



For countless generations, people have come to Shenandoah for rejuvenation. For almost two decades, generous donors have made it possible for the Shenandoah National Park Trust (SNPT) to help the park preserve and restore the historical and natural resources that make Shenandoah the stunning, peaceful place it is. For the next two decades and beyond, we hope to continue growing and adapting alongside our park, funding critical research and implementing meaningful projects, programs, and initiatives.

SNPT funds projects aligned with four pillars that serve as the foundation for all of our strategic investments and development. This framework is informed by research data as well as input from park staff and diverse community partners, including many of you. At all levels of SNPT's programming and projects, you will see significant, measurable impacts emerge through these concentrated efforts. We are grateful to our supporters, and we hope you will join us in this important work.

## PILLAR I: STORIES OF SHENANDOAH

Shenandoah National Park provides a lens through which to view and understand Virginia's history and culture. The park has been home to Native Americans who came to the Blue Ridge every summer; communities of mountain folks who settled in the "hollers"; the Civilian Conservation Corps who built the original park infrastructure; and many others. SNPT strives to preserve and share the rich history of the land that encompasses Shenandoah National Park, and the peoples whose voices must be heard and remembered.

### Goals

- Honor and share the stories of the people of Shenandoah, including but not limited to: indigenous peoples and early settlers, both free and enslaved; the people displaced by the creation of the park; and those who worked to build, expand, and integrate the park into the landscape and community.
- Engage in interactive historic and cultural storytelling that connects visitors to park lands and the surrounding communities.
- Share the rich ecological history of Shenandoah.

## PROJECTS

### Collecting Stories, Amplifying Voices

**🌲 Funding needed: \$25,000**

Shenandoah National Park and SNPT are both committed to protecting our nation's natural wonders and historic places. We are both also committed to telling the stories of Virginia, and of our nation and its public lands. SNPT will fund a 24-week internship to assist with museum collection work and tours of Rapidan Camp, making the rich cultural history of Shenandoah accessible to the public and amplifying the voices of those who have been historically underrepresented.

### Connecting People to the Park

**🌲 Funding needed: \$27,000**

Social media has the power to reach new audiences and create a vibrant community of national park advocates. This seasonal employee will create better and broader engagement among the park's audiences and develop high-impact visual media across a variety of social media platforms to reach new, more diverse audiences. Such outreach will facilitate deeper connections with the public by providing accurate, engaging, and relevant content, as well as sharing important news and events.

### Exploring Shenandoah Through Time

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$250,000**

SNPT has partnered with Kevin Morgan — of *Pixels & Pointers* — to create a documentary that explores Shenandoah through time, leaning into hard histories, navigating complex experiences, and building toward a beautiful, inclusive future. While Kevin explores the park with his wife, daughter, and dog through the #SNP52 hiking challenge in the present, he talks to the stewards of Shenandoah's past — Native Americans and the families who were displaced during the park's establishment — as well as archaeologists and historians, content creators, and organizations like SNPT who are working to ensure the future of the park.

# PILLAR 2: WILD SHENANDOAH

With over 40% of Shenandoah designated as wilderness, tens of thousands of living creatures make their homes in the park, from black bears resting beneath rock overhangs to tiny aquatic insects darting through mountain streams cooled by towering hemlocks. To protect these flora and fauna, SNPT invests in proactive, research-based strategies that protect and restore the park's natural resources, preserving ecological integrity and promoting climate resilience.

## Goals

- Support park staff in adopting a culture of comprehensive, adaptive management.
- Explore and develop a conservation-based approach to boundary protection.
- Effect significant improvements in ecological integrity, connectivity, resilience, and sustainability.
- Educate park staff, partners, residents, and visitors about the changes taking place in Shenandoah so they can participate in stewardship efforts.

## PROJECTS

### Protecting Shenandoah's Forests

Forests cover 97% of Shenandoah National Park. They are the foundation of the park's ecosystem, and changes in the forest have far-reaching implications for the health and sustainability of plant species, the animals that depend on them, and our local communities. This multi-pronged initiative approaches forest health in three ways:

#### Preserving Diminished Trees

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$50,000**

Over the last 25 years, hemlock and ash populations have been devastated by invasive pests. This project, rooted in the latest research, focuses on protecting the remaining hemlock and ash trees through early interventions, biologic controls (predators that target the invasive pests), and insecticide treatments.

#### Detecting & Removing Invasive Species

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$55,000**

Invasive plants are one of the most significant threats the park faces today, and this threat is only expected to increase with climate change and increased visitation. This project focuses on detecting non-native plants and insects early and removing those that crowd out native plant species, degrade habitats, and negatively impact the visitor experience.

#### Discovering the Data

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$75,000**

Shenandoah has more than two decades of forest monitoring data, but hasn't had the capacity to analyze how the forest is changing. This project will allow the park to evaluate long-term trends in tree mortality and regeneration to predict future forest composition and integrity, helping park leadership make decisions to ensure the forest's survival.

#### Restoring Watersheds

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$25,000**

Preserving the park's natural resources depends on local solutions that counteract the effects of regional and global issues, such as acid deposition and climate change. This year, the park will work to restore pH levels in Meadow Run through re-liming treatments with the goal of making the stream suitable for native species, including brook trout. SNPT will fund an assessment of the stream across two years — both before and after re-liming — to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. The park will use findings from this project to inform future watershed management decisions throughout Shenandoah.

#### Keeping Bears Wild

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$100,000**

Black bears are an icon of Shenandoah and a pinnacle of both the visitor experience and the ecosystem itself. With visitation increasing, SNPT is prioritizing the health and safety of the park's black bear population through various efforts, including crucial visitor education and the installation of bear boxes at campsites and picnic grounds. Bears who become "food-conditioned" are a danger to visitors and often need to be relocated, drastically decreasing their chance of survival. This program will also fund seasonal Bear Technicians — staff in charge of teaching visitors about wildlife stewardship through campground programs and one-on-one outreach.

#### The Edge Fund

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$2,000,000**

The Edge Fund allows SNPT to purchase land or receive land donations on behalf of the park. To date, SNPT has donated more than 1,300 acres of land with a value of over \$3.5 million to protect the park's boundaries. SNPT works with private land holders to protect environmentally sensitive areas along Shenandoah's borders, preserving these lands to provide unimpaired habitats for myriad flora and fauna and promoting species resilience in the face of rising temperatures and encroachment. These funds allow SNPT to reach and educate bordering landowners about land donation as an option for perpetual stewardship, cover costs of accepting donated land, purchase property from willing sellers.

# PILLAR 3: STEWARDS OF SHENANDOAH

Shenandoah National Park is a living classroom with endless opportunities to learn about history, geology, ecology, and more. It's also a thriving workplace with opportunities to start careers in conservation. SNPT is proud to fund programs and initiatives that educate and engage youth, ensuring that a younger and more diverse generation will become supporters and stewards of this vast public resource. The future of Shenandoah depends on the next generation of stewards who will preserve and protect the park for generations to come.

## Goals

- Support life-long learning opportunities as the foundation for building stewardship of Shenandoah.
- Provide opportunities for youths from diverse backgrounds to experience the outdoors and be inspired by nature.
- Engage, educate, and employ the next generation of park stewards via media, volunteer and job opportunities, events, and community partnerships.

## PROJECTS

### The Shenandoah Youth Corps **Funding Needed: \$100,000**

Getting out into the field with park staff is incredibly empowering for young people considering conservation-related career paths. The Shenandoah Youth Corps provides much-needed assistance with trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and the restoration of historic structures. During their four weeks in the park, the youths meet with park staff for professional workshops and educational programming, preparing them to be capable stewards of our public lands.

In addition to the traditional Shenandoah Youth Corps program, we have created a “Bridge” program for teens who have never served outdoors and might be overwhelmed by a month of camping and working in a national park. The Bridge program supports half-day, weekend, and week-long crews in the youths’ communities surrounding the park, acclimating them to working outdoors with the goal of preparing them for longer service in Shenandoah National Park.

### College Internships

#### **Funding Needed: \$80,000**

SNPT funds 6–7 internships every year for young adults dreaming of a career in national parks. Interns will work collaboratively with park staff in areas of management, interpretation, museum support, and research, gaining valuable work experience and connections for future careers in conservation while adding immense value to the visitor experience in Shenandoah. This program strives to reach out to a diverse pool of young adults, with several internships only offered to young people from historically underrepresented communities.

### Access to the Outdoors Fund

#### **Funding Needed: \$500,000**

National parks belong to all Americans, but not all Americans have access to them. SNPT is working to understand and remove barriers that have historically kept underrepresented communities from accessing Shenandoah while creating relevant programming to help build connections, skills, and confidence in the outdoors. This fund is championed by a \$150,000 gift from the Christopher Johnson McCandless Memorial Foundation. With your support, we can ensure Shenandoah is truly a place of respite, learning, and recreation for all.

## Play, Learn, Serve

Today's youths are tomorrow's stewards. This program provides educational, recreational, and service-learning experiences for over 10,000 youths and adults every year. There are three overlapping components to this program:

### Engaging Youth (Play)

#### **Funding Needed: \$30,000**

SNPT funds summer and after-school engagement programs designed to introduce young people to the outdoors through educational and recreational experiences. Participating organizations, such as Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters, allow us to reach underserved audiences who would not otherwise have the means to visit the park.

### Educating Youth (Learn)

#### **Funding Needed: \$60,000**

Curriculum-based programs that meet local, state, and national learning standards can support classroom instruction for kindergarten to adult learners. Trust-funded initiatives include in-park field trips, ranger-led programs in local classrooms, online learning programs, and professional development opportunities for educators.

### Working with Youth (Serve)

#### **Funding Needed: \$30,000**

SNPT funds extended, in-depth programs held over multiple days that provide recreational (play) and educational (learn) experiences coupled with work projects (serve). Last year, groups cleaned picnic grounds, collected trash and debris, revamped the Big Meadows Amphitheater, and completed other similar service projects.



# PILLAR 4: EXPERIENCE SHENANDOAH

SNPT funds education and enrichment opportunities that encourage public engagement as well as initiatives that keep trails and other public spaces safe and accessible. This work allows visitors to build meaningful, personal connections with the park while preserving the landscape.

## Goals

- Use technology and data to anticipate the current and future needs of visitors, and identify the resources needed to address these challenges.
- Maintain and improve the park's physical amenities, including trails, overlooks, and campgrounds.
- Help the park ensure visitors' safety and wellbeing.

## PROJECTS



### Maintaining Trails

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$50,000**

With the strain of ever-increasing visitation and limited staffing resources, many of Shenandoah's trails have fallen into disrepair. This year, SNPT is supporting the maintenance of sixteen backcountry trails, part of an extensive trail network — with over 500 miles of backcountry and front country trails — that is at the heart of the recreational visitor experience.

### Engaging Volunteers

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$75,000**

Shenandoah's volunteer program is a powerful force that provides vital support and creates enthusiastic advocates for the park's mission. Each year, approximately 700 volunteers donate more than **42,000 hours of their time** to the park — an effort worth an astonishing \$1.2 million in services and a priceless investment in building community connections. Volunteers perform backcountry patrols, wildlife surveys, astronomy and other interpretive programs, geologic research, and archaeological work. SNPT funding will help cover the cost of supplies, housing, uniforms, and vehicles, as well as the staff integral to coordinating this key program.

*Thank you to our donors and partners for making our achievements possible!*

**Will you help us do even more for Shenandoah in 2024?**

Scan the QR code or visit [www.snptrust.org/donate](http://www.snptrust.org/donate) to make a gift today.



### Views Forever

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$100,000**

Skyline Drive is an astounding hallmark of the National Park Service, boasting 75 overlooks with stunning views of the Shenandoah Valley to the west and the rolling Piedmont to the east. It remains one of the most visited recreational mountain roads in the United States, with more than 70% of park visitors only experiencing Shenandoah from overlooks. But many vistas are overrun by years of vegetative growth, blocking the landscape from view. With funding from SNPT, youth crews will work with arborists to maintain 15 overlooks, effectively reducing the maintenance cycle from 9 years to 5 years.

### Artist-in-Residence

**🌲 Funding Needed: \$20,000**

The Artist-in-Residence program invites professional artists to interpret the park's iconic landscape through traditional and contemporary media. Artists have a long history with our national parks—many early painters and photographers contributed to the establishment of national parks by revealing these amazing landscapes to the American public. In 2024, SNPT will fund five Artists-in-Residence, each of whom will spend three weeks in the park pursuing their artistic endeavors. During their residency, artists will lead public programs to share their experience and help park visitors think deeply about their time in Shenandoah.