

FIELD NOTES



NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2021

THE PATH AHEAD

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During my first meeting with Superintendent Pat Kenney, he shared a story of a former Youth Conservation Corps member who recently reached out to him after several years. She is now in college, pursuing a degree and a potential future in conservation work. She was reaching out to see if she could interview him for a project. Pat was sharing with me how incredible it was to see the long-term impact of a program funded through philanthropy.



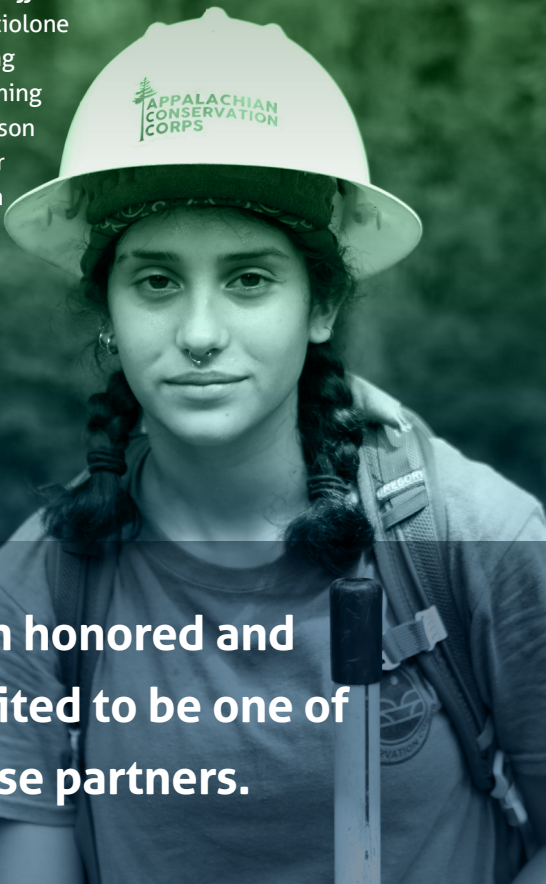
To quote John Muir, "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." Your support of the programs and services that the Trust funds, are critical. Funds that not only provide resources for the park staff to protect and preserve these amazing spaces and species within; but also allow thousands of children and adults to learn and explore - to be shaped and changed by their interactions with these awe- inspiring wild spaces.

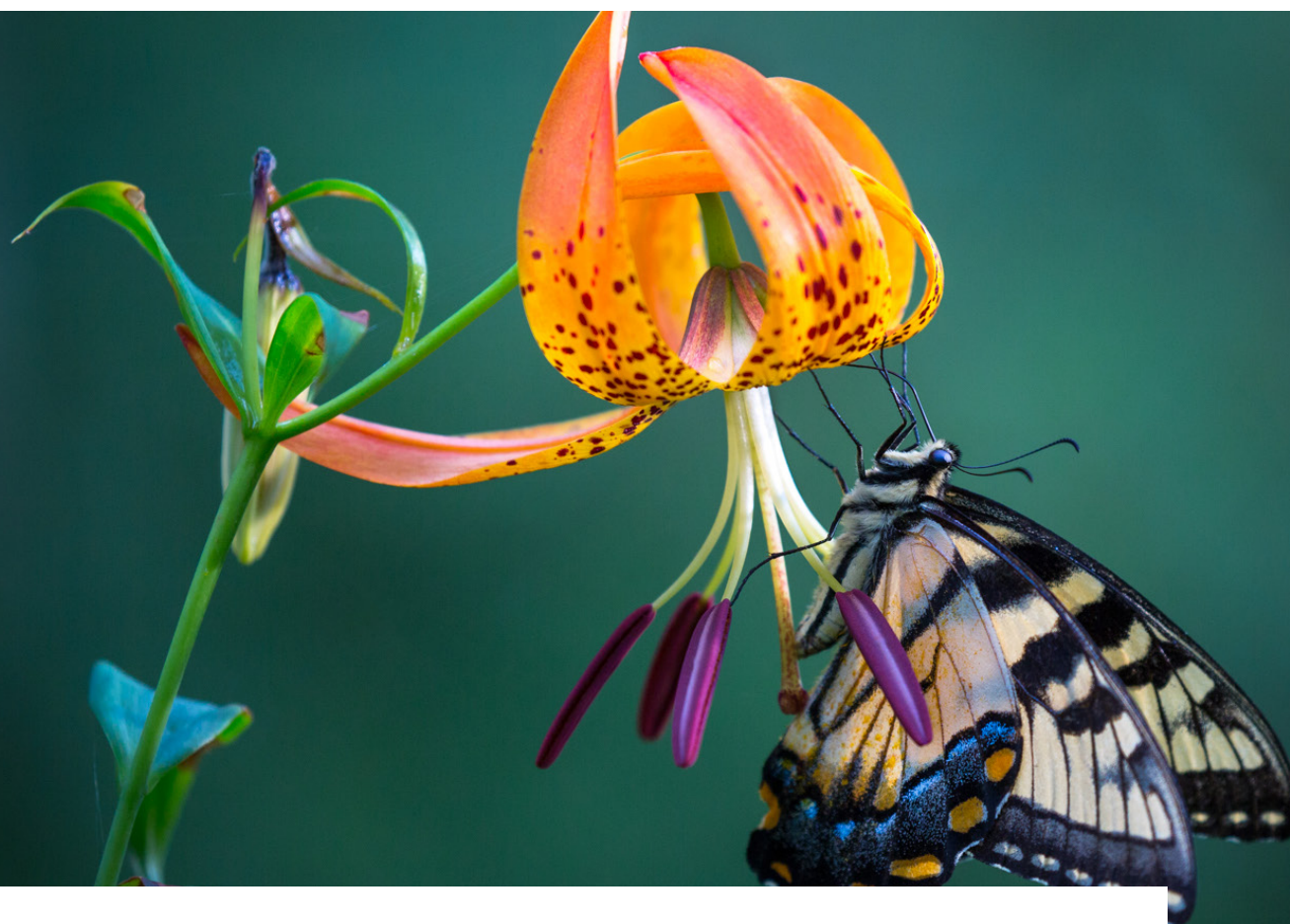
A great park deserves a great partner.

I am honored and excited to be one of those partners. I look forward to working, learning from you, and together, developing the vision for our future. A vision of continued commitment to protecting what you love about Shenandoah National Park, while creating programs to inspire the next generation of National Park stewards.

- Jessica Cocciolone, Executive Director of SNP Trust

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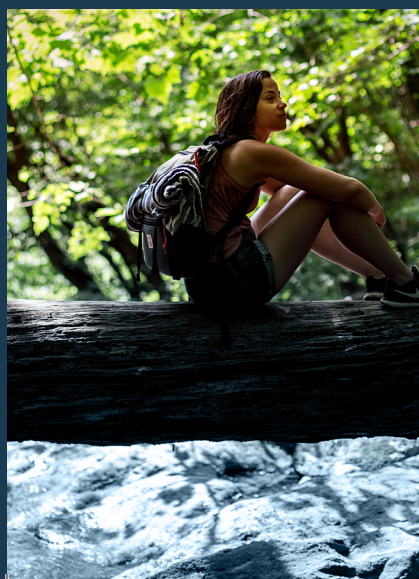


 Tyler Reber

WHAT A YEAR

Shenandoah National Park saw huge spikes in visitation over the last year. In 2020, the park saw 1,654,516 visitors, a 15.2% increase over 2019 visitation. The last time we had over 1.6 million visitors was 25 years ago in 1995! It's no surprise that people flocked to this magnificent park for a welcomed change of scenery—and often as an alternative to vacations that were cancelled due to the pandemic.

In 2020, Shenandoah National Park saw a 15.2% increase in visitation over 2019.



It's wonderful to see so many people enjoying the park. But more boots on trails means more maintenance needs. More cars on Skyline Drive mean more chances for collisions with wildlife. Many visitors were first-timers to a national park. Some underestimated the challenge of some of our mountains and sustained injuries as a result.

Park staff met all of these challenges skillfully. Thanks to your philanthropic investments, we funded numerous Park Rangers, interns and volunteers—all of whom worked tirelessly on your behalf to protect the park we all love.

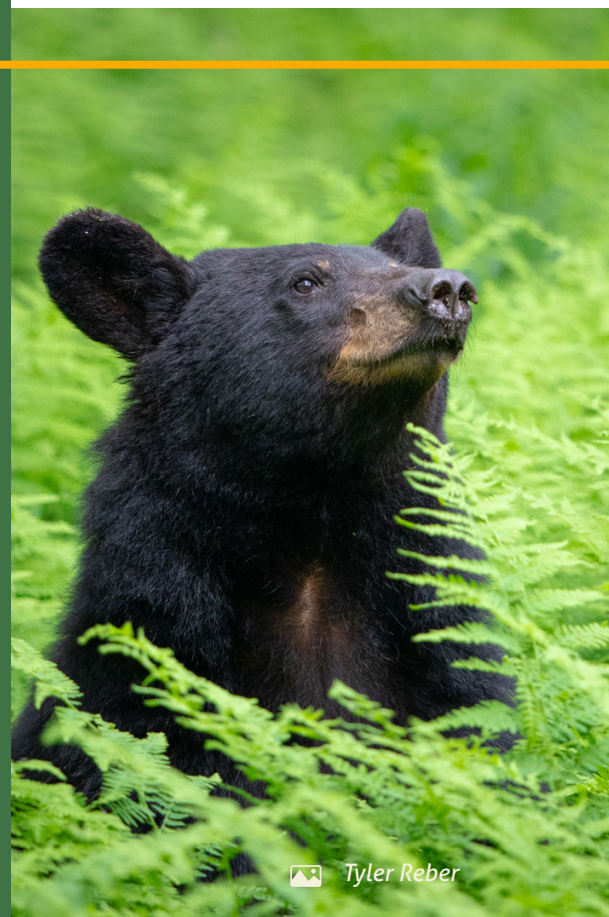
Thank you for your continued partnership.

KEEPING BEARS WILD

What do Shenandoah's black bears like to eat? Berries? Yes. Insects? Check. Your sandwich? Absolutely!

More visitors in Shenandoah National Park over the past year meant more food that smelled really good to bears. When picnickers and campers don't store or dispose of their food properly, bears can make mischief. If a bear becomes a "repeat" offender at a particular campsite or trash bin, park rangers will trap and relocate the bear. We'd rather keep the bear from being tempted in the first place.

Thanks to you, we funded a team of employees who travel throughout the park to educate visitors on food storage and disposal—and safe wildlife viewing distances. New placards were posted on picnic tables explaining proper etiquette to protect bears, and "high collision area" signs were erected in areas with dense bear populations, including Jewell Hollow Overlook, Skyland, Dark Hollow Falls/Big Meadows, Milam Gap, Simmons Gap, Upper Hawksbill and Lower Hawksbill.



 Tyler Reber

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

"Pivot" may turn out to be the most-commonly used word during the pandemic. We've all had to pivot in some aspects of our lives. Shenandoah National Park was no exception. From April through November, the park would typically be bustling with school groups and youth organizations and Park Rangers would be in local classrooms delighting students with lessons on natural history. But the pandemic shut down in-person field trips and educational programs. So what did the park's education department do?

Pivot! Your support of youth education programs made a lot of great things possible.

Seemingly overnight, a park office was transformed into a studio, and the education team mapped out an entire season's worth of virtual field trips and programs. Over 3,000 children participated in a virtual program in 2020. Virtual field trips were in real time, and students were able to interact with Park Rangers.



VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS CONT.

Children of all ages could also tune into pre-recorded Virtual Junior Ranger Programs, covering topics in geology, watersheds and dark night skies. These programs were so well-received that they are sure to become a permanent component of the park's education offerings.

I wanted to reach out and thank you for the wonderful virtual program that you provided for our class! The students loved it. Some families were so inspired that they have made a trip to the park!

SAVING ENDANGERED TREES



When an invasive, non-native pest called the hemlock woolly adelgid swept through the park in the 1990s, it swiftly killed 95 percent of Shenandoah's native eastern hemlock trees. Since then, park biologists have worked vigilantly to protect the remaining hemlocks. When—thanks to your support—the Shenandoah National Park Trust began to invest funds into this program, our biologists were able to treat more trees – over 2,000 annually – with an insecticide targeting the adelgid.

And with additional funds you provided, the park was able to introduce into the forests a beetle that preys on the adelgid. This combined approach is proving highly effective in protecting the remaining trees.

Additionally, your support has enabled park biologists to protect Shenandoah's native ash trees from the emerald ash borer, another non-native, invasive pest that threatens to kill a million trees in our park. So far, our only option is chemical treatment, but we are hopeful that a biological control like we have for the adelgid will be proven effective for the ash borer in the near future.



SAVE THE DATE
NATIONAL
PARK WEEK
APRIL 17-25

    @snptrust

Follow along on social media
and sign up for our e-newsletter:
www.snptrust.org

April 17 - Fee Free Day @ SNP

April 18 - Partnership Showcase

April 19 - Keeping Bears Wild

April 20 - Artist-in-Residence Live!!

April 21 - Shenandoah's Legacy

April 22 - Digital Earth Day + Virtual Engagement

April 23 - Virtual Outdoor Education

April 24 - National Junior Ranger Day + Volunteer Day w/ the Trust @SNP

2020

A Year in Review

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK TRUST



YOUR IMPACT

\$450k

in estimated direct and in-kind support to Shenandoah in 2020

15.2%

increase in park visitation (Despite 6-week closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

20,000

digital event views highlighting the 5 Artists-in-Residence we help fund

TOGETHER SHENANDOAH

Climate Resilience

- We planted 3,509 herbaceous plants and trees in FY20.
- 2171 hemlock trees over 775.9 acres were treated to fight the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.
- 642 volunteer hours were logged to remove invasive plant species and restore native plants in SNP.

Expert-in-Residence

- Expert-in-Residence funding was used to test 150 mammal specimens and 200 birds in the park's museum collection for hazardous substances: mercuric chloride and arsenic.

Wildlife/Wildlands

- Wildlife Staff conducted 1171 visitor education contacts related to human-bear interactions.
- Staff deployed aversive conditioning on habituated bears 33 times (21 bear jams and 12 other hazing events in picnic/campgrounds).

Trail Maintenance

- 151 Volunteers worked 2,834 hours on trail maintenance, completing 103 projects.
- Trail maintenance completed work on 42.2 miles of trails.

Youth Education

- Before COVID hit, the Trust funded 28 in classroom programs for 794 students.
- Before COVID hit, 590 students were able to visit SNP thanks to the Trust funded "Ticket to Ride" program.
- Pivoting after COVID, 15 distance learning opportunities were brought to 831 participants.

Artist-in-Residence

- Over 375 applications for the 2020 Artist-in-Residence program, with 5 artists selected to spend 3 weeks in SNP.

3 WAYS TO MAKE AN IMPACT



Donate

Every gift is an investment in your park. See your philanthropy at work with SNP Trust.



Advocate

Be an ambassador for the park, whether out in the park or on our online community.



Volunteer

When it's safe to do so, volunteer opportunities include trail maintenance, building tree cages, collecting native seeds and removing invasive plant species.

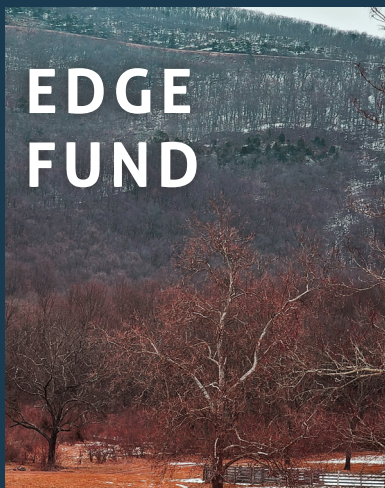
Make An Impact Today

GIVE MONTHLY Your monthly support helps Shenandoah National Park's unique ecosystems become more resilient to the effects of climate change and increase youth education programs.

JOIN THE RAPIDAN SOCIETY Your gift of \$1000 (\$83+/mo) or more gives you exclusive access to private events and opportunities to network, hear from your park's superintendent, and more!

PLANNED GIVING Become a member of the Shenandoah Legacy Circle by including Shenandoah National Park Trust in your will or estate planning. Contact us at (434) 293-2728 to discuss a planned gift.

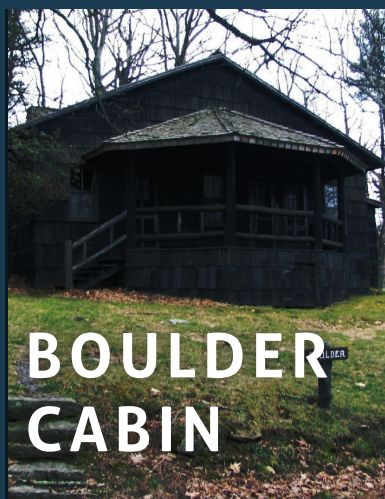
VA LICENSE PLATES Your purchase of a Shenandoah license plate supports our park. With every sale and renewal, \$15 comes to the Trust to fund park programs and projects. Visit the Virginia DMV's website today to learn more.



SNP Trust has the opportunity to purchase a 225-acre parcel called Grouseland near Front Royal that currently belongs to the Wildlife Center of Virginia. The spacious and rugged hardwood forest sits right below on Skyline Drive and is home to an abundance of wildlife. With your support of SNP Trust's Edge Fund, we'll be able to purchase and then donate this adjacent acreage to Shenandoah National Park.

The Shenandoah National Park Trust (the Trust), working alongside the Commonwealth of Virginia and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the DuPont Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration settlement, acquired over 900 acres of rolling woodlands in Page County, VA.

If you're interested in learning more about conservation easements or donating land through the Edge Fund, please call or email us: info@snptrust.org



Built in 1911, Boulder Cabin was part of the original Skyland Resort. When Congress established Shenandoah National Park in 1935, Boulder Cabin continued to be a part of the resort and was available to be rented by park visitors. In later years, it was used as an office by Park Rangers. However, as federal funding for national parks decreased, Shenandoah National Park's workforce downsized and Boulder Cabin was no longer needed for an office. It has stood vacant for 10 years.

The Shenandoah National Park Trust has committed to restoring this historic building in 2021. When completed, Boulder will become the permanent home for Shenandoah National Park's Artist in Residence Program.

Support this project by contacting Chip Sawyer: csawyer@snptrust.org