



A Newsletter From Friends Of Cook Forest

January 2019

A LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR:

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019!!!!!!

But what a year last year, 2018, has been for Cook Forest State Park, and the Friends of Cook Forest, as well.

As we look back at 2018, Cook Forest State Park was named "Park of the Year," by the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation out of 122 State Parks. In 2018 Cook Forest State Park's brand new Park Offices and visitor center building structure was completed, and will have its grand opening this Spring of 2019. The Pennsylvania State Park system celebrated its 125th anniversary, with a State Park being within 25 miles of every home. AND new news, our own Clarion River was chosen to be featured on a new series of US Postage stamps!!!!

The Friends of Cook Forest were also kept busy in 2018 by, lets work backwards now, hosting Cook Forest State Park's first ever "Walk In Penn's Woods" (a hike held October 7th, where every Pa. County hosted an organized walk). We renovated and placed new interpretive signs on the Cook Trail, so everyone can learn more about our beautiful forest as they get a little over 2 miles of good walking exercise. The Friends of Cook Forest hosted a walk in one of our ancient forests to the largest Eastern Hemlock in this part of the United States, along with participating in a wonderful raffle fundraiser on our behalf that day. In 2018 we continued the fight to save our Eastern Hemlocks from a threatening invasive insect, by participating and helping to host numerous showings of the documentary, "Cathedral: The Fight to Save the Ancient Hemlocks of Cook Forest." We also hosted several educational and restoration projects for the whole family, including a milkweed planting for the Monarchs, and a Garlic Mustard pull throughout Cook Forest State Park. And that was along with planning new projects for 2019!!

But what really makes all this happen is people. The donors and the volunteers, like you, make it happen. It's clear all you forest enthusiasts are the driving force behind one of the most successful park systems in the nation. We look forward to seeing you this year.

Enjoy Your Woods,

Amanda DiBenedetto/"Friends of Cook Forest" - Chair

The Friends of Cook Forest group is organized to support, assist and promote the mission and activities of Cook Forest State Park, its properties, and facilities.

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

COOK FOREST STATE PARK SPONSORED EVENTS

Saturday, January 12 at 7:30am- “Clarion River Winter Wildlife Expedition” Winter on the Clarion is one of the best times of the year to observe wildlife in the park, especially migrating birds, river otter, fisher and other species of birds and mammals. Please bring your binoculars to the Park Office for an interpretive driving tour as we search Clear Creek State Park, the Clarion River, and Cook Forest. Hot chocolate and coffee will be available at the Park Office. (4hours)

Saturday, February 2 at 6:00pm- “Cross Country Ski Cook Forest at Night: Log Cabin Inn-Swinging Bridge” Please bring your cross country skis and headlamps and meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a candlelit evening interpretive cross country ski trip within the Tom’s River Valley. Learn to identify animal tracks in the snow as you ski within the old growth forest at the base of the Forest Cathedral Natural Landmark. If snow conditions aren’t good, we’ll snowshoe or hike instead. Hot chocolate and a cozy cabin will be available to warm up. (2 hrs).

Saturday, February 16 at 1:00pm- “Snowman in the Forest Day”. Come join us for a day of fun wintery activities along the Clarion River within Cook Forest State Park. Various activities will be held at the new River Shelter by the playground on River Road approximately 1-mile up river from the Park Office. Schedule:

11:30am- Chili Cook Off (hot and Mild divisions)

11:30am-2:30pm- Carriage rides, sledding, snowman building, ice skating (ice skates available)

12:00-1:00pm- Snowshoe interpretive hike within the old growth forest along Cook Trail. Meet at the new River Shelter.

1:00pm- Happy Dog Contest

2:00pm- Door Prize Awards

*Come sample the chili during the “Free Chili Cook Off”. Hot chocolate and coffee will be on hand to help take the chill out of your bones. Enjoy a wonderful day among family and friends in Cooksburg’s winter wonderland. Event sponsored by the Cook Forest Vacation Bureau. (3 hrs).

More Cook Forest State Park events, activities, and volunteer opportunities are being added.

Stay in touch, to see what great things we have planned this season.

Follow us on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/friendsofcookforest

WALK IN PENN'S WOODS-COOK TRAIL

Sunday October 7th was a great day to be in Penn's Woods, especially if you were in Cook Forest State Park. Across the state more than 1,100 people were in the woods on 68 walks in 48 counties. The Friends of Cook Forest hosted a walk of more than a dozen hikers in Forest County on the Cook Trail, led by our fearless board member, Carl Harting. We were also given information about Pennsylvania's forests, private and public, as a whole, and how we benefit from them.

It was a beautiful fall day, and everyone agreed what a blessing it was that they were able to learn from Carl's amazing forest facts, get good exercise and enjoy each other's company on this more than 2 mile walk.

This state wide walk started by Penn's State University's Center for Private Forests started two years ago, and The Friends of Cook Forest hope to keep it going within in our state park every year. Our goal is to be able to eventually host a walk, wheel chair and stroller accessible too.

To find out many of the amazing facts pertaining to Cook Forest on the Cook Trail, please take a walk on the trail located at Henry's Run Picnic area right off River in Road in the park. The Friends group recently renovated the trail and posted more than 15 new timber interpretive signs along the route. But some interesting State Forest facts that many don't know, are listed below:

- *There are 17 million acres of forests in Pennsylvania
- *12 million acres-70% of the state's forests, are privately owned
- *740 thousand private owners of Pennsylvania's woods actions and decisions play a vital role in the future health of Pa. forests

BECAUSE:

- *100 large, 40 year old trees can remove about 430 pounds of pollutants each year



- *100 large, 40 year old tree can remove over 53 tons of CO₂ from the atmosphere each year.
- *100 large mature trees intercept 538,700 gallons of rainfall each year
- *Trees provide critical shade and habitat for organisms that are crucial to having clean, healthy waterways.
- *Trees growing along streams are even more important because they stabilize the banks, preventing erosion from scouring water.
- *Studies show hospital patients who see trees out their windows need less medication and have faster recovery times following surgery.
- *The density of trees, or stocking, is declining due to disease, insects, weather and cutting.
- *Statewide, forest areas with large trees- (hardwoods with a diameter of more than 11 inches) are increasing.
- *highest state forest coverage was 90% in 1630, the lowest was 30% in 1907



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*Pennsylvania's total acreage is 28,991,000 acres (45,300 square miles). 93% is rural land made up of forests, fields, and water. 7% is suburban and urban made up of cities, towns and roads.

***Pennsylvania is home to 83,184 miles of rivers and streams!!**

Which brings us to another topic. Did you know that Cook Forest's wild and scenic [Clarion River](#), that runs right through our state park, is going to be

[FEATURED ON A US POSTAGE STAMP!!](#)

That's right. According to The Pennsylvania Great Outdoor's Visitor's Bureau, The Clarion River is going to be honored in 2019 on a US Postage Stamp. The beautiful wild and scenic Clarion River will be featured on a Forever Stamp as part of a 12-stamp series on the National and Wild Scenic River System.

According to the Pa.Visitor's Bureau article, the stamp will feature a photo by Bureau of Land Management photographer, Bob Wick that shows a peaceful scene of mist rising above the water near Clarington. I could post the picture, but go to "visit pago .com" for a full picture and more details.

Visit PaGo states that the Clarion River was also recently nominated as one of four possibilities for Pennsylvanias 2019 River of the Year.

And as many of you know the Clarion River got it's name because the original settlers of the area thought the noise of the ripples down the river valley made the sound of a distant clarion flute.

But most of us know the Clarion River as the beautiful river we use for kayaking, fishing, swimming, or just gazing at its beauty and watching eagles soar over it. The miles that run through the Cook Forest State Park are quiet and serene, mainly because of lack of infrastructure along the river, and the shallowness does not allow for motorized boats to travel on it.

A Special Thank You

Every once in a while a special someone, or in this case, group of people come along who really make a difference in an organization's well being and function. For us it has been the residents and operators of [Deer Meadow Campground](#), right on the border of Cook Forest on Forest Road. For the past couple of years they have held a gift basket raffle and fund raiser honoring Cook Forest State Park, and have donated the proceeds to Friends of Cook Forest. This donation has enabled the friends group print literature helping to protect our endangered Eastern Hemlocks, restore the Cook Trail, and now help mark the new Tobacco Trail.



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.facebook.com/friends





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.

PICTURE PAGE



I spoke a little too soon when I mentioned that there are no motorized boats on our stretch of the Clarion River. There is one motorized boat. It's called a Mokai. For many years the DCNR rangers have had access to this very unique motorized kayak. It is equipped with a 211cc air cooled, jet drive, internal combustion engine, for those of you who know what that means. Top speed for the loaded Mokai is about 14 mph.

Rangers at Cook Forest have over 25 miles of the Clarion River to patrol, many of which have no road access. Several times over the years the Mokai has been used to respond to emergency calls on the river. The Mokai allows the rangers to respond faster than man

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powered boats. The Mokai has also been used in search and rescue mission on the Clarion River. It allows the rangers to search more miles than traditional watercraft.



The most recent picture of Cook Forests State Park's new office building. It should be completed this Spring in 2019. The new 4,000 square foot facility will include interactive exhibits, public restrooms, an environmental education classroom, and a more spacious and efficient administrative area. The exhibits will provide visitors an opportunity to learn about the park's history, distinctive old growth white pine and hemlock forest, and recreational opportunities. A combination of capital and key 93 funding was used to build the building totaling 3.1 million dollars.