

# DCNR Accomplishments During the Wolf Administration

As Pennsylvania's leader and chief advocate for conservation and outdoor recreation, DCNR works to inspire people to value their natural resources, engage in conservation practices, and experience the outdoors.

Intentional actions are taken to make sure state parks and forests are accessible to all, to provide inclusive and equitable programs and services, and to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

Given the environmental, social, and conservation challenges Pennsylvania faces, DCNR also has worked during the past eight years on strategic initiatives: climate change; forest conservation and jobs; sustainability; outdoor recreation; water; and youth engagement.

Top accomplishments during the Wolf Administration are highlighted below.

## Outdoor Recreation

- Added four new state parks:
  1. Susquehanna Riverlands in York County
  2. Vosburg Neck in Wyoming County
  3. Big Elk Creek in Chester County
  4. Washington Crossing Historic in Bucks County
- Kept state parks and forests open for critical health benefits during the pandemic with more people visiting than any other time in history
- Created the first motorized recreation area in the state forest system and expanded ATV riding opportunities through connector trails in northcentral Pennsylvania
- Hired Pennsylvania's first Director of Outdoor Recreation and convened a coalition aimed at growing the outdoor recreation economy
- Closed five Top 10 trail gaps toward the goal of a trail within 10 minutes of every Pennsylvanian:
  1. Climax Tunnel, Redbank Valley Trail, Clarion County
  2. Mansion House Bridge, D&L Trail, Carbon County
  3. Lower Trail connection to Canoe Creek State Park, Blair County
  4. Safe Harbor Bridge, Enola Low Grade, Lancaster County

## 5. Martic Forge Bridge, Enola Low Grade, Lancaster County

- Awarded more than \$430 million in grants for community recreation and conservation projects and partnerships
- Modernized the system for state forest camping reservations replacing paper permits
- Launched the strategic plan Penn's Parks for All to guide and improve state parks for the next 20 years
- Began Pennsylvania's statewide Walk with a Doc initiative connecting health and outdoor recreation



*Governor Tom Wolf visits the overlook at the new Susquehanna Riverlands State Park in 2022.*

## Stewardship

- Established the state's first Riparian Buffer Program and an associated advisory committee to help Pennsylvania achieve cleaner water -- attracting more than \$4.5 million in federal grant funds and providing more than \$9 million to partners for tree planting along waterways

- Acquired or helped to protect about 100,000 acres of lands across the commonwealth including about 50,000 acres of new forest lands and more than 3,500 acres of state park lands
- Maintained independent dual certification of well-managed forests allowing timber to be marketed as sustainable
- Hired the first Tree Equity Specialist to focus on the aspects of environmental justice and urban tree planting
- Provided access to the public to more than a quarter of a million records on oil and gas wells with the launch of the Exploration and Development Well Information System
- Acquired state and federal funding sources to collect high-quality elevation data to assist with mapping for flood prevention, hazard mitigation, conservation, and agriculture and precision farming
- Broke ground for the first nature-like fishway in Pennsylvania at Shikellamy State Park for migrating fish to get around a major dam on the Susquehanna River
- Cleaned up lead contamination from a former trap shooting range at Black Moshannon State Park
- Inducted 12 sites in state parks and forests into the Old Growth Forest Network for their permanent conservation and public enjoyment





*DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn joined Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding to plant trees in a streamside buffer in Lancaster County.*

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/Workforce Development**

- Created the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps to prepare a young and diverse workforce for careers in conservation, employing more than 1,000 young people across the commonwealth and hiring 38 of them into the department
- Hired the commonwealth's and DCNR's first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coordinator to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion on public lands through grants and contracting; in communications; and in training, recruiting, and retaining its workforce
- Piloted a program to have state forests and parks share ranger coverage for efficiency
- Hired the first female state forester in the Bureau of Forestry's more than 125-year history



- Established a cultural resource program within DCNR to evaluate all educational and interpretive elements for full historic accuracy and developing untold stories; and added a new Cultural Resource Crew as part of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps to conduct archeological field studies, curation, mapping, and cataloguing of cultural resources found on DCNR lands
- Created welcoming signs for all trailheads to show commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Launched the Next Gen Council to increase engagement with and public participation from young people



*DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and State Forester Ellen Shultzabarger meet with Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps members at Seven Tubs Recreation Area in Pinchot State Forest.*

## **Sustainability/Climate Change Resilience**

- Developed Pennsylvania's first climate change adaptation and mitigation plan to address all aspects of DCNR's work
- Hired the agency's first Director of Applied Climate Science



- Installed 23 solar array installations, bringing numerous buildings and facilities to net zero
- Pledged to produce or purchase all of the agency's energy from renewables by 2030
- Purchased more than 33 plug-in hybrids and zero emissions cars and motorcycles for DCNR's fleet
- Installed more than 40 free electric vehicle charging stations in state parks and forests -- removing the worry about traveling to remote locations
- Implemented a plan to decrease energy consumption by about a quarter by 2025 while making significant energy efficiency investments through the Guaranteed Energy Savings Act



*Recently installed solar array at Mount Pisgah State Park.*