Maryland Park Service
2018 Annual Report

Photo by Susanne Weber - Sandy Point State Park
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Our Dedicated Workforce

Managers...53
Maintenance...64
Rangers...85
Administrative...38
Long-term contractual...34
Seasonal...803
TOTAL CLASSIFIED...240
“The mission of the Maryland Park Service is to manage the natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources to provide for wise stewardship and enjoyment by people.”

Our Brand Promise

- Nourish the well-being of children in ways that only nature can provide.

- Connect people to the beauty and serenity of nature in safe and welcoming places that feel like they belong to them.

- Reveal historical sites and relics that tell inspiring stories that give context and meaning to our lives today.

- Leave people feeling stress-free, even revitalized, and with happy memories to sustain them.

- Create places to relax in the reassuring presence of a friendly and dedicated park ranger who inspires and supports a desire to be a good steward of the Earth.
Maryland Park Service Operations

FY 2018 Revenues - $50.3 Million
- Park-Generated: $30.10
- Property Transfer Tax: $19.20
- Federal: $0.2
- Reimbursable: $0.8

FY 2018 Expenditures - $46.6 Million
- Salaries: $25.56
- Operations: $18.38
- Grants: $2.68
During peak season, 14 parks were filled to capacity and temporarily closed to new visitors 66 times.

PARK OPERATIONS

MPS and NRP staff responded to 429 incidents ranging from minor rules infractions to missing persons to medical emergencies.

Park lifeguards participated in 11 rescues of distressed swimmers or boaters.

6,000+ volunteers donated over 90,000 hours worth in excess of $1 million.

Over 13.4 million visitors enjoyed the amenities of 75 of Maryland’s State Parks.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE

Introduced the new rolling 365-Day Annual Park Passport, which is now valid one year from the time of purchase, rather than the end of the year.

“Rocky Gap staff always make you feel welcome. We visit several times a year, and they are always happy to see us.”

“Tuckahoe State Park keeps nature at the forefront of any visit. I love the simplicity! Also, keep blowing the leaves out of campsites before campers arrive. That was a top notch surprise this trip.”

“Even though we stayed in a cabin I used the campground bathrooms which were very clean and well-stocked. It had all the amenities. The staff kept the park clean and was very friendly, helpful and knowledgeable when we asked questions.”

“We absolutely love this place...I once saw a couple of what looked like river otters while I was there, and that is a treasured memory.”

95% of visitors who answered our Customer Service Survey said that visiting parks is "one of the best ways to spend time with family".

Customer Service issued **6,909** Annual Park Passports and **6,638** Golden Age Passes
The Maryland Conservation Corps treated 3,747 hemlocks and 613 ash trees in 21 parks to protect against woolly adelgid and the emerald ash borer.

Planted, conserved, and managed 804 acres of pollinator habitat across the state, including a quail preserve, in cooperation with Washington College.

The Safe Skies project was completed by the Conservation Jobs Corps using dozens of fabricated cords at the Department of Natural Resources Headquarters to prevent bird strikes on windows.
CULTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Filled the position for a new *Historic Sites Planner* as part of an increased emphasis on preserving and cataloging our increasing inventory of historic resources.

- Formed a partnership with Preservation Maryland to advance planning for South Mountain State Battlefield and Fort Tonoloway State Park.

- Secured a $100,000 African American Heritage Preservation Program grant to renovate and cosmetically preserve the *Historic African-American Schoolhouse* at Fort Frederick State Park.

- Initiated development of a new *Historical Sites database* of ranked assets within the parks with a detailed catalog of condition assessments and project needs.

- Reenactors at South Mountain State Battlefield

- Historic African-American Schoolhouse at Fort Frederick State Park

- Ivy Hill at Patapsco Valley State Park
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING AND EDUCATION

Over 1,000 family teams participated in Park Quest in 23 parks across the state. This program has filled to capacity every year since its inception.

Park staff and volunteers tagged and released 1,347 Monarch butterflies as a part of state park citizen science programs.

Forged a partnership with Park RX America to promote health initiatives throughout the state via a including collaboration between park and public land agencies, healthcare providers, and community partners.

Park staff provided interpretive and educational programs to over 266,000 participants.
SIGNATURE EVENTS

"Es Mi Parque" events for Latino visitors at various parks throughout the state, attracted over 1,200 participants as a part of our continuing emphasis on inclusion.

The 24th Annual Market Fair at Fort Fredrick State Park is the single-largest living history event on the East Coast.

The Greeting of the Geese tradition was revived at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary in partnership with the Piscataway Tribe, who consider this site to be of significant cultural importance.

The 48th Annual Maple Syrup Festival, held over two weekends in March at Cunningham Falls State Park, drew almost 5,000 people, making it one of the park’s most popular events.
JANUARY
First Day Hikes – throughout Maryland State Parks

MARCH
Maple Syrup Festival – Cunningham Falls State Park

APRIL
Egg Hunts – throughout Maryland State Parks
Colonial Market Fair – Fort Frederick

MAY
Youth Fishing Rodeos – throughout Maryland State Parks

JUNE
National Trails Day – throughout Maryland State Parks
Great American Backyard Campout – throughout Maryland State Parks
Blue & Gray Days: Civil War Re-enactment – Point Lookout State Park

JULY
Art in the Park – Deep Creek Lake State Park
Old Time Jams: Bluegrass Music – New Germany State Park

AUGUST
French & Indian War Muster – Fort Frederick State Park

SEPTEMBER
Harriet Tubman Emancipation Celebration – Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State
National Public Lands Day – throughout Maryland State Parks

NOVEMBER
Greeting of the Geese – Merkle Wildlife Natural Resource Management Area

DECEMBER
Holiday Open Houses & Lights Displays – throughout Maryland State Parks
Maryland Conservation Corps (CJC) led projects involving trail work, invasive species removal, and sign construction. MCC members mentored over 400 underserved youth through the Conservation Jobs Corps (CJC), leading them in projects consisting of trail work, invasive species removal, and sign construction.

The Maryland Conservation Corps planted 7,708 trees and shrubs, plus 22,850 bay grasses and other native plants and removed invasive species from parks across the state.

Maryland Conservation Corps crews provided environmental education programs to 49,811 park visitors.

MCC crews responded to 4 disaster areas in Maryland from floods to wildfires, including the Ellicott City Flood in May, which required large-scale cleanup efforts and trail assessments along the Patapsco River.
CONSERVATION JOBS CORPS (CJC)

465 youths and young adults participated in Conservation Jobs Corps programs and completed 133 stewardship projects ranging from trail work to invasive plants removal.

308 CJC participants were first-time campers who learned how to set up a campsite, explore their natural surroundings and leave no trace, once they left.

13 former CJC members were employed to return and work as program staff to mentor incoming participants.
A full renovation of historic cabins, including a conversion to ADA accessibility was completed in seven full-service cabins at Herrington Manor State Park as a part of our continuing emphasis on inclusion and customer service.

The first phase of the Assateague State Park dune repair project was completed, shifting five campground loops up to 100 feet in order to migrate the dune westward to respond to the measured effects of sea level rise.

The Bloede Dam removal project commenced at Patapsco Valley State Park to return the Patapsco River to its natural state and flow, and enhance fish migration and passage.
Commenced work on the final phase of the Western Maryland Rail Trail expansion in Hancock, which connects the trial with Green Ridge State Forest.

MCC built, re-routed and blazed over 225 miles of trails to improve recreational opportunities and protect wetlands.

A new, comprehensive and standardized Trail Signage and Wayfaring Guide was implemented for 900+ miles of trail system.

Maintained 957 miles of trails in parks and created 16 new miles of trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding.
Acquired **1,986 acres** in Garret Country to create **Wolf Den Run State Park**, which features approximately three miles of frontage on the Potomac River's North Branch, three brook trout streams, 1,700 acres of mixed forest and unique rocky bluffs rising 900 feet above the Potomac River.

Increased the number of parks from 73 to **75** for a total of **140,761 acres** managed by the Maryland Park Service.

Completed the strategic management strategy for **Chapel Point State Park** to work cooperatively with Charles County to jointly manage the park and complete improvements.

Acquired **460 acres** in southern Cecil County, for **Bohemia River State Park**. The property includes approximately 225 acres of upland and hydric forest, 195 acres of cultivated land and 14,000 feet of frontage on Great Bohemia Creek and tidal inlets.
In 2018, Maryland Park Rangers initiated and developed a "Ranger Pocket Guide" to serve as a ready job aid in the field.

20 new Rangers graduated from Ranger School at Janes Island State Park after an intensive four-week training led by our training division and park leadership.

Superintendent initiated Town Hall Listening Sessions throughout the spring for all employees in all four regions to seek their input and feedback on park operations and innovations.

The Training Division offered dozens of training opportunities throughout the park system including close quarters defense, civilian firearms, basic water rescue, small craft operations, various first aid and CPR disciplines, among others.
OUR PARTNERS

Our friends groups are invaluable sources of support. These independent nonprofit organizations are dedicated to, among other things, assisting a particular park, helping with special events and programs and park maintenance.

- Governors Park Advisory Commission
- Friends of Assateague State Park
- Friends of Maryland State Forests and Parks
- Friends of Janes Island State Park
- Friends of Martinak State Park
- Friends of New Germany
- Western Garrett County State Park Volunteers
- Friends of Cunningham Falls State Park
- Volunteer Team
- Dan's Mountain Park Association.
- Friends of Fort Frederick State Park
- Save Fair Hill
- North Point State Park Volunteers
- Soldiers Delight Conservation
- Friends of Calvert Cliffs State Park
- Friends of Point Lookout State Park
- Point Lookout Lighthouse Preservation Society
- Friends of Seneca Creek Stone Cutting/Benjamin Harrison Society
- Gunpowder United Mountain Bike Operators
- Percy Lee Dairy Farm Foundation
- Graham Equestrian Center
- West/Rhode Riverkeeper
- Friends of Helen Avalynne Tawes Garden
- Piscataway Conoy Tribe
- Friends of the Patapsco Valley State Park
- National Steeplechase Foundation
- Turkey Point Light Station
- Catoctin Forest Alliance
- Maryland OHV Alliance
- West Rhode Riverkeeper
- Rosaryville Conservancy
For more information about parks: [dnr.maryland.gov/Publiclands/Pages/default.aspx](dnr.maryland.gov/Publiclands/Pages/default.aspx)

To make a park reservation: [parkreservations.maryland.gov/](parkreservations.maryland.gov/)

To purchase an annual Park or Golden Age pass: [shopdnr.com](shopdnr.com)

To get updates: [public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MDDNR/subscriber/new?qsp=MDDNR_3](public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MDDNR/subscriber/new?qsp=MDDNR_3)

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