

**PARKS AND RECREATION COUNCIL MEETING**

**LOCATION: Nature Center  
Lums Pond State Park**

**Thursday, November 1, 2018  
9:30 a.m.**

**AGENDA**

**Council Members**

Ronald Mears, Chairperson	Ronald Breeding, Vice Chairperson	Ed Lewandowski
Joseph Smack	Jan Durham	Edith Mahoney
Jim White	Isaac Daniels	

**Staff**

Ray Bivens, Director	Matt Ritter	Greg Abbott
Bob Ehemann	Esther Knotts	
Secretary Garvin	Matt Chesser	

**I. Introductions/Announcements**

- A. Chairman Ron Mears called the council meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and outlined the agenda for the meeting.
- B. Secretary Garvin was introduced and thanked the Council for serving. He also congratulated the Chairman for his 22 years of service on the Council.

The Secretary stated that he likes having a connection to all the DNREC councils. He does that through the Director.

The Secretary stated that State Parks needs to stay on the “cutting edge” and we are always evolving to meet the needs of the users. Maintenance and upkeep is always difficult. We are constantly trying to balance recreation and maintaining the resources while still keeping our fees low. The Secretary stated, “the Council’s role in the decisions we make is huge.” He said we will continue to look to them for guidance.

The Secretary shared his experience at Go Ape when he and the Governor visited during a recent eco tour.

The Lieutenant Governor’s Challenge 2.0 stresses the great parks that the State has and that they offer opportunities to get outside.

The Secretary said that all Delawareans have a “favorite park” and our challenge is to get them to leave their favorite park to see what our other State Parks have to offer.

The Secretary gave an overview of his career and shared that he was “born and raised” in Delaware and has never lived anywhere else.

Jim White stated that he travels the United States and Delaware's State Parks are the best parks he visits. "The way they are kept and managed is top notch", he said.

Jan Durham thanked the Secretary for working with the legislators to get funding for capital improvements. The Secretary stated that he is grateful for all the legislative support and shared that recently several legislators provided funding through CTF (Community Transportation Funds) dollars.

## **II. Official Business/Council Activities**

### **A. Approval of Minutes**

Ron Mears asked for Council approval of the August meeting minutes. Ron Breeding made a motion to approve the minutes. Edie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **B. Chairman's Report**

Ron Mears was appreciative of being able to get together and discuss the good things that are happening in the Parks system.

### **C. Council Member Reports**

#### **1. Fort Delaware Society- *Edith Mahoney reported.***

The Society administrative office now has a new heat and air conditioning unit.

The Society is working to clean up the library. They sell books and certificates online.

#### **2. Natural Areas Advisory Council- *Ed Lewandowski reported.***

Ed complimented the Division and staff on the work being done on the White Clay Creek masterplan.

The Natural Areas Advisory Council expects to see activity soon relating to construction at the Cavalier Country Club. They will monitor this activity.

Matt Ritter shared that this year's Vet Corps program included teams dedicated to the Natural Areas program in both the southern and northern regions of the State.

The Division is considering getting Green Grazer Goats to help with stewardship/maintenance efforts in areas of White Clay Creek and Brandywine Creek.

#### **3. Wildlife Management Committee- *Matt Ritter reported.***

A new archery hunting program was initiated at Brandywine Creek State Park (BCSP) for the 2018-19 hunting season on October 1. Thirteen pin sites – at which hunters are allowed to hunt from their own portable deer stands – and three temporary metal ladder stands were installed in the park by BCSP and ESP (Environmental Stewardship Program) staff. A tag board and sign-in sheet is located at the entrance to the BCSP Office/Nature Center. An on-site

lottery was conducted on the first day and the first Saturday of the hunting season which began on October 1. The season ends on Saturday, December 1. Hunters are allowed to harvest a deer of either sex. There is no Sunday hunting. As of October 30, hunters have harvested 10 bucks including a 180 pound 8-pointer and 3 does. Hunters have reported that they have seen very few does.

A new archery hunting program will begin at Thompson Island Nature Preserve on December 1. ESP and Park staff has identified seven pin locations in the “open” portion of the preserve. Staff are currently installing the final pins, and marking perimeters around the pins and marking access trails from the park trail to the pin locations. The season will run through January 31, 2019.

Delaware State Parks does not allow Sunday hunting. If the Division decided to change that, the Division is required by law to hold public meetings to receive public feedback. The Division of Fish and Wildlife would like to see expanded hunting opportunities. Secretary Garvin stated that we have to “balance” hunting with other forms of recreation.

ESP staff began conducting the annual deer spotlight surveys on Tuesday, October 16. As of October 30, we have conducted two surveys in each of the following parks; Trap Pond, Killens Pond, White Clay Creek, Brandywine Creek and Auburn Valley (including Oversea). The final surveys at Cape Henlopen and Lums Pond State Parks are scheduled for November 1. Totals for the first round of surveys are below:

Cape Henlopen- East-20 (2 bucks, 14 does, 2 fawns, 2 unclassified)  
Cape Henlopen – West-30 (6 bucks, 20 does, 2 fawns, 2 unclassified)  
Trap Pond - 17 (2 bucks, 13 does, 1 fawn, 1 unclassified)  
Killens Pond- 49 (5 bucks, 33 does, 7 fawns, 4 unclassified)  
White Clay Creek- 253 (30 bucks, 73 does, 55 fawns, 95 unclassified)  
Brandywine Creek- 60 (12 bucks, 26 does, 12 fawns, 10 unclassified)  
Auburn Valley- 68 (11 bucks, 34 does, 10 fawns, 13 unclassified)  
Lums Pond- 35 (5 bucks, 12 does, 11 fawns, 7 unclassified)

Ron Mears asked which park has the most need for hunting. Matt Ritter said White Clay. Ray said we get more community interest in hunting at Brandywine Creek than any other park.

4. Resident Curatorship Committee- Joseph Smack reported.  
The website has been update. It explains the program and process and provides a list of properties which are available for curatorship.

Concord Township Pennsylvania has reached out to Jim Hall to see how Delaware manages its program. Jim is sharing information with them.

Jim Hall and Sue Staats met with New Castle County to compare how the State of Delaware's program runs versus how the County program runs.

The Division will be hiring a seasonal employee to assist with running this program.

The curatorship at the Warrington House does not appear to be moving forward. In order to stabilize the property, Jim Hall will be requesting funding to replace the roof.

The Division's paralegal is working to develop a new resident curatorship agreement.

The Division was recently approached by a group looking for a commercial building for a glass blowing business. They were referred to the Fort Delaware Redevelopment Corporation.

### **III. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **IV. Staff Reports**

#### **A. Policy/Legislation- *Ray Bivens reported***

Ray shared that during the last session, the Resident Curatorship Bill was "wrapped up" and the Baynard Stadium Bill passed. He reminded the Council that the City of Wilmington owns Baynard Stadium.

As part of the legislative agenda, the Division is requesting summons-writing authority for our advanced seasonal patrol officers. This will be very helpful especially as it relates to the Division's pilot fee machine program and surf fishing compliance.

Biden Center received funding. The Division has a meeting scheduled next week to discuss steps necessary to turn the Center into an overnight education facility. The Secretary added that this will be an, "expensive venture". Ron Mears asked if it would be better to demolish the Biden Center. The Secretary stated that the building "has a lot of character and history". Matt Chesser stated that the building needs to be "gutted". He estimates that cost to readapt and renovate this building to be \$8M.

Ray shared that at the next Council meeting, the Division would like to discuss the possibility of increasing the cost of surf permits by \$10.00 and a small increase to lifetime passes. The Division is also considering limiting the number of surf permits issued each year to 17,000.

Ray discussed the fee machine pilot program and stated that he hopes to have approximately 20 fee machines installed in remote parking areas of the parks. Currently, the Division is piloting two machines; one at Holts Landing and the other at Alapocas Run. Matt Chesser stated that the machine is easy to use and since its installation at Alapocas Run, the machine has been used 800 times. The fee machines

eliminate the need for staff to complete RORs (report of receipts). The Division expects that through additional monies collected, the machines “will pay for themselves”.

**B. Section Updates-** A handout was provided to the Council and highlights were discussed. (see attached)

a. **Administrative Services-** *Greg Abbott shared highlights from the Park Council Report*

Ron Mears asked if there is an issue with criminal activity at Fox Point. Ray said the biggest issues we have occur in remote parking lots usually involving “smash and grabs” but Fox Point is no different than other remote areas.

Studies show mothers ages 25-44 make the decisions regarding family travel and vacations. The Division’s marketing team targets this group through social media.

In August, the Division unveiled its new website. Users are accessing the site using multiple different types of devices primarily through mobile (58.7%). The new platform is mobile friendly.

The number of social media followers continues to grow consistently. Between social media platforms and E-newsletter, the Division is engaging 75,961 people monthly.

The reservation page of the Aspira website has undergone a major renovation. It is now easier to use.

Because of the growth of our retail operation (37% increase in the last 3 years), the Division continues to focus on new retail opportunities within the Parks.

Twelve vendors attended the Facilities Management RFP pre bid meeting for Bellevue Hall, Judge Morris and Cauffiel Estate. Proposals are November 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Division worked with the Attorney General’s office to facilitate the auctioning of “dead boats” located at the Indian River Marina.

The Division will be holding a low digit surf tag auction from Black Friday through December 5<sup>th</sup>.

The AmeriCorps Veterans Conservation Corps accomplished many huge projects this summer. Future funding for this program is at risk due to changes in criteria that limits funding for Environmental Stewardship projects by CNCS.

Greg shared many highlights from the Friends’ summited reports. Ron Mears asked if every park has a Friends’ group. Greg stated that Fox Point is the only park that does not but the Friends of Bellevue include it in their efforts.

**Operations, Maintenance, and Programming-** *Matt Ritter shared highlights from the handout.*

Lums Pond hosts a lot of events which include pets and their owners.

Paranormal Tours at Fort Delaware sold out this season. Funds from ticket sales for the tours stay at Fort Delaware. Much of this money is used to pay the Fort's mason.

The Chilean Independence Day Festival was held at Bellevue. These diverse types of events are becoming more frequent.

WHYY did a story at the Zoo to highlight the conservation components of the zoo.

The Division is seeking to purchase mobile wheelchair accessible ADA hunting stands for several of our parks.

A total of 1844 raptors have been sited at the Cape Henlopen Hawk Watch since September 1. Matt Ritter will provide last year's numbers at the next Council meeting so that a comparison can be done.

All of the Piping Plover nests at Gordon's Pond failed this year.

A Spotted Lantern Fly was discovered at Brandywine Creek State Park. This destructive and invasive species is a real threat to agriculture. Jim stated that there were several found throughout the State.

The Division currently has three rangers in the State Police Academy. Once graduated, they will be assigned to Lums Pond, White Clay and Delaware Seashore.

Two Rangers (John Lister and Trevor Ditmore) and their K9 partners are currently in training with the Delaware State Police. K9 Leo will be assigned to Lums Pond State Park and will be used primarily in the northern parks. After his basic training, Leo will receive additional training in bomb detection. K9 Vos will be used primarily in the southern parks. After basic training, Vos will receive additional training in the detection of narcotics.

Delaware State Park Rangers carry NARCAN. Recently, a ranger at Trap Pond saved a life using NARCAN on park property.

Ron asked what the Friends of Trap Pond have done with the funds raised. Matt said that most recently, they installed a new playground and that they are always supportive of the park and staff.

b. **Planning, Preservation, and Development-** *Matt Chesser shared highlights from the handout.*

The SCORP (State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreations Plan) was signed by the Governor and the Secretary and has been submitted to the National Park Service for approval.

The railroad turntable which was delivered to the NVF site originated in the Chicago area and weighs nearly 39 tons.

Matt brought the Council up to speed on the Tower 3 project at Delaware Seashore State Park. Jim stated that he sees photographs of Tower 3 on social media all the time. He thinks it must be the most photographed location in the area. Ron Mears asked if the Delaware Seashore Preservation group is still active. Matt said they are a small group but they have done a lot of fund raising. Matt shared that Erni Felici hosts races and that one in particular, raised funds for this project. Matt shared that, “for several years in, they were getting \$30,000 for this cause.” Matt said the group has raised \$170K for the project and if they get another \$130K, the Longwood Foundation grant will “kick in” and they will have \$400K for the project.

The Killens Pond pedestrian walkway design is underway. This walkway will be very similar to the one located at Trap Pond.

This year the Division received more financial support from legislators donating CTF (Community Transportation Fund) money than any year previously. Representative Melanie George-Smith gave the Division \$250K in CTF money to install a playground at Lums Pond and to expand the playground at White Clay Creek. Representative Gray committed CTF funds (\$450K) and Senator Hocker committed \$50K for improvements to Holts Landing State Park including an overhaul of the parking lot and installation of a playground. Ron Mears asked the age range for playgrounds. Matt Ritter explained that the equipment installed has a manufacturer’s suggested age range, usually 2-5 years old and 5-12 years old. Matt Chesser stated that the Division usually tries to separate the equipment for the different age groups.

**V. Land and Water Conservation Trust Funds - *Bob Ehemann made a presentation and asked for the Council’s recommendation.***

Bob made a PowerPoint presentation for the Council outlining the requests for the 2018 Outdoor Recreation Parks and Trail Grant Cycle. He shared the scope of each park project and provided the details of each request. (Summary page will be attached to the minutes.) Requests were received for 12 park projects totaling \$573,533.00. Bob’s presentation was developed based on the recommendations by the ORPT (Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism) review committee who reviewed the applications in October. Ron Breeding made a motion that the Council accept the committee’s recommended projects in the amount of \$573,533.00. Jan Durham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Bob thanked the Council for their support over the past years. Bob will be relinquishing the management responsibility for ORPT grants to Park Planner Bill Miller. The Council commended Bob's work during the last 14 grant cycles.

## **VI. Old Business**

- A. Pickleball - Matt Chesser shared that the contractor (WRT) who was conducting the feasibility study for the pickleball courts has determined that the best location for the courts is outside of Park property. The contractor is working on a concept plan for that site and there are other negotiations for purchasing and acquisition for the site. This property is located near the Rt. 9 and Cool Spring Road intersection, mid-point between Georgetown and Lewes. This location will also serve as the trail head for the Georgetown to Lewes Rail Trail. The Division continues to work with the First State Pickleball group.
  
- B. Firearms in State Parks – Ron Mears shared that court determined that it was not illegal to have firearms in State Parks. Ray stated that concealed carry is allowed anywhere within Parks. Open carry is allowed “almost everywhere.” Maps will be updated to take campgrounds out of restricted areas. DNREC does not intend to pursue this issue.
  
- C. White Clay Creek Masterplan – Bill Miller stated that four open houses were held during the summer with a heavy emphasis on public input. An online survey was available from May thru August. Bill provided the Council with a copy of the results of the survey. (He did not interpret the results.) Bill stated that this is an “open process” and the Division is trying to share as much information as possible. Bill shared that the responses in the survey results were not verbatim but the categories are representative of all the comments. Bill said the comments have given him perspective on what the public thinks. Comments emphasized the natural setting of the park and the ability to get refuge from suburbia surrounding the park and showed diversity in areas of interest and how the park is used.

Ron Mears asked if there is an objective. Bill said yes, to determine short and long term goals for the Park. White Clay Creek State Park is our second largest park and has a lot of complexity in terms of geography, how it is laid out, and the different user groups involved. In addition, there has been staff turnover there. The objective is to have a path forward that is clear to everybody internally and externally. This will be a thoughtful process determining priorities and making a clear path forward.

The next step is to draft the preliminary draft of the masterplan. The Division plans to share the preliminary draft at an open house in late fall/early winter. The Division will use the feedback from this open house to develop a final draft of the masterplan. A formal public meeting will take place in late winter or early spring to share the final draft. Following that process, the Division will have a plan that will be in place for several years. Bill requested that the Council share information with the public and any groups or family and friends.

Ron Mears mentioned the previous study (done 10 years ago) at White Clay Creek. Matt Chesser said that was never finalized. Bill has ensured public involvement in the process this time.

Ron Mears also provided background on a public meeting that took place many years ago to discuss the possibility of small game hunting at White Clay Creek State Park. At that time, it was determined that White Clay Creek is a multi-use park and the Council did not support small game hunting. Ron hopes this issue is resolved.

Council asked if the Division has considered charging entry fees year-round. Ray said there are no plans for that.

- D. Baynard Stadium – Delaware State Parks will continue to manage Baynard Stadium through the spring sports season then Salesianum will take over the management of the stadium. Salesianum expects that construction will take 10-12 months to complete. Parks will continue to handle grass mowing and snow removal outside of the stadium. The stadium is expected to hold 4000-5000 spectators. Staff and Rangers will be relocated to a new office building.

Matt Chesser stated that the Fenton Barn at Brandywine Creek State Park is in danger of falling and damaging the historic Fenton House. The Division has tried to stabilize it. We have also tried to find partners interested in the barn. Right now, the building is buckling. A structural engineer inspected the barn and determined that it is a threat to the nearby house. The barn needs to be removed. The Division is communicating with New Castle County about plans to tear down the barn. The Division will try to tear it down to a safe height which will allow for interpretation of the site. The Division has “documented” the barn for historic and interpretive use. The Division has spent \$200K on the Fenton House in the last two years. Asbestos and lead have been removed and the windows have been replaced but the house cannot be occupied until the barn is removed.

## **VII. New Business**

### **VIII. Upcoming Events**

The dedication of the Auburn Valley State Park will take place on November 9. Ron Mears requested that Council members attend the event. Many Council members will be in attendance to see the Marshall Valley Bridge naming that day. Matt Chesser shared that a reception will be held immediately following the dedication.

The next Council meeting will be held at the Dover Public Library on January 17, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. The Division will introduce a plan to cap the number of surf permits issued during the season. The Division is considering a modest fee increase to the Lifetime passes and surf permits.

### **IX. Adjournment**

Ron Mears asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ed made a motion to adjourn, Ron Breeding seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

**Division of Parks and Recreation**  
**Parks and Recreation Council Report**  
**November 1, 2018**

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## Director's Office

### Personnel Updates

#### Esther Knotts

**Christopher Kohout** was hired as a Conservation Tech III at Delaware Seashore. Chris comes to the Division with nearly 40 years of experience working in the trades fields. Much of his career was spent with the City of Dover's Wastewater Department where he was employed as a crew leader.

**Kelly Brennan** was hired as the Administrative Specialist II at Delaware Seashore. Prior to accepting the merit position, Kelly worked for the Division as a casual seasonal employee responsible for completing report of receipts, overseeing scheduling, providing customer service, assisting with fiscal and usage reports.

**Richard Szutenbach** was promoted to Conservation Tech IV at Delaware Seashore. In addition to skills acquired while serving in the military, Richard has a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science, worked for five years maintaining a 100-unit apartment complex, and worked for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

**Patrick Thompson** was hired as the Park Manager at Alapocas Run. Pat has worked for Delaware State Parks for 14 years. He holds a degree in Recreation and Leisure Service Management and did his internship at Bellevue State Park in 2004. Pat has worked as a Park Patrol Officer, Seasonal Assistant Park Superintendent, Conservation Technician I-III, and as an Assistant Park Superintendent. During his time with Delaware State Parks, Pat has worked at Bellevue, Alapocas Run, Wilmington, and Brandywine Creek State Parks.

**Connor Smith** was hired as an Enforcement Trainee at Lums Pond. Connor spent several summers working for the Division as a seasonal Park Patrol Officer while attending Frostburg State University and earning his degree in Recreation and Park management with a concentration in Adventure Sports Management. Connor also worked seasonally in the boat house at Lums Pond and as a Revenue Supervisor. He holds two certifications as a Wilderness First Responder and Mountain Bike Guide.

**Travis Wilson** was hired as an Enforcement Trainee at White Clay Creek. Prior to accepting the merit position, Travis worked at Cape Henlopen as a seasonal park patrol officer. In addition to a degree in Parks and Recreation from Slippery Rock University and several related certifications, Travis has experience in retail/customer service.

**Tyler Beutler** was hired as an Enforcement Trainee at Delaware Seashore. Prior to accepting the merit position, Tyler worked at Delaware Seashore as a seasonal park patrol officer. In addition to an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice from Delaware Technical and Community College and related certifications, Tyler has experience in customer service.

**Jay Jolly** was hired as a Conservation Technician II at Cape Henlopen. Prior to coming to the Division, Jay worked in agriculture and as a painter/groundskeeper. He also has management and large equipment experience.

**Marc Mackay** was hired as a Physical Plant Maintenance Trades Mechanic III at Bellevue. Marc came to the Division from Pollinger Roofing Co., where he spent the last 15 years of his career. Marc has supervisory experience as a foreman, has extensive experience in roofing projects (residential, commercial and industrial), and holds certifications in welding and reading blueprints.

**Kyle Bradley** was hired as a Conservation Tech III at the Indian River Marina. Kyle comes to the Division with eight years of experience working in the trades field and possesses a strong background in construction and machine maintenance.

**Andrew Hyden** was hired as a Conservation Tech II at White Clay Creek. Prior to accepting the merit position, Andrew served as the seasonal Labor Foreman for two years at White Clay. In addition to working at the park, Andrew has worked as a machine operator, a general laborer and a property manager.

**Josh Fitzgerald** was hired as a Conservation Tech II at Alapocas Run State Park. Josh has 10 years of experience working in parks and grounds maintenance. Prior to joining the Division, Josh was an Assistant Orchard Manager. He has also worked as a Park Tech, a Nursery Tech, a Survey Tech and a Biological Science Aid. Josh has a Forestry related degree from Paul Smiths' College in Adirondack Park.

**Ron Fox** was hired as a Conservation Tech II at Wilmington State Parks. Ron has been a seasonal employee with the Division since April 2016. Prior to coming to the Division, Ron owned his own business. He also has 12 years of experience working as the general manager of a private company in Wilmington.

## **Administrative Services**

### **Greg Abbott**

## **Creative Services**

### **Administrative Services**

New website at [destateparks.com](http://destateparks.com): Highlights of website visitation from August 1 (*launch of new site*) to Oct. 9, per Google analytics

Total visitors during this period: 237,499

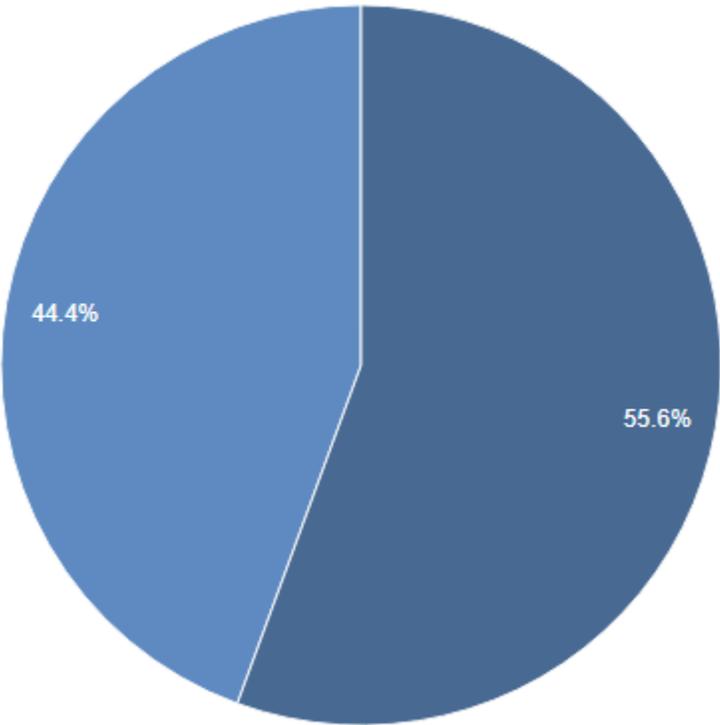
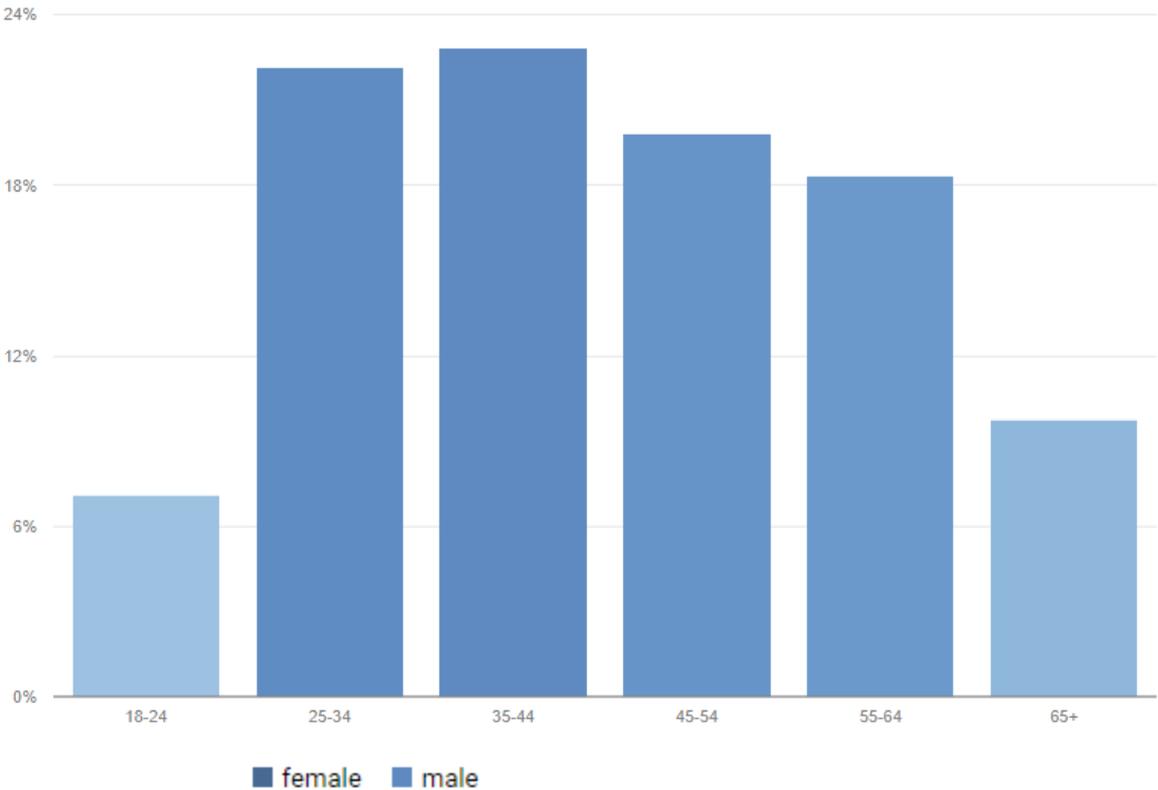
## Top 10 States

State	# of Visitors	# of Visits	Pages per Visit
	161,050	230,331	2.45
	% of Total:	% of Total:	Average per View:
	98.92%	99.01%	2.45
	-162,803	-232,631	-0.09%
Delaware	<b>48,580(28.66%)</b>	45.63%	2.49
Pennsylvania	<b>34,733(20.49%)</b>	44.85%	2.53
New Jersey	<b>21,846(12.89%)</b>	49.10%	2.34
Maryland	<b>19,576(11.55%)</b>	42.84%	2.58
District of Columbia	<b>16,830(9.93%)</b>	51.18%	2.17
Virginia	<b>8,571(5.06%)</b>	46.24%	2.46
New York	<b>6,038(3.56%)</b>	45.26%	2.6
Ohio	<b>1,293(0.76%)</b>	48.88%	2.54
Georgia	<b>1,236(0.73%)</b>	47.51%	2.47
Massachusetts	<b>1,022(0.60%)</b>	42.28%	2.67

## Ten most-viewed pages during this period:

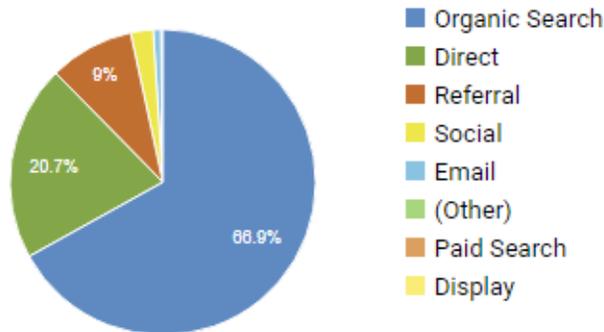
Page	Pageviews	# of Visitors	Average Time on Page
Home	<b>79,738(13.99%)</b>	57,851(13.13%)	0:01:01
Cape Henlopen	<b>53,089(9.31%)</b>	39,450(8.96%)	0:02:00
RV and Tent Camping	<b>38,854(6.82%)</b>	28,199(6.40%)	0:03:20
Find A Park	<b>25,402(4.46%)</b>	19,017(4.32%)	0:00:32
Delaware Seashore	<b>17,266(3.03%)</b>	13,013(2.95%)	0:01:48
Lums Pond	<b>16,522(2.90%)</b>	12,426(2.82%)	0:02:02
Killens Pond	<b>15,386(2.70%)</b>	11,688(2.65%)	0:01:14
Reservations	<b>14,432(2.53%)</b>	11,856(2.69%)	0:02:52
Killens Pond Water Park	<b>12,703(2.23%)</b>	10,480(2.38%)	0:03:11
Trap Pond	<b>12,675(2.22%)</b>	9,310(2.11%)	0:01:46

### Demographics: Visitor Age and Gender



## How visitors found us:

### Top Channels

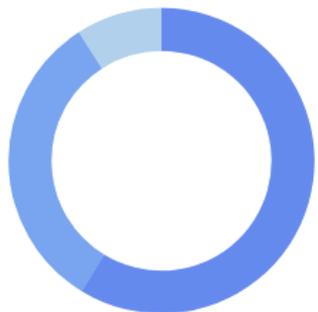


### Top Websites

- 1 google (search engine)
- 2 (direct) / (none)
- 3 bing (search engine)
- 4 visitdelaware.com (Delaware Tourism)
- 5 delawarestateparks.reserveamerica.com (Aspira, our reservation management company)
- 6 yahoo (search engine)
- 7 m.facebook.com (Facebook's mobile site)
- 8 Delaware State Parks Newsletter (e-mail)
- 9 dnrec.delaware.gov
- 10 visitwilmingtonde.com (Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau)

## Devices visitors used to visit our site

### Sessions by device



## Website Updates

The new website launched August 1 and has been well-received. Since then, completed 211 updates and additions have been completed, including the following additions and improvements:

### **Improvements:**

- Coded homepage cards (orange boxes displaying upcoming programs and marketing campaigns) to automatically switch to new text/photo on expiration
- Added Featured Program code to park pages, allowing important interpretive programs and special events to display near the top of the page as a highlighted item and disappear after event date has passed
- Purchased security certificates for both beta and production sites for improved visitor security and Google compliance, so URL now starts with *https* instead of *http*
- Created a system allowing emergency notifications to prominently display on individual park pages
- Converted 752 fall programs from Google calendars and added location info and keywords, allowing the user to filter programs by region and category on the *Find Events and Programs* page
- Created a system to show filled internship positions
- Added meta tags/keywords and Google Analytics code site wide
- Made changes to main navigation menu based on user feedback and page additions and changes
- Built an xml site map for improved searches and display on Google
- Contacted all parks for current addresses for employees who answer e-mails, updated contact form with current e-mail addresses, and added links to contact page throughout site
- Created spreadsheet for staff and sites linking to us, showing old URLs and their equivalent new URLs
- Added Google Translate to footer of all pages for instant foreign language translation of every page

### **New pages created:**

- Park Improvement Projects page
- Beach Patrol page
- Firearms Regulations page
- NRPA Gold Medal Award page
- Wilmington University Scholarship page
- Reservation Discounts page (displayed only when a discount is available)
- YCC page
- Park Publications page for annual reports and other downloads
- Resident Curatorship page
- FSHP Market Fair page

## Publications



The Creative Services team received two national awards in the Graphic Design USA (GDUSA) American Inhouse Design Awards competition, one for the Division’s 2016 Annual Report, and the other for the Fort Miles Museum logo. The GDUSA American Inhouse Design Awards highlight the extraordinary work, creativity and skill of premier in-house graphic designers and graphic design departments in companies, organizations, and institutions across the nation. While GDUSA receives thousands of submissions for the awards each year, only about 15% receive honors. Other winners this year include in-house graphic design groups for AARP, Pepsi, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Pella, and Boeing, among others. The team’s designs were featured in the August 2018 edition of *GDUSA* magazine.



### Number of print/design projects completed during this period: 47

#### Completed Projects: Highlights

- 2017 Annual Report
- One-sheets for Blue Ball Barn, Cauffiel House, and Judge Morris Estate, in support of the Division’s RFP for these locations
- Vehicle wraps: Working on update of Parks minibus wrap, and lead designer Shirley Blankers and photographer April Abel are offering assistance on a vehicle wrap design for DNREC’s Community Affairs Division.

## Other completed projects:

- 5 ads
- 4 banners
- 1 brochure
- 2 certificates
- 6 posters
- 1 rack card
- 3 signs
- 8 waysides

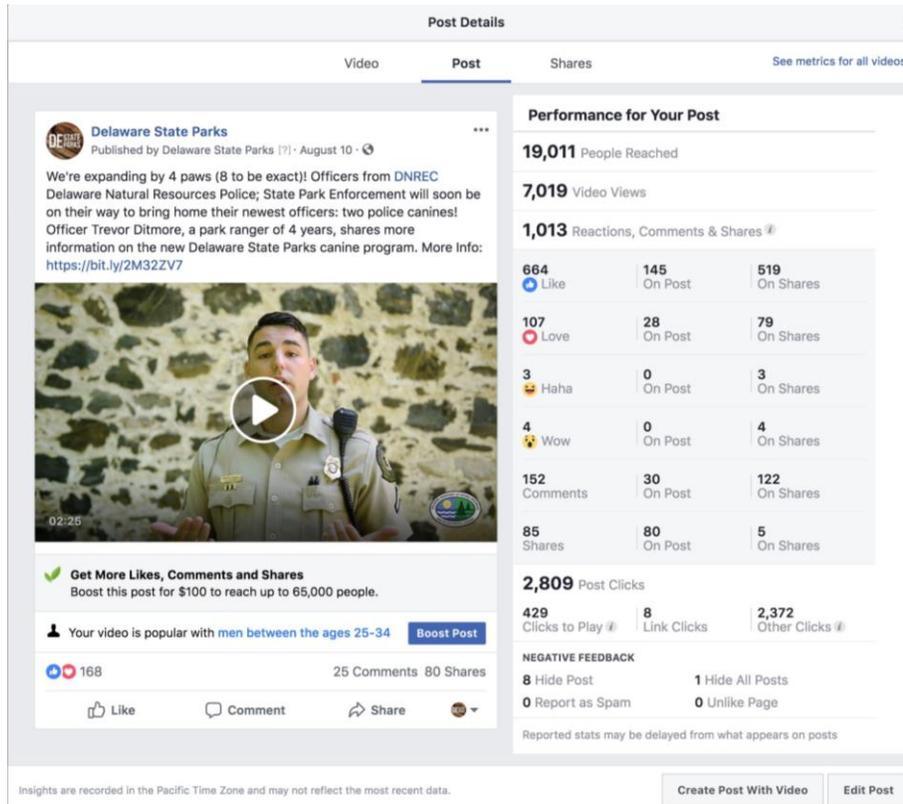
## Marketing Campaigns

- The Division had a presence at following events and expos as a vendor: The Fan Zone at the University of Delaware, the Governor's Cup 5K, Delaware Electric Co-Op Annual Dinner, and the Best of Delaware.
- The Division Partnered with University of Delaware for an annual collaborative social media contest. To enter, visitors had to share a Facebook post, and enter their email address into a form for extra entries. The winners received a free camping stay at Lums Pond, free tickets to a UD game, and a behind the scenes pre-game tour. The prize was presented on the field during the game along with a video and PA read about Delaware State Parks.
  - The contest received more than 300 entries, and 185 new subscribers to the e-Newsletter were signed up.

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post from 'Delaware State Parks' published on August 23. The post text promotes a contest where users can win a weekend getaway by sharing the post and commenting. The post includes two images: a white bus and a blue mascot. Below the images is a blue banner with the text 'SCORE A WEEKEND WITH UD AND DELAWARE STATE PARKS!'. The post has 8,863 people reached, 60 likes, 73 comments, and 81 shares. To the right of the post is a 'Performance for Your Post' analytics panel.

Performance for Your Post		
8,863 People Reached		
365 Reactions, Comments & Shares		
102 Like	77 On Post	25 On Shares
4 Love	3 On Post	1 On Shares
172 Comments	146 On Post	26 On Shares
87 Shares	81 On Post	6 On Shares
571 Post Clicks		
58 Photo Views	67 Link Clicks	446 Other Clicks
NEGATIVE FEEDBACK		
7 Hide Post	1 Hide All Posts	
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page	

- Canine Campaign: The Division selected two new canine rangers to join the State Parks enforcement team. The Marketing Department did a two-week campaign to follow the rangers through the process of selecting the dogs. The campaign included photos, videos, and information over Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and the Adventure Blog. **The campaign had a total reach of an audience of more than 74,500.**



- The Division is working with Miles Media to create a new Welcome Video for Cape Henlopen State Park. The final product will be shown in the Seaside Nature Center and the Park Office, as well as used for social and digital advertising.
- The Division collaborated with the Big Chill Beach Club for a summer-long photo contest. The contest received more than 230 entries, and the winners won a Big Chill gift card and a stay at the Indian River Marina cottages.
- The Division is preparing to host the annual Southeastern State Parks Programs Seminar in December 2018. The website is live, and registration is now open.

## Marketing and Advertising Channels

- Discount e-Newsletter
  - The Division is initiating a new Discount e-Newsletter that will be sent out to a list of 8,000+ subscribers several times per year. The discount newsletter will promote camping deals, discounts, and promotions. Example below.



## DELAWARE STATE PARKS

YOUR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE STARTS HERE



### Save up to 25% at Lums Pond State Park

Book your weeknight stay and use the code [41CY178Y] at checkout. Discount available select night until December 31, 2018. Click below for details.

Reserve Now

### Discover Fun for Everyone at Lums Pond State Park

Lums Pond State Park offers fun for the whole family. During your stay, enjoy one of our many unique park offerings and make the most of your visit.



#### Go Ape! at Lums Pond

Zip through the trees on the Go Ape! Tree Top Adventure Course at Lums Pond State Park [Learn More»](#)



#### Find a Program

Find family friendly programs to participate in during your getaway. [Find a Program»](#)



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Our mailing address is:  
89 Kinds Highway Dover, DE 19901

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

You are receiving this email because you opted in to receive Delaware State Parks discount information at our website, when making a Delaware State Parks camping reservation, or by request.

- The Division's media buying advertising plan brought 14,737 visitor walk-in visitors directly resulting from digital display ads.

### SITO Park Walk Ins

Month	Walk Ins	Spend	C/Walk In
April	301	\$ 7,192.37	\$ 23.89
May	3586	\$7,250.71	\$ 2.02
June	2925	\$6,978.23	\$ 2.39
July	2777	\$7,158.93	\$ 2.58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14,737</b>	<b>\$34,124.83</b>	<b>\$ 2.32</b>

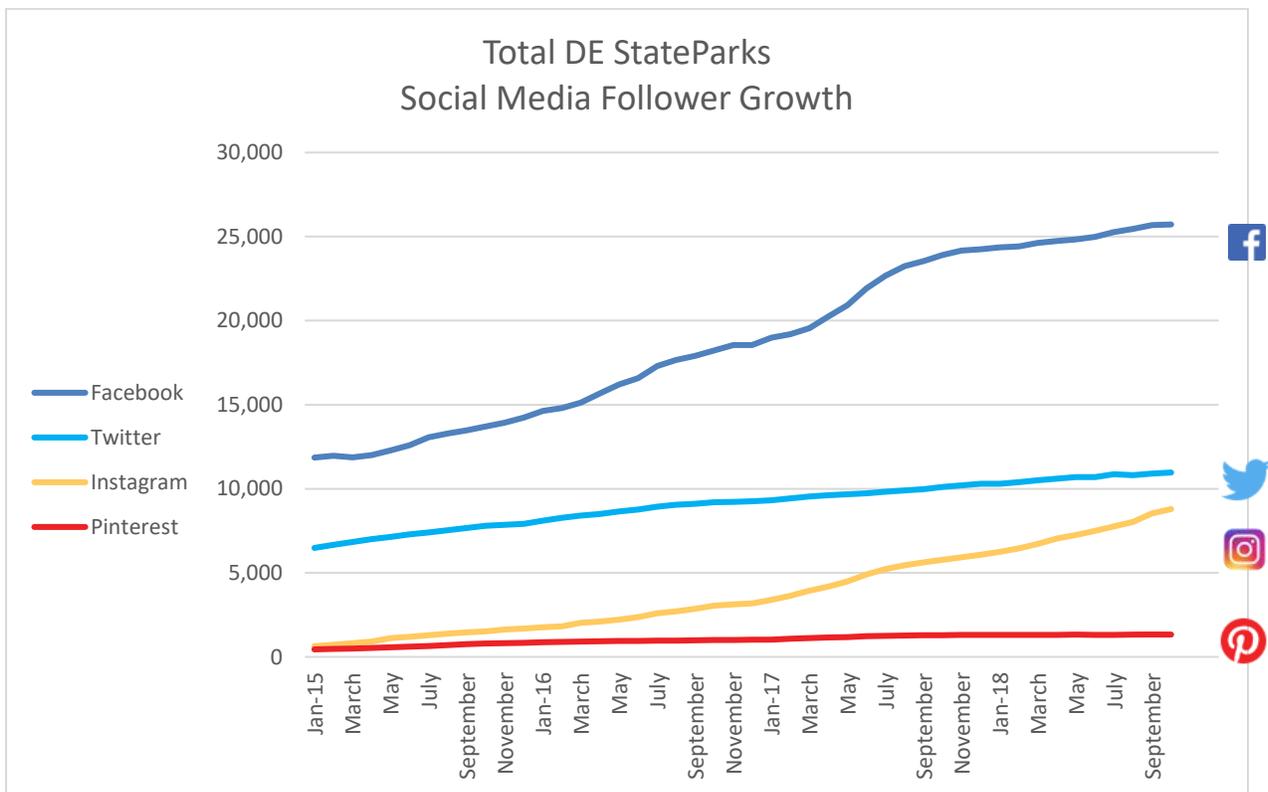
Insights:

- C/Walk average \$7.72
- from April - July
- Daily Average Walk

### Social Media Achievements

#### Division Social Media Breakdown

- Facebook: **25,719 (1.8% growth since July)**
- Instagram: **8,791 (13.2% growth since July)**
- Twitter: **10,966 followers**
- Pinterest: **1,330 (1.14% growth since July)**

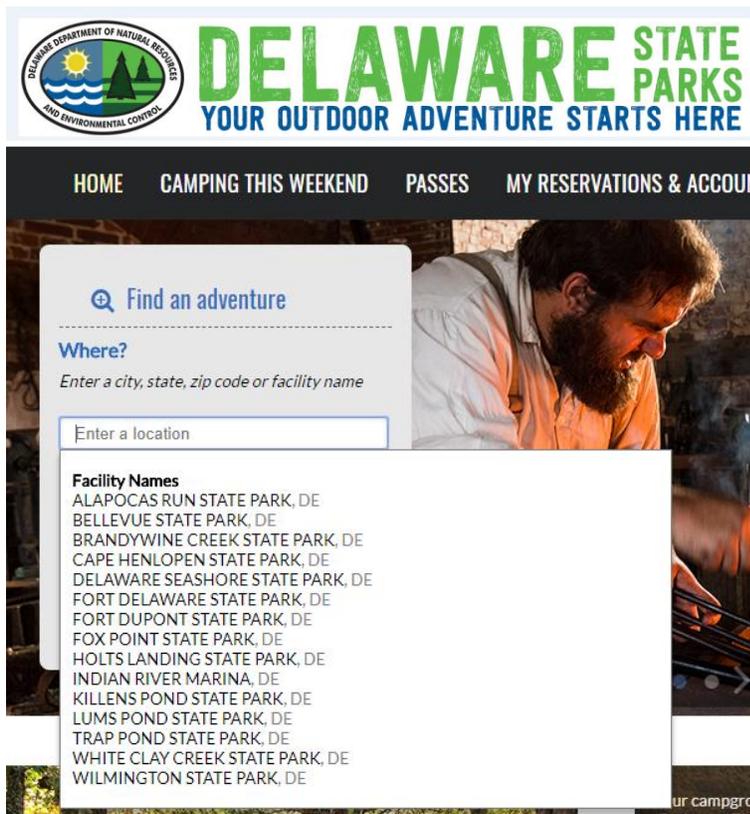


## Division E-Newsletter Statistics

- Number of current subscribers: **29,155**
- Number of new subscribers since last report: **268**
- Number of newsletters sent since last report: **4**
  - **Clicks per Open:**
  - 33% (July)
  - 25.6% (August)
  - Previously Averaged in 17-20% range

## Business Services

The updated Delaware State Parks Reservation Website went “live” to the public this summer. The new version has an updated look and offers better response to visitors search functions. A drop down list takes visitors directly to any one of Delaware’s State Parks web pages. The new web search provides the ability to select camping, picnic and pavilions or tours or other ticketed reservation activities. The web site employs more Social Media tools and channels to provide visitors with greater access to many park offerings and programs. Behind the scenes, a web site analytics application was added to provide enhanced ability to track click traffic. This will help us to ensure that our visitors are getting the best web experience possible.



The Division is also receiving new Facility Rating Reports where customers “rate” and provide feedback about our facilities.

**Rating for Lums Pond State Park received on September 27, 2018 - Rating \*5\***  
*“Lums Pond State Park is a beautiful, quiet and very clean campground. My family and I really enjoyed our weekend trip and can't wait to come back!”*

## Retail Operations

**Retail Sales Comparison FY2016-2018**



Retail Operations have seen a significant growth this past Fiscal Year with upgrades to Cape Henlopen State Park and strong revenue in the inland pond region. Compared to FY17, Retail Sales grew \$124,645.81 in FY18.

Top selling items included apparel, handmade pottery dishes, jewelry and collectables, stuffed animals, maps, decals, popular food items, ice, fire wood, and camping necessities.

*Picture shows our rustic Trap Pond Camp Store, which is stocked well and supporting our park patrons.*



## **Contracts, Agreements and Concessions:**

### Request for Proposals (RFP) on the Market:

- Facility Management for Events, Catering or Food Services at Bellevue Hall/Judge Morris Estate/Cauffiel Estate and Catering and Event Booking and Management Services at the Blue Ball Barn – These four RFPs will provide services for these sites; proposals are due from the vendor community no later than November 15.

### Request for Proposals (RFP) or Invitation to Bid (ITB) in Development:

- **State Park Reservations, Point of Sale, Ticketing, Registration, Licensing, and Program Management** – this RFP is in the final stages and will engage the vendor market for Reservation and Point of Sale System software and support; the current contract with vendor Aspira expires November 2019.
- **Retail Sales for Delaware State Park Camp Stores, Nature Centers and Park Offices** – this contracted service will provide a “one-stop-shop” for the Retail Services team to procure retail sales items; the RFP is being drafted due to increased revenue in the Retail Sales program and requirements to adhere to State of Delaware procurement thresholds.
- DNREC is considering legislation to allow for flexibility with Retail Sales procurement that would enable the Division to meet customer expectations and compete in the surrounding retail market.
- **Property Management** – this RFP will potentially be a multi-awarded contract to manage Division-owned rental properties (and future owned properties) statewide.

### Minor Agreements/Amendments:

- Parkeon – Trial Agreement for automated fee collections at Alapocas Run State Park and Holts Landing State Park.
- Radio Control Club – New Agreement with the Radio Control Club at Lums Pond State Park to continue operating for the club and general public’s benefit.
- Delaware FFA Association – Memorandum of Agreement to book Cape Henlopen Youth Areas and Field outside of the lottery process.

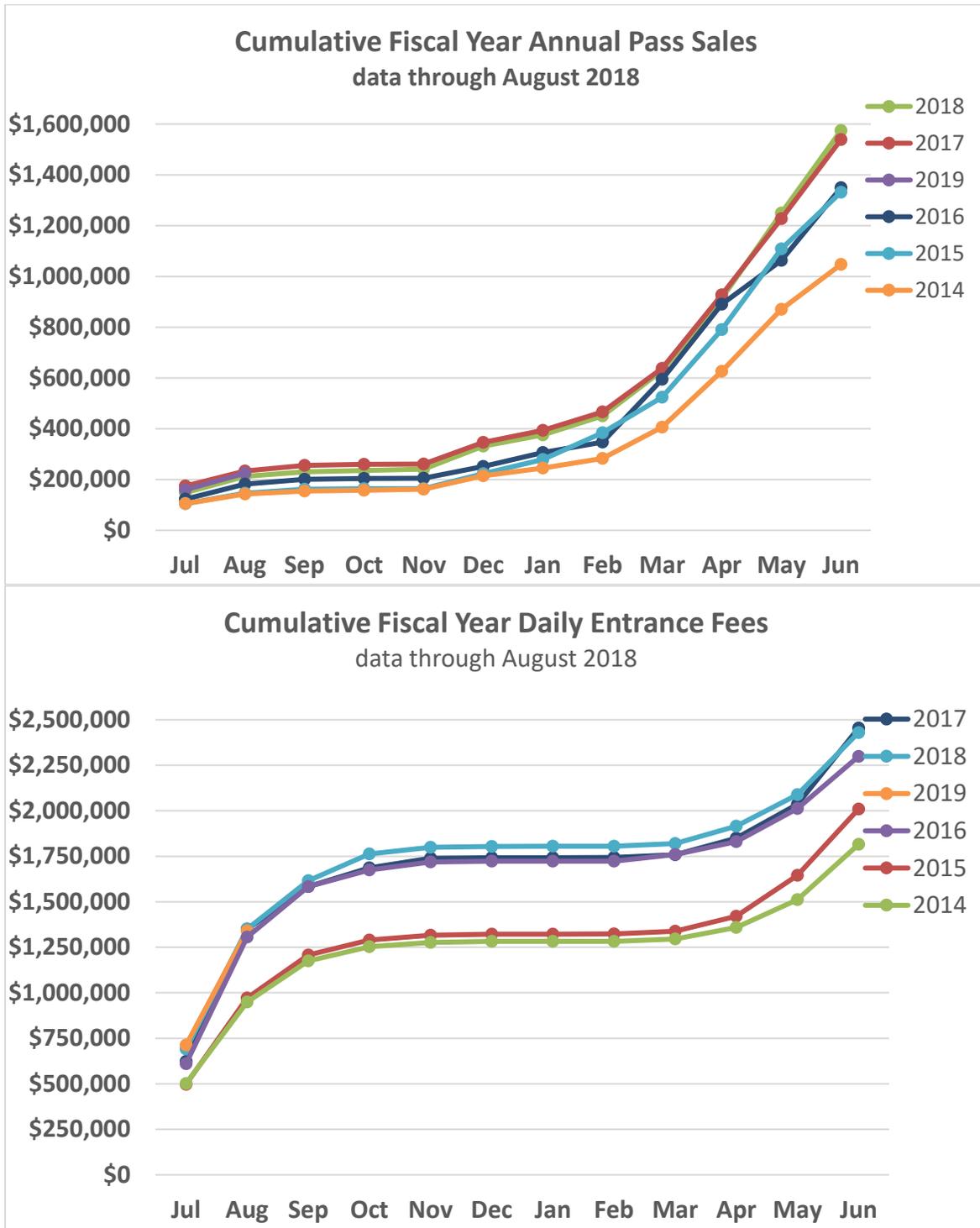
### Notable Mentions:

“Dead Boats” at the Indian River Marina are moving out. Abandoned boats left due to non-payment for storage or boats that have come to be on Marina property without an agreement are being auctioned.

## **Parks by the Numbers:**

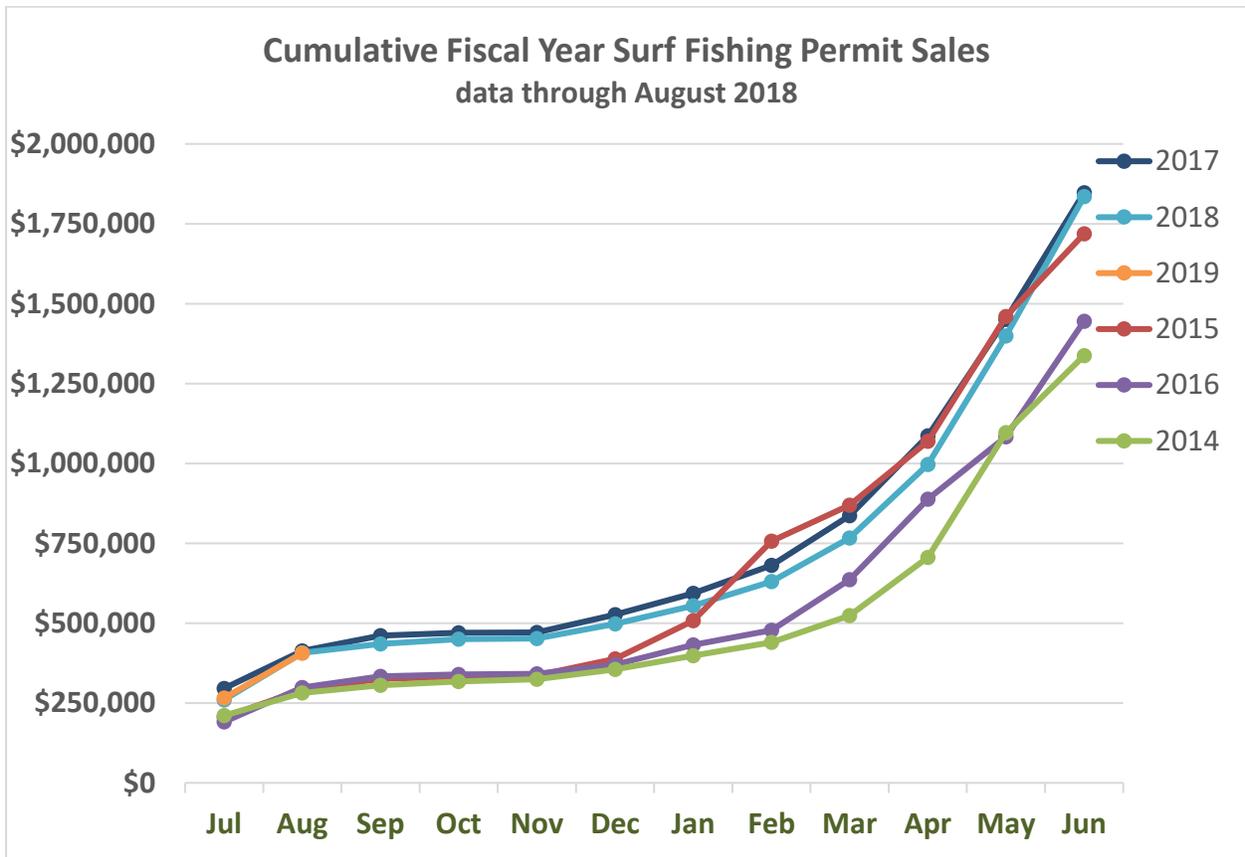
Financial data for park entry sales in September was not complete at time of report generation so only data from July and August was included in the charts below. Revenue from annual permit sales for July and August of fiscal year 2019 is roughly comparable to FY17 and FY18; both of which were record years with more than \$1.5M in annual permit sales.

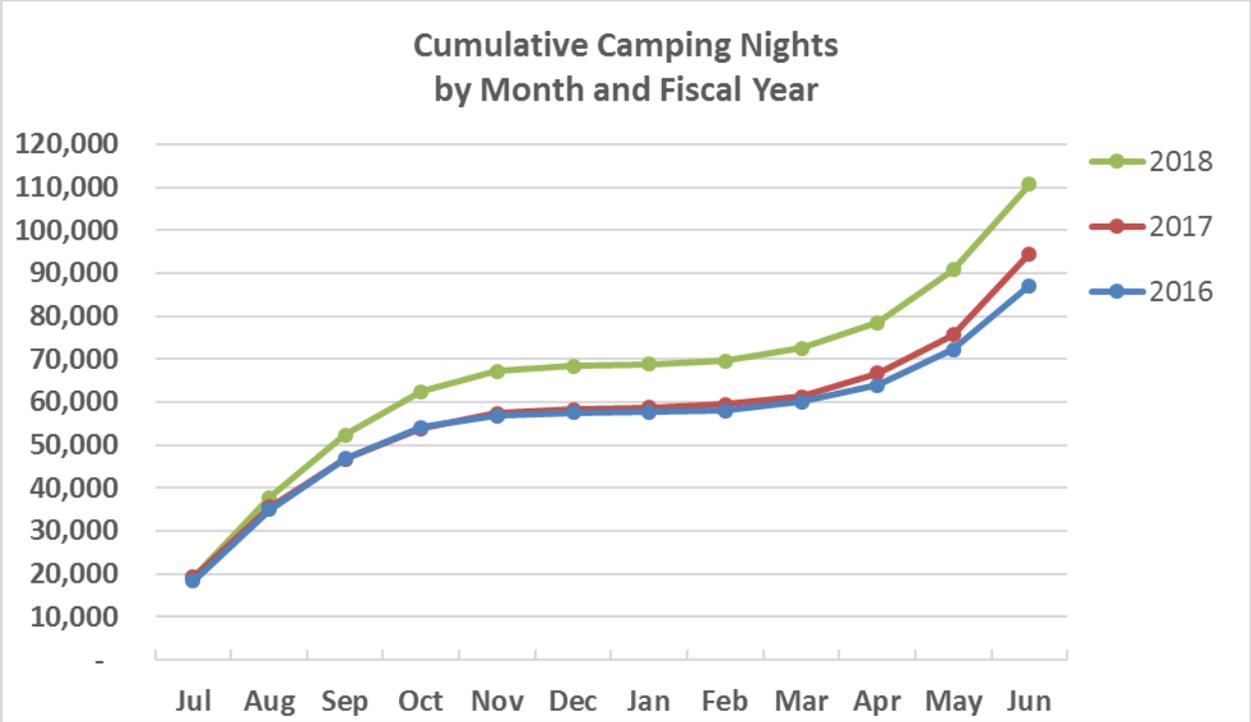
Fiscal Year 2019 Daily Entrance Fee revenue for July and August is matching the sales pattern of FY17 and FY18, both of which brought it more than \$2.4M in revenue.



Surf Fishing Permit sales for fiscal year 2019 are on track to match record sales in FY17 and FY18 each of which totaled more than \$1.8M.\*

The number of camping nights (sum of occupied RV, Tent, Cabin and Cottages sites at all parks) grew dramatically in fiscal year 2018 with the completion of major renovation at Cape Henlopen campground in spring of 2017 and continued growth in business at newly renovated Lums Pond campground.\*





**Business Development Opportunities**

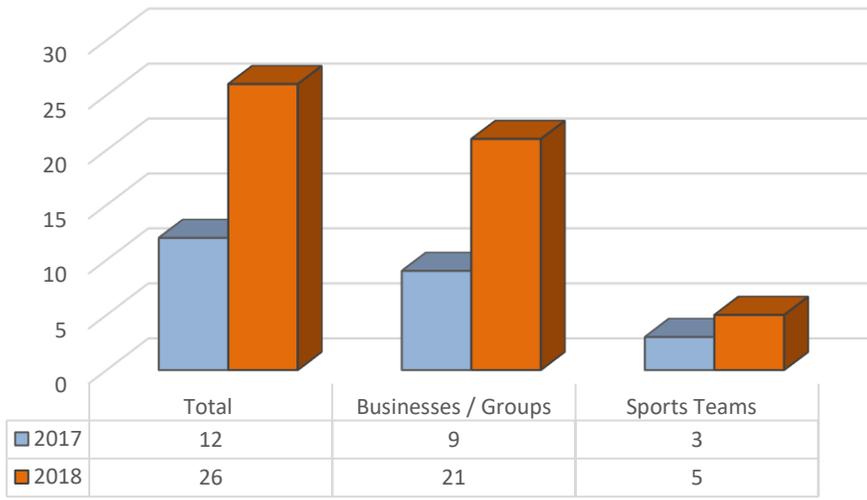
Current projects include assisting Business Services with the research and outreach for the Catering and Event Booking and Management Services out for bid until November 15.

Future projects include request for proposals (RFPs) for properties including the Lamborne Estate, Krapf House, and the Krantz Farm all located within White Clay Creek State Park. Delaware’s Government Support Services is assisting the Division in the writing of these RFPs.

**Corporate Pass Program**

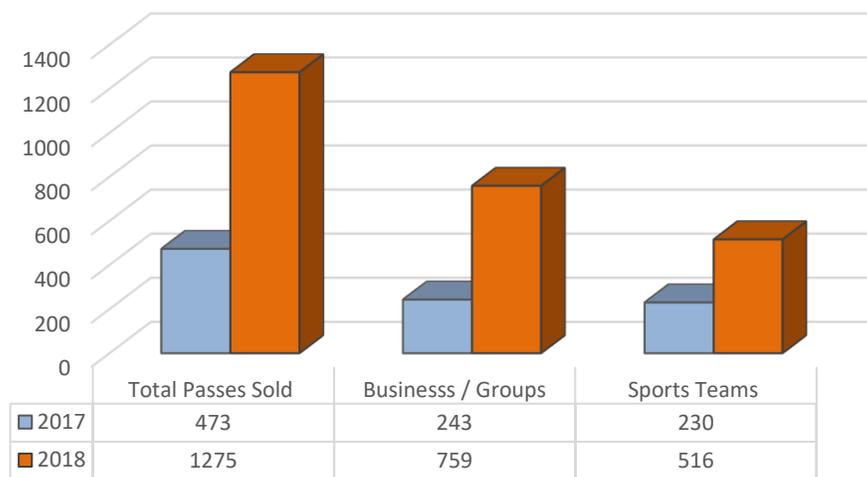
The Corporate and Group Pass Program continues to see exceptional growth. The charts below show both our Business/Group Pass sales as well as the Sports Team sales. Sports teams are classified as a group with the main purpose of purchasing passes for recreational use of the parks athletic facilities including cricket fields, disc golf and cross country courses.

2017 v. 2018 Organization Breakdown

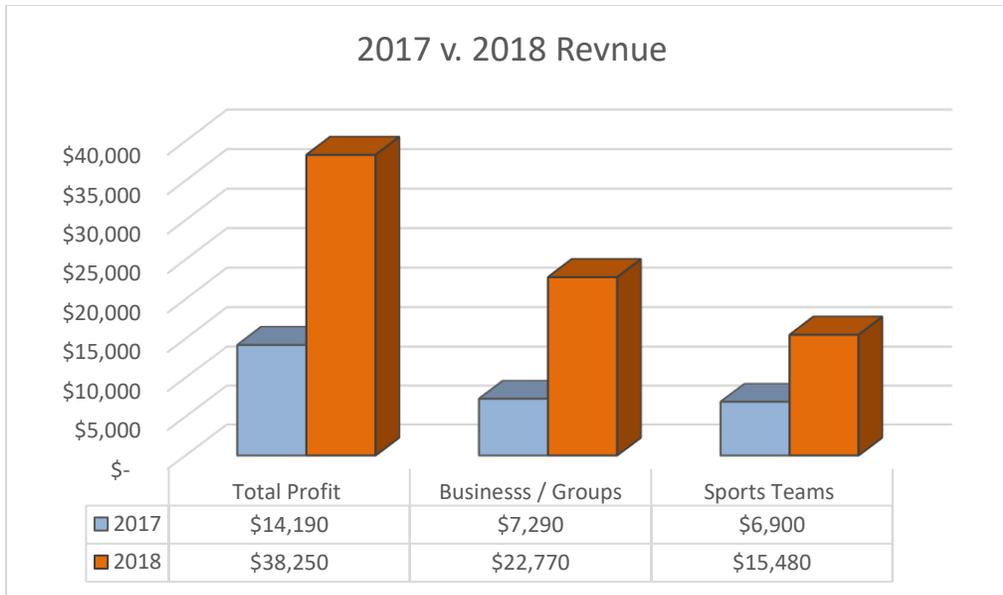


**116.66% Increase from 2017 to 2018**

2017 v. 2018 Passes



**169.55% Increase from 2017 to 2018**



**169.55% Increase in revenue from 2017 to 2018**

#### Delaware State Parks Lifeguard Stands

	Total signs	Signs on display	Capacity %	Profit after cost
<b>2016</b>	60	21	35%	\$16,200
<b>2017</b>	60	38	66.33%	\$23,215
<b>2018</b>	34	34	100%	\$24,605

In previous years, advertising signage space was sold for both sides of our lifeguard stands which ultimately proved to be hazardous for lifeguards when entering and exiting the stands. Removal of the side-of-stand signs decreased the sign count from 60 to 34 but with additional sales and increasing advertising costs we increased profits by 5.98%.



**Main Stand-  
2 signs per back**



**Standard Stand-  
1 sign per back**

This year we began advertising opportunities at Killens Pond Water Park. Total revenue for 2018 was \$2,000.

## Partnerships

Wilmington University Scholarship Program

In 2018, we expanded the Wilmington University Scholarship to now support the following groups:

- Delaware State Parks Beach Patrol
- Killens Pond Lifeguards
- Delaware State Parks Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)
- Delaware State Parks Veterans Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps)

Our hope is to use these scholarships as a recruitment tool for Parks employment. We also have begun conversations with other Delaware colleges and universities with hopes to expand the scholarship offerings. In exchange for the scholarship donation, Wilmington University receives the following advertisement space:



### 2018 Lifeguard Stand Locations

Cape Henlopen Beach  
Main Stand

Tower Road Beach  
Main Stand

Fenwick Beach  
Main Stand

## Volunteer and Community Involvement

Volunteer Totals

Period	Hours	Volunteers	Hrs/Vol	FTE	Value
July - September	36,218.75	636	57	18.5	\$362,180

**Top by Volunteer Hours: July - Sept 2018**

Volunteer Hours by Park:

- |                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| 1) Cape Henlopen | 5,555 |
| 2) Trap Pond     | 3,729 |
| 3) Zoo           | 3,640 |
| 4) Killens Pond  | 3,132 |
| 5) DSSP          | 2,867 |

Type of Volunteer:

1) Interns	14,289	63	227/intern
2) Host	8,671	31	280/Host
3) Vet Corps	5,403	34	159/member
4) Friends	3,071	76	40/Friend

**Volunteer Activity:**

1) Operations and Maintenance	9,615
2) Environmental education	6,370
3) Administration	3,512
4) Trails	3,447
5) History	2,704
6) Special Events	7,044

**Youth Conservation Corps (YCC):**

Summer 2018 saw the successful completion of the fifth year of YCC with 67 participants ranging in age from 14 to 26. Members were placed in 12 of the parks and on four traveling teams working with parks and community partners.

In 2018, the program has grown to 67 members statewide, conducting meaningful work on four traveling teams, and in critical summer staffing positions within the parks. (2017 – 58 members, 2016 – 42 members, 2015 – 23 members, 2014 – 15 members).  
Total Hours completed: 12,654

**Member Breakdown:**

County:

New Castle – 23 (9 of the members are funded through NCCSYEP)  
Kent – 31  
Sussex – 13

**Program Grantors:**

Capital One  
Chesapeake Bay Grant  
DNREC – Division of Parks and Recreation  
State Office of Volunteerism  
New Castle County Summer Youth Employment Program (NCCSYEP)



### **Interns**

- Total number of active interns: **79**
- Total number of sites with active interns: **16**

### **Positions**

- Environmental Education and Research
- Outdoor Summer Camp Counselor
- Field Stewardship and Research
- Historical Interpretation and Research
- Outdoor Skills
- Park and Program Management
- Operations Administration Assistant
- Research and Policy
- Hospitality and Facility Management
- Brandywine Zoo Animal Care/Education and Research
- Policy and Communications
- Children in Nature
- Conservation Easement Monitor
- Enterprise Development
- Campground Management
  - Five Internships Outside of Parks
    - 3 positions at **DNERR**
    - 1 position at **DuPont Nature Center**
    - 1 position at **AREC**

## New Positions

- Marina Boat Ramp Attendant – DSSP IRM
- Outdoor Environmental Education Guide – DSSP
- Visitor Experience Intern – Dover
- Facility Coordinator – CHSP
- Hospitality Management – TPSP
- Marketing – R & R
- Park Operations Assistant – KPSP
- Park Operations Assistant – AHP
- Environmental Educator - AREC

## Applications

- **239** applications received
- **148** different Colleges, Universities, or High Schools
- Candidates from **28** different states
- Age Range: **17 – 40**

### Candidates by home state:

1. Delaware	145
2. Pennsylvania	53
3. Maryland	19
4. New Jersey	16
5. New York	13

### Applications by College/University:

1. University of Delaware	79
2. Penn State University	10
3. Delaware Valley University	7
4. Delaware Technical and Community College	7
5. Delaware State University	5

## AmeriCorps Veterans Conservation Corps

- The teams assisted with storm cleanup at Garrisons Lake, removed invasives, and kept the trails clear for visitors.
- The program was invited to Washington DC to participate in a *Get Outdoors* day of service with The Corp Network, CNCS, and the National Park Service. Our program was identified and invited to do the heavy chainsaw work in the area of the service project. We ran six chainsaw crews while volunteers from other Conservation Corps removed the debris.

The 2017 – 2018 program year ended in August with a celebratory dinner.

Highlights from the 2017 – 2018 program year included:

21 members successfully completed the program (five veterans and 16 military family members)

Members served 22,469 hours

Treated 549 miles of trails which exceeded the grant goal by 9%

Treated 959 acres which exceeded the grant goal by 91%



### **White Clay Creek and Brandywine Creek State Parks**

In July, Brandywine Creek State Park hosted a Regional Intern Outreach Day work event. More than 60 interns from 10 different organizations worked on three different conservation projects and worked 177 volunteer hours.

A group of individuals removed invasive plants around the Judge Morris Estate every week. The group recorded 300 hours from July to September and do not plan on stopping any time soon.

Two members help the trails crew create new trails, repair mountain biking obstacles and build bridges. Combined they gave 500 hours from July through September.



### **Cape Henlopen, Delaware Seashore, Holts Landing and Fenwick Island**

#### Picnic Bench Assembly

Capital One Auto Financing of Parkton, Maryland brought 10 of their employees to *Delaware Seashore State Park* on a hot, sunny August 27 to help build picnic tables.



#### Coastal Clean-Up

Members covered nine beachfront locations in the Coastal Region for Coastal Clean-Up: Main Beach, Fishing

Pier, The Point, and Gordon's Pond at Cape Henlopen; Keybox, North Inlet, South Inlet, Holts Landing, and Fenwick Island at Delaware Seashore.

### Volun-Teens

A new, young, small but dedicated summer Volun-Teens effort was launched at Cape Henlopen on July 17 and met every Wednesday morning at a specific location in the park through August 21. Volunteers teamed up with Environmental Stewardship interns and site supervisor, Andrew Hansen identifying and removing invasive species at locations like Junction and Breakwater Trail, Herring Point, Fort Miles Historical Area, and the Seaside Nature Trail.

### **Brandywine Zoo**

This year's Brew at the Zoo was the largest one yet with more than 400 attendees. A group of about 10 came from Bank of America and the family of a nonverbal autistic volunteer and his caretaker to help with setup. During the event, interns from the zoo volunteered on their own time, members from Alpha Zeta at University of Delaware (honors professional Agricultural fraternity) volunteered, and two members of our volunteer community.

### UD Agriculture and Environment Meetup

Staff represented the Brandywine Zoo and Delaware State Parks at the University of Delaware's Agriculture and Environment's tabling event on September 24. Staff talked with about 24 potential applicants and collected a similar number of resumes.

### Chase Bank Employee Appreciation Day

Staff represented the Brandywine Zoo and Delaware State Parks at the Chase Bank Employee Appreciation day and gave a speech on stage about the impact of corporate volunteers and future opportunities.

### **Killens Pond and Trap Pond State Parks, First State Heritage Park, Central Office**

- The Dover Police Youth Academy's 17 cadets and four chaperones came out to Killens Pond State Park on Thursday June 21. The seventeen cadets and four chaperones did an amazing job adding stone dust to the entrances of each of the Parks eleven cabins and walkways.



## **Friends Updates**

### **Friends of Auburn Heights**

In July, the Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve hosted the 2018 Eastern Invitational Steam Car Tour, with 38 operating steam cars (and more than 120 operators and passengers) visiting from 24 states, Canada, and Australia for a week of touring the region.

We published our first book – *How It Was: Selections from Tom Marshall's Weekly News* – in both limited hardback and paperback editions, 298 pages, with more than 120 archival images.



### **Friends of Bellevue State Park**

The Friends provided funds for stipends for three summer interns.

Ten motion detecting solar lights were provided to Park Ranger, Dave Redgraves, to improve security around Bellevue Hall, the Figure 8 Barn and the main parking lot.

The Friends submitted a grant request to the Longwood Foundation for repairs to the Mt. Pleasant Meeting House's stained glass windows.

The Friends are helping to restore the historic Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. Grants funds were obtained from the Eastern Brandywine Hundred Council and the Fox Point Association to have Materials Conservation restore eight priority 1 headstones, several priority 2 markers and to train the Friends and other volunteers to clean the remaining markers. Most of the work is now completed. The metal gates to the cemetery need stripping and repainting.

Friends Board Member, Don Blythe, has successfully coordinated a major effort to fund and obtain an historic marker to be placed in front of the Mt. Pleasant Meeting House complex. Unveiling and dedication of the sign was scheduled for October 2018.

The summer concert series was a great success. The Friends worked every Sunday Concert over the 10-week series selling 50/50 tickets and sponsoring a beer garden and food trucks. The group raised \$12,000 for park projects.

Work continued on the Music Garden with weeding, watering and new plantings.

### **Trap Pond Partners**

The Trap Pond Partners were awarded the 2018 DNREC Volunteer of the Year Award for Friends Groups. The Award Ceremony took place on Thursday, July 25 at the State Fair.



### **Friends of Killens Pond**

The Friends hosted an entertaining Summer Concert Series with weekly raffles, refreshments and sharing information about the Friends and other park event and programs.

The group's successful Floral Design Class under the direction of master gardener Wendy Aycoth continued in September.

Monthly trail and garden maintenance occurs on the second and fourth Thursdays and every third Sunday each month with continued upkeep of park trail pathways, weeding and general beautification of the park.

### **Fort Miles Historical Association**



July Sketching Awards Event, Dedication of the Fort Miles Flyover painting by Paul Rendel. First ever sketching event. Subjects were taken from the April 28th Re-enactment and open house hosted by FMHA and Cape Henlopen State Park. Recognition was given to the top three sketchers. Also on that occasion FMHA dedicated the Fort Miles Flyover painting by Paul Rendel. Attending were the owner and crew of the Ponchito, B25 Bomber hangered in Georgetown DE, which was the main subject of the painting.

Finalized the FMHA new Mission and Vision Statements - The FMHA and State Parks Partnership worked together in an all-day planning session in the spring and followed up during the summer to generate a finalized version of the new Mission and Vision statements which will serve to guide our team through the creation of the Fort Miles Museum and beyond.

Red White and Blue Day in Rehoboth Beach - our newly refurbished 90MM gun - secured in partnership with Delaware State Parks and restored by the FMHA Bunker Busters. Board members and Bunker Busters staff the FMHA tent to share our story with the many visitors and to honor the local veterans and first responders.



Friends of Wilmington Parks Members and neighbors enjoyed a summer concert series in two Wilmington Park locations, the Sugar Bowl Pavilion and Rockford Park, complete with food trucks, dessert trucks, visual artists and terrific musical talent!

An opportunity to “paint in the parks” was offered during four concerts, including the finale at the Sugar Bowl, where we partnered with local nonprofit FourYouth, which fosters the development of underprivileged youth through educational programs.

The Friends, in partnership with Delaware State Parks, offered 19 concerts throughout the summer of 2018, attended by over 3,000 visitors.

### Foodie Fridays

Fridays are fun at the Blue Ball Barn. Friends of Wilmington Parks, in partnership with Delaware State Parks, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Urban Bike Project, Delaware Greenways and Mike Stanley, owner of Wildwich, supported four Foodie Fridays in the summer with a grand finale on Friday, October 19. Wilmingtonians and friends enjoyed live bands, a food truck “throw down,” and cold drinks on balmy nights under the stars and courtyard lights during these family and pup friendly events.

### Volunteerism

Volunteerism within the local community is alive and well. The Rose Garden and Josephine Fountain continued to dazzle throughout the summer months, and volunteers kept plants happy and pruned to perfection.

# Operations, Maintenance and Programming

## Matt Ritter

### Inland Pond Parks

#### Lums Pond State Park

The Delaware Remote Control Club's *Warbirds Over Delaware* event was held at Lums Pond from July 9 through 15. There were more than 120 registered pilots, about 400 airplanes and at least 600 spectators.

The Cape Gazette Published an article about Camp New Hope which was recently held at Lums Pond:

[capegazette.com/article/camp-new-hope-helps-kids-who-have-experienced-loss/161092](http://capegazette.com/article/camp-new-hope-helps-kids-who-have-experienced-loss/161092)

Over 200 people participated in the Kinetic Multi-Sports Triathlon held at Lums Pond on September 8. More than 200 people attended the "*Companions in the Campground*" event at Lums Pond on September 29, organized by Gatehouse Media. There were several pet-related exhibits and pet adoptions.



On October 5 and 6, more than 120 people enjoyed hayrides at Lums Pond.

#### Trap Pond State Park

The Trap Pond Partners were awarded the 2018 DNREC Volunteer of the Year Award for Friends Groups at the Delaware State Fair on July 25.

Trap Pond staff competed in the 5th Annual Recycled Cardboard Boat Regatta in Blades the week of July 30. Their boat came away with trophies in the "Most Whimsical Boat" and "People's Choice Award" categories.

On August 25, Teen Challenge (a faith-based organization which helps individuals overcome life-controlling problems and addictions) hosted their Annual Crab Feast at Cypress Point with more than 825 in attendance. Representative Timothy Dukes, Representative Richard Collins, Senator Bryant Richardson and Sussex County Councilman Robert Arnett were in attendance.

The week of August 30, two copperheads were observed by Park Patrol Officers at Trap Pond.



On September 22, Trap Pond Partners hosted their Fourth Annual Beer and Wine Festival with 60 vendors including beer, wine, spirits, crafts and food. Total estimated attendance was over 1000.



Trap Pond hosted three weddings on September 29.

### First State Heritage Park

The First State Heritage Park was notified they will receive an ArCH Preservation Days grant for fiscal year 2019.

Heritage Park staff led tours for more than 200 visitors the week of August 9 featuring Woodburn, Legislative Hall, the John Bell House, Public Archives and the Biggs Museum.

Comic Con Events at the Dover Library including John Bell House, *Thousand Ways to Die in a Victorian Home*; Pillory Photo Opportunity and *Tales of Sickness and Health* Walking Tour were attended by 125 visitors on August 18.

First State Heritage held tours of Old Dover for over 130 visitors the week of September 6.

### Fort Delaware State Park

A large number of the Fort Delaware Seawall collection, including photographs, were transmitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for processing.

Almost 1000 visitors enjoyed the reenactors and relaxing ferry rides to Pea Patch Island the week of August 23.

On September 22, families from Belgium, Austria, Scotland and Southern California toured Fort Delaware.

Over 160 people attended paranormal tours at Fort Delaware October 5 and 6.

### Killens Pond State Park

Killens Pond was featured in the [onlyinyourstate.com](http://onlyinyourstate.com) publication:

*The Enchanting Delaware Trail That's Perfect for Everyone: "Though small at only 2,489 square miles, Delaware is home to 17 wonderful state parks where you will find a myriad of recreational opportunities, including miles and miles of phenomenal hiking trails. There is truly no better way to spend an afternoon than with a leisurely hike in one of our breathtaking state parks, and today, we're taking you on an*





*unforgettable journey along one of the most enchanting trails in the state. Welcome to Killens Pond State Park and the phenomenal loop trail you will find within its border. Established as a state park in 1965, Killens Pond preserves and protects an area of mature broadleaf forest surrounding its namesake pond. The moderately trafficked 2.7-mile Killens Pond Loop Trail circles the 66-acre millpond that was established in the late 1700s.*

*Before the pond was created, the Murderkill River and surrounding forest were home to several Native American homes and hunting camps. This enchanting trail leads hikers on a magnificent journey through the woods that is as beautiful as it is peaceful. Though the meandering trail is not paved, its short mileage, well-maintained status, and packed earth surface make this the perfect hike for the entire family. Kids especially will love scampering through the forest and over footbridges.”*

Killens Pond Water Park 2018 season attendance total was 54,364.

Puppies in the Pool was held at Killens Pond on September 3 with 121 dogs!



The annual Lake Forest Cross Country Invitational was held at Killens Pond on September 8 with more than 20 schools in attendance.

## **Northern Parks**

### Auburn Heights Preserve

The annual Eastern Steam Car tour returned to Auburn Heights the week of July 12. Nearly 30 Stanley owners from states including Florida, Iowa and Michigan participated.

### Bellevue State Park and Fox Point State Park

The week of July 12, Bellevue hosted the *West Chester Swing Kings* and *Boy in Black* with over 3000 in attendance.

During the week of July 19, the *Mystic Warriors* and *Chorduoy* performed at Bellevue entertaining more than 3000 visitors.

The First State Duathlon was held July 21 at Bellevue with more than 200 racers and spectators.

Bellevue Disc Golf Course Redevelopment (DDGA) has completed initial work to relocate meadow-area holes. Following a successful pilot usage of the new course holes by DDGA members, DDGA are reaching out to a larger audience to use the new course holes and provide additional feedback.



More than 900 visitors used the pavilions at Bellevue and Fox Point the week of July 26 and more than 5000 visitors enjoyed *Category 5* (classic rock) at Bellevue on July 29.

On August 1, 1220 visitors enjoyed the blues and soul of the *Dukes of Destiny* at Bellevue.

On August 2 and 5, Bellevue continued their Summer Concert Series with *John Flynn* (400 visitors) and *Spokey Speaky* (2,000 visitors) respectively.

On August 12, more than 2000 visitors enjoyed *The Big Jangle* (Tom Petty-like band).

On August 23 and 26, respectively, *Seven Rings* and *Re-Live the Beatles* brought in more than 6200 music lovers to Bellevue.

More than 300 people participated in the Delaware Burger Battle on August 25 at the Cauffiel House. Proceeds benefit Food Bank of Delaware and Prostart (which helps provide young people with a foundation for restaurant careers).

The Chilean Independence Day Festival was held at Bellevue on September 9 with 800 in attendance.

The week of September 20, Bellevue hosted weddings for 500 guests at Figure 8 Barn, Bellevue Hall and the Cauffiel House.



On September 27, the 2018 TEDx (technology, education and design) Wilmington Conference was held at Bellevue with presentations from approximately 40 authors, specialists and community leaders on a wide variety of topics, with approximately 300 attendees and staff.

The Faithful Friends 5K and Mutt Mile was held on September 30 at Bellevue. The event attracted approximately 500 attendees and 200 dogs.

On October 5 and 6, more than 150 people enjoyed caramel apple-making and hayrides at Bellevue.

### Brandywine Creek State Park

Intern Outreach Day was July 12 at Brandywine Creek. More than 60 horticulture and environmental stewardship interns, and 59 volunteers from Winterthur, Rutgers Garden, Longwood and Tyler Arboretum worked on invasives with more than 177 volunteer hours recorded.

Stroud Research and *The Workshop* filmed at Brandywine Creek for a WHYY mini-series pertaining to waterways in the Delaware Valley in August.

Readers Digest listed Brandywine Creek as the number one spot for picnicking in Delaware! [www.rd.com/advice/travel/best-picnic-spots-in-every-state](http://www.rd.com/advice/travel/best-picnic-spots-in-every-state).

Brandywine Creek hosted the Salesianum cross country meet on October 6 with approximately 37 schools in attendance.

### Brandywine Zoo

On September 21, more than 450 people attended *Brew at the Brandywine Zoo*.

A Greek tortoise was acquired from a private individual for the Brandywine Zoo education collection the week of September 20.



### White Clay Creek State Park

There were 1278 visitors in attendance for the “*Big Band from the Valley*” concert at White Clay Creek on July 11.

Karen Rodriguez and the Latin Jazz Ensemble entertained more than 1300 visitors at White Clay Creek on July 18.

White Clay Creek received 15 buddy stands and cable locks from Cabela’s for November’s Youth Hunt purchased with money from a \$2500 donation made by a proud father of a youth hunter in August.



On August 13, after several inches of rain in a very short period, 400 feet of Hopkins Road washed out at White Clay Creek and deposited on the roadway. Also the bridge at Creek (Tweed) Road floated off its foundation. Access through the Penn Del trail from Chambers Rock was determined as “walk in only” due to degradation of the culvert. The Trail Crew and Veterans Corps have cleared branches and debris off the trails. The bridge at Creek Road is still being worked on.

The week of September 20, White Clay Creek staff installed 25 concrete blocks with floating line attached in the Smith Mill Road Pond to promote the growth of algae for stocked minnows to use to hide from predator fish.

The week of October 4, more than 250 children from Gallaher Elementary, Jones Elementary and Oberle Elementary enjoyed interpretive programs at White Clay Creek.

### Wilmington State Parks and Alapocas Run State Park

On July 13, the Blue Ball Barn staff and Friends of Wilmington Parks hosted the second Foodie Friday of 2018 featuring music by the *CamelTones*, art for sale and on display by local artist Eric Zippe, food by WildWich, Mojo Loco, and Outlandish food trucks, and a special bike raffle benefitting the Urban Bike Project. The event was featured on Delaware Online's "DO Delaware" page as a featured event to kick off your weekend.

The *Touch a Truck* event was held at Wilmington and Alapocas Run with 363 in attendance.

Friends of Wilmington Parks was awarded \$1880 from the Wilmington Flower Market, with funds earmarked for Scholarships for Environmental/STEM Education and Rock-Climbing Scholarships at Alapocas Run the week of July 30.



On September 7 and 8, more than 4500 spectators attended football games at Baynard Stadium.

On September 8, the Brandywine Festival of the Arts was held at Brandywine Park with attendance of over 4000.

Athletic fields and courts at Wilmington and Alapocas were fully booked the week of September 20 for soccer, flag football, rugby, Frisbee, tennis and paddleball. Baynard Stadium also hosted two games on September 21 and 22.

Wilmington and Alapocas held three events on October 6 and 7 with a total of 400 participants:

- Pearls of Hope 5K
- Brother to Brother
- SOAR, Ostrich 5K

Materials Conservation began restoration of the Todd Memorial the week of October 4.



### **Ocean Parks**

The Delaware Seashore Region won three awards for 2018 at the annual DNREC Volunteer award ceremony: Bill Cook for Environmental Education described as "incredibly reliable and a great interpreter," Ernie Felici, former president of the Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation, for Administration and Coordination, and the Delaware Mobile Surf Fishermen won the Conservation Group award for support of DNREC on beach driving classes, beach grass planting, and special events.

## Cape Henlopen State Park

Mid-Atlantic Field Hockey returned the week of July 19 for their 41<sup>st</sup> year at Cape Henlopen occupying Youth Camps I, II and III.



The first phase of replacing foot showers with pole showers at Gordon's Pond was completed the week of August 9.

On August 18, Cape Henlopen hosted the Wilmington Rugby Club with over 200 participants.

Friends of Cape Henlopen sold more than 500 tickets to their 12<sup>th</sup> annual Chocolate Tasting on September 8.



US Wildlife Services released their final report on the predator control at Cape Henlopen this spring and early summer. There were 41 red foxes and three raccoons removed from these sensitive beach nesting areas.



On September 28, Becoming an Outdoor Woman was hosted at Cape Henlopen with 70 participants. They joined in kayaking, surf-fishing, archery, hunting skills, birding, nature photography and more.

The Annual Special Olympics Fishing Tournament, organized by Delaware Special Olympics, was held at Cape Henlopen on September 29 with over 200 Olympians and their families.

A total of 1844 raptors have been sited at the Cape Henlopen Hawk Watch since September 1.



Delaware Mobile Surf Fisherman held their 12<sup>th</sup> annual Invitational Tournament at Cape Henlopen on October 6 and 7 with more than 200 participants.

During the week of October 4, the Cape Henlopen Nature Center greeted 1584 visitors and held 12 programs for 1000 participants.



Delaware Seashore State Park

The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Sandcastle contest was held at Delaware Seashore on July 14 with more than 70 participants.

The final Breeches Buoy Rescue Drill Reenactment of 2018 at the Indian River Lifesaving Station was held August 11 for 45 visitors.



A contribution from the Delaware Community Association in the memory of Pete Geldof, Jr., 90, who passed away on August 3, was made to Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island (both of which Mr. Geldof was responsible for creating along with Cape Henlopen). Mr. Geldof was hired as Park Superintendent of “Brandywine Springs State Park” in 1954. In 1964 he was appointed Director of the Delaware State Park Commission (later Division of Parks & Recreation). Mr. Geldof retired in 1986.

On August 25, the 2018 Delaware Seashore Paddlefest took place with 170 paddlers kayaking (or stand-up paddling) a four-mile course through the bayside marsh and islands, discovering a variety of wildlife and local history along the way.



*Brews by the Bay* on September 29 at the Delaware Seashore “Old Camp” was enjoyed by more than 800 visitors with 50 kinds of craft beer from the First State, plenty of food trucks and live reggae music.

#### Fenwick Island State Park

The second week in July Marine Education Research and Rehabilitation Institute personnel moved 78 loggerhead sea turtle eggs from the Town of Fenwick Island to Fenwick Island State Park. The loggerhead turtle, federally listed as a threatened species, visits Delaware Bay in the summer and fall.



#### Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area

More than 200 visitors enjoyed the Battery 519 tour, lantern tour, Cold War Bike Tour and artillery demonstration at Fort Miles the week of July 19.



#### Holts Landing State Park

Holts Landing featured “Shakespeare in the Park” on September 6, hosted by Lifesaving Station staff and the Friends of Holts Landing.

A wedding in the woods took on magical charm for the first “Grove” event at Holts Landing September 29 with 150 guests.

On October 5, a program about the daily lives of the surfmen who served at the Life-Saving Station and the heroic rescues they performed was sold out. The menu created by Chef Lion Gardener from the Blue Moon restaurant, was inspired by what surfmen would have eaten 100 years ago. The evening was capped by a lantern-lit walk on the beach.

On October 6, more than 200 “kids of all ages” enjoyed *Big Truck Day* at the Indian River Marina.



### Stewardship

On July 25, Natural Resource Manager, Chris Bennett met with PPD staff who identified and prioritized 1841 acres of park land for potential reforestation.

Archaeologist John McCarthy worked in the field at Killens Pond the week of July 30 supervising the boathouse area archaeological testing performed by Dovetail Cultural Resources Consultants. Considerable prehistoric resources were documented in addition to remains associated with a 19th century millworker residence.

Environmental Stewardship staff reported a sighting of possible wavyleaf basketgrass on August 9 at White Clay Creek. The sighting was also confirmed by the State Botanist. This is the first occurrence of wavyleaf basketgrass, *Oplismenus undulatifolius*, in Delaware. The colony was removed and further scouting for this perennial grass will continue.

Jim Charney and Mark Kammer have returned from their firefighter deployment in Utah.



Stewardship staff and volunteers conducted the last evening heron survey for their 16<sup>th</sup> season in Delaware City on August 29. A total of 1225 herons, egrets and ibis were counted. This is the third highest total for an August survey. Cattle Egrets (833) and Little Blue Herons (365) made up the bulk of the flight.



During the excavation of the 12-inch gun pit in battery 519 the week of September 6, contractors found a few historical items from WWII. They included a metal tag from the propellant charge and pieces of the 12-inch gun carriage.

An Archivist Archaeological Technician from the Corps of Engineer's St. Louis Division picked up 73 boxes, five buckets of unwashed artifacts, one unidentified oversized iron object and one wooden box from the Fort Delaware Seawall Collection September 20. The week of October 4, Delaware Historical and Cultural Affairs came out to Cape Henlopen to examine what looks to be a shipwreck on the Bayside of the Point. They assessed the total length to be over 50 feet. Research is ongoing.



### **Kudos**

*"Just back from a three-day visit at Lums Pond, and I have to tell you this was as nice a place as we have camped in some time. Staff were most helpful and friendly, the sites were large and well cared for, everything about your place was first rate- I'm. Sure we will be back. Thank you!"*

Wilmington State Parks received the 100 Cities/100 Memorials certificate acknowledging the ongoing restoration efforts at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, AKA the Todd Memorial.

First State Heritage Park: *"Thank you for a wonderful tour of downtown Dover's historical section. Rosemary was excellent! She kept the teenagers entertained and engaged. One group from Delaware was hosting 4H-ers from Kentucky and everyone enjoyed the tour. We will definitely bring future exchange groups on the tour! Many thanks, Kent County 4H Exchange group."*

Amanda Burnett sent a very complimentary email of the Oversee Farm trail the week of July 26. She said *"I wanted to just reach out and say, first of all, THANK YOU, (and the state in general), for opening Oversee Farm! We have enjoyed this park more than I can even describe. To go into more detail...my husband is from Minnesota and has a love for fishing he just hasn't been able to fulfill since living here, and ever since we discovered the park he has been the happiest guy ever! He's there almost every Saturday morning trying to catch what he claims is the biggest bass he's ever seen but somehow keeps eluding him...I just go with it. We're currently living with my parents just off of Benge Rd., so we're minutes away from the park. My parents also belong to Auburn and were there every month for Steamin' Days with our two little boys! We're all so excited for the entire Yorklyn project (I'm also trying to convince my husband to buy a house in Yorklyn as we speak...). Anyway, between Oversee and Auburn we*

*just wanted to say thank you and your team for giving the community both of these awesome parks and we can't wait to see what else is to come! Thank you again!"*

*From Facebook: "Hi! I wanted to thank everyone at the park (Trap Pond) for helping my son Jacob out of the woods on Saturday July 21st. It was very frightening to get that call from him that he couldn't find his way out of the woods, and I couldn't be there to help. Everyone involved was very professional and understanding of the situation and I wanted to give Kudos to all involved. The only name I got was Missy, but I wanted to say thanks to all involved. Jacob loves hiking, nature, mushroom hunting, and is an all-around good person."*

*"What a kind, polite and wonderful officer he (Cpl. Dylon Parks) is. You can be proud to call him a member of you police force. He certainly helped us out of a very sandy jam! Lesson learned!!"*

*This was received through the website on July 30: "To Whom it May Concern: Sending a quick comment to say thank you for the excellent service the lifeguard staff at Cape Henlopen provides. On July 29, 2018, I lost a pair of prescription sunglasses in the ocean. Around 12:30PM, I asked the guard stationed closest to the Hawk Watch entry point about a lost & found, and described the glasses. Sometime around 3PM, a guard named Hunter was walking among beach goers, asking if they had lost a pair of glasses. Turns out they were my prescription glasses, which were returned to me. Thank you for the great work & follow through!" -*

*Kudos go out to the entire staff. Larry Boyer, Fort Miles Treasurer recently visited Fort Delaware with his family. Mr. Boyer sent this note of appreciation to Ray Bivens, Matt Ritter and Jon Wickert: "All, I just wanted to reach out to share with you a wonderful experience I had with my family yesterday. I took my son, daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter to Fort Delaware. They were in from South Carolina. Everyone we ran into from the boat pilot to the re-enactors to the parks folks on the island were top notch. Their level of knowledge and professionalism was outstanding. You have managed to maintain this very old facility to a level that provides a terrific living history journey into the past. We all learned and experienced a lot in a few hours. At the end of the evening we all went around the table and shared what our rose was (best thing about the day) and all of us said that it was the Fort Delaware trip. My grandkids are 10 and 6 and it was a great educational experience for them (and the rest of us too). It was great to take a day off from the daily 'stuff' and appreciate the great work you folks do for our state. Just wanted to say thanks."*

*Indian River Marina staff received the following:*

*"Dear Governor Carney: I already know that there is a good chance that you will not see or read this email but I will send it to you anyway. You most likely gets lots of complaining emails and letters about one thing or the other, well this is not one of those emails. I am writing to you about the staff at the Indian Inlet Marina that is located in the Delaware Seashore Park in Rehoboth Beach. We have been customers of this marina for the past two seasons and I cannot tell you how happy we are at this marina and it is mostly because of the staff. Theresa who is the manager does an outstanding job, she is friendly, helpful and*

*professional. The staff such as Dan, Dave and Jill are also very helpful, always making the time to help and answer any questions that I come up with. There are many others that work at this marina full time that need to be recognized but I don't know their names. It is a pleasure to talk to and be around these very nice people and to be at this marina. Speaking of the marina, Theresa's staff maintains the grounds, docks, restrooms like a five star resort so I commend them all on a job well done. I hope that you do get to read this email and take the time to speak to the staff at Indian Inlet Marina and let them know how grateful I am to them."*

*"Hello, my name is Duncan McArthur. On July 28<sup>th</sup> around 1:30pm I visited the marina on my way to Hammer Heads restaurant. When entering the docking area my boat began to have engine trouble. We came from Fenwick via the intercoastal river. Three young gentle men were to our side to assist with whatever we needed. I was not thinking properly to remember the guys names, but you are lucky to have gentlemen like this employed for you. I have a small business and employ 18 people, and would be proud to have these guys work for me. My fuel line broke and the one young man offered to go the shop and get me a hose clamp. I gave him a few bucks and he even found me at the restaurant to give it to me... SERVICE at its best. After my friends and I finished eating I was able to repair the fuel line and be on our way. I have been to other marinas and never treated so well. I will share my days experience with many, and I will return."*

Lifeguard Captain **Kris Knutsen** (yellow cap), certified paramedic, responded (from Towers Ocean – still in swimsuit) to and assisted Natural Resource Police with a subject having a cardiac event at the Indian River Marina on August 17. Knutsen did a very good job treating and keeping the patient and his wife calm. Knutsen, former Sussex County Paramedic, took the lead and worked in tandem with the Sussex Paramedic on scene. (Patient was transported to Beebe Medical ER.) *"I was thoroughly impressed with Knutsen's professionalism and treatment of the patient. He is a valuable asset for our Division."*

Diane Scobey, of Rehoboth Beach, came into the Cape Henlopen office on August 25 stating how much she appreciated the Mobi-Mat that was installed at Gordon's Pond. She stated that a group of friends would like to cover half the costs of another one. Superintendent Melville called her back to discuss her generous offer. She stated that with these mats, friends of hers that were no longer able to enjoy the beach can now access the beach again. Melville stated that he will find out the prices for a new mat as well as what the best process is through which they can help.

Trap Pond's Facebook page received a special message posted by Nancy Cleveland: *"What do I recommend about Trap Pond State Park.....probably easier if I had anything NOT to recommend 😊😄 but...there isn't. New to trailer "camping" this year it's perfect. We have been fortunate in always getting the same site...which we love. Haven't tried any of the activities (yet) though nice to know they are there if we choose to. For us it's enough to be in among the trees, the peacefulness of the campground. Love to see how the other campers kids enjoy being there...outdoors, making their own fun on their site, the playground, bikes and fishing. Happy to be somewhere there is no Wi-Fi..lol!! The staff.....so friendly, helpful as other*

*campers we met even if only briefly. And it's funny.....we live probably less than thirty minutes from the park, our house surrounded by tall, tall trees with many birds at our feeders, raccoons, possum, the occasional fox and skunk as nighttime visitors. So what IS different? 😊 :-)* At the campground there are no chores, nothing we feel we "should" be doing except relax away from the rituals of daily life. I rarely sit out back at home yet on our weekends it's all I do, lol....and love it. The campground is so well-maintained, scenic.....hate to think the season is soon coming to an end. For this year!"

The following thank you was received by e-mail: "I want to thank your staff for taking care of me when I blew out my knee while visiting there on Thursday at Fort Delaware. They made sure I made it to the boat and from the boat to the ambulance, then to my car."

White Clay Creek received the following kudos on Facebook the week of September 6.



**Joe DeLellis**

Just there today, what a beautiful park. I stop every time on my way to and from lower Delaware. The park and restrooms are always spotless, it's always quiet and has a peaceful setting. To all the staff that keeps it this way I just wanted to say that it all never goes unseen and would like to give a special THANK YOU for all that's put into it.

Below is an excerpt from Bobby Cao thanking Corporal Betts at Cape Henlopen for his help: "I hope this e-mail gets to the right people. I just wanted to say thank you so much for going above and beyond and helping me diagnose the problem of why my Jeep Wrangler won't start... I have never ever had any officer do so much for me...I hope this e-mails counts for something as I know in this day and age, people only open their mouths if there is a complaint, but never take the time out to thank an officer for doing a kind deed to another fellow human being, which I believe happens 100% of the time. I am humbled by your good will. Thanks Keith."

## **Planning, Preservation and Development**

### **Matt Chesser**

#### **The Park Resource Office (PRO)**

##### **Personnel Update**

The Nature Preserve Program Manager position is still vacant after Eileen Butler accepted a promotion within the Department effective June 15, 2018.

### **Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)**

RTP funds are passed through DelDOT from the Federal Highway Administration. Holts Landing trail and boardwalk engineered plan are complete with environmental and cultural resource documentation complete pending the sub-aqueous permit.

White Clay Creek Tri-Valley Trail Phase 1 construction with a 2018 completion timeline.

White Clay Creek Tri-Valley Trail Phase 2 is approved and construction will begin this fall with a spring 2019 anticipated completion. Lums Pond Little Jersey trailhead is under construction with a 2018 expected completion. Auburn Heights Valley Trail construction is on-going with a 2018 expected completion.

### **State Parks Trail Program**

PRO staff help administer the planning, design, construction, and maintenance projects under state funding.

Active state trail projects are:

- Brandywine Creek Trail Plan – public process complete and final draft is being reviewed.
- Killens Pond Trail Plan – public process complete and final draft is being reviewed.
- Cape Henlopen Trail Plan – public process complete and final draft is being reviewed.
- Delaware Seashore -
- Assawoman Canal Trail Phase 2 – Route 26 bridge underpass design underway and dredging for kayak launch anticipated this fall.
- Trail visitation and counter collection – ongoing
- Holts Landing – two-mile accessible loop in planning. Anticipate construction in fall – winter 2018 – 2019.
- White Clay Creek –
- Tri-Valley Trail phase 1 nearing completion with minor improvements at Smith Mill parking lot (97% complete).
- White Clay Creek Tri-Valley Trail Phase 2 construction starting fall 2018
- Charles Bailey Trail - construction underway (95% complete)

### **Outdoor Recreation, Park and Trails Grant (ORPT) Program**

The FY18 grant cycle has 12 park applications requesting \$573,533 in ORPT grant assistance. Park Council members Clyde Shipman and Ron Breeding are reviewing these applications in preparation of the upcoming Park Council meeting on November 1.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program**

#### SCORP Update

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) update which is required every five years to remain eligible for LWCF and a tool for recreation planning statewide. Upon final approvals, the SCORP update will be submitted to the National Park Service.

Noteworthy survey results are:

- 73% of Delaware residents indicated that outdoor recreation was “very important” to them personally (trend increasing) while 96% said it had some importance in their lives
- The most popular outdoor recreation activity among Delaware households, by far, is walking or jogging, followed by swimming at the beach, visiting historic sites, picnicking, swimming in a pool, visiting a zoo, bicycling, fishing, dog walking, hiking, and using playgrounds. Questions were asked regarding 37 outdoor recreation activities.
- 66% of Delaware residents feel outdoor recreation programs are a necessity
- 70% of Delaware residents agree that parks, wildlife areas, and state forests should receive budget priority even during economically challenging times
- Trails, restrooms, and playgrounds are the facilities most desired to be added to existing areas

### In Perpetuity Protection

Parks that receive LWCF Program assistance must remain as outdoor recreation places in perpetuity – referred to as 6(f) boundary protection. We are working on a conversion at Fort DuPont and one in Georgetown.

### Master Plan - White Clay Creek State Park

The Division held four open houses over the summer regarding input for the master plan. The open house events were well attended (roughly 250 attendees overall) and ran smoothly. An online survey asked 10 general questions about how people use the park. Emphasis was placed on getting public involvement on the front-end of the process before any plans or concepts were drafted. The online survey closed at the end of August with more than 1000 surveys completed! All comments were read and categorized for reporting purposes.

The process of creating the Master Plan document will soon begin and will continue in two parts:

1. A *preliminary* draft of the Master Plan will be compiled with an open house tentatively in late fall. If necessary, we will develop a second survey.
2. Then we will revise the document to produce a final draft Master Plan. We will hold a formal public meeting on the final draft master plan, tentatively in late winter.

### Outreach

On July 31, the City of Wilmington held a ribbon cutting event for playground improvements at Father Tucker Park; Ninth and Scott Streets. The Division assisted with securing funding through the LWCF Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program which granted \$306k toward the project.

### Park Maps and Geographic Information

Updated tear-off maps were created for Brandywine Creek, Killens Pond and Auburn Heights Preserve. Web maps were updated for Alapocas Run State Park, Brandywine Park and Auburn Heights Preserve.

A service area modeling analysis was performed for the city of Dover for a proposed trail at Mallard Pond. The results were used to help support a grant proposal to acquire funds for a feasibility study.

Service Area modeling was also conducted for each of the seven ORPT grant projects. Results of the analysis were used in the ranking process to assist with the allocation of over \$500,000 in funding.

For the 2018 SCORP, Service Area modeling was completed for Basketball Courts, Dog Parks, Playgrounds and Trails for each of the five SCORP regions.

In support of the AmeriCorps program, GIS maps were created to document each of the work projects created since the beginning of the year. The maps are an important part of the grant reporting process.

In support of the White Clay Master Planning process, multiple informational maps have been created for displays and presentations at the public workshops.

### **Open Space Program**

Delaware State Parks, along with the Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Delaware Forest Service, and the Division of Historic and Cultural Affairs are the State agencies eligible for funding through the Open Space Program, which was created through the Land Protection Act (7 Del. C. Ch. 75).

The Land Protection Act also created a Delaware Open Space Council to advise the Secretary of the Department of the Natural and Resources and Environmental Control on all matters relating to the administration, implementation, and financing of the Open Space Program, which is the conservation program where the agencies can purchase land or conservation easements to further their missions.

After three years without funding, the Open Space Program will be funded in FY19 receiving \$10M appropriated by the Land Protection Act on December 15, 2018. Of that amount, \$9M fully funds the Open Space Program for preserving resources and expanding recreational opportunities in Delaware. The other \$1M is for infrastructure improvements shared between the Divisions of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife. The four eligible agencies are currently evaluating properties to purchase.

Parks recent accepted two properties, totaling approximately six acres, in Dover which are part of the Fork Branch Natural Area. Additionally, parks is in the process of purchasing a five-acre parcel, which is an inholding in the Angola Neck Nature Preserve in the Cape Henlopen State Park management unit, and will be purchasing a conservation easement on a parcel near Georgetown, which is a joint venture for an outdoor/ indoor recreational facility with a trailhead for the Georgetown-Lewes rail trail.

## **Natural Areas Program**

The Natural Areas Advisory Council is working on several short promotional videos and improvements to the website. Topics for the videos include conservation, recreation and private owner benefits.

## **Wildland Fire Fighting**

Mike Krumrine volunteered to help battle the wildfires that are plaguing the western states this summer. He served as part of the Delaware Interagency Wildfire Crew organized by the Delaware Division of Forestry. The crew was sent to Northern Idaho and British Columbia from August 6 to 26.

## **Agency Representation and Support**

Manage all aspects of three Councils (Greenways and Trails, Open Space and Natural Areas Advisory Council)

Recreational Trail Program Advisory Council

Pedestrian Council

Bicycle Council

Community Transportation Funds

Quarterly OMB reports on Trails and Pathway progress

Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) review

Liaison to LWCF Administration

Dover liaison to Cape Henlopen, Brandywine Creek, Wilmington Parks

## **Office of Design and Development**

### **Construction Project Status - October 2018**

#### Assawoman Trail

*Trail under Route 26:*

Design documents underway.

*Dredging for Kayak launch:*

Waiting on permit for dredging. Anticipate early winter dredging.

#### Auburn Heights/NVF

*Wetlands:*

Construction documents are being finalized; anticipate bidding early winter.

*Paper Mill and Auburn Heights:*

Construction underway, anticipated completion fall 2018. The park dedication is on November 9.

*Amphitheatre:*

Amphitheatre is under review.

*Rail Road Turntable:*

The turntable was shipped from Illinois Railroad Museum and delivered to NVF site in late September. Plaza, trail, and bridge are under design; construction is anticipated in 2019.

Bellevue State Park

*Hunter Barn Restroom:*

Project out to bid, anticipated construction to commence early winter 2018.

Cape Henlopen State Park

*Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrades:*

Consultant AECOM is assisting with the contract for Sussex County in negotiations to repair and manage sewer treatment plant.

*Tower 7 Renovations:*

Concrete renovations are completed. Stair renovations and painting to commence in 2018.

*Fishing Pier:*

SPI Pharma pipes under the pier have been repaired. The pier will be evaluated again next spring for structural integrity.

*Trail :*

Railroad track removal has been completed by DelDOT along Cape Henlopen Drive. Trail design is complete and trail installation is to begin in late fall 2018 by George and Lynch. Cost of the project is \$1,132,556 to pave the trail and construct the crossing at Freeman Highway. State trail dollars are being used to fund this project.

*Pickle Ball Feasibility Report:*

A feasibility report review has been completed. Consultant WRT is working on a concept plan for the suggested site.

*Biden Center:*

A kick off meeting for Biden Center planning will be scheduled in November. Consultant GWWO will work with design team creating program for facility.

Delaware Seashore State Park

*South Inlet Campground:*

Roads will be overlaid in November 2018 by George and Lynch to repair large ruts and holes.

*Tower #3:*

GWWO and HMR will be working on the plans for the tower renovations. Design Development plans have been presented to design review team. Plans will be presented to Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation in late October. After their review, next steps will be determined.

### Fort Delaware State Park

#### *Solar:*

Solar updates and repairs have been underway throughout the summer.

#### *Tram Path Renovation:*

Tram path, pavilion, heronry and trail are under design by CDA Engineering. Bidding is anticipated in late fall.

### Killens Pond State Park

#### *Pedestrian Walkway:*

Design is underway for walkway paralleling spillway. An archaeological investigation is underway. Design completion is anticipated in early 2019.

### Indian River Inlet Marina

#### *Pavilion:*

Pavilion design is underway, with anticipated installation in early 2019.

### Lums Pond State Park

#### *Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrades:*

Project plans are underway with bidding anticipated in late 2018.

#### *Campground Bathhouse Conversion to Laundry/Camp store:*

Renovations to the existing bathhouse are underway. Once completed, the existing building will hold laundry facilities and a camp store (very similar to the renovation to the bathhouse at the Cape Henlopen campground). Mechanical work has yet to be completed. Phase I was completed in August (laundry) with an anticipated Phase II (camp store) completion in early 2019.

#### *Campground Playground:*

Design is underway. Playground funding will be matched with grant dollars. Grant application was due at the end of October. Installation is anticipated for late 2018.

### Trap Pond State Park

#### *Nature Center:*

An emergency septic field design is complete and construction is underway. Anticipated completion in late fall.

#### *Bathhouse:*

The restroom by the yurts will be replaced in early 2019 with prefabricated structures.

### White Clay Creek

#### *Tri Valley Trail:*

Phase 1 trail construction punch list items are being addressed. Anticipated completion in late fall. The Phase II trail contract was awarded to Greggo Ferrara. Anticipate construction commencement late October 2018.

*Carpenter Playground:*

Design underway, playground funding to be matched with grant dollars. Grant application due at the end of October. Anticipate installation late 2018.

Wilmington State Park

*Josephine Fountain:*

Restoration is underway, anticipated completion late summer 2019.

Brandywine Zoo

*Support Facility and Lemur Exhibit:*

Work on the Support Facility (Quarantine) and Lemur Exhibit (Madagascar) construction documents is underway. Anticipate that bidding will take place in early 2019.

Holts Landing State Park

*Boat Launch Parking Lot:*

Completed

*Parking Design and Playground:*

Design is underway, and playground funding will be matched with grant dollars. The grant application was due at the end of October. Anticipate that installation will take place in late 2018.



Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
89 Kings Highway  
Dover, DE 19901

**2018 Outdoor Recreation Parks and Trails (ORPT) Grant Cycle  
Park Applications  
Park Council Meeting Nov 1, 2018**

Sponsor	Park	Acq/Plan/ Dev	Project Description	Total Project Cost	ORPT Request	Recommend
Bowers Beach	Town Park	Dev	New picnic tables, benches, bike racks, trash containers, doggie bag dispensers and electricity.	\$ 6,066	\$ 3,033	\$ 3,033
Dover	Bicentennial Playground	Dev	Playground equipment	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Dover	Silver Lake Park	Dev	Replace parking bollards	\$ 18,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000
Kent County	Big Oak Park	Dev	New restroom facility	\$ 225,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Lewes	Canalfront Park	Dev	Tennis Court (Pickleball) Restoration	\$ 70,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
Millville	Millville Park	Dev	New bathroom/storage facility	\$ 237,297	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
New Castle County	Banning Park	Dev	Synthetic turf field	\$ 600,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Newark	Preston's Playground	Dev	New restroom facility	\$ 625,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
Smyrna	George Wright Municipal Park	Dev	Lighting installation for sports fields	\$ 77,800	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000
Smyrna	Lake Como Park	Dev	Playground equipment	\$ 40,952	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500
South Bethany	Town Open Space	Dev	Playground equipment	\$ 16,515	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Wilmington	Eden Park	Dev	Playground equipment, pools, bathhouse, pavilions and athletic fields	\$ 1,850,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$3,781,630</b>	<b>\$573,533</b>	<b>\$573,533</b>
<b>Available ORPT Funds</b>					<b>\$1,047,286</b>	
<b>Trail Apps</b>					<b>\$473,753</b>	
<b>Balance</b>						<b>\$0</b>