog park.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Rehabilitation of Area 1 parking lot
- Renovations and improvements for aging restroom facilities in Day Use Area 1 to support day use and Go Ape
- Improvements to roadways and parking lots throughout the park
- Development and construction of a new nature center
- A new playground pavilion and overflow parking for the campground

TRAP POND STATE PARK



One of Delaware's first state parks, Trap Pond is home to the northernmost natural stand of baldcypress trees in the U.S. The park provides visitors with many opportunities to explore the beauty of the wetland forest and swamp through hiking, paddling the canoe trail, fishing, camping, birdwatching, and stargazing.

TRAP POND
at a Glance

-  **3873.29**
Acres
-  **12.21**
Miles of trails
-  **137,200**
Visitors
-  **142**
Campsites
-  **6/19**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **12,227**
Volunteer hours
-  **357/6,159**
Programs/Participants
-  **1/9**
Day Camps/Campers
-  **9,558**
Nature Center Visitors

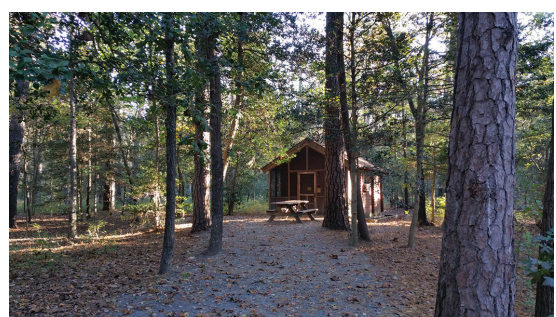
FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Work was completed on the historic tin-stamped roof of Bethesda Church to seal the leaks and preserve the structure.

Cypress Point Road received approximately **\$35,000** in millings. All prep work, delivery, and grading were accomplished by state park, DELDOT, and Fish and Wildlife staff.



Heat was installed in the C-loop restroom and frost-free spigots were installed for half of C-loop, allowing winter camping for the first time.



“What a gem of a pond and cypress swamp! Nice put-in boat ramp, \$8 out-of-state self-pay fee, and adequate parking. Have never seen so many turtles sunning themselves. Saw a few ducks and geese. Really enjoyed paddling among the cypress trees and knees. Went far upstream and the swamp changed over to deciduous, with lots of green flora and Forest songbirds. Big old beaver lodge, too. Much bigger area than we had assumed. This little treasure is well worth it.”

*– TripAdvisor Review
2015*

SPECIAL EVENTS

The **Delmarva Stargazers** come to the park for the clear view of the stars and the planets. Their **annual “Star Party”** was recently featured in AAA magazine, right up there with an event at the Grand Canyon.

More than **3,500** people attended the **25th Annual Halloween Howl** in October. Families trick-or-treated and took part in Halloween crafts, pumpkin carving, costume contests, and hayrides.

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, DNREC’s Reclaim Our Rivers, and Trap Pond State Park sponsored the annual **Nanticoke River Wade In** event on the shoreline of Trap Pond. Approximately **100** people attended the event, including 25 waders and 35 children, who took part in educational watershed activities. The event also launched two experimental “floating wetlands” into Trap Pond.

Trap Pond served as the first stop for all riders (about **300**) participating in the **Laurel Chamber’s Bike and Brew**.



TRAILS

The Loblolly Trail was rededicated as the **BOB Trail**, a 6-mile multi-use trail. Prior to the dedication, park staff and the trail crew installed new trail markers and completed trail upgrades.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Campground dock replacements for fishing and boat access
- Hitch Pond Road parking area construction to provide safe access to the James Branch canoe trail
- Full-service restroom with showers to support the cabin complex
- Campground infrastructure upgrades. The galvanized water lines were installed in 1987 and show signs of deterioration and rust in the water. The electric to C and D loop is 30 amp. The average new RV requires 50 amp, and the larger require 100 amps, which we do not offer. The size of the average RV is 45’ and longer. The campground has few sites that can accommodate this size.
- Improvements to campground playground in conjunction with Trap Pond Partners



PARTNERSHIPS

Trap Pond provided canoes, kayaks, and information on the park at the inaugural Laurel Ramble. The park's naturalist has been working with the Ramble committee to find ways to draw tourists to the town of Laurel, which will directly benefit the park.

The Laurel Nature and History Tourism program's goal is to make the Town of Laurel the "Central Hub" for outdoor tourism in Western Sussex County. Trap Pond staff have been providing their planning expertise, as well

as using the park's minibus for special events and to shuttle members of the committee to see all that Sussex County has to offer in outdoor recreation.

Park staff provided informational programs on Trap Pond and wildlife at Rotary Meetings. Rotary has provided Trap Pond with school scholarships.

The park partnered with the Laurel Chamber of Commerce to promote a Jeep Jamboree. The popular Jamboree included discounts for camping.

The Park partnered with the Laurel School District and the Department of Agriculture on a 10-week summer education program. Approximately **110** children from underserved communities in Sussex County participated in the program, which offered free transportation, breakfast, and lunch.

Trap Pond Partners

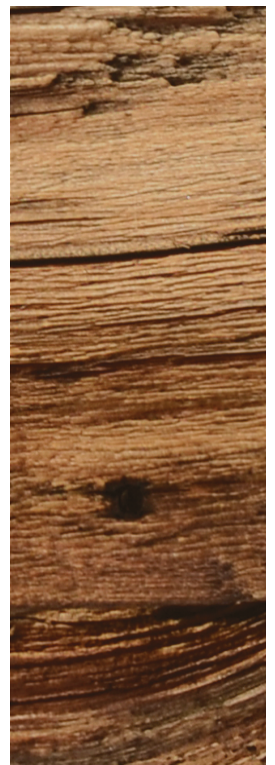


FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

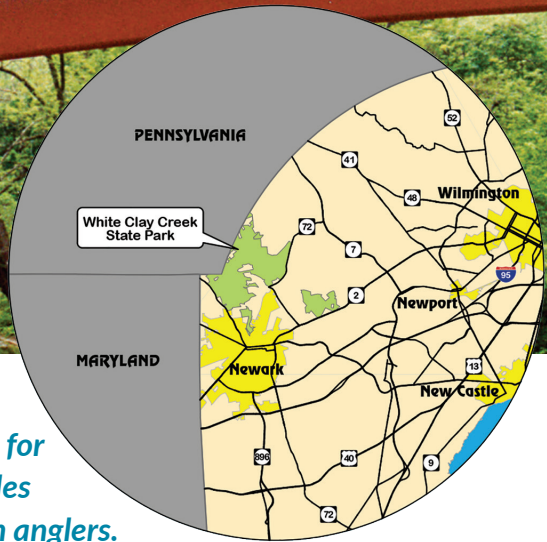
Trap Pond Partners provided **\$4,500** to the park through a transportation grant, an education grant, and summer concert sponsorship.

Trap Pond partners held several fundraisers, including the 1st Annual Taste of Wine & Beer Festival, which drew 20 vendors and **250** attendees in September. Proceeds were used to enhance the free Borrow-a-Bike program and to construct a new 24' x 12' bike shed at the campground.

Trap Pond Partners developed a park puppet show that introduces young children to all of the activities the park has to offer and the benefits of getting outside and active.



WHITE CLAY CREEK STATE PARK



Located along White Clay Creek, a nationally-designated Wild and Scenic River, White Clay Creek State Park offers something for everyone. Hikers, bikers, runners, and birders enjoy nearly 40 miles of trails, and the park is a regional trout destination popular with anglers. The park offers summer concerts for music enthusiasts and is home to a very popular disc golf course.

**WHITE CLAY CREEK
at a Glance**

-  **3,522.58**
Acres
-  **34.7**
Miles of trails
-  **232,758**
Visitors
-  **9/20**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **7,555**
Volunteer hours
-  **331/24,100**
Programs/Participants
-  **17/252**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Niven House was painted and a new roof installed. This was the first phase in renovating and developing the property as a market rental.

Plans were finalized for the 2.8-mile Tri-Valley Trail. The trail will complete an 18-mile network of trails linking the Judge Morris Estate, Middle Run Natural Area, and Possum Hill.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Creek Fest drew over **600** attendees on a cold and rainy day to celebrate White Clay Creek and the 50th anniversary of the White Clay Watershed Association. There were hikes, food, live music, kids' activities, displays, and more than 30 vendors and exhibitors, including live animals from the Brandywine Zoo.



White Clay Creek closed its **Summer Concert Series** with a final Labor Day concert that drew **3,200** attendees. Over **16,000** people attended the 13 summer concerts.

Several hundred different species of plants, animals, and fungi were added to the White Clay Creek project list on iNaturalist.org during the park's **BioBlitz** event. A portion of the BioBlitz was funded through a grant from the Delaware Association of Environmental Educators.

Mystery at the Mansion, a performance presented in partnership with Reedy Point Players and the Delaware Division of the Arts, drew **140** attendees.



PARTNERSHIPS

White Clay Creek State Park received a **\$10,000** grant from REI for biking/hiking in the park.



VOLUNTEER AND FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Tri-State Marker Trail was completed as a joint project of several volunteer groups, including Friends of White Clay, White Clay Creek Preserve Friends (PA), and Delaware and Pennsylvania State Parks. It runs 1.5 miles on the Delaware side and 2.5 miles on the Pennsylvania side.

Friends of White Clay Creek State Park funded the materials to replace the post and rail fencing at the entrance to Nine-Foot Road.

Trail stewards assisted with clearing of downed trees on trails after heavy storms in late spring/early summer.

The Friends provided scholarships that allowed more than **1,330** children to attend programs led by the nature center staff. For many of the participants, this was their first opportunity to explore nature.

The Friends raised funds for upgrading the sound system at the bandshell.

Critical

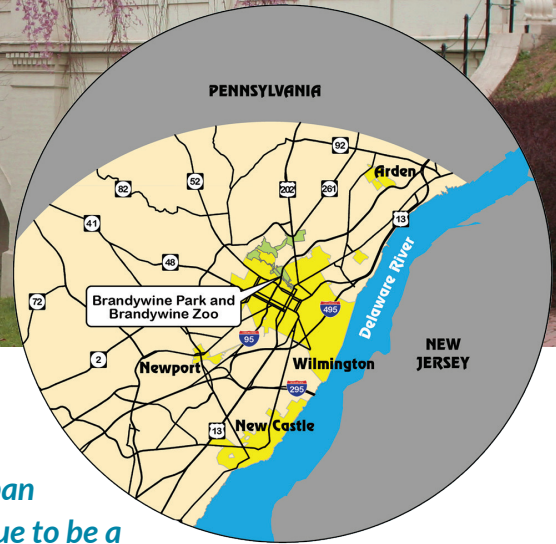
CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Roof replacement at Deerfield Golf Course
- Nature center complex redevelopment plan for the Robinson House and current Chambers House Nature Center
- Park Office relocation to Carpenter Recreation Area
- Renovation of the Niven House as a market rental to generate revenue
- Renovation to Krapf House for a bed-and-breakfast concession

"A great place to seek a brief respite from the hustle and bustle of downtown Main Street, this is a place for hiking, mountain biking, trail running, a quick walk with the dog, or all of the above."

*– Professor Lumen
Newark, DE*

WILMINGTON STATE PARKS BRANDYWINE ZOO



Wilmington State Parks – comprising Brandywine, Rockford, and H. Fletcher Brown Parks – embrace the rich history of life in Delaware’s largest city. The park areas here have served as an urban retreat for the citizens of Wilmington since 1883 and they continue to be a vital part of daily life in the city. On any given day, visitors of all ages participate in all types of recreational pursuits: tennis, baseball, softball, football, lacrosse, soccer, track and field, kickball, rugby, Ultimate Frisbee™, basketball, and basketball. The Brandywine Zoo, located in Brandywine Park, is home to 150 different species of birds, reptiles, and mammals including bald eagles, condors, and the world’s largest rodent, the capybara.

WILMINGTON STATE PARKS at a Glance



345
Acres



10.4
Miles of trails



1,362,619
Visitors



16/26
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



14,648
Volunteer hours



1,145/71,098
Programs/Participants



20/247
Day Camps/Campers

FY2016

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The swinging bridge in Brandywine Park was structurally repaired, resurfaced, and reopened to the public.

Project Cost: **\$650,000**

Eagle Ridge opened at the Brandywine Zoo, transforming a hilly, multi-story area and making it fully accessible. It includes a new viewing platform and gently sloping walkway. Simone Realty sponsored Eagle Ridge with a **\$30,000** donation. The project also received **\$100,000** in Community Transportation Funds from Representatives Bolden, Brady, and Potter, and from Senators Marshall and McDowell.



The Monkey House at the Brandywine Zoo, heavily damaged in 2013 by a falling tree, was demolished and the area returned to open green space.

The Northern Delaware Greenway Trail paving project, connecting Wilmington State Parks to Alapocas Run State Park, was completed. The Greenway Trail runs through City of Wilmington and New Castle County parks to Bellevue and Fox Point State Parks.

The Rodney Street tennis courts in Brandywine Park were resurfaced and the parking lot at Josephine Garden was improved.



SPECIAL EVENTS

The Wilmington Flower Market, held at Rockford Park since 1952, again drew thousands of people.

The Brandywine Festival of the Arts drew up to **20,000** visitors.

In addition to community and foundation races and walks, large annual races and walks include:

- Run for the Buds, drawing about **400** participants
- JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes, with **3,500** attendees
- Wilmington Renaissance Corporation Grand Prix, drawing **1,500** participants
- Caesar Rodney Half-Marathon, drawing about **1,500** runners
- Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation 5K, drawing around **1,000** participants

The Brandywine Zoo held themed events such as **Red Panda Day**, **Endangered Species Day**, and others throughout the year. These events drew approximately **10,000** people and raised close to **\$20,000**, which was donated to local, national, and global conservation causes.

Critical

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Rehabilitation of Baynard Stadium to address aging infrastructure. There is demand for an all-weather playing surface, parking and lighting improvements, and permanent replacement of the temporary bleachers.
- Zoo hospital upgrade to improve the quarantine area, required for AZA recertification
- Implementation of the Zoo master plan
- Relocation of the Wilmington State Parks office to a permanent structure
- Major updates to the Brandywine Zoo's power and water services to accommodate the \$10 million rainforest exhibit announced by the Governor in 2014 and a \$4-5 million expansion along the top ridge of the zoo
- Todd Memorial renovation

“Very nice little zoo tucked away into a larger park/residential area by the river. We came here as an alternative to the Philadelphia Zoo, and were pleasantly surprised.”

*– Jason I.
Browns Mills, NJ*



SPORTING EVENTS

Baynard Stadium is a popular venue for high school and youth sporting activities including football, soccer, lacrosse, and track and field. It is the home stadium for Delaware Military Academy, St. Marks High School, Salesianum School, Howard High School of Technology, and St. Elizabeth High School. High-profile tournaments included:



- New Castle County Track and Field Championships
- Catholic Youth Ministry Track and Field Championships
- Two Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Lacrosse Tournament Games
- City of Wilmington Flag Football Championships

Brandywine Park and Rockford Park ballfields are home to youth and adult baseball and softball teams, including Little League, high school, Catholic Youth Ministry, semi-pro, and recreational programs. Wilmington Little League hosted the 2015 New Castle County 11-to-12-year-old All-Star tournament in Brandywine Park

The Rodney Street tennis courts in Brandywine Park are home to the Ursuline Academy tennis team, City of Wilmington's Rodney Street Tennis and Tutoring youth tennis program, My Serve youth tennis program, and the United States Tennis Association's Middle States Delaware District youth and men's senior leagues. The Rockford Park tennis courts are home to the Delaware Tennis and Paddle Club.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Rotary Club of Wilmington chose the rehabilitation of Fletcher Brown Park as their centennial community project. The club has initiated a fundraising campaign to redevelop the park for improved access and community gathering opportunities.



FRIENDS OF WILMINGTON PARKS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Wilmington Parks continued fundraising throughout 2015 in support of the restoration of the historic Sugar Bowl in Brandywine Park.

Through the generosity of the Friends of Wilmington Parks scholarship program, park interpreters were able to provide low-cost and free environmental education programs to **2,628** students in Title I schools and Head Start centers.



Delaware State Parks

The Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation
89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901

David S. Small, *Secretary*
Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Raymond E. Bivens, *Director*
Division of Parks and Recreation

Ron Mears, *President*
Parks Advisory Council