



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

Community Conservation Partnerships Program

Grantee Communications Kit



Forbidden Drive Mt. Airy Avenue Trail Improvements

Funding assistance has been provided by the
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Recreation and Conservation
Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund



*DCNR-2024-Communications Kit
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Congratulations on your grant award!

Your grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is an outstanding achievement that should be shared with your community.

This kit provides tips for spreading the word about both your grant and your project. Inside this kit, you'll find:

- ✂ Grant requirements for acknowledging and involving DCNR in your promotions
- ✂ Advice on sharing your project through multiple methods including press releases, events, videos, and social media



Community build days are great ways to involve the public in your project and generate positive press.

You'll also find helpful links to more resources, such as:

- ✂ External resources for communication best practices
- ✂ A [speaker form](#) to request DCNR staff involvement in project events, like groundbreakings and ribbon-cuttings
- ✂ Template press releases for various phases of your project, including:
 1. [Grant award](#)
 2. [Groundbreaking](#)
 3. [Ribbon-cutting](#)

General Tips

- ✂ Share your project at each major stage. Park and recreation projects often take years. Sharing your progress helps assure the public that the project is advancing.
- ✂ Hold community events to celebrate project progress. Groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings are excellent opportunities to engage the press and show your community the work you're doing for them.
- ✂ Take pictures of your project at every phase. Before, during, and after photos are powerful tools that show the impact your work is having.

Acknowledging and Involving DCNR

As a recipient of DCNR funds, **you are required to acknowledge DCNR** when undertaking grant-supported projects. This acknowledgement may take several forms, depending on your project.

Signs

DCNR requires that a permanent sign be erected and maintained on all grant-funded project sites. See Article XVIII, “Acknowledgement of Assistance,” in your grant agreement for more information.

Logos, sign templates, and design specifications are all available in DCNR’s [Project Signage policy](#).

Publications

Any publication you create or contract to create about your grant project must include the following statement:

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program, {insert your funding source here, such as the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund}, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Example publications include print materials such as reports and brochures as well as digital content like webpages and videos.

Events

DCNR staff are available to take part in groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings. To request DCNR participation in your event, you should do the following:

1. [Contact your DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation regional advisor](#). Let them know about your event and the role you’d like DCNR to play in it.
2. Work with your regional advisor to complete the “DCNR Secretary’s Event Request” form. This form is available under “Project Resources” in the [DCNR Grants Customer Service Portal](#).
3. Email the completed form to your regional advisor **at least one month prior** to your event (**two months preferred**).
4. Your regional advisor will connect with DCNR staff to determine availability. Note that it may take a few weeks to receive confirmation of who from DCNR will be able to join your event.



An example project sign.

Media-Specific Tips and Resources

Press Releases

- ✍ Press releases are the basic way of communicating with traditional media outlets.
- ✍ Build and maintain a list of media contacts in your area. That way you can distribute press releases quickly. Local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations are good places to start.
- ✍ Address press releases to specific people. At news organizations, look for the “features,” “education,” or “assignment” editor.
- ✍ Newspapers often run press releases in their entirety, so include all relevant information: the who, what, when, where, and why of your project. Include quotes from relevant staff or local officials.
- ✍ Keep your press release short and to the point. Word count should be 250 – 500 words.
- ✍ Distribute press releases in the morning and not on Fridays. That gives reporters more time to work with your release to craft a story.
- ✍ Post your news release on your website and promote it via social media to expand its reach.



Think beyond traditional media. Reach out to project partners and local groups like tourism boards, friends groups, and chambers of commerce. These groups may share your press release through their social networks.

Getting Started with Press Releases

Unsure where to begin your press release, or how to format it? DCNR has created three template releases you can use as starting points.

Templates for grant awards, groundbreakings, and ribbon cuttings are all available through the “Project Resources” section in the [DCNR Grants Customer Service Portal](#).

Social Media

- ✂ Promote across several platforms. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram followers, for example, are often different people.
- ✂ Recycle content. Add photos to your press release to make a blog post. Promote the blog post in your organization's e-newsletter. Select a key sentence and picture to create a Facebook or Twitter post.
- ✂ Take advantage of services that let you draft and schedule posts in advance, such as Twitter's [TweetDeck tool](#).
- ✂ For more tips, check out this [social media article](#) from the National Recreation and Park Association.
- ✂ Background music can enhance videos and fill in gaps between speakers. [YouTube's free Audio Library](#) has thousands of background tracks that are copyright-safe.
- ✂ When posting videos online, pay careful attention to titles, keywords, and video descriptions. These tools help video services connect your videos to audiences.
- ✂ Caption your videos to make them more accessible. This [captioning resource](#) from the University of Washington provides links to several free captioning tools.
- ✂ For best results, use video editing software so you can trim clips, combine footage, and add voiceover and music.

Videos

- ✂ Plan ahead with video footage. Get before and after footage so the public can see the change your project has caused.
- ✂ Know what format you're shooting in. Although video services like YouTube are flexible, for best results you will typically want to shoot in "Full HD," or 1920x1080 pixels.
- ✂ Keep videos short: no more than three minutes.
- ✂ Make sure your video has clear audio. Record voiceover indoors rather than in the field if possible. Use a quality microphone.



Drone footage often works well for showing recreation and conservation projects. Consider adding drone footage to a promotional video or even creating a standalone drone flyover video. Ensure you have appropriate licenses and permissions to operate a drone before using one.

Events

- ✂ Events are great ways to thank the many contributors to your project. Invite relevant local and state officials, funders, and volunteers. Make sure invitees have plenty of notice, at least a month.
- ✂ Make sure you [contact your DCNR regional advisor](#) and complete the Secretary's Event Request form so DCNR staff are aware of your event.
- ✂ Have the event at the project site if possible. Plan for rain by using a tent, pavilion, or having a rain date.
- ✂ Linking your event to a broader story may help you get more attention. For example, consider holding your event on a relevant holiday like National Public Lands Day or a community anniversary.
- ✂ Develop an event schedule. A common schedule includes a welcome, dignitary speeches, recognition of contributors, groundbreaking/ribbon cutting, and closing remarks.



Plan ahead for any equipment purchases or rentals such as a podium or sound system. Don't forget large scissors for ribbon cuttings!

- ✂ Designate a “master of ceremonies” – someone whose job is to keep the event on track.
- ✂ Promote public events through social media, like a Facebook event page. Event pages allow the public to find out about your event, invite friends, and RSVP.
- ✂ Livestream your event. That way people who can't attend can still feel part of it.

Event Photo Tips

Event photos are great for future promotions on social media and in press releases. Here are some tips for taking better event photos:

- ✂ **Shoot in landscape** – It's easier to adapt for social media.
- ✂ **Put people in context** – Take crowd shots rather than tight ones of speakers at the podium. Make sure the location is clear in the background.
- ✂ **Take more than you need** – When the event's over, you can't shoot more pictures. It's better to have too many photos. That way you can sort through and find the best to share.