FRIENDS OF
Cook Forest
STATE PARK
Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

A Newsletter From Friends Of Cook Forest

September 2018

A LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR:

Hello All:

What a great summer!! "The Friends of Cook Forest" used this summer to prepare for our big project of renovating and replacing the interpretive signs on the Cook Trail. What a great workday with great results!!! Now everyone who walks the trail can learn something about our beautiful ancient Cook Forest by reading the interesting information on our beautiful timber signs. Look for pictures of our fantastic volunteers hard at work on our picture page at the end of this newsletter.

We have so many wonderful events going on this fall, we may have to separate our September/October newsletter into two issues so we can give a full report on all the soon-to-be happenings. Many of the events this fall consist of "news that you can use", and you will thank me that I gave you a full report.

On October 7th please consider taking the Walk in Penn's Woods on our new restored Cook Trail. It is a Penn State sponsored event. Their goal is to have an organized hike in every county that day on both public and private lands. Our walk will be guided at 1:00pm, and should last less than two hours. If you can't make it at that time, please consider checking out the trail at your own will.

Soon "The Friends of Cook Forest" will start planning projects and events for next year. If you have any ideas, or projects you would like to see done, please let us know at:
friendsofcookforest@gmail.com

And as always we gladly accept donations and memberships directed to the address at the right to help us fund our projects to make Cook Forest State Park a great park for all to enjoy.

Enjoy Your Woods,

Amanda DiBenedetto/"Friends of Cook Forest" - Chair

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF

The Friends of Cook Forest is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation. The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Become a member and/or volunteer and receive this newsletter regularly, stay informed and become involved.

Annual membership costs:

Individual……..$15

Family……$25

Sponser……$50

Join Today!

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Email:_____

Phone:_____

Make your check payable to:

"PPFF-Friends of Cook Forest"

PO Box 31

Cooksburg, Pa 16217

UPCOMING EVENTS AT COOK FOREST STATE PARK

FRIENDS OF COOK FOREST SPONSORED EVENTS

Sunday, October 7 at 1:00 - A Walk in Penn's Woods: Please join the Friends of Cook Forest as we take a guided hike led by one of our "Friends" or a member of our Cook Forest State Park staff. We will hike the Cook Trail which was recently renovated with the goal of getting ready for this event and educating all who walk this trail. Every county in the state will have a represented trail for this event organized by Penn State. The hike is under 2 miles, is fairly easy to moderate, and should take less than two hours.

Saturday, September 15 at 7:00pm - "Cathedral: The fight to Save the Ancient Hemlocks of Cook Forest". All organizations involved with Cook Forest State Park will be on hand for a "town Hall" type forum to answer questions and give information about the state of Cook Forest State Park and the plight of the HWA along with the viewing of this beautiful 20 minute documentary. The HD short film, produced by Wild Excellence Films, is about the ancient hemlock trees of Cook Forest which are under attack from the hemlock woolly adelgid, a destructive invasive insect that threatens the Eastern Hemlock's existence. This event will take place at the Sawmill Center for the arts in the Sawmill Theater. The cost is $15. All proceeds will go to the fight to save the hemlocks.

THE COOK FOREST CONSERVANCY SPONSORED EVENT

Sunday, September 16 at 10:00 am - "Twilight of the Hemlocks & Beeches": Join the Cook Forest Conservancy for breakfast in the woods, featuring a slideshow by ecologist and author, Tim Palmer, featuring his new book. This will take place at Pavilion #2 by Tom's Run. It is free, but RSVP is required to kelly@cookforestconservancy.org

Wednesday September 26 at 5:30pm - Save your Trees & save money: Join forestry insect experts for a practical field seminar covering how and when to treat for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, and with what. Meet at pavilion #1.

STATE PARK SPONSORED EVENTS

Saturday, September 15 at 1:00pm - "Fire Tower Historical Tour" Historical or Fire Tower #9 conducted by park volunteers Kelley & Al Bilotto. Take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower and learn how it operated. The top of the tower will be open from 1:00-3:00pm. (2 hrs)

Saturday September 22 at 7:30pm - "Cathedral by Candlelight". Walk back in time with us into the depths of the Forest Cathedral with an historical character from the past by candlelight. Meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom. Refreshments will be served. Bring your flashlights. (1.5hrs)

Saturday, September 29 at 9:00am - Wilderness Survival: Primitive Fire Building & Meal Preparation" - Meet at the Log Cabin Inn Learning Classroom to learn various fire starting techniques. We will then prepare our lunch and car pool to the Black Bear Trail area to use our new found fire starting skills to cook our lunch. Cost is $25 due upon registration by 9/26. Contact Dale at 814-744-8407.

Saturday September 29 at 1:00pm "Fire Tower Historical Tour" (see above)

Follow us on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/friendsofcookforest

WATCH OUT HWA. WE'RE ON YOUR TAIL!

More than fifty years ago the Hemlock Woolley Adelgid native to Asia, was first spotted in the U.S. near Richmond, VA. Since then, this invasive pest has destroyed the majority of the Eastern Hemlocks in the Shenandoah Mountains and the Great Smokey Mountains. Five years ago the HWA was discovered in the largest and oldest stand of Eastern Hemlocks left in the Eastern United States, our own Cook Forest State Park. The Park staff has been working hard to try to save these ancient hemlocks in what has been proclaimed as a National Natural Landmark. The park service has been using pesticides, the introduction of an HWA egg eating beetle, and manpower (including Friends of Cook Forest volunteers), searching through Cook Forest State Park to find where this pest has infested. Through the Friends of Cook Forest newsletter we will keep you up-to-date on the progress protecting Cook Forest State Park's treasured Eastern Hemlocks.

A series of amazing events to help combat the Hemlock Woolley Adelgid are scheduled to take place this fall in Cook Forest State Park. All eyes are on our state park to see how we plan on winning the fight against this invasive species. Please consider attending these events, if you can. Not only will you learn and spread the word on what us, as the human race, can do to reverse the effects that this changing world has had on our native flora and fauna, but your attendance will show that this is an important issue to residents and visitors of this great state. The bigger buzz that is out there, the bigger the support from the state. The "Save the Hemlock"s campaign has three major events that are listed on our events page. The screening of the documentary "Cathedral: The Fight to Save the Ancient Hemlocks of Cook Forest" will take place Saturday September 15th. The next morning, Author and ecologist, Tim Palmer, will discuss our forests fate in his book "Twilight of the Hemlocks & Beeches" on Sunday the 16th. Then Wednesday the 26th, an active workshop will teach all how to combat the HWA in your own yard.

***Cook Forest State Park has been fortunate to have a film company, Wild Excellence Films, donate their time and talents to produce a documentary on the plight of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and the fight to save the ancient hemlocks of Cooks Forest.**

A special shout out goes to the Cook Forest Conservancy for all their research in finding additional experts in the field, and in organizing the invaluable seminars. Its our army against the HWA army. We love our forest. It is extremely unique, and we have to do all we can to protect our species and win the war.

Look for upcoming events on:

www.facebook.com/friendsofcookforest

*We're the group with the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation logo

Cook Trail to be Featured in: "A Walk in Penn's Woods"

Did you know that the Cook Trail has a tree that is actually two, an Eastern white pine and a Northern Red Oak that just happened to grow together? Or that the trail has a Chestnut tree that died during the chestnut blight in the 1920's, but a large part of the tree is still standing because the wood is so durable. See these amazing marvels and many more sights as you read about them on the Cook Trail during "A Walk in Penn's Woods" on Sunday October 7th.

The "Friends of Cook Forest", member, Carl Harting, brought up the idea of restoring the old trail at a CFC meeting earlier this year. How awesome would it be to post new signs and restore the old information that could no longer be read along the trail. So with a lot of behind the scenes work with the state park service and other CFC members, the gang got everything ready for volunteer work day in August. A great group showed up to help out and we got the job done. And great timing. Because we were asked by the Penn State organizers of "A Walk in Penn's Woods" if we had a trail that we might like to feature, on their walk day, October 7th. We said, "Boy, Do we ever." And we hopped on the band wagon.

The "Walk in Penn's Woods" goal is to have an organized group hike, educationally led, in every Pennsylvania county that Sunday, October 7th. And the purpose of this walk is so that others may learn about the many ways that the Penn's Woods works for all of us.

Each walk around the state is unique, but most walks are a bit like a field trip, where you can learn from people who manage, own and and study forests. You can take a closer look at the woods around you and better understand the function and behavior of these systems.

The Friends of Cook Forest will have someone to lead the walk at 1:00pm on Sunday October 7th to elaborate on the information that is already posted, and to give additional interesting tidbits of knowledge. But our main objective in doing this project is that families and parents and grandparents can take their kids on this trail, and they can help plant the seed of loving the forest into these someday adults. For these children will be the future generations that will tend to and protect our beautiful public and private lands and its species.

We also have some older history along the trail like an old1930's CCC dynamite shed, that was built so the roof would merely blow off in case of an explosion. Now who can beat that. There's something for everyone.

(continued)

The Cook Trail is located along River Rd. In Cook Forest State Park near the Riverside Cabins playground and new picnic shelter at Henry's Run Rd. The GPS coordinates are:

41.32778, -79.19302

I'm not trying to show off with that information , because I have no idea what to do with it. But someone asked me the coordinates, and I found out. Please don't be intimidated. But please do make an effort to come join us at :THE COOK TRAIL, SUNDAY OCTOBER 7, AT 1:00pm. See you there!!

FRIENDS OF COOK FOREST

Volunteer Opportunities

Trail Stewardship: Monitor and maintain trail conditions, as well as planning and assisting in the restoration of existing trails, their signage and educational qualities.

Habitat Enhancement: Remove invasive plants, in addition to planting vegetation that will improve the habitat of natural native forest species.

Education and Recreation: Program hosting, lead hikes, assist with special events and seminars.

Additional: Administrative tasks, grant writing, public relations, and fundraising, volunteer at meetings, and board positions.

*Gmail: friendsofcookforest@gmail.com

Membership Benefits:

*Subscription to the Friends of Cook Forest newsletter.

*Supporting the protection, improvements, and activities of the “2018 Park of the Year - Cook Forest State Park.”

*Meet people with similar interests

*Stay connected and informed

www.facbook.com/friends

PENNSYLVANIA Parks & Forests FOUNDATION

It's just our nature to help!

FRIENDS OF
Cook Forest
STATE PARK
Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

Membership Form

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Individual	☐	$15.00
Family	☐	$25.00
Organization	☐	$35.00
Supporting	☐	$50.00

Additional Contribution $ _____ Total Enclosed $ _____

Can you spend time as a volunteer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Make checks payable to **PPFF** and write *Friends of Cook Forest* on the memo line. Mail to:

Friends of Cook Forest
PO Box 31
Cooksburg, PA 16217

THANK YOU!

The Friends of Cook Forest is a chapter of the PA Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). PPFF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to PPFF are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration of PPFF may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Here are our amazing volunteers who showed up on the Cook Trail Work Day to install 20 new educational signs. We were seeing how another sign would look here in front of this rooted up tree caused by a recent storm. Weather has become one of the biggest issues wreaking havoc with our forests now days.

Taking out the old timbers and putting in the new, along with additional signage, required us to use hole diggers and other tools to break up rocks. Much man (and woman) power was needed. We also had rakers, who helped clear the trails, along with removing logs and other obstacles. And thank you also to the volunteer fairies, who actually stained and put the signs together the week before, when no one was looking. We know who you are.

Many of us arrived as strangers on work day, but after the four hours, left as friends. Not only did we put in some good work, we had good conversation. Here we have three people whose common interest is their love for the forest. In this group, one of us also volunteers as a local camp host, another just came back to Pa. after spending almost 20 years working in Switzerland, and the third volunteer is actually from Cleveland, but established her love of Cook Forest from her parents bringing her to the forest as a child.