



DELAWARE STATE PARKS



2021

Annual Report

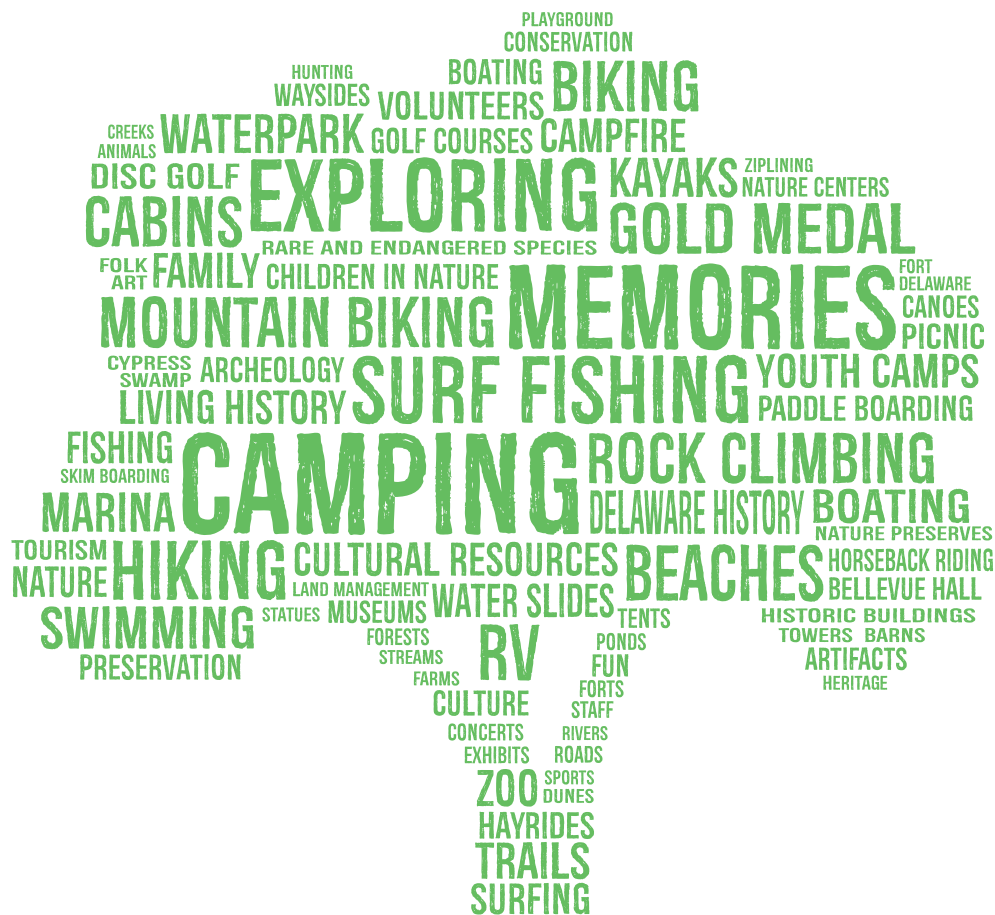


Delaware State Parks

2021

Annual Report

VOTED AMERICA'S BEST



Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Division of Parks & Recreation

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TIMELINE ANNIVERSARIES



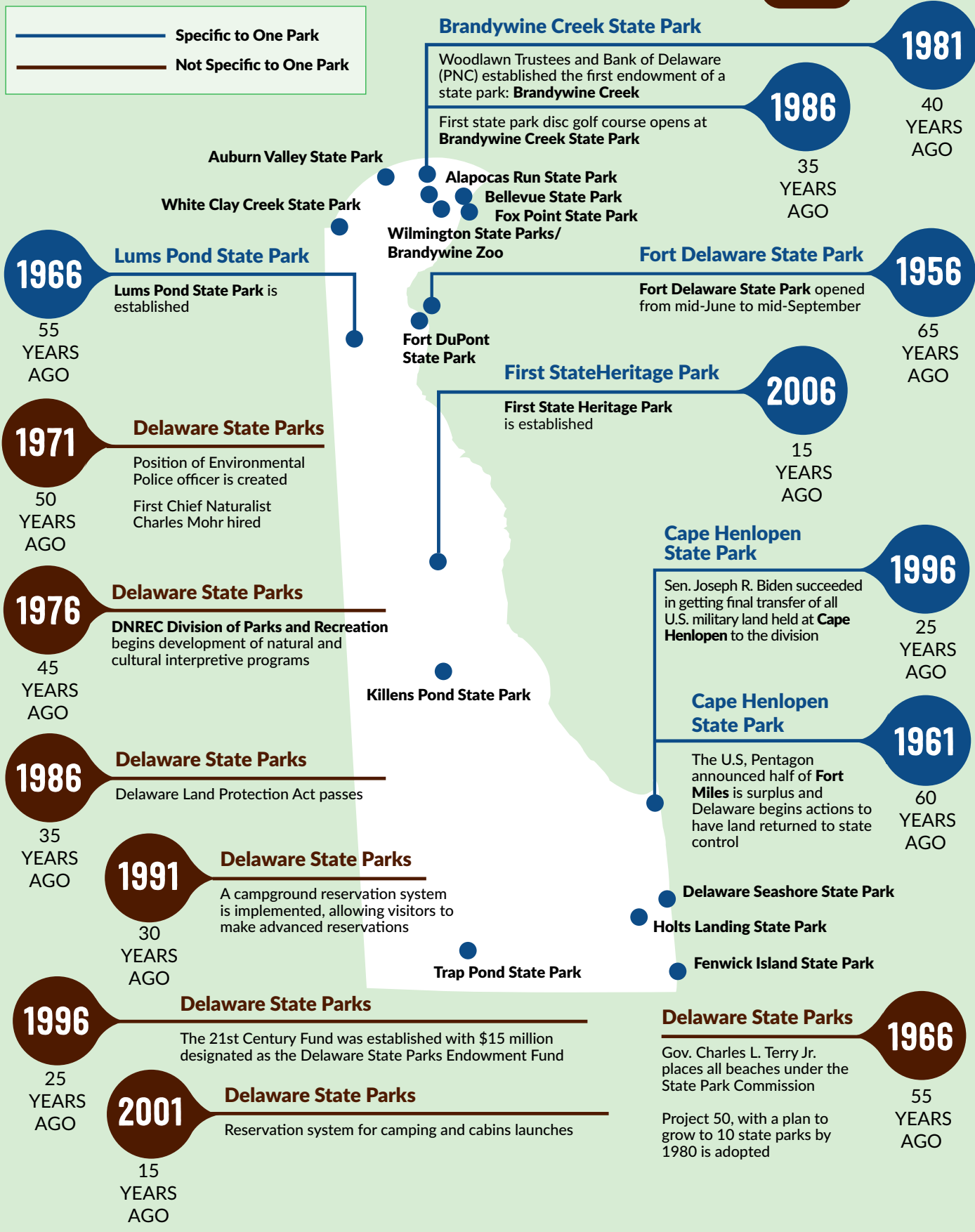
Delaware State Parks

70th anniversary of Delaware State Parks

2021

THIS YEAR

— Specific to One Park
— Not Specific to One Park



1966
55 YEARS AGO

Lums Pond State Park
Lums Pond State Park is established

1971
50 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
Position of Environmental Police officer is created
First Chief Naturalist Charles Mohr hired

1976
45 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation begins development of natural and cultural interpretive programs

1986
35 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
Delaware Land Protection Act passes

1991
30 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
A campground reservation system is implemented, allowing visitors to make advanced reservations

1996
25 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
The 21st Century Fund was established with \$15 million designated as the Delaware State Parks Endowment Fund

2001
15 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
Reservation system for camping and cabins launches

1986
35 YEARS AGO

Woodlawn Trustees and Bank of Delaware (PNC) established the first endowment of a state park: **Brandywine Creek**
First state park disc golf course opens at **Brandywine Creek State Park**

1981
40 YEARS AGO

1956
65 YEARS AGO

Fort Delaware State Park opened from mid-June to mid-September

2006
15 YEARS AGO

First State Heritage Park is established

1996
25 YEARS AGO

Sen. Joseph R. Biden succeeded in getting final transfer of all U.S. military land held at **Cape Henlopen** to the division

1961
60 YEARS AGO

The U.S. Pentagon announced half of **Fort Miles** is surplus and Delaware begins actions to have land returned to state control

1966
55 YEARS AGO

Delaware State Parks
Gov. Charles L. Terry Jr. places all beaches under the State Park Commission

Project 50, with a plan to grow to 10 state parks by 1980 is adopted

WHAT WE ARE

The mission of DNREC's Division of Parks and Recreation 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.

Delaware State Parks by the Numbers:



7,925,295
Visitors

17

Parks



1



AZA Accredited
Zoo

21

Nature Preserves



26,608
Acres



629
Buildings
on Park Land

174



Miles
of Trails



18
Miles of
Ocean Beach

43.7
Miles of Road

OUR PARKS AND PRESERVES

The Division of Parks & Recreation operates and maintains 17 state parks and related preserves and greenways throughout Delaware.

STATE PARKS:

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

PRESERVES:

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

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

ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Delaware State Parks provide recreation, nature, environmental and educational opportunities for everyone. Enabling people to enjoy all 17 state parks and more than 26,600 acres of parkland is an important component of the division's work. Each year, the division updates and improves the state parks with this all-access vision in mind. In 2021, the division added several accessible amenities with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in mind for individuals of all abilities.

Auburn Valley State Park

- Historic bridge installed at Farm Lane allowing for improved accessibility
- Steam Museum renovation with accessible bathrooms and exhibit space fundraised and managed by the Friends of Auburn Heights

Cape Henlopen State Park

- Repairs to fishing pier pilings to allow for the continued operation of the most heavily utilized fishing pier in the state. The pier offers accessible fishing and special needs tournaments.
- Fort Miles Artillery Park pathway paving that creates full accessibility to all gun pads and the northwest entrance of Battery 519
- ADA pole showers installed at Gordons Pond
- Installation of access mats on every dune crossing at Gordon's Pond for accessible beach access
- New event space and parking for the Fort Miles Museum with accessible pathway and museum access
- A new accessible hunting stand was installed at Cape Henlopen State Park



Gordon's Pond
Trail at Cape
Henlopen State
Park

Delaware Seashore State Park

- Installation of mobility mats for accessible beach access
- ADA pole showers installed at South Inlet

Fox Point State Park

- Bathroom improvements for accessibility

Killens Pond State Park

- Elevated boardwalk from the boat rental area to the boat ramp, including accessible fishing opportunities from the boardwalk

Lums Pond State Park

- Sensory Trail re-route and resurfacing

Trap Pond State Park

- Resurfacing of the Bob Trail

White Clay Creek State Park

- Lighting of the Pomeroy Trail allowing for improved visibility and safety
- Repaving of the Wendell Castle Trail

Wilmington State Parks

- Improvements to playground to increase accessibility

Pomeroy Trail at White Clay Creek State Park



Elevated Boardwalk at Killens Pond State Park

SIMPLY THE BEST!

Delaware State Parks Wins National Competition for Excellence



Governor John Carney joined Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Shawn M. Garvin in November to announce that the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation won the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 2021 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This is the second time Delaware's state parks received this prestigious award, having won it previously in 2015.



In May, Delaware, Ohio, Tennessee and Texas state parks systems were selected as finalists in the State Parks Division. This biennial Gold Medal award has only been given 13 times since its establishment in 1997. Delaware and Florida are the only state park systems to win the award more than once.

The division does not know the exact factors that set Delaware apart in the competition, but believes multiple items played into being selected as the 2021 Gold Medal state park system. Under

the leadership of Director Ray Bivens, the Delaware State Parks system has seen tremendous growth and broken records in numerous areas, including camping/cabin stays, volunteer hours, park attendance and revenue.

The division is committed to innovation, including creative public private partnerships such as the Fort Miles Museum, Big Chill Beach Club and the establishment of Auburn Valley State Park from one of the most contaminated and flood-prone sites in the state. The division's impact on the economy includes support for more than 6,000 jobs through concessionaire and partnership agreements.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of community members, staff members and elected officials. The National Gold Medal Awards program, sponsored by Musco Lighting, LLC, honors communities in the United States that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition.

"Delaware State Parks provide refuge for millions of Delawareans and visitors each year and were critical to the public's mental and physical health as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic. To be awarded the National Gold Medal two times is a testament to the dedication of the Division of Parks and Recreation and our state's natural and cultural resources."

– Gov. John Carney

Delaware State Parks received numerous other accolades in articles throughout the year, including:

Top Must-Visit Destination in Delaware

Cape Henlopen State Park
Buzzfeed

35 Best Weekend Getaways From D.C.

Wilmington: Brandywine Zoo
Tumovo

The 50 Best Summer Vacations in America

Cape Henlopen State Park
MSN Travel

The 50 Best State Parks for a Summer Road Trip

Lums Pond State Park
MSN Travel

Your State's Most Unique Spot to Camp this Summer

Cape Henlopen State Park
MSN Travel

The 50 Best Beaches for Summer

Fenwick Island State Park
MSN Travel

America's Most Stunning State Parks

Cape Henlopen State Park
Travel MSN

50 Beautiful Places in the US to Visit this Winter

Cape Henlopen State Park
MSN Travel

Things Worth Trying

Delaware State Parks Passport Program
Out & About Magazine

The Best Outdoor Dining In Every State

Big Chill Beach Club, Delaware Seashore State Park
The Sushiholic

Your State's Best Picnic Spot

Cape Henlopen State Park, Lewes
MSN Love Food

Best Marina in Sussex County

Indian River Marina
Coastal Style magazine

25 of the Best Restaurants in Rehoboth Beach

Big Chill Beach Club
Full Life, Full Passport

Best Memorial Day Weekend Fishing Destinations for 2021

Lums Pond State Park
South Florida Reporter

The 100+ Best Waterfalls Across the US

Alapocas Run State Park Waterfall
Parade

The Best Campground in Every State

Delaware Seashore State Park
Outside Magazine

Why You Should Head to the Delaware Beaches This Summer

Cape Henlopen and Delaware Seashore State Parks
Forbes

This Is the Best Beach in Your State, According to Yelp

Fenwick Island
Best Life

Iconic Fly Fishing Destinations in Every State

Lums Pond State Park
WFMZ Allentown

The Most Amazing, Unusual Insta-Worthy

Glamping Spots Across the US
Trap Pond State Park Yurts
Parade

These Best Fishing Spots in Every State Have Us Totally HOOKED!

Killens Pond and White Clay Creek state parks
Parade

The Best Campground in Every State

South and North Inlet Campgrounds, Delaware Seashore State Park
Outside Magazine

WHO WE ARE

OUR PEOPLE PUT US ON TOP IN FY21

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

53 
electrical, mechanical and maintenance staff

26 
park rangers

16 
administrative specialists

13 
technical experts

26 
park superintendents and assistant superintendents

11 
educators

14 
central office staff

5 
animal keepers and zoo managers

1 
canine

1 
director

17 New Castle Conservation District staff

948 casual/seasonal staff, including:

- **68** ocean lifeguards to protect swimmers in our ocean beaches
- **56** lifeguards and monitors to protect visitors at the Killens Pond Water Park
- **67** Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) members
- **417,555** Total hours worked by Division Seasonal staff in 2021



PEOPLE ARE OUR GREATEST RESOURCE

Director Ray Bivens received the 2021 National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD) Conference Distinguished Service Award in September for demonstrating a long-term, sustained record of professional accomplishment in the field of park and recreation management.

For more than 30 years, Ray has dedicated his career to park stewardship with a passion for natural and cultural resources, customer service, training, partnerships and staff development. He has placed a focus on youth during his tenure with the division and played a lead role in creating the Delaware Children in Nature plan and the creation of the First State Heritage Park in Dover. One of his first acts as director was to establish the Delaware Youth Conservation Corps. Other accomplishments include having a key role in the creation of the Trap Pond and Killens Pond state park nature centers, and the development of multiple new trails and playgrounds.

Under his leadership, the Delaware State Parks system has seen tremendous growth and broken records in various areas, including camping/cabin stays, volunteer hours, park attendance and revenue. Other milestones include the dedication of Delaware's 17th state park, Auburn Valley, in 2018 and the creation of the division's first strategic plan in 2020.



Director, Ray Bivens

Division of Parks and Recreation Outstanding Employee Awards

Jim Charney, the division's arborist, was named the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation Employee of the Year for all he does for Delaware State Parks, sister agencies and the neighbors that border the parks. He also supports other states as part of a team of Delawareans who fight forest fires.

When a tornado traveled through Lums Pond State Park in August 2021, Jim worked extremely hard, and even canceled his summer vacation, to help reopen the Lums Pond campground and trails in record time. Jim's continual preventative work to prune and shape the trees over campsites saved lives and the division hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage costs. Through his expertise in his field and his ability to read pressures, weights and natural weakness that occur when a tree grows, Jim was able to remove potential hazards before they became an issue.

On top of that, Jim conducts multiple training courses each year for staff and volunteers. His trainings have created a safer environment and cost savings for the state through free training and enabling staff to complete work that would otherwise need to be outsourced.



Employee of the Year, Jim Charney

Our other honorees include:

Achiever

Larry Davidson
Don Laske
Danielle Levredge
Rich Szutenbach
Chris Polo

Innovator

Ian Peters
Vinny Porcellini
Abby Shepard
Jim Thomas

Motivator

Tyeast Amankwah
Keith Betts
Elena Stewart
Patrick Thompson

Customer Service

Mazie Barbosa
Bruce Cavanaugh
Mike Krumrine
Tom Welch

Mentor

Beth Berlin
Mandy Fischer
Darren Lawson
Cpl. Adam Yeager

Organizer

Kate Crane
Erica Donahue
Mika Drake
Katherine Wilson

Team Award

Tornado Team: The Aug. 4, 2021 tornado had windspeeds upward of 110 miles per hour as it passed through Lums Pond State Park and inflicted severe damage to grounds that required herculean cleanup efforts by division staff. Recognition goes to the following DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation employees for their efforts to help clean up:

Lums Pond Staff including Stephen Beitel, Gary Shane, Jeremy Timney, Mike Moyer, Dave Murphy, Steve Ursin, Taylor Toman, Colby Lemke, Mazie Barbosa, Nathan George, Katelyn Hartnett, Jillian Green, and Campground Hosts Cam and Donna Herring, Tony and Lisa Fentress, Scott and Sarah Haywood; both Veterans Corps teams – Karen Minner, Lela Otto, Glenn Catchings, Darryl Bryant, Robert Anderson, Nicolas Bryant, Laura Crossman, Leslie Olivares, Jherry Williams and Jhyere Williams; the Trail Team; and other division staff including Jim Charney, Bill Miller, Mark Hardcastle, Brooks Cahall, James Wagner, Grant Melville, Darren Lawson, Mike Bloom, Vinny Porcellini, Ian Silva, John Guentner, Jon O'Neil and Bradley Melson.

NASORLO Award

Bob Ehemann and now-retired Susan Moerschel were recognized with an achievement award for data collection and advocacy at the annual conference of the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers in Carlisle, Pa. Bob serves on the organization's executive board as its northeastern representative. These officers manage the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund stateside program. Susan has been an advocate for boundary mapping for decades and took the lead to collect LWCF information from all 50 states.



Teresa Pierce is seen here giving a presentation about American Girl Dolls in Rehoboth Beach

The Mohr-Jennings Award

Teresa Pierce received the Mohr-Jennings Award for her deep passion for her work, which is clear to attendees of the interpretive tours and hikes she leads. She describes rooms during her mansion tours in a way that makes listeners feel they are in the period described. She constantly researches the rich industrial history of Yorklyn to develop new program opportunities. For example, some of her research led to the formation of a committee to formulate an Interpretive Plan for the Marshall Paper Mill to safely allow the public to tour the mill and learn the local history of this site.

The Mohr-Jennings Award is named for former Division of Parks and Recreation Chief Park Naturalist Charles E. Mohr and Historian Lee Jennings and

was created by former Chief Park Naturalist Jim O'Neill in 1985 to reflect the service of someone who had given "beyond-the-call" dedication to resource interpretation.

Delaware Engine Crew Fighting Colorado Wildfire

Delaware's Type 6 engine and its three-man crew, including division employees **Bradley Melson and Adam Kever**, were part of 313 personnel fighting the Oil Springs Fire in Colorado, which was started by lightning on June 18 and burned 12,613 acres until it was contained July 10. Delaware's crew worked on one of the fire's priority areas as the fire spread moderately in a mixture of pinyon, juniper and sagebrush.

MARKETING

WE ROCKED SOCIAL MEDIA!

In 2021, the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation added strategic capabilities and targeted messaging to reach broader audiences, including increased reach and engagement through digital marketing. Momentum is expected to continue to build with more engaging content, expanded capabilities and targeted strategies that drive measurable results.

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Giveaway with Go Ape

The division participated in a collaborative social media campaign with Go Ape. The campaign was a giveaway of a camping stay and Go Ape tickets.

Lifeguard Recruitment

The division planned and executed a large-scale marketing campaign for lifeguard recruitment, which included a digital ad campaign with AB&C, ads on Facebook and Instagram targeting both potential guards and guard parents, ads on Snapchat, rack cards and posters, email blasts and in newsletters.

WBOC Partnership for Summer Concerts

The division partnered with WBOC's Delmarva Life to promote summer concerts in Kent and Sussex counties. WBOC ran an eight-week segment where they interviewed and promoted a band in the concert series each week.



University of Delaware (UD)

The division sponsored the RV lot at the University of Delaware for the 2021 football season. The university also promoted Lums Pond as an option for campers and the official campground of UD Athletics.



Hershey RV Show

The division had a booth at the Hershey RV Show in Hershey, Pa., which drew 61,000 participants. AB&C did a geofencing ad campaign for the show.

Blue Rocks

As part of the division's partnership with the Wilmington Blue Rocks, their Rocky Bluewinkle mascot visited six different parks for photo ops.



VOLUNTEERS

The Delaware State Parks system benefits greatly from people who volunteer, including through businesses, non-profits, other groups or the division's volunteer opportunities offered online. Volunteers generously give their time through Friends' groups, internships, campsite hosting and by taking part in a wide array of volunteer activities throughout the state park system all year long. In 2021, 2,054 volunteers contributed 97,500 hours, or the equivalent of 50 full-time employees.

How Volunteers Spent Their Hours	
Park Operations and Maintenance	48,999
Programming/Education	13,588
Administration	9,784
Environmental Stewardship	7,825
Wildlife	6,618
Trails	3,677
History	3,193
Marketing/Outreach	1,227
Recreation	942
Arts	575
Training	476

Where Volunteers Spent Their Hours	
Cape Henlopen State Park	27,273
Trap Pond State Park	11,069
White Clay Creek State Park	9,805
Brandywine Zoo	8,656
Killens Pond State Park	7,241
Lums Pond State Park	6,175
Auburn Valley State Park	5,209
Delaware Seashore State Park	4,374
Bellevue State Park	3,759
Alapocas Run/Blue Ball Barn	3,257
Brandywine Creek State Park	2,388
Division Central Office	2,136
Wilmington State Parks	1,995
Other DNREC Divisions	1,180
Holts Landing	1,086
Fort Delaware State Park	967
First State Heritage Park at Dover	601
Garrisons Lake	385
TOTAL HOURS	97,556

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Interns came from 35 different states, and represented 38 colleges, universities and high schools. Interns worked in the following fields:

- Animal Keeper Apprenticing
- Coastal Training Programs
- Collections
- Conservation Education
- Environmental Education
- Environmental Summer Camps
- Environmental Stewardship
- Folk Art Collection
- Folk Art Education
- Historical interpretation
- History
- Horticulture
- Interpretive Programming
- Outdoor Skills
- Operations and Maintenance
- Park Management
- Research
- Science Policy

Top # Intern Home States:

Delaware: 85
 Pennsylvania: 55
 Maryland: 24
 New Jersey :23

The Division of Parks and Recreation also assisted the Divisions of Fish and Wildlife and Climate, Coastal and Energy with the placement of interns.

Top activities interns assisted with:

In 2021, Environmental education was where most interns were placed. Environmental Stewardship and Historical Interpretation Internships placed a very close second/third. Due to COVID restrictions and housing limitations during the 2021 Internship Program year, the division was unable to fill several positions. The hardest hit were the outdoor summer camp positions throughout the state.



Christina Catalano,
Outdoor Summer
Camp intern at Lums
Pond State Park

INTERN SPOTLIGHT

“Interning at Lums Pond with the Delaware State Parks was an outstanding experience. I worked with an engaging staff that taught me invaluable leadership, organization and interpersonal communication skills. Specifically, I admire how the team at Lums Pond was so dedicated to personally ensuring each camper had the best week possible. As an intern in Delaware State Parks, I enjoyed the unique opportunity to enrich the campers’ lives through various activities that highlight nature, wilderness and personal growth. The Lums Pond staff was incredibly supportive of all their interns and provided several opportunities for advancement within the organization. My supervisor, Samantha Sobel, encouraged me to apply for the assistant camp director position. Without the confidence she showed in me, I would have never become a member of the Lums Pond family. Whether it was fishing out of a paddleboat or admiring the creatures in the Nature Center, we were able to excite children about the wonders of nature! The positive and uplifting environment made this past summer one I will never forget.”

YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS (YCC)

- 15,776 YCC hours in 2021
- 14 Parks involved
- YCC Department of Labor grant \$111,632
- 67 YCC members

Members of the Youth Conservation Corps, an eight-week summer program for youth between the ages of 14 and 23, logged 15,776 hours of outdoor environmental stewardship and conservation work among 14 Delaware state parks and in all three counties. That’s the

equivalent of eight full-time employees. Supported by a combination of grant and division funding, participants worked on key aspects of running a park, including grounds maintenance, boat rental, program assistance, environmental stewardship and administration. At the end of the program, the participants overwhelmingly indicated that the program provided them with a valuable experience.

As part of workforce development funding allocated by the Delaware General Assembly, the Delaware Workforce Development Board and the Delaware Department of Labor Division of Employment and Training provided \$189,486 to the YCC and Work-Based Learning programs in 2021. This grant provided funding for the YCC summer employment program including transportation, team tools, personal protective gear, and wages for 67 members and three field team leaders. It also funded Work-Based Learning field teams of five students each, two team leaders, transportation and tools. The students in this program work in Delaware State Parks during the school year as part of career pathway learning for school credit. Additionally, the grant provided funding for a Longitudinal Report, a third-party evaluation of the YCC’s last five years and its plan for the future.



Program Outcomes

- Overall participant rating of program – 4.7 out of 5
- 96% participants would recommend program to others.
- 85% indicated time in program helped them understand expectations of an employer.
- 100% of members indicated they learned a new skill as a result of time in YCC.
- 96% indicated increased confidence in nature.
- 100% indicated increased knowledge of recreational and environmental awareness activities/programs in Delaware State Parks.
- 77% indicated this was their first job experience.
- 76% of members indicate they plan to continue conservation and stewardship activities beyond summer 2021 as a result of their time in YCC.

AMERICORPS/VETERANS CONSERVATION CORPS

Nine veterans served 12,746.75 volunteer work hours as members of the AmeriCorps/Veterans Corps team. During this time, 872 acres of natural area lands were treated and improved, and 183 miles of trails maintained and/or improved, in addition to park projects and hurricane cleanup.

The 2021 Veterans Corps teams worked primarily with the Environmental Stewardship Program and trail projects. They received training in winter invasive plant identification and control techniques, herbicide handling and application and chainsaw safety and use.

Veterans Corps north worked in a patch of invasive wisteria at Brandywine State Park and on invasive species control projects in Bellevue State Park. Veterans Corps south removed invasives in the life course area of Killens Pond State Park. Both teams participated in the terrapin fence removal in Delaware Seashore State Park and the replacement of the sensory trail at Lums Pond State Park. Both teams also assisted with a large trail project that included demolition of a wooden boardwalk that was then replaced with a hardened stone dust path.



"I've been in three meetings over the last two weeks regarding work-based learning in Delaware. At every single meeting, there have been multiple people singing your praises for the great work you're doing with school districts. It is not easy to earn such high praise from school leaders so please know that not only is their gratitude deserved, but you have gone above and beyond to earn it."

Email to YCC
Program Director
Ashleigh
McKinney from
Jon Wickert,
Delaware
Department of
Education

There are
14
Friends
groups that
actively
support
Delaware
State Parks

FRIENDS OF DELAWARE STATE PARKS

Friends groups are independent, nonprofit organizations whose members are dedicated to assisting DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation: helping with special events and programs, park maintenance, planning, fundraising, staffing the nature centers and advocating for the parks.

The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation

Supports Delaware Seashore State Park and the Indian River Life-Saving Station.

The Delaware Zoological Society

Supports the Brandywine Zoo's educational and conservation mission through business operations, fundraising, membership and events.

The Fort Miles Historical Association

Committed to the preservation of the Fort Miles Historical Area in Cape Henlopen State Park. Members raise funds and write grants to support the Fort Miles Historical Area and Museum.

The Friends of Auburn Heights

Maintains a unique steam car collection and miniature railway, and supports and maintains garden trails.

The Friends of Bellevue State Park

The Friends of Bellevue State Park support the Summer Concert Series, provide camp scholarships, fund summer interns, and champion historic preservation of the park, including of the Mt. Pleasant Parsonage, Meeting House and cemetery.

The Friends of Brandywine Creek State Park

Sponsors clean-up projects, supports park events and provides environmental education scholarships.

The Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park

Coordinates monthly trail maintenance, purchased the live Osprey Camera, supports park projects and events, hosts special events and sponsors the Bike Barn/Park Pedalers Program.

The Friends of Holts Landing State Park

Dedicated to the preservation and constant improvement of a natural resource treasure. Members help maintain the park, conduct trail maintenance and coordinate the park's Summer Concert Series.

The Friends of Killens Pond State Park

Maintains the trails and gardens, supports the Summer Concert Series and children's nature programs, and helps with park projects and special events.

The Friends of Lums Pond State Park

Raises funds and helps maintain the park.

The Friends of Old Dover

Sponsors the iconic Dover Days each spring and supports First State Heritage Park in Dover.

The Friends of White Clay Creek State Park

Staffs the nature center, monitors bluebird boxes, conducts trail maintenance, supports the Summer Concert Series, and provides fundraising and grant support to the park.

The Friends of Wilmington Parks

Coordinates the Summer Concert Series, hosts special events, raises funds and offers grant-writing support. They also sponsor and maintain the Jasper Crane Rose Garden and provide maintenance for Wilmington State Parks.

Trap Pond Partners

Sponsors an annual bike rally, supports the Summer Concert Series and bike rental program, writes grants and provides scholarships for environmental education. They also host special events and help fund projects around the park.

DNREC Friends Group Volunteer of the Year

The Friends of Wilmington State Parks were honored, along with many other volunteers, in April for their care of the Jasper Crane Rose Garden, a horticultural jewel of Brandywine Park that is frequented by thousands of visitors. FOWP employs a skilled rose gardener year-round to maintain the garden. The Rose Garden is enjoyed every June by friends group members and others at the Jasper Crane Rose Garden Party and is also a favorite location of local photographers.



Governor's 2021 Outstanding Volunteer Award

Ellen Muentzer, Friends of Wilmington Parks board member and Jasper Crane Rose Garden volunteer coordinator, was a recipient of the Governor's 2021 Outstanding Volunteer Award for her work to support several area nonprofits, including the Brandywine Zoo and the Friends of Wilmington State Parks.

FRIENDS GRANTS HIGHLIGHTS

The Friends of Auburn Heights were able to raise \$25,000 in Community Transportation Funds for museum improvements, \$10,000 from the Marshall-Reynolds Foundation for educational programming support and a \$15,400 Delaware Humanities CARES grant to support programming.

The Fort Miles Historical Association secured \$90,000 in state Grant-in-Aid, \$7,500 from the Delaware Community Foundation for repairs and a \$3,500 Delaware Humanities CARES grant for the Arizona Exhibit.



The Friends of Bellevue State Park advocated for and received \$2 million in funding through the Bond and Capital Improvements Act, known as the Bond Bill. The grant was added to the funding for necessary improvements to several areas of the park, including the Figure 8 roof and parking lot, the Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse, Bellevue track, signage and the maintenance pole shed.

The Friends of Wilmington State Parks received \$22,000 in Grant-in-Aid funds for general operations, projects and maintenance, along with another \$1,700 from the state for the WSP Summer Concert Series. They also received \$2,100 from the Delaware Community Foundation for the Jasper Crane Rose Garden, \$600 from the Wilmington Trail Club and \$2,000 from other donors.

The Delaware Zoological Society received \$124,600 from the Delaware Community Foundation for operations, \$25,000 from Chichester duPont for virtual programming, \$76,879 in relief funding for salaries and general operations, \$10,000 from Grant-in-Aid and \$2,500 in other donations.

The Trap Pond Partners received a \$10,000 tree planting grant for the park and trees were planted in four areas: the campground, Cypress Point, picnic area and the primitive youth camping area.

FRIENDS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Museum Addition

Friends of Auburn Heights

Working with the division, the Friends of Auburn Heights fundraised and constructed a museum addition that improves the space for exhibiting the collection and adds a bathroom facility, along with improved interior and exterior space and design.

Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse Restoration

Friends of Bellevue State Parks

Working with the Friends of Bellevue, the division completed the restoration of the Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse exterior including removing the addition on the back of the existing structure, roof repair, and repointing and stabilizing the structure. The division and friends groups are in the process of restoring the interior and developing interpretive plans.



Tower 3 Renovation and Rehab

Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation and Fort Miles Historical Association

Working with the Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation and the Fort Miles Historical Association, the division is renovating and rehabbing Tower 3 in Delaware Seashore State Park. The work completed to this point includes lighting the tower at night, cleaning the exterior and interior of the tower, excavating down to the door opening, adding a ramp and new door to allow access and replacing the windows on the bottom level. The next phase is under construction and includes interior stairs and access to the top for a first-class view.

Brandywine Zoo Front Entrance

Delaware Zoological Society

The Delaware Zoological Society, in partnership with the division, has fundraised for the planning and construction documents for a new front entrance. The Society has embarked on a capital campaign to fundraise the necessary money for the next phase of construction.

Fitness Station Upgrades at Brandywine Creek

Friends of Wilmington State Parks

The Friends of Wilmington State Parks funded four new fitness stations placed in Brandywine Park to upgrade and improve existing stations.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with local and national businesses, government and nonprofit groups enable the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation to offer additional services and programs, enriching the visitor experience. It is also one of the ways Delaware State Parks fulfills its mission.

512th Airlift Wing

The 512th Airlift Wing of the Dover Air Force Base partners with the division for an annual gathering at Trap Pond State Park, during which members and their families enjoyed fellowship, lunch and water-based activities like kayaking, canoeing and pontoon boat tours. The events are coordinated with the help of Ray Bivens, division director, and a 512th Airlift Wing honorary commander, as a way to integrate members of the military into the civilian life while outside in peaceful nature.

Center for Inland Bays (CIB)

The Center for Inland Bays, located within Delaware Seashore State Park, conducts an Oyster Recycling Program in partnership with the division. The CIB acquires oyster shells from local restaurants to support the program.

Delaware Division of the Arts

The division received a special project grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts to present new artists, programming and performances in the parks in summer and fall 2021. The funding largely included artists who were scheduled in 2020 but not able to perform due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Delaware River and Bay Authority

Each year, the division partners with the Delaware River and Bay Authority to offer accessible transportation for visitors to Fort Delaware State Park from Delaware City via the Delafort ferry. Additionally, evening sunset boat cruises around Pea Patch Island were added.



First State Heritage Park

The First State Heritage Park at Dover is Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries" linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. It is a partnership of Delaware's Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Delaware Public Archives and other state and city agencies, under the leadership of the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation.

Minority Engineering Regional Incentive Training (MERIT)

The Minority Engineering Regional Incentive Training program, which helps minority students prepare for careers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics, utilizes Delaware State Parks for programs and gatherings.

Sports partners

Delaware State Parks trails serve most of the high school cross country meets in Delaware. White Clay Creek State Park is also the home course for the University of Delaware cross-country team. Killens Pond State Park is the home course for five high schools and averages two dual meets per week from September through November. In 2021, Brandywine Creek State Park served as the course for the Henlopen Conference Championship. Bellevue, Brandywine Creek and Trap Pond state parks also serve as home courses for local cross country teams. Delaware State Parks also provides home courses and fields for high school, college and league teams to play soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, tennis, softball, baseball, flag football and ultimate Frisbee.



Story Walks

DNREC partnered with the Delaware Department of Education, the Delaware Division of Libraries, Syncretic Press and First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney, honorary chair of the Delaware Library Card Campaign to place bilingual Story Walks in each county – At Wilmington, Killens Pond and Trap Pond state parks.

Sussex County Habitat for Humanity

The division partnered with Sussex County Habitat for Humanity to provide campsites for Care-A-Vanners from Habitat for Humanity International at Trap Pond State Park in Laurel. Each spring, Care-A-Vanners spend two weeks volunteering on housing projects in Sussex County.

University of Delaware

The division worked with the University of Delaware Head Start program to remove barriers to Delaware State Parks access for underserved families. Families were able to complete the Annual Park Pass Assistance Program application as part of their ongoing work with the Head Start program rather than visiting a state service center to obtain the pass.

The Urban Wildlife Information Network

The Brandywine Zoo partners with the Lincoln Park Zoo's Urban Wildlife Institute to conduct passive monitoring of wildlife within the State of Delaware as part of the Urban Wildlife Information Network (UWIN), a collaborative group of cities working on urban wildlife projects across North America. The Brandywine Zoo was the first organization on the East Coast partnered with the UWIN to focus specifically on monitoring green spaces inside and outside of Wilmington at field sites along an urban to rural gradient.

ADVISORY COUNCILS

PARKS AND RECREATION COUNCIL

The Parks and Recreation Council serves in an advisory capacity to the director of the Division of Parks and Recreation. The council considers matters related to the planning, acquisition, development, management, conservation, and programming of lands and services. The council may also study, research, plan and advise the director, DNREC secretary and the governor on matters it deems appropriate to enable the division to function in the best manner possible.

Ronald A. Breeding, Chair

Joseph D. Smack, Vice Chair
Brenda Bramble
Isaac Daniel
Janice Durham
Gregory Johnson
Ed Lewandowski
Linda Parkowski
Clyde Shipman III
Bobbi Steele
Jim White



Jan Durham speaks on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Council

OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

The Open Space Council advises the DNREC secretary on matters relating to the administration, implementation and financing of this protection program, site selection, methods of protection, and interagency and intergovernmental coordination among public and private land preservation agencies.

John R. Schroeder, Chair

Paul Boswell
Rep. Gerald L. Brady
Dennis Coker
Sen. Bruce C. Ennis
Lorraine M. Fleming
Dean Holden
David Humes
David Sheppard

Open Space Ex-Officio Members

Michael Scuse, secretary, DDA
Jeffrey Bullock, secretary, DOS
Raymond Bivens, state liaison officer for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund

COUNCIL ON GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

The Council on Greenways and Trails is an advisory group to the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation. A major council role is to promote and encourage the development and use of trails and the protection of greenway conservation corridors. The Council may participate in venues to promote active and healthy lifestyles.



John Martin – Acting Chair

Charles Emerson
Mack Cochran
Laura Johnson
Gary Kirk
Jeanne Rapley
Lauri Webber
Stewart Crouch

Legislative Members

Rep. Franklin Cooke
Rep. Krista Griffith
Rep. Bryan Shupe

Agency Members

Raymond E. Bivens, DNREC
Betsy Gant, Historic and Cultural Affairs
Elizabeth Keller, director of the Delaware Tourism Office
Jimmy Kroon, agriculture
Todd Pryor, transportation



NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The governor-appointed Delaware Natural Areas Advisory Council advises the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control on the administration of nature preserves and the preservation of natural areas. The council includes members of the public, private educational organizations, conservation organizations and industry leaders active in environmental matters, among others.

Debbie Heaton, Chair

James White Jr., vice-chair
Richard Bergold
Dr. Christopher Heckscher
Edward Lewandowski
Theodore Palmer
John Williams, Esq.



THINGS WE DO

PRESERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

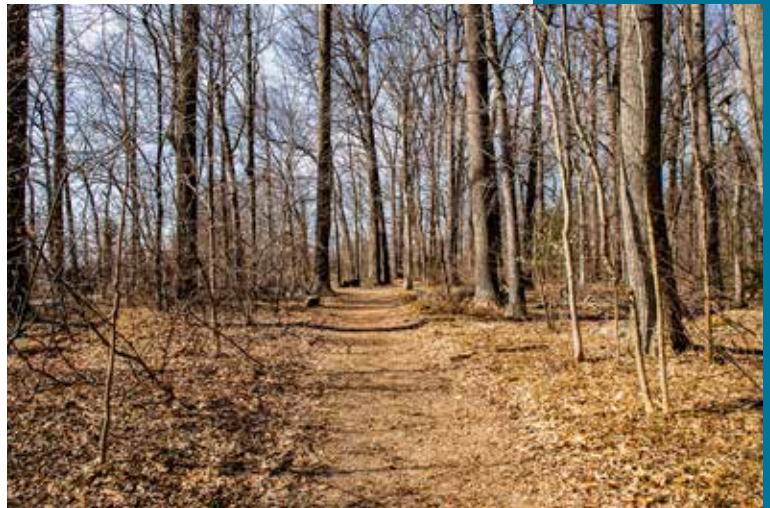
Open Space Program

The Open Space Program coordinates acquisitions for four state land management divisions: the DNREC Divisions of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife, The Delaware Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the Department of State Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs.

Since the Open Space law was passed in 1990, the Open Space Program has more than doubled the amount of acres preserved by these four divisions, adding 64,612 acres to state parks and preserves, fish and wildlife areas, state forests and cultural resource sites.

In calendar year 2021, 811 acres of land were preserved, including:

- 9.39 acres: Assawoman Wildlife Area
- 200 acres: Augustine Wildlife Area
- 1.5 acres: Cape Henlopen State Park
- 271.39 acres: Cedar Swamp Wildlife Area
- 118.43 acres: Eagles Nest Wildlife Area
- 3.37 acres: Little Creek Wildlife Area
- 28 acres: Mispillion Harbor Reserve
- 54.384 acres: Norman G. Wilder Wildlife Area
- 152.44 acres: Conservation Easements



Office of Nature Preserves

In 2021, the Office of Nature Preserves (ONP) worked to dedicate four additions to the state's nature preserve network upon recommendations made from the Natural Areas Advisory Council. In New Castle County, 6.08 acres were added to the Flint Woods Nature Preserve, which will create a more efficient parking area for the hunters who heavily utilize the preserve.

In Kent County, the ONP worked with the Division of Fish and Wildlife to dedicate the Gray Farm as an addition to the Murderkill River Nature Preserve. This 232.975-acre tract of land, part of the Milford Neck Wildlife Area, already has an established hunting program and will continue to be enjoyed by those with a Division of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Pass.

In collaboration with DelDOT, 42.47 acres were added to the Doe Bridge Nature Preserve in Sussex County to preserve wetlands. George Wayne Jagers of Laurel worked with the Open Space Program to place a Conservation Easement on his land, an inholding for the James Branch Nature Preserve. Mr. Jagers opted to honor his beloved late wife and memorialize her name, with the dedication of the Dorothy L. Jagers Tract of the James Branch Nature Preserve.

In 2021, 292 acres of land were added to the state's nature preserves, including:

- 42.27 acres: Doe Bridge Nature Preserve Sheep Pen Tracts
- 6.08 acres: Flint Woods Nature Preserve Maroney Property
- 232.975 acres: Murderkill River Nature Preserve Gray Farm Tract
- 10.6 acres: James Branch Nature Preserve Dorothy L. Jagers Tract

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The division's Environmental Stewardship Program (ESP) protects natural resources within Delaware State Parks through a variety of specialties including natural resource planning, hunting, nuisance wildlife management, habitat management and restoration, reforestation, meadow management and invasive species control.

Rare Birds in State Parks

While 2020 brought about sightings of rare birds in state parks, including two black-throated gray warblers, a Townsend's solitaire, brown booby, snowy owl and harlequin ducks, 2021 opened with sightings of a western tanager at the point parking lot at Cape Henlopen State Park. This is only the third record for Delaware and the second for Delaware State Parks. Dovekies, a tiny seabird related to the puffin, was seen in unusual numbers along the coast of Delaware with several sightings at Indian River Inlet at Delaware Seashore State Park and at the fishing pier at Cape Henlopen between late December 2020 and mid-February 2021. While seeing a single bird close to shore is noteworthy, as many as five birds were seen at a time on several days through the winter. A snowy owl was seen sporadically at Cape Henlopen State late winter of 2021.



Archery at Holts Landing

At Holts Landing State Park, hunting rules were revised because of the new boardwalk and loop trail and increased park visitation as a result. An archery zone was established, which can only be hunted by a single hunter in the southern part of the old archery only hunting area. In the northern portion of the previous archery-only hunting area, hunting is now restricted to three newly installed accessible deer stands. A tag board was installed on the trailhead kiosk at the intersection of the Seahorse Trail and the road to the primitive youth camp.

Invasive Species Management

Invasive species management and habitat restoration in Delaware State Parks and its nature preserves is the primary focus of the Environmental Stewardship Program. ESP staff continued to treat a wide range of non-native invasive species throughout the state park system in 2021.

Tree of Heaven Control

ESP staff continued to search for and control tree of heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, the primary host of the invasive spotted lanternfly throughout Delaware State Parks, in an effort to remove as many of these invasive trees as possible. Tree of heaven is present in all Delaware State Parks and the ESP team continues to work toward complete removal of this widespread invasive species.

Basketgrass at Disc Golf Courses

While treating the invasive Japanese stilt grass at Trap Pond State Park over the summer, ESP staff discovered and removed wavyleaf basketgrass near one of the baskets on the disc golf course. Staff quickly conducted surveys on all state park disc golf courses, except at Cape Henlopen where the habitat is not suitable for this invasive plant. A small population of basketgrass was discovered and removed at Lums Pond State Park. No basketgrass was found at the courses at Brandywine Creek, White Clay Creek, Bellevue or Killens Pond state parks. Because many disc golfers who play at Delaware courses also traverse through Maryland, where basketgrass has been known to spread, ESP staff added state park disc golf courses to the network of state park trails that are monitored for basketgrass from becoming established in state park natural areas.



Basketgrass

Diamondback Terrapin Fence Replacement Project

After two decades in the harsh salt air of the Delaware seashore, the 1.8 miles of terrapin fence at Delaware Seashore State Park was removed and replaced. ESP and Veterans Corps staff assisted the DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship Shoreline and Waterway Management staff to install brand new cedar posts and sand fence in March. In May, before the start of the terrapin nesting season, ESP and Vet Corps staff completed the new fence by installing silt fabric on the fence to make it a more effective barrier.



Removal of tree of heaven near White Clay Creek State Park



PROTECT AND SERVE

Nearly 8 million people visit the state's 17 parks each year, and it is up to the division's 26 full-time Natural Resource Police officers to help ensure that everyone's visit is enjoyable and safe.

The DNREC Natural Resources Police were able to add two additional park ranger positions to help with the increasing complexity of investigations. Two officers were promoted to detectives – one in the northern region and one in the southern region and will provide patrol support when they are not conducting criminal investigations. Park Patrol officers worked a total of 56,224 hours in 2021.

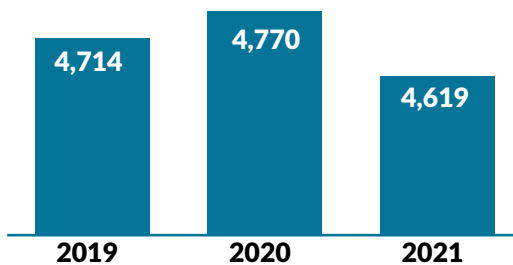
PARK RANGERS

Park rangers combine duties in law enforcement and protection of Delaware's natural resources and environment. **Twenty-six** full-time Delaware State Park rangers handled more than **4,600** complaints in 2021. That breaks down to **approximately 177** complaints per ranger. The ratio of park rangers to state park visitors in 2021 was **1 to 304,819**. The ratio of park rangers to acres of managed land is **1** park ranger for every **1,023** acres of land managed.

Statewide the rangers handled calls for service ranging from park regulation violations, traffic and criminal offenses, surf fishing violations, motor vehicle collisions, medical emergencies, lost or missing person(s)/children and ensuring visitors were abiding by Gov. John Carney's Executive Orders relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 279 tickets and more than 275 written warnings were issued for various surf fishing violations.

COMPLAINT COMPARISON 2019-2021



Highlights from 2021 include:

The DNREC Natural Resources Police continued to assist the U.S. Secret Service when President Joe Biden returned to Delaware to his Wilmington or Rehoboth residences. Brandywine Creek and Cape Henlopen state parks have provided landing space for Marine One, the presidential helicopter.

BEACH PATROL

The division employed 68 ocean lifeguards along beaches at Cape Henlopen, Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island state parks. The Division of Parks and Recreation remains a desired employer for lifeguards. The Delaware State Parks Beach Patrol includes members of all ages and backgrounds.

Of the 24 hired rookies, 12 lifeguards finished training and remained throughout the summer.

THE NUMBERS

115 water rescues and 304 assists at the beach parks

35 major and 293 minor first aid administrations

63 missing persons, generally children that were missing and found then reunited with their families

SURF FISHING PERMITS

After unprecedented winter 2020-2021 sales, the 17,000 cap on Delaware surf fishing permits was reached March 3, three months earlier than in 2020. The cap was first placed on surf fishing permits in 2019 to manage a limited resource and protect against overcrowding of parks beaches. Before the cap was implemented, surf fishing permit sales were increasing at an unsustainable pace.

In response to the overwhelming interest in permits, Gov. John Carney issued the eighth modification to the COVID-19 emergency order on March 29 to direct DNREC to issue up to 1,000 additional one-year surf fishing permits for 2021. Interested anglers first had to acquire a special voucher on April 14, which were available on a first-come, first-served basis at six parks: Cape Henlopen, Brandywine Creek, Delaware Seashore, Trap Pond, Killens Pond and Lums Pond. Vehicles began to line up outside of parks at 10 p.m. the night before to get in line.

In addition to the limited voucher-issued surf fishing permits, DNREC launched an off-peak surf fishing permit pilot program starting late May. The off-peak permits allowed anglers to drive-on surf fish at Delaware State Parks beaches any day except summer weekends and holidays. These special permits were due to 2021's unprecedented sales and the need to allow more anglers and beach users to safely social distance during the COVID-19.

"I was at the beach sitting near lifeguard station #3 with my young grandsons on July 3 and 4. It was impressive to observe Eric Barnes and Noah Tuohey as both young men were very watchful over the ocean waters. There were at least four occasions where these guards were very quick to "jump in" to rescue young swimmers who had ventured out too far. I felt the need to compliment these, and the other guards who ran to the stands as backup as required. This young crew is helping to reassure trust in the youth of America. Keep up the good work!"

– Susan Rice,
Ocean View



PROGRAMMING BY THE NUMBERS

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- **80,912** people visited state park nature centers at **11** different parks.
- **39,186** members of the general public attended **3,143** programs.
- **68.61%** percent of all state park general public programming was free.
- **99.3%** of participants surveyed reported enjoying the program they attended, and **98.2%** stated that they would attend another Delaware State Parks program.
- **17,225** people came out to enjoy **53** summer concerts at **6** different locations.
- **5** parks offered **182** public and private hayrides for **1,781** attendees.

EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE

- Park programs were delivered to school groups with **92** school programs educating **6,479** children.
- **657** Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts participated in **32** tailored programs.
- Nature-based experiences were provided through **74** state park day camps to **844** campers from ages 4 to 16 years.



VIRTUAL PROGRAMS AND ONLINE SPECIALTY ACTIVITIES

- Virtual programs were put on by **9** parks to allow for programs during the COVID-19 shutdown.
- **2.4%** of all programs were held virtually, and **12.24%** of all program attendance was virtual programming.
- Along with virtual programs, parks held online specialty programs on social media that reached almost **1.25** million people and had engagement from over **100,000** viewers.

Restrictions and closures due to COVID-19 continued into Fiscal Year 21 with the closure of nature/interpretive centers and museums from Dec. 14, 2020 to May 21, 2021; this greatly affected center visitation. Program attendance was also affected due to the closure, program restrictions and group size limitations. General public program attendance was down 47.76% from the previous year and the number of public programs were only reduced by 9.74%. Many programs were still held, but attendance was limited, in part due to size restrictions.

The full concert series returned in the summer of 2021, adding back Wilmington's Sugar Bowl series and concerts at White Clay Creek and Bellevue state parks; however, these larger concert series started late.

Summer camps in 2021 continued at reduced capacity, adding back Cape Henlopen and Trap Pond state parks while Killens Pond and Brandywine Creek state parks remained closed. Fewer hayrides were held with reduced capacity. School programs continued to be limited. During the winter closure, virtual programs (remote programs with counted attendance) and online specialty activities (self-guided activities, video series and special posts) increased.



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE FY2021

	Number of Programs	Number of Participants
General Public Programs	3,143	39,186
Nature Center/Historic Building Visitation	N/A	80,912
School Programs	92	6,479
Summer Day Camps	74	844
Summer Concerts	53	17,225
Scout Programs	32	657
Private Programs	103	848
FY 2021 Totals: All program types	3,497	146,151

Not all categories are reported. Some programs such as scout and group programs may fall into multiple categories. Concerts and camps are reported on the calendar year instead of fiscal year.

HOW WE PAY FOR IT

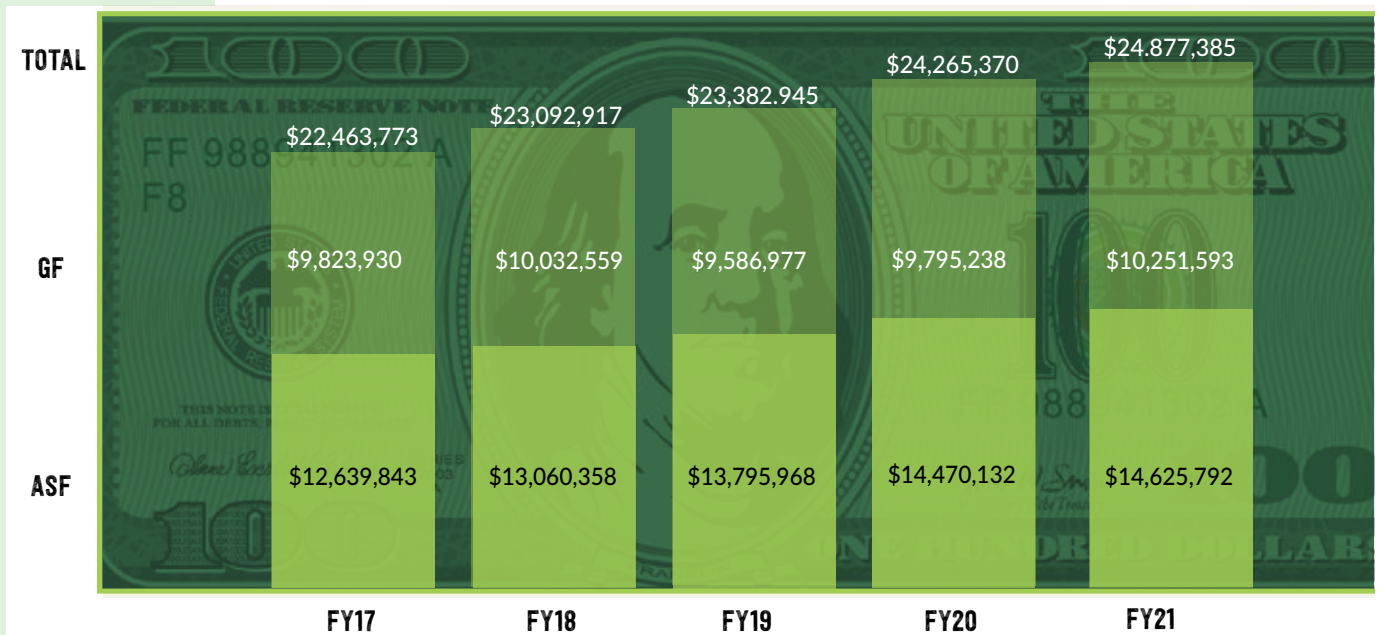
FUNDING THE PARKS

The division is primarily self-funded, with more than 70% of its funding coming from user fees, which is unique within Delaware state 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 the division's control. Those include:

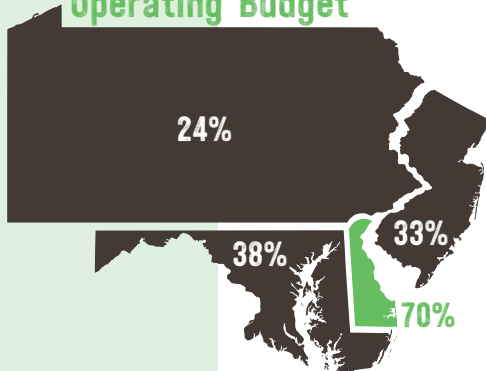
- Weather (rainy summer season, hurricanes, excessive heat)
- Gas prices and economic swings that affect the amount of discretionary money available to vacationers.
- Carrying capacity limitations at ocean parks and other large revenue-generating management units.

Fees and other revenue pay for annual increases in operating expenses and unfunded mandates. Operating expenses have remained stable for the last three years.

OPERATING EXPENSES: FY16 TO FY20



Self-Sufficient Operating Budget

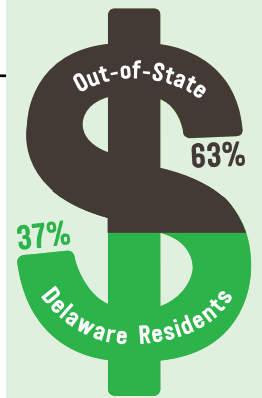
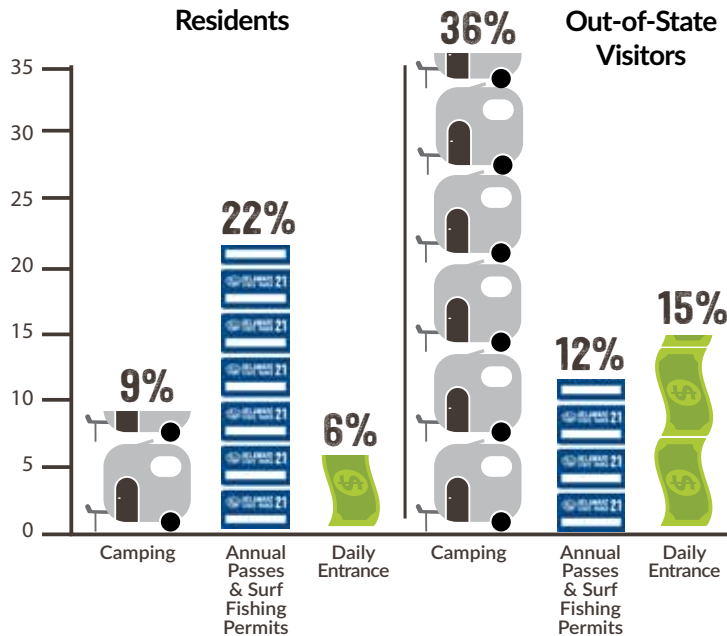


In Delaware, most of the funding for operating state parks comes from park-generated revenue such as camping, fees, passes and permits. Roughly 30% of park operating revenue funds come from the state budget. This is quite different from Delaware's neighboring states, which receive more of their states' general fund support.

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.

FY2021, revenue from park user fees totaled \$14,802,893

SOURCES OF REVENUE



63% of the revenue in 2021 came from out-of-state visitors to the parks.

Camping By The Numbers

- Camping generates: **45%** Park fee revenue
- **50,418** Reservations were made for Delaware State Parks campsites, cabins, yurts and cottages across the state in FY2021.

TAKING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH

In addition to fee revenue, the division utilizes innovative entrepreneurial sources of revenue.

Low-Digit Surf Tag Auction

Since the inception of the program, the division has sold **210** plates for a total of **\$564,601**.



Yurts, Cottages and Cabins

Yurts, cottages and cabins have proven to be in high demand. They had a **76%** occupancy rate for the year, with a **98%** occupancy rate during the peak season of Memorial Day through Labor Day.

State Park Concessions

Privately-owned concessionaries and partners run businesses and deliver services at the state park locations and paid **\$440,902** in negotiated fees back to the division. Services provided included head boat fishing, food service, horseback riding, non-motorized boat rentals, tennis, bait and tackle and a high-ropes adventure course.

The revenue from retail products increased in **calendar year** 2021, up 20% from **\$674,984** in 2020 to **\$812,066** in 2021. Some of the top-selling items included firewood, ice, food, clothing, stickers, handmade pottery, jewelry, collectibles and stuffed animals.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ADVANCES

The Division of Parks and Recreation established an entrepreneurial fund with \$300,000 in self-generated revenue. A list of revenue generating projects to potentially invest in are developed and funding allocated annually. The program requires that annual principal payments are made back to the entrepreneurial fund until the total amount invested is fully repaid, making it self-sustaining.

Examples include:

- Cape Henlopen State Park campground improvements, which included cabins, utilities and campground store enhancements. The division borrowed \$300,000, which was repaid in \$60,000 payments over a five-year term.
- Killens Pond Waterpark Phase 1 improvements, which included two new 54-foot speed slides and other enhancements. The division borrowed \$250,000, which was repaid in \$50,000 payments over a five-year term.

Corporate and Group Passes

The Corporate and Group Pass Program added eligibility to nonprofit groups this year and continued to grow in 2021, selling 2,629 annual passes and generating \$78,870 in revenue. Archmere Academy, Capital One, Delaware Electric Cooperative, Delaware Disc Golf Club, Delaware Nature Society and Pike Creek Valley Running Club participated in the program. The Corporate Pass Program also boosted interest in corporate volunteer projects in the parks.



Summer Concert Series Sponsorships

The 2021 Delaware State Parks Summer Concert Series included 19 musical performances and hosted 17,225 attendees. Due to COVID-19, summer concerts were canceled in June and limited in July and August. Sponsors for the 2021 series included the Delaware Office of Highway Safety, and friends groups including the Friends of Wilmington State Parks, Friends of Holts Landing State Park, Friends of Killens Pond State Park and Trap Pond Partners.

SMALL BUSINESSES AT THE PARKS

18 businesses served as concessionaires in the parks in 2020, providing food, experiences and rental equipment for park visitors.

Food Vendors

- Hammerheads Dockside
- Jay Vending Company
- The Big Chill

Service Providers

- Coastal Kayak
- Excellence Tennis Academy
- Forewinds Hospitality (Garrisons Lake and Deerfield Golf Courses)
- Go Ape High Ropes Aerial Adventure Course
- Hook'em & Cook'Em
- Jeffrey Miller Catering
- Kurtz Live Bait
- Lighthouse View Bait & Tackle
- Old Inlet Bait & Tackle
- Prime Hospitality
- ProTrade LLC

- Quest Kayak
- Summit North Marina
- Sunset Stables
- Wellspring Farm

Total gross revenue for these businesses was \$15.9 million in 2021.

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.

PROVIDING GRANTS

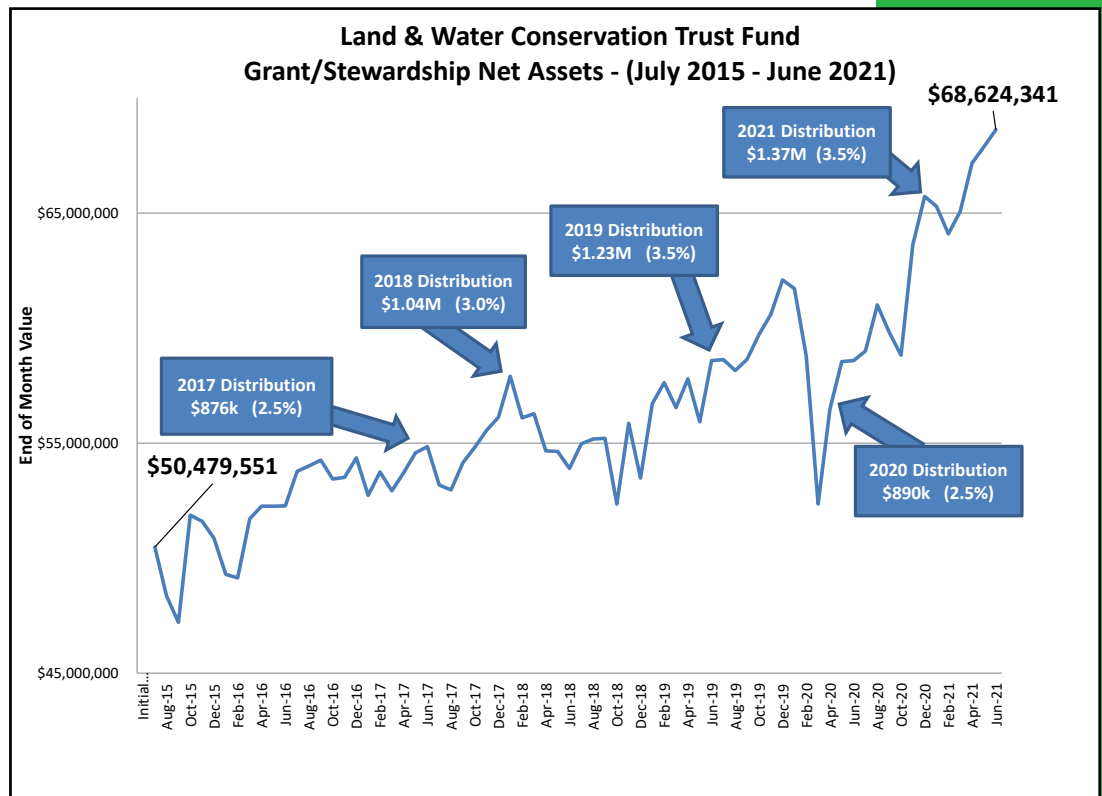
OUTDOOR RECREATION PARKS AND TRAILS PROGRAM

The division awarded more than \$1,359,000 in grants for 19 new parks and trail projects statewide through the Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails (ORPT) Program.

This program was established in 1986 to provide funding for parkland and greenway conservation and for outdoor recreation facility development. County and municipal governments and park districts are eligible to apply for matching financial assistance. Up to 50% funding is available for projects sponsored by municipalities or counties. Up to 75% funding is available for park districts, municipalities that have not received ORPT funds in the past and projects located in or serving Census Tracts identified as highest vulnerability by the CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI score range 0.75 – 1.00).



Changes to the grant program in 2021 included incentives for new sponsors to the grant program and equity considerations for outdoor recreation projects that serve census tracts with high social vulnerability, based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Vulnerability Index.



New Castle County:

- City of Newark: Develop Phase 3 design plan at Old Paper Mill Park: **\$62,500**
- City of Newark: Basketball court rehabilitation/resurfacing at Dickey Park: **\$30,000**
- City of Wilmington: Renovate the steel access ramp and restore the publicly accessible boardwalk that reaches out onto the Christina River (i.e., lighting, trees and accessibility) at Christina Park: **\$175,000**

Total: \$267,500

Kent County:

- Town of Wyoming: An inclusive, sensory playground and surfacing will be installed at the Wyoming Park: **\$150,000**
- Kent County: Underground irrigation, design and installation for three softball, two soccer and one multi-purpose field at Browns Branch County Park: **\$80,000**
- Town of Smyrna: Restroom replacement at George C. Wright Jr. Municipal Park: **\$125,000**
- City of Dover: Continue Splash/Spray Pad installation at Dover Park: **\$142,000**
- City of Dover: Park and Playground Improvements in Mary Street Park, Mayfair Park, Kirkwood Street Park, Dover Park and Silver Lake Park: **\$33,000**
- City of Milford: Design and build new playground and pickleball courts at Memorial Park: **\$175,000**
- Town of Bowers Beach: Provide a piling (mast) mounted with unique surveillance equipment at Watermans Park: **\$3,500**

Total: \$708,500

Sussex County:

- Town of Delmar: Replace existing fence and install new replacement playground equipment at West Delmar Tot Lot: **\$51,000**
- Town of Georgetown: Replace aging, antiquated playground and design a multi-age appropriate playground at the Richard Allen School: **\$15,000**
- Town of Laurel: "The Ramble" Phase 4: installation of a critical shade structure at Tidewater Park: **\$60,347**
- Sussex County: Outdoor recreation feasibility and planning study for a low impact recreation site that includes a parking lot, trails, picnic area and water access at Herring Creek Preserve: **\$17,000**
- Town of Millville: Install a poured in place rubber surface at swing set matching the pattern under the playground equipment at Evans Park: **\$29,259**
- Town of Bethany Beach: Design a public pedestrian nature-based pathway connecting neighborhoods to public spaces: **\$13,500**
- Town of Milton: Project Continuation: bulkhead repair, supporting the Governors' Walk Trail: **\$150,000**
- City of Seaford: Install a playground with security lighting at Nutter Park: **\$32,250**
- City of Seaford: Pier boardwalk replacement at the Riverwalk: **\$15,000**

Total: \$383,356

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Community Transportation funding is provided to Delaware legislators for projects within the community. The division obtained funding from:

Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf and Sen. Ernie Lopez contributed **\$24,000** in funding for installation of utilities and a shower facility at Herring Point in Cape Henlopen State Park.

Reps. Nnamdi Chukwuocha and Gerald Brady, and Sens. Sarah McBride and Darius Brown contributed a total of **\$90,000** to the Brandywine Zoo's new entrance planning, in addition to the **\$100,000** contributed by now retired Sen. McDowell in 2020.

Sussex County legislators including Reps. Peter C. Schwartzkopf, Bryan Shupe, Daniel Short, Timothy Dukes, Stephen Smyk, Jesse Vanderwende, Ronald Gray, Richard Collins, Ruth Briggs King and Sens. Gerald Hocker, David Wilson, Ernesto Lopez, Brian Pettyjohn and Bryant L. Richardson contributed **\$20,000** each to the restoration of Tower 3 in Delaware Seashore State Park.

Rep. Brady contributed **\$25,000** to improvements for the Auburn Valley Steam Museum.

MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

REDUCTION IN GENERAL FUND SUPPORT

Since 2010, the DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation has seen its general operating funding support decline by 12%, requiring management to come up with new ways to fund the state park system. At the same time, the division has experienced an increase in expenses, visitors and responsibilities. Over the last decade, the division has continued to find creative ways to meet visitor demand and expectation.

2010	2021	% Change
General Fund Support		
11,636,000	\$10,251,593	-12%
Total Expenses		
19,551,818	\$24,877,385	+27%

CARRYING CAPACITY

Why is this an issue?

In 2021, Delaware State Parks saw capacity issues like never before at Lums Pond, Trap Pond, White Clay Creek and Killens Pond in addition to normal beach capacity issues at Delaware Seashore, Cape Henlopen and Fenwick Island state parks, which regularly fill their parking capacity and are forced to turn vehicles away most summer weekends. Campground nights booked grew by 117% from 70,880 nights in 2012 to 153,582 nights in 2021. Because they are in the park 24 hours a day, campers utilize more park resources than daily visitors. The dramatic increase in camping requires more staffing to support the growth.

MORE VISITORS, FEWER FULL-TIME STAFF

Why is this an issue?

Park visitation has grown to 7,925,295 visitors annually, an increase of 3,135,515 visitors since 2010. That is a 65% increase in visitors. During that same period, the division has experienced an 11% decrease in its full-time staff. Increasingly, Delaware State Parks are being used by schools, nonprofits and other organizations to hold special events such as 5Ks, half marathons, and special days of respite and recreation for organizations such as Special Olympics Delaware. These visitors rely upon park staff to ensure events run smoothly and everyone enjoys a safe, fun-filled day in Delaware State Parks.

2010	2021	% Change
Number of Full-Time Employees		
184	166	-11%
Number of Park Visitors		
4,789,780	7,925,295	+65%

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Why is this an issue?

The division has more than \$200 million in capital backlog across all 17 state parks, nature preserves, the Brandywine Zoo, marinas and golf courses. Without investments, infrastructure will age well beyond its life expectancy.

2021 IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The following events occurred in the Operations Section and field offices due to of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic:

- All park offices within Delaware State Parks were closed from Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 2020, until Jan. 12, 2021, to coincide with a stay-at-home advisory from Gov. John Carney's latest to help limit the spread of COVID-19.
- In early January, air purifying units were put in all DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation offices to help keep staff safe as they interact with the public.
- On Jan. 12, field offices reopened to be able to sell passes and permits.
- A second round of air purifiers were made available for maintenance shops and interpretive centers in late March.
- Playgrounds opened in Delaware State Parks on March 29, roughly one year after being closed.
- In mid-April, in-person programming restarted beginning with outdoor programs with 10 or fewer participants.
- Staff-led volunteer opportunities began again in mid-April. This started with outdoor only, with groups of no more than 10 volunteers at one location, with one staff lead. Staff were only able to lead two groups per week.
- Work-Based Learning also resumed in April and ran with limited capacity through mid-June.
- In May and June, indoor and outdoor programming increased both in number and in size of participants. Nature centers, interpretive centers and museums also reopened. Staff-led volunteer groups were again allowed to meet indoors with up to 20 volunteers.
- On June 7, park offices returned to their standard 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. operating hours.
- All seasonal park housing was restricted in 2020 and again in 2021 to one staff member per room. Due to the housing constraints, the Environmental Stewardship Program had a single three-member intern team working in the northern region over the summer.
- The Marketing team continued to distribute information and updates about COVID-19, including social distancing precautions, masks and safety regulations on social media, and the Creative Services team continued to produce COVID-19 safety signs, banners and materials.
- Fiscal Year 2021 retail revenue bounced back from seeing a reduction in Fiscal Year 2020 due to COVID-19 and exceeded the revenue received in Fiscal Year 2019 by 18%.
- Fort Delaware State Park had 9,208 visitors, compared to 3,750 in 2020 and 14,202 in 2019. Visitation in 2020 and 2021 was heavily affected by COVID-19 closures; the 2020 season was cut short, and youth and group visits were down during 2021. Both in 2020 and 2021, Fort Delaware was open three days a week.



LOOKING AHEAD

THE 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

A five-year Strategic Plan was introduced as a framework to guide core priorities and goals leading up to the Division of Parks and Recreation's 75th anniversary.

The plan calls for:

- 75,000 trees planted in parks
- 750 acres of new park land, conservation easements or nature preserves protected
- 75 new/improved campsites, cabins, cottages or yurts
- 75 new accessible amenities, including boat ramps, hunting stands, hay wagons, pavilions, campsites, etc.
- \$7.5 million in grants and partnership funding to support free park-based field trips, community recreational improvements and cultural/natural resource stewardship efforts statewide
- \$75,000 in grants and partnership funding to support internships in natural and cultural resources
- \$7,500,000 annual investment toward addressing capital backlog and improvements

The plan also details strategies to:

- Promote excellence in our workforce through training, open communications with staff, and mentoring and shadowing opportunities
- Develop programs that highlight our parks' themes and create a working group to help ensure all visitors and staff feel safe, welcomed and valued
- Continue to improve capital and partnerships and develop a deep connection to our resources



INFO BY PARK

*"Nature can win if we
give her a chance."*

— Jane Goodall



▶ 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 natural rock wall, 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 and a unique event space.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Journey through mature forest and blue granite cliffs along the Northern Delaware Greenway Trail to experience Delaware’s only natural rock-climbing wall and the Blue Ball Barn.

ALAPOCAS RUN

at a Glance

-  **359**
Acres
-  **6.5**
Miles of trails
-  **150,130**
Visitors
-  **5/24**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **1,437.25**
Volunteer hours
-  **91/5,073**
Programs/Participants
-  **5/32**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The former New Castle County maintenance building and shop yard were converted into a Camp and Recreation Center for day camps, public programs, school groups and associated storage. The location allows easy access to the only publicly accessible rock climbing wall in Delaware and will provide close shelter.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In partnership with the Delaware Division of the Arts and several other partners, Alapocas Run State Park hosted a reception for the grand opening of two new Folk Art exhibits at the Blue Ball Barn: “These Ties That Bind: Community Values in Folk Art” and “Visions and Vistas: Exhibiting Delaware’s Collective Memory” with both new and old pieces from the Delaware State Parks Folk Art Collection.



Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *Repair or replace Bancroft Bridge*
Estimated cost: \$1.5 million
- *Alapocas Woods waterfall bridge stone walls stabilization* Estimated cost: \$250,000
- *Electric and restroom for the Bancroft Mills Pavilion* Estimated cost: \$200,000

For the sixth year, history and beer united at the Blue Ball Barn for a “Brewing, an Intrepid Profession” event that featured Delaware beer historian John Medkeff and a panel of guests who discussed how brewers have overcome obstacles in the past and present. Fifteen breweries, cideries and meaderies provided samples of their products under the tent in the courtyard. Heat lamps and bonfires warmed the participants as they enjoyed the evening, while Wildwich Sandwiches provided tasty eats.

The Blue Ball Barn showcased a solo exhibition featuring the work of the late Louis Strauss, whose surrealist collages utilize parts of vintage watches and sewing machines, along with jewelry pieces, metal scraps and more.

In 2021, Alapocas Run hosted eight teams across a variety of sports including rugby, ultimate frisbee, flag football, soccer, lacrosse and running. The teams utilized the park for 125 practices, 399 games and three tournaments.

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS



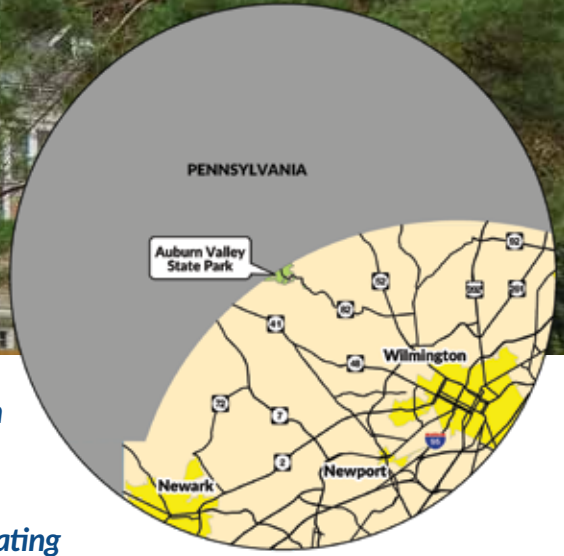
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints completed 626 hours of service at Alapocas Run to remove invasive plants, weed, cut back trails, clean up after storm damage, pick up trash and mulch the Can-Do Playground. For their efforts, they received a Governor’s Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for a Volunteer Group.

With assistance from his father, two scout leaders and a fellow scout, Eagle Scout William Worrall installed 12 Bluebird Boxes in Alapocas Run after a months-long process of planning, approvals, resource management and carpentry. The houses are now monitored as part of a volunteer program.

In late October, four eighth-grade biology classes from Wilmington Friends School completed 147 hours of service at the park.



AUBURN VALLEY STATE PARK



Auburn Valley State Park 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 that encircles the property. The collection of Stanley Steamer cars in the museum is the largest operating collection in the world.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Appreciate the beauty of Auburn Valley by exploring Red Clay Creek. Discover the role of water in the industrial development of Yorklyn and the revitalization of this community. Step back in time to the magic age of steam with a vintage steam car ride or on a miniature steam railway or take a tour of the Marshall Estate.

AUBURN VALLEY

at a Glance

-  **471.72**
Acres
-  **4**
Miles of trails
-  **17,958**
Visitors
-  **4/8**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
-  **5,209**
Volunteer hours
-  **102/2,221**
Programs/Participants

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Farmlane Bridge at Auburn Valley was installed, making this the second of three historic bridges constructed on the property. The bridge allows for improved access for residents and park users.

The rose arbor, which was in disrepair, was rebuilt in its original 1920's style through a collaborative effort between park staff and the Friends of Auburn Heights.



After multiple service calls to fix the 13-year-old gate operator, it was decided to upgrade to new technology. A new gate was installed that features a cell phone app to open and close the gate, and program codes.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *New NVF sewer pump station and force main. Estimated cost: \$3.8 million*
- *Repairs and renovations to the Marshall Mansion. Estimated cost: \$1 million*
- *Construction of new pump station adjacent to the papermill for the museum and mansion complex, Estimated cost: \$350,000*
- *Construction of a new maintenance building. Estimated cost: \$250,000*



Friends of
Auburn Heights Preserve Inc.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Yorklyn Day, a community event put together through a collaboration of the park, Friends of Auburn Heights and the Center for Creative Arts, featured its usual Steamin' Day, with multiple vendors along park trails, music performances at CCArts and a dance performance from the Hindu Temple.



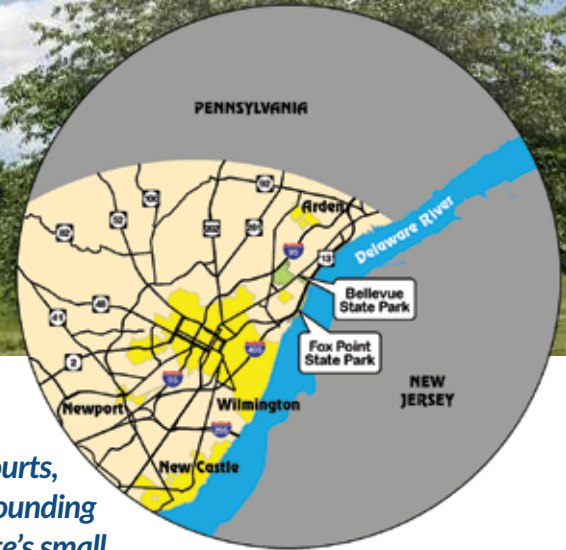
EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Friends of Auburn Valley held a successful Train Day event in May and completed a trial run with portable gauge G/1 steam trains. The Friends launched popular Model T driving lessons in June, which attracted new members with its unique and personal experience that was well received.

Eagle Scout Ryan Balu built a bridge across the millrace spillway for staff to access and maintain the otherwise inaccessible area next to the papermill.



BELLEVUE AND FOX POINT STATE PARKS



Bellevue State Park was once an elegant estate belonging to the prominent DuPont family. The park features Bellevue Hall, tennis courts, horseback riding stables, gardens and a 11.5-mile fitness track surrounding a picturesque pond. Visitors can stroll the grounds, explore the estate's small arboretum, enjoy a summer concert or escape the hustle and bustle of Wilmington.

Fox Point State Park gives the entire family a relaxing place to stroll, picnic or watch the boats go by on the Delaware River. Families can enjoy horseshoe pits, the volleyball court and a children's play area. The park serves as the most northern park of the 90-mile-long Coastal Heritage Greenway. The greenway stretches south to Cape Henlopen State Park and highlights Delaware's natural, cultural and recreational diversity.

BELLEVUE/FOX POINT

at a Glance



331.02/93.35
Acres



10.30/2.29
Miles of trails (Including Fox Point)



441,039
Visitors



9/64
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff



3,759
Volunteer hours



138/7.759
Programs/Participants



20/266
Day Camps/Campers



7/6,200
Concerts/Attendees

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Escape into the DuPont's tranquil life of leisure. Stroll the paths of this elegant DuPont estate, visiting Bellevue Hall, the tennis and equestrian facilities, natural areas, the pond and racetrack.

Waterways and railroads are still relevant at Fox Point State Park. See working rail lines and deep-water shipping at this sprawling recreational site along the Delaware River.



INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Bellevue State Park Improvements

Jeffrey Miller Catering at Bellevue State Park continued to restore and renovate Bellevue Hall and the Cauffiel property. Improvements to the mansion include hallway, kitchen, electric, plumbing and air conditioning, while the Cauffiel Barn received roof repairs and improvements were made to the Cauffiel Tower roof and siding.

Wellspring Farm, an equestrian concessionaire in Bellevue State Park, paid and installed new LED light fixtures to the exterior of that facility for improved safety.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

Bellevue State Park

- Mount Pleasant School House interior rehabilitation. Estimated cost: \$750,000
- Percheron Barn structural and roof repairs. Estimated cost: \$235,000
- Figure 8 Barn roof repair and replacement. Estimated cost: \$600,000
- Track grading and resurfacing. Estimated cost: \$850,000

Fox Point State Park

- Phase 2 of road and parking area paving. Estimated cost: \$750,000
- Repairs to parking lot lights. Estimated cost: \$75,000
- BioSun bathroom replacement. Estimated cost: \$75,000

Maintenance staff made several other improvements including installation of an iron ranger in the music garden to collect Friends of Bellevue State Park donations, installation of memorial benches and trees, and placement of stone along the cross country course.

Fox Point State Park Improvements

The restrooms were upgraded at Fox Point.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Bellevue State Park hosted several events such as the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Delaware walk, and the Hoy En DE Hispanic Festival that featured local artists and vendors, live music and cultural performances. The park also saw the return of the The Grand's Drive-In Cinema, which was created as a safe way to recreate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bellevue State Park also hosted several high school cross country meets, weekly matches through the Tennis Center, a Faithful Friends 5K, Wellspring Staples' horse show and the Trilogy Challenge Disc Golf Tournament.

At Fox Point State Park, Autism Delaware hosted its 15th Annual Walk for Autism.

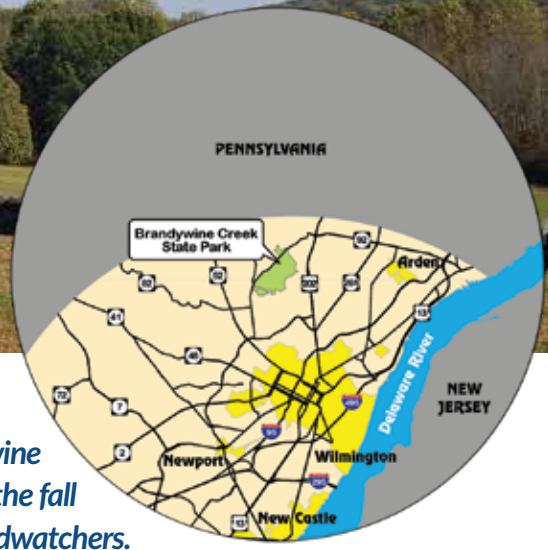
EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends of Bellevue State Park had a beer garden and food trucks to raise funds during the Summer Concert Series events. In addition to raising significant capital for the park, They also landscaped around the Mount Pleasant Meeting House and Parsonage, participated with division staff in the Claymont Christmas Parade and purchased disc golf baskets.



Girl Scout Troop 457 rehabbed the pollinator garden behind the Art Center for a Bronze Metal awardable project.

▶ BRANDYWINE CREEK STATE PARK



Brandywine Creek State Park is home to many different habitats, including rolling hills, meadows and the forested banks of the 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 leisure summertime canoe or tubing trips down the creek.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

The stone wall and rolling hills at Hawk Watch Overlook provide a stunning backdrop for soaring birds, majestic sunsets and man's indelible impact on the natural world.

Enter Tulip Tree Nature Preserve, Delaware's first nature preserve, and hike among 200 year old Tulip Poplar giants, discover the "Hidden Pond" vernal pool and listen to the babbling of the Brandywine Creek.

Enjoy the tranquility of the Brandywine Valley while floating down Brandywine Creek, hiking Rocky Run Trail's bed of blue granite from Thompson Bridge to Rocky Run Bridge or quietly fish the creek's edge.

BRANDYWINE CREEK

at a Glance

-  **951.33**
Acres
-  **18.09**
Miles of trails
-  **156,890**
Visitors
-  **5/32**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
-  **2,388**
Volunteer hours
-  **69/405**
Programs/Participants

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IIN THE PARK

Park staff upgraded aging and out-of-compliance power poles and electrical service lines leading into the maintenance area. This project will help reduce the amount of power outages that occur in that area.

The entrance fee booth was removed in anticipation of future entranceway changes. Parkeon automated fee collection stations were installed throughout the park several years ago, reducing the need for the booth.

Park staff completed major repairs to fallen sections of the historic dry-stacked stone walls as part of a multi-year project that began in 2017.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *Pave and fix erosion on existing stone trails. Estimated cost: \$500,000*
- *Historic barn structural stabilization and roof repairs. Estimated cost: \$250,000*
- *Add parking area and path to Wilson Run Bridge. Estimated cost: \$150,000*
- *Redesign and retrofit of composting toilets at Thompson's Bridge. Estimated cost: \$250,000*



SPECIAL EVENTS

Brandywine Creek held its first Enchanted Meadows Trick or Treating event in October, with volunteers dressed as storybook characters to meet trick-or-treaters. Brandywine Creek staff worked hard creating backgrounds, setting up the trail and carving pumpkins and staff from throughout the state assisted to help the event run successfully.

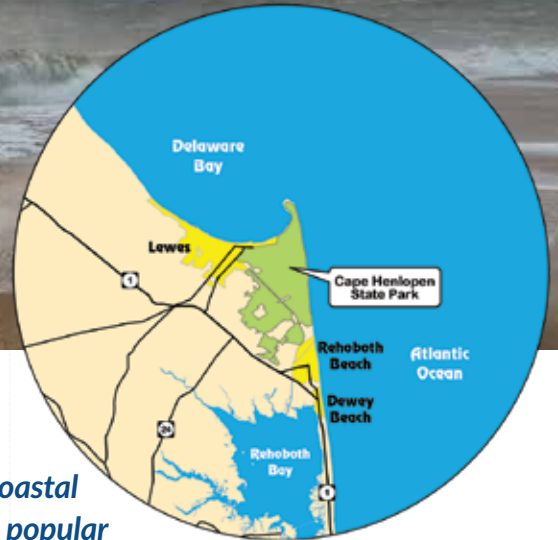
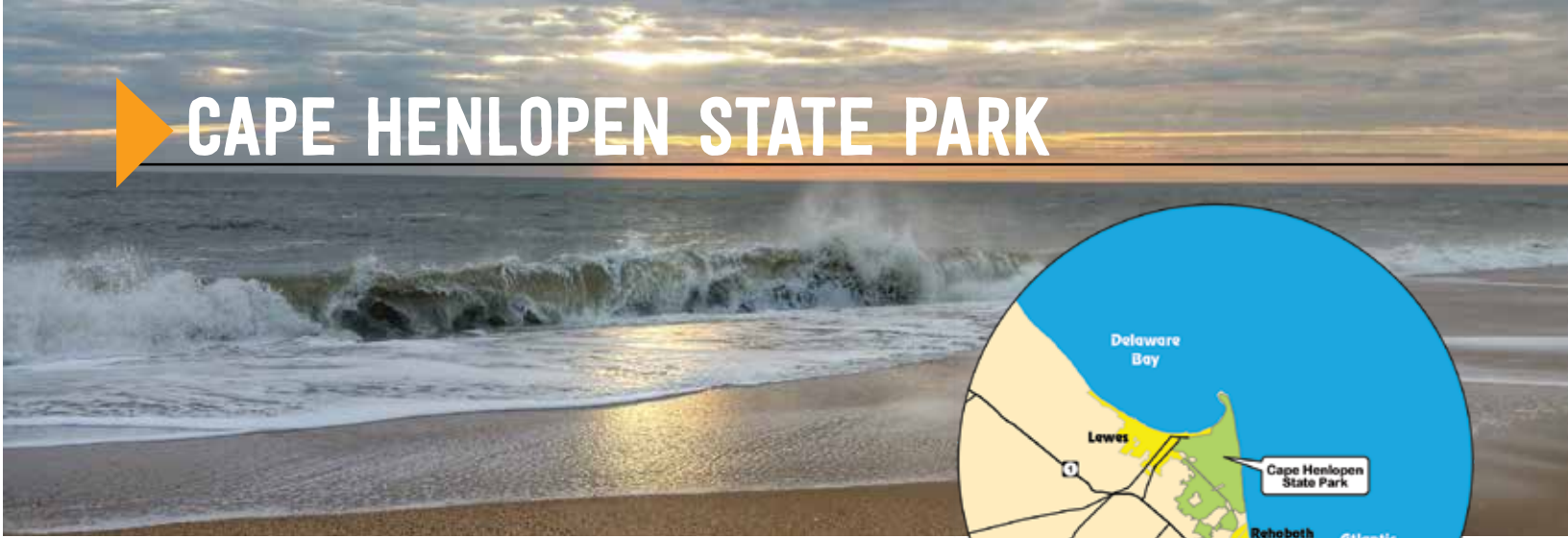
The DIAA Cross Country Championships were held in November and, for the first time, gates to the 1,500-vehicle parking field had to be closed after reaching carrying capacity.

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends of Brandywine Creek State Park continued to support educational programming through funding school field trips. The group raised money for the effort by selling food and drinks at both the Salesianum Cross Country Invitational and the DIAA Cross Country State Championships.



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 plus houses saltwater aquaria and a gift shop.

CAPE HENLOPEN

at a Glance



5,450.81
Acres



21.96
Miles of trails



175
Campsites



1,748,109
Visitors



19/100
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff



24
Lifeguards



27,273
Volunteer hours



777/1,383
Programs/Participants



9/88
Day Camps/Campers

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Discover Cape Henlopen's military history with a guided tour of the Fort Miles Museum and Historic Area.

Experience the park's recreational opportunities from the fishing pier to Gordons Pond by fishing, hiking, paddling, swimming and surfing along the bay and ocean coast.

Gain a new perspective of the park's natural and cultural landscapes by visiting overlooks at The Point, Herring Point, the Great Dune at Battery 519 and Tower 7.

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK



The Cape Henlopen fishing pier is a World War II structure that requires regular repairs to the pilings to maintain its safety and integrity. The pier has an annual evaluation and repairs are done prior to each operating season as needed. In 2021, repairs were made to 25 pilings to improve their strength and safety.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *Coordination of sewer plant replacement and upgrades with the City of Lewes. Estimated cost: \$5.5 million*
- *Biden Environmental Education Training Center renovations. Estimated cost: \$12 million*
- *Main Beach bathhouse parking lot resurfacing. Estimated cost: \$1.7 million*

Planning began for a new park office at Cape Henlopen to handle the demand of sales, parking and staff offices. The improvements also include trail connectivity and improved traffic patterns around the entrance/exit of the park.

In partnership with the Fort Miles Historical Association and the Fort Miles Museum Board, the division began to plan the design and interpretive elements for Battery 519 and the Visitor Center associated with the Fort Miles Museum and Historic Area.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Fort Miles Museum new exhibit, "Oil Still Bleeds: A Relic and Remembrances of the Battleship USS Arizona," opened in September. This multi-sensory exhibit combines audio, video, text and two interactive touchscreen kiosks, all centered around a piece of the Arizona itself. Visitors will discover the history of Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the effect it had on Delawareans throughout the country.



The park hosted multiple sporting events, including the Mid-Atlantic Field Hockey Camp for its 44th Year, the 48th Annual Wilmington Rugby Athletic Cup Tournament, the Beth Coleman Ultimate Frisbee Fundraiser, the Special Olympics Family Fishing Day and CHSP Youth Fishing Tournament at the pier, the CoDel Running Fest, the Rehoboth Seashore Marathon, Seashore Striders Youth Cross Country, Fusion Lacrosse and the Sea Witch Half Marathon.

After being canceled in 2020, the Delaware Autism event returned to Cape Henlopen in 2021 with food trucks, vendors, a DJ, bounce house and a large tent.



EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends of Cape Henlopen supported the park through monthly trail days, the popular Borrow-a-Bike program, their annual Flea Market, the campground Little Library and by assisting at events year round. They also supported the Natural Resources Police enforcement staff by purchasing an all-terrain vehicle, and providing bicycle tune-ups and nine cameras to help combat vandalism.



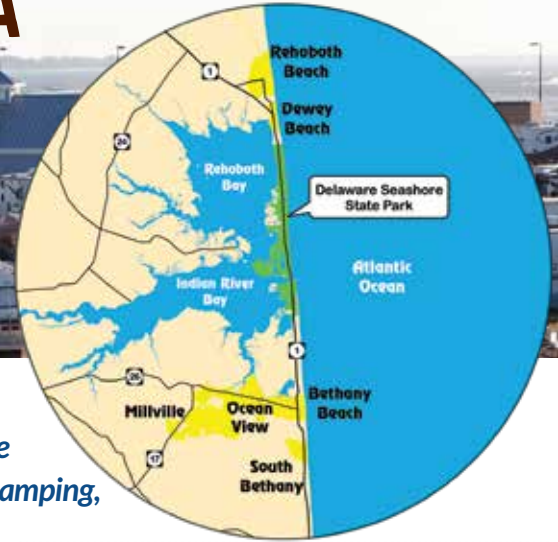
The Fort Miles Historical Association hosted a successful Delaware Defense Day with approximately 1,400 attendees. They also completed several projects, including updates to the 519 Battery north wing exhibit, part of the south wing updates and the Arizona artifact exhibit.

"My family visited Cape Henlopen for a few days last week. We bought a three-day pass and explored multiple parts of the park. We loved how clean and beautiful the park was and all it had to offer. We were amazed at the free bike program and how nature and history are mixed together almost perfectly. We're looking forward to visiting again soon."

- Rob McCarry, Virginia



DELAWARE SEASHORE STATE PARK AND INDIAN RIVER MARINA



Delaware Seashore State Park borders the Atlantic Ocean and Delaware's inland bays with six miles of coastal shoreline. 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

-  **2,722.87**
Acres
-  **10.33**
Miles of trails
-  **347**
Campsites
-  **12**
Cottages
-  **1,717,385**
Visitors (including IRLSS)
-  **17/92**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff*
-  **28**
Lifeguards
-  **4,374**
Volunteer hours
-  **162/2,971**
Programs/Participants
-  **194/154**
Marina Wet Slips/Dry Storage

* The casual/seasonal staff number does not include the lifeguards.

Conveniently located on the north side of the Indian River Inlet, the Indian River Marina is home to some of the finest fishing on the East Coast. Boaters and fishermen alike can enjoy this first-class, state-of-the-art facility with full service amenities and friendly staff.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES

Delaware Seashore

Hike over the Indian River Inlet Bridge and along the coastline to take in the sweeping vistas of the ocean and inland bays.

Tour the Indian River Life-Saving Station to learn about maritime heritage, the role of surfmen and the heroic rescues they performed.

Indian River Marina

Experience the sights and sounds of a bustling marina and enjoy fishing, dinner or a stroll along the water's edge as the sun sets over the inland bays.



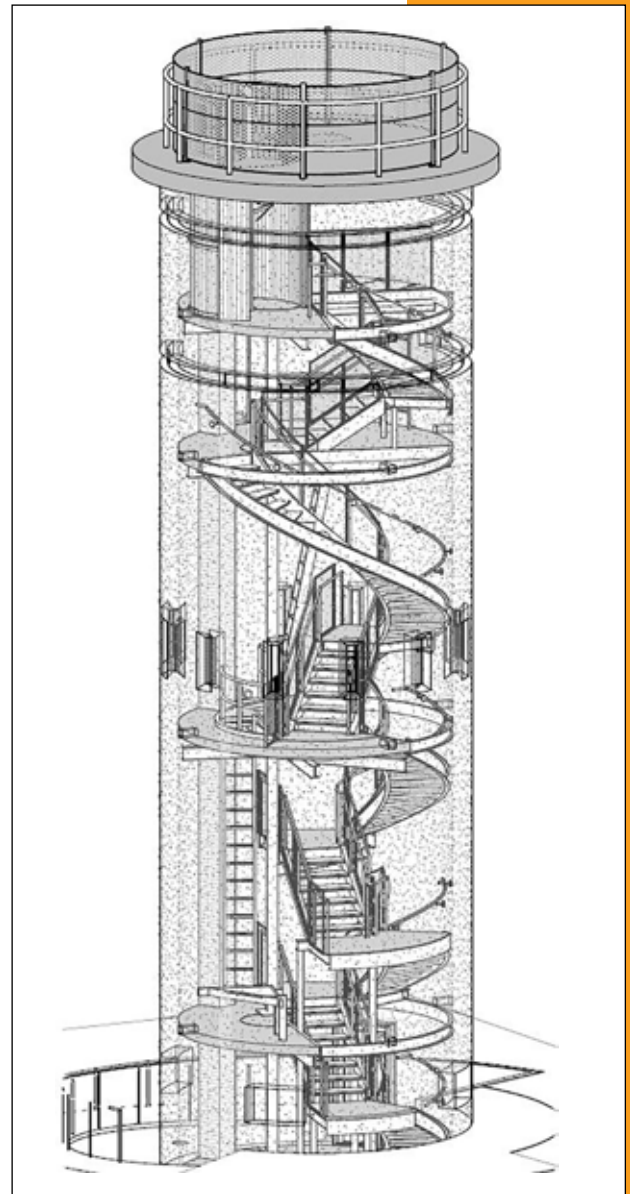
FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Delaware Seashore

In partnership with the Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation, Tower 3 in Delaware Seashore State Park is under rehabilitative construction to create access to its top. The project includes interpretive elements, rehabilitation of interior elements and new stairs to access the top.

The bowing railing at the Thompson Island Preserve Trail foot bridge was repaired.



"I have been a boater most of my life and the Indian River Marina is among the best run and maintained facilities I have had the pleasure of using. Every employee with whom I interfaced was exceptional."

- Christopher Pisano, Milton

Indian River Marina Investments

Repairs were done to the drystack roof to carry over until a new roof is installed.

The cottages received repairs, including new back staircase railings, new seat covers and cushions for furniture, and stripping and resealing of fireplace tile.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

Delaware Seashore

- Address Tower Road day area parking lot draining and paving. Estimated cost: \$900,000
- New Road erosion repairs. Estimated cost: \$250,000
- Thompson Island stabilization. Estimated cost: \$500,000

Indian River Marina

- Replace dry stack roof and exterior skin. Estimated cost: \$1.3 million
- Piling sandblast, seal and pile jackets. Estimated cost: \$800,000
- Move fuel dock to resolve fueling and maintenance concerns. Estimated cost: \$300,000



Harry Aiken memorial bench and wayside.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Delaware Seashore

A small ceremony was held in July on the southside of the Indian River Inlet to honor local legendary surf fishing figure Harry Aiken, who started surf fishing in the 1940s with his father, with a bench and interpretive wayside acknowledging the history of surf fishing at DSSP.

The Treasuring Our Coastal Heritages Art Exhibit opened in October with an evening of food, folk art and culture at the Indian River Life-Saving Station. Participants honored Delaware's maritime culture through art created by surfmen, Coast Guardsmen and local artisans, while enjoying dishes inspired by Delaware's coastal heritage.

The park hosted several sporting events, including the Believe in Tomorrow 5K at the inlet, the Dewey Beach Sprint Triathlon at Towers Ocean and the Bethany Beach First Responders Sports Weekend.

Indian River Marina

Indian River Marina hosted the Sixth Annual Kids Catch-all Fishing Tournament, which benefitted the Lyme Disease Association of Delmarva, in July with a high turnout and close to \$20,000 raised.

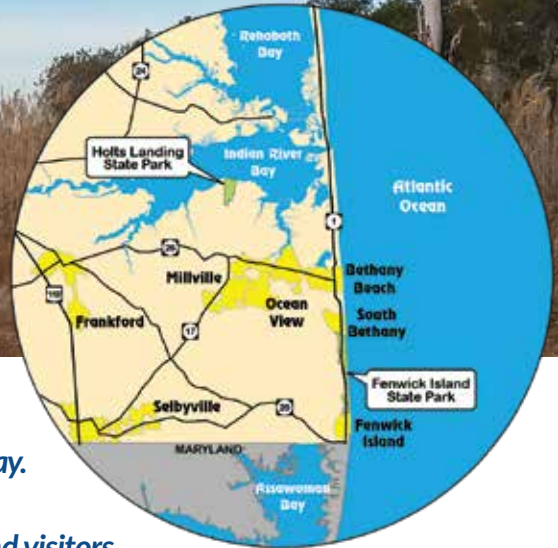
The Annual Slipholder Tuna Blast Tournament was also held at the marina in July with 29 boats participating, followed by an awards banquet.

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Indian River Marina continued its partnership with Hammerheads Dockside bar and restaurant.

Hook'em and Cook'em, the marina's bait and tackle shop, and all of the IRM fishing charter fleet, reported a record year for business and charters for the 2021 season.

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 is a great spot for fishing, hiking and picnicking.

FENWICK/HOLTS

at a Glance

- 
375.47/205.60
 Acres Fenwick/Holts
- 
.26/2.54
 Miles of trails at Fenwick/Holts
- 
3
 Youth group campsites
- 
291,831/14,417
 Visitors Fenwick/Holts
- 
0/40
 Full-Time/Casual Seasonal staff
- 
16
 Lifeguards
- 
1,086
 Volunteer hours - Holts
- 
12/118
 Programs/Participants - Holts
- 
8/1,214
 Concerts/Participants - Holts

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES

Fenwick Island

Take in the setting sun at the Assawoman Recreation Area as it dips below the undeveloped shoreline of the Little Assawoman Bay.

Swim, stroll, bask or play on the picturesque beaches of Fenwick Island for a true Delaware beach experience.

Holts Landing

Hike the shoreline and Sea Hawk Trail through the park's intertidal zone, salt marsh, maritime forest and borrow pits.



INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Fenwick Island State Park

New air compressors were purchased and placed at Fenwick Island State Park's three drive-on surf fishing crossing air stations along with new hoses and "air chucks" for the 2021 season.

As a low-cost way to come up with a plan to slow the blowing sands that cover the park's boardwalk, University of Delaware environmental engineering graduate students used Fenwick as a design, installation and project study of the unique dune environment. The students also installed data measuring instruments for future study of the movement of the dunes.



Investments in Holts Landing State Park

Due to the growing popularity of the Summer Concert Series, park staff relocated the stage to a larger area in the grove for more people to comfortably spread out. The move also eliminated the sun setting behind the stage, which made it difficult for guests to see performers.

Park staff made shingle repairs to the pavilion roof, which was damaged in winter storms.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

Fenwick Island State Park

- Parking lot expansion, amenity upgrades, drop-off for shuttles, bathroom renovations and secondary egress. Estimated Cost: \$10 million

Holts Landing State Park

- Relocate the kayak launch closer to the existing boat launch. Estimated cost: \$250,000
- Address staff housing. Estimated cost: \$300,000
- Addition of wildlife viewing platform. Estimated cost: \$330,000

SPECIAL EVENTS

Paddle Second Chance returned to Holts Landing State Park and partnered with Warrior Community Connect, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the resilience of Delaware wounded, ill or injured U.S. military veterans and their caregivers.



EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends of Holts Landing State Park reported record breaking attendance at the Summer Concert Series, and marked a successful trail season with a celebration for all the volunteers in May. The group also built and installed two new benches and brought all existing benches up to ADA standards.



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 visitors get a chance to learn about Delaware's capital-rich history.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE




Walk in the footsteps of Delaware's patriots with an interpreter in period clothing to experience the stories of Dover, capital city of the First State.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Victorian Picnic on The Green was held in June and was hugely successful, featuring a historically inspired picnic lunch under shady trees, a nine-piece brass band and popular Victorian lawn games. Park staff created several period-appropriate costumes for the event.

The park participated in Dover Comic Con, providing "True Crime: Walking Tour of The Green" and "Victorian Dover with the Caped Crusader" tours.

HERITAGE PARK at a Glance

-  **1,125***
Visitors
-  **11**
Historic Partner sites
-  **2/7**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
-  **601**
Volunteer hours
-  **233/607**
Programs/Participants

* The number of visitors to First State Heritage Park is based on estimates. First State Heritage Park has 11 partner sites and does not issue tickets or passes, admission is free.





The Green in Dover was swarmed by visitors in November with the return of Market Fair, in its 11th iteration. Visitors saw returning acts such as Signora Bella –The Great Italian Equilibrist and Doc Balthazar’s Traveling Miracle Medicine Show, vendors selling homemade baskets, art, 18th-century inspired clothing, breads and sweets. The park also welcomed some new faces and activities such as 18th-century cricket, carpentry and traditional oil painting.



EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the year, FSHP works with several community partners for volunteers, events and programming, including First State National Historical Park and the National Park Service, the Friends of Old Dover, the First State Club, the John Bell House, Delaware Public Archives, Old State House Museum, Biggs Museum of American Art, Johnson Victrola Museum, Legislative Hall, Woodburn and Hall House.

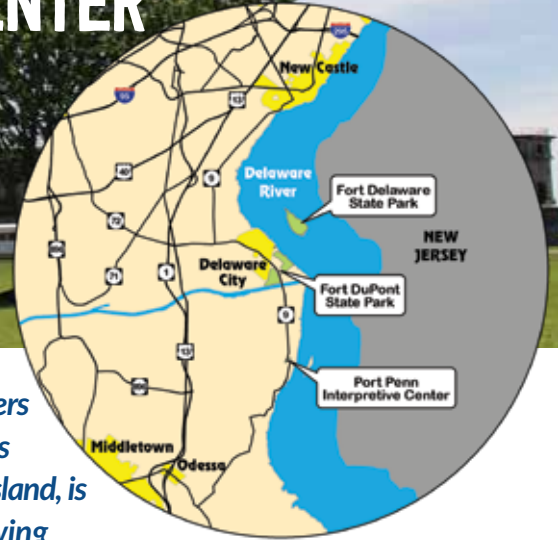
Partnerships of note for 2021 include the National Park Service, which FSHP assists with programming such as their Arts, Culture and Heritage (ArCH) days that went digital while the NPS joins the park for events like the Market Fair and Girl Scouts Love State Parks. The First State Club, comprised of students from Milford High School, assists with and creates programming for the park while also acting as volunteers for major events.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *Addition of public restroom and John Bell House storage. Estimated cost: \$200,000*
- *John Bell House internet access on second floor. Estimated cost: \$50,000*

FORT DELAWARE AND FORT DUPONT STATE PARKS PORT PENN INTERPRETIVE CENTER



Fort Delaware was used to house close to 33,000 Confederate prisoners of war 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 to defending our coast.

The Port Penn Interpretive Center in the village of Port Penn offers displays and programs about the historic wetland communities along the shores of the Delaware River. Programs and walking tours featuring the town and its scenic marshlands are available.

FORT DELAWARE/DUPONT

at a Glance



248.55/295.53
Acres Fort DE/Fort DuPont



.76/.85
Miles of trails Fort DE/Fort DuPont



9,769/6,806
Visitors Fort DE/Fort DuPont



3/44
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff



967
Volunteer hours



243/5,216
Programs/Participants

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Fort Delaware

Travel back to 1864 with a first person interpreter where you will experience life during the Civil War and the firing of a cannon from the 1850s. View the island from the fort's ramparts and visualize the complex of structures and 12,000 prisoners that once resided on the island.

As you travel from the ferry terminal to the dock on Pea Patch Island, observe the flight of herons, ibises and egrets to and from the heronry in Pea Patch Island Nature Preserve.

Fort Dupont

Walk south along the River View Trail past Batteries Read and Gibson. Stop at the point to consider the role of Fort DuPont as part of a three-fort system in the evolution of coastal defense.

Port Penn Interpretive Center

Walk the Port Penn Interpretive Trail and discover how people made a living from the natural resources of the Delaware River.

“My mother and I had a wonderful time [at Fort Delaware]. My mother is in a wheelchair, and everyone was so helpful. There was a gentleman who picked us up in a golf cart and brought us back to the ferry; he was extremely helpful and nice. Can't wait to go back again. Thank you!”

– Eileen Shelton

FY2021

FY2022 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARKS

Fort Delaware State Park Improvements

Fort Delaware State Park staff completed restoration of original windows, repointed brick work around the visitor center and repointed the archway over the tool room along with the rest of the granite around the room.

Fort Dupont State Park Improvements

At Fort Dupont State Park, renovations were made to two existing buildings for a new park office and repository. Another new building is being constructed to house the new maintenance shop.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- Fuel dock piling replacement and repair. Estimated cost: \$250,000
- Masonry repairs to the brick work throughout the historic fort. Estimated cost: \$12 million
- Mainland public dock piling evaluation and repair. Estimated cost: \$250,000



SPECIAL EVENTS

Fort Delaware held its first Escape Fort Delaware program of the season in August. 39 tickets were sold, with guests divided into 10 groups. Seven “escaped” by solving the tasks presented by the “guards.” The three remaining groups were

freed based on time served and enthusiasm during the event. The following event in September sold out with 50 participants.

Carson Hudson performed Civil War era songs at the Fort and the 3rd Regiment United States Colored Troops Reenactors delighted guests thanks to a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts.

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Fort Delaware Society provided new hats and leather cartridge boxes, cap pouches and buckles for the park interpreters. Members also assisted in living history demonstrations at Fort Delaware.

The Diamond State Ghost Investigators conducted paranormal tours for the Pea Patch Paranormal Adventure in October.

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. Wooded campgrounds, 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.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Journey along the pond's edge to experience the natural, historical and cultural stories that shape Killens Pond State Park.

KILLENS POND
at a Glance

-  **1,493.70**
Acres
-  **9.26**
Miles of trails
-  **87**
Campsites
-  **296,404**
Visitors
-  **1/144**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
-  **56**
Waterpark Lifeguards/Monitors
-  **7,241**
Volunteer hours
-  **128/1,609**
Programs/Participants
-  **7/782**
Concerts/Attendees

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Killens Pond Elevated Boardwalk opened to the public on Earth Day in April and allows users of the Killens Pond Loop Trail to walk across the pond rather than on the roadway. The walkway creates a safe and unique experience for walkers, bikers, joggers and anglers.



Park staff made several other improvements around the park, including installation of two new main pool pumps and renovations to the water park's family bathroom, plus HVAC in the Camp Store and all cabins.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- Boat ramp and parking relocation and improvements. Estimated cost: \$600,000
- Installation of a new water system including pole building to house tanks at campground. Estimated cost: \$400,000
- Add new dump station at the campground. Estimated cost: \$150,000

Sporting events at the park included the Lake Forest Cross Country Invitational Race, Kent County Cross Country Championship, Henlopen Conference Cross-Country Meet, Delaware Christian Academy 5K, Piggy Run 5K and the Reindeer Stampede 5K.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Two theme nights were hosted at the Killens Pond State Park Water Park.



EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2021, the Friends of Killens Pond maintained trails around the park along with gardens at the front entrance, park office and nature center and replaced 72 bluebird houses.



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 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.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Embrace the tranquility of the pond's edge, exploring its diverse habitats by foot, horseback, bike or boat.

LUMS POND at a Glance

- 1,789.53**
Acres
- 17.20**
Miles of trails
- 74**
Campsites
- 567,716**
Visitors
- 9/48**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
- 6,175**
Volunteer hours
- 64/753**
Programs/Participants
- 8/78**
Day Camps/Campers

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Area 1 parking lot at Lums Pond State Park was demolished and rebuilt with a proper base to eliminate cracking and potholes.

Park staff installed a partition wall and a sales counter at the Lums Pond Boat Rental kayak building.

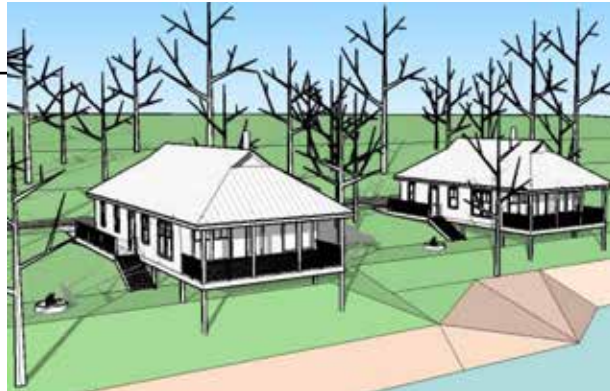
The Whale Wallow Loop was reconstructed with new decking over wet areas and Rocky Bluewinkle came to the park to test it out.



Critical

Capital Project Needs

- Replace existing docks at Lums Pond with aluminum docks and add a handicap accessible launch. Estimated cost: \$500,000
- Add new waterfront cabin complex. Estimated cost: \$8 million



SPECIAL EVENTS

The Wilmington Kennel Club partnered with the Penn Treaty and Mispillion Kennel clubs in April for the annual Dog Show and Agility Trials at the Lums Pond campground. The clubs booked every campsite for the well-advertised event. With the exception of 2020, the event has been held at the park every year since 1999.

The Delaware RC Club (radio controlled model airplanes) held a smaller version of their annual Warbirds over Delaware Event, which was scaled back due to the pandemic.

The Delaware Hospice held its annual Camp New Hope at the park in June for youth who have serious illness or family members with serious illnesses.

SPORTING EVENTS

The park was host to multiple leagues and events, including the Delaware United Cricket League, the Delaware Premier Cricket League, Delaware Sports League, Delaware Flag Football League, the Bear Triathlon, Mainly Marathons Independence Series 26.2 mile run/walk, Kinetic Multi-Sports Triathlon and the Bear Trail Running Race.

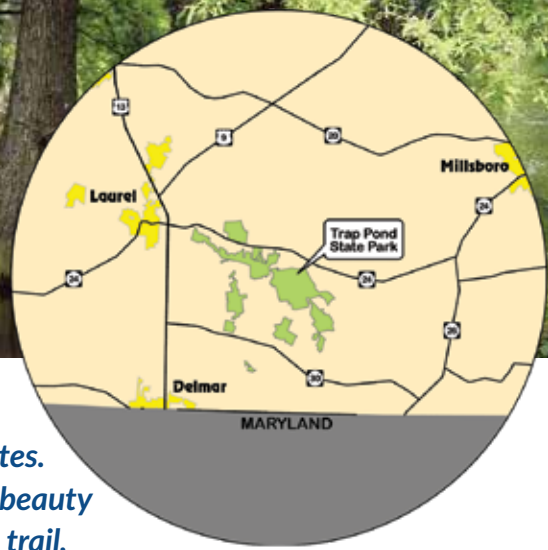
EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Go Ape treetop adventure course expanded to include a monkey drop that allows guests to free fall 40 feet.

Lums Pond State Park has continuous partnerships with organizations like the Delaware Disc Golf Association, the Friends of Lums Pond, the RC Flying Club, Warhay Farms and the Delaware Department of Correction.



▶ 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 United States. The park provides visitors with many opportunities to explore the beauty of the wetland forest and swamp while hiking, paddling the canoe trail, fishing, camping, birdwatching and stargazing.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Experience the solitude of the cypress swamp. Become immersed in the sights, sounds and smells of the pond and beyond.



TRAP POND at a Glance

-  **3,993.28**
Acres
-  **14.84**
Miles of trails
-  **146**
Campsites
-  **283,883**
Visitors
-  **7/40**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
-  **11,069**
Volunteer hours
-  **358/3,345**
Programs/Participants
-  **12/945**
Concerts/Attendees

FY2021

INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The division's trail crew resurfaced the entire length of the Bob Trail at Trap Pond, including areas of regrading.

Preliminary planning was completed for a spray park to allow Trap Pond visitors the opportunity to cool down in the summer months.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Delmarva Adult and Teen Challenge hosted their annual Crab Feast at Cypress Point.

The Becoming an Outdoors Woman program was hosted by the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife. Participants were able to experience kayaking, archery, fishing, tree identification and other useful outdoor skills.

The CHEER Center of Georgetown held its annual Fall Festival with dancing to DJ Sky Brady, bingo and good food.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- *Replace bathhouse and septic at Jason Beach. Cost Estimate: \$600,000*
- *Repair the lift station at the campground and recondition wet well. Cost Estimate: \$100,000*
- *Reroute the Bob Trail at Wootten Road with a boardwalk to provide a safe, fully off-road trail experience. Cost Estimate: \$250,000*



"Shout out to Bob White. From Monday to Thursday Bob, cleaned 30 toilets, five portable toilets, seven urinals, 24 sinks, 26 mirrors, 16 showers and 12 baby changing stations, mopped approximately 2,000 square feet and blew off approximately 2,000 square feet of sidewalk. Bob also picks up trash on 3 to 4 miles of roads, brushes down cobwebs and does other small cleaning jobs."

- The staff at Trap Pond

The Vintage Camping Weekend hosted several programs, including cart iron cooking and staff making, a fishing tournament, celebration of life and retirement party.



The Trap Pond State Park Campground hosted its 31st Annual Halloween Howl with site decorating, pumpkin carving and a group-themed costume contest.

The park was host to several sporting events, including seven cross country meets for Laurel High and Middle schools, which have established Trap Pond State Park as their home course, and the first Fast Cat agility course hosted by the American Kennel Club was held at the park.



Trap Pond Partners

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Trap Pond Partners hosted a fundraiser concert with a performance by Charlie and The Cool Tones which had a great turnout. Raffle tickets were sold, and lucky winners received either a cabin/camping stay at Trap Pond or a Sun Dolphin kayak and paddle.

The Delaware Museum of Natural History filmed a short video of park staff paddling through the park's bald cypress trees for display at the museum.

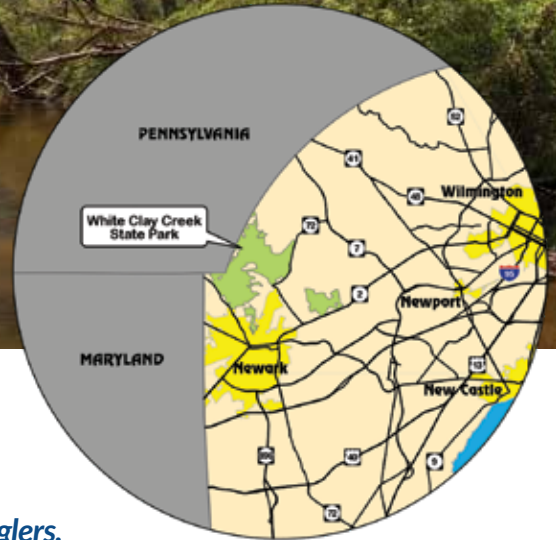
Eagle Scout Jack Jones installed a gaga ball pit by the campground pavilion and made a new camp store sign.

Boy Scout Troop 1 removed green briar and Japanese barberry by the Baldcypress Nature Center.

"I have been camping in state parks in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland, and now your state for the first time. The staff at the front office truly made me feel welcome beyond what words can explain. Not only the memories created by kayaking among the cypress trees and hiking the six mile loop trail, but the truly spectacular happy and helpful staff made this park into our Top 5 list of 'must do again.' "

- A Happy Camper

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.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Discover White Clay Creek's National Wild and Scenic Watershed by exploring the Chambers House area. Experience the watershed on trails that meander from the bank of the creek to scenic views of the valley.

WHITE CLAY CREEK at a Glance

- 3,559.31**
Acres
- 41.26**
Miles of trails
- 296,404**
Visitors
- 10/28**
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff
- 9,805**
Volunteer hours
- 119/9,252**
Programs/Participants
- 15/167**
Day Camps/Campers
- 7/6,585**
Concerts/Attendees

Explore the most diverse trail system in Delaware State Parks with scenic views, the Millstone Pond, Mason-Dixon marker and bridges spanning White Clay Creek.



INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Lighting was added to an area of the Pomeroy Trail for improved safety, several re-routes were completed and a section of the Wendell Castle Trail was repaired.

The park maintenance staff completed several projects, including new paint, a roof coating and repairs to the historic masonry at the Kranz Hill Farm barn and repairs to the Lamborn boathouse/milk house roofs.

The planning of a new nature center at White Clay has begun. The facility will allow for year-round programming, improved amenities, increased parking, and new interpretive elements to host school groups, camps and the public.

Critical

Capital Project Needs

- Nature Center bridge evaluation and replacement. Cost Estimate: \$275,000
- Replacement of barn roofs. Cost Estimate: \$250,000
- Robinson house upgrades for ADA and structural stability. Cost Estimate: \$100,000



SPECIAL EVENTS

At the Fall Fling event hosted by Friends of White Clay Creek State Park, the park held a roundtable discussion with the Robinson family as part of a 200-year anniversary celebration of the Chambers House Nature Center, which was their childhood home. The Robinsons shared stories of growing up with a dirt floor until they built the new house higher up, weekends playing in the creek and anecdotes about early residents of the area. The event also raised money for the friends group.

The park hosted a variety of cross country meetings, including the University of Delaware Cross Country Championships and Diamond State Conference High School Cross Country Championships.

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Judge Morris Estate property and habitat improvements were a partnership effort including Friends of White Clay Creek and the volunteer Environmental Stewardship team. The Friends successfully obtained grant funding to help pay for a new cedar shake roof on the house and outbuildings, as well as masonry repairs. They also helped fund the continued invasives removal and native planting campaign, including the popular estate pollinator garden. These improvements will also help to increase event revenue at the site which directly supports the historic preservation of the estate house.

The invasives volunteer group at White Clay Creek State Park dedicated 3,822 hours to replacing invasive flora with native species.



The Friends group was happy to restart its Summer Concerts Series in July, where they raised funds through 50:50 raffle tickets, a beer garden, food trucks and water ice.

Eagle Scout and White Clay revenue attendant Ian Moss completed his bench installation along the Tri-Valley Trail/Smith Mill Road. This makes two handicapped-accessible benches on this popular stretch of multi-use trail.

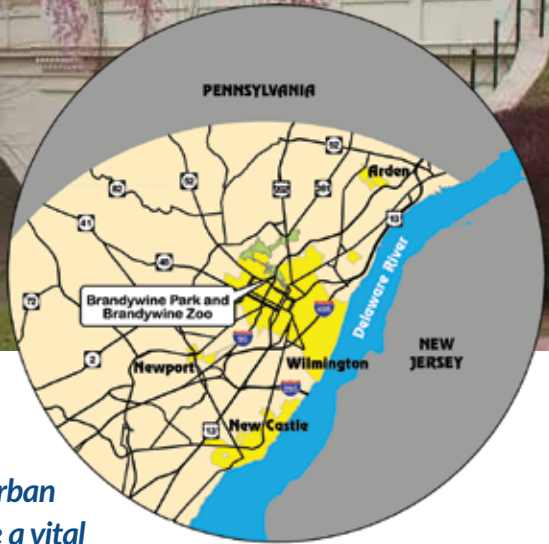


Bird Box volunteers, led by George Probst, installed, maintained and monitored the Park bird boxes. They had a successful year, counting 446 fledglings from 108 boxes.



The Tri-Valley Trail

WILMINGTON STATE PARKS BRANDYWINE ZOO



Wilmington State Parks is comprised of Brandywine, Rockford, H. Fletcher Brown and Kentmere Parkway, which embrace the rich history of Delaware’s largest city. The park areas have served as an urban retreat for Wilmington residents since 1883, and they continue to be a vital part of the city. On any given day, visitors of all ages participate in all types of recreational pursuits.

The Brandywine Zoo, along the Brandywine River in beautiful Brandywine Park in Wilmington, is home to birds, reptiles and mammals, including lemurs, condors, red pandas and the world’s largest rodent: the capybara. The zoo is managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation with the support of the Delaware Zoological Society. The zoo is one of more than 200 zoos and aquariums accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums in North America and Delaware’s only AZA-accredited zoo.

WILMINGTON STATE PARKS

at a Glance



ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Wilmington State Parks

Walking the river’s edge in Brandywine Park, adjacent to the Josephine Fountain, Brandywine Zoo, Swinging Bridge and Jasper Crane Rose Garden, witness the development of Wilmington State Parks as the recreational hub for the City of Wilmington.

Drive along Wilmington’s iconic streets to appreciate the cultural history preserved in Wilmington State Parks, stopping at the Sugar Bowl, H. Fletcher Brown Park, Rockford Park, and numerous memorials and sculptures throughout the city.



INVESTMENTS IN THE PARKS

Wilmington State Parks

Wall repairs were made at H. Fletcher Brown Park.

Brandywine Zoo

Stonework in the historic animal exhibits was pointed and stabilized.

Construction commenced for an animal support building that will provide improved space for veterinary care, quarantine and keeper space.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Wilmington State Parks

The Brandywine Festival of the Arts returned for its 60th anniversary after a COVID-19 hiatus with a two-day event that featured local and regional artists, food vendors and organizations.

Wilmington State Parks hosted 16 teams across a variety of sports including baseball, paddleball, racquetball, softball, soccer and tennis. The teams utilized the city parks for 204 practices, 227 games and two 14-week camps. Events at Abessinio Stadium began with a successful opening weekend and, throughout the fall season, hosted 18 football games and five soccer matches.

Brandywine Zoo

A Virtual Groundhog Day was offered in February, the zoo's first live program. The zoo had 65 registrations total. Almost all were school groups. More than 1,000 people participated. It was also featured on the news that day.

In September, the zoo welcomed the Madagascar Embassy Delegation as guests of honor at a VIP Reception. Delaware Zoological Society announced fundraising for additional projects, and thanked contributors who made the Madagascar Habitat possible, for which the zoo received a tribute from the Delaware House of Representatives. This was followed by a sold-out Lemurs & Lagers event, which featured food, drinks and live music.

BRANDYWINE ZOO

at a Glance



4.7
Acres



54
Species



46,019
Visitors



13/20
Full Time/Casual Seasonal staff



8,656
Volunteer hours



717/24,706
Programs/Participants



11/137
Day Camps/Campers



Critical

Capital Project Needs

Wilmington State Parks

- Renovation of H. Fletcher Brown Park concrete stairs and structures and redesign of existing park layout, pathways and access. Estimated cost: \$1.1 million
- Loring Avenue Phase 2 improvements of courts and accessible pathway. Estimated cost: \$250,000
- North Park Drive replacement of curb and walkway. Estimated cost: \$150,000
- Add steps connecting the Delaware Greenway to the Swinging Bridge. Estimated cost: \$200,000

Brandywine Zoo

- Historic bathrooms renovations and upgrades. Cost estimate: \$100,000
- Implementation of new entrance and flamingo exhibit. Cost estimate: \$5 million
- Replacement of failing wood "town house" enclosure structures and addition of new mesh. Cost estimate: \$150,000

EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Friends of Wilmington State Parks helped host the Summer Concert Series at Rockford Park and the Sugar Bowl, and also solicited financial support from community organizations and elected officials.



Members of local Rotary Clubs teamed up to mulch the Can-Do Playground in late October.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints completed 169 hours of service to remove invasive plants, weed, cut back trails, clean up after storm damage, pick up trash and help mulch the 18th Street Playground. For their efforts, they received a Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for a Volunteer Group.



The DZS saw a 55% increase in membership in 2021 over 2020, the highest membership since 2015.





Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Division of Parks & Recreation
89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901

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