

# DELAWARE STATE PARKS

# 2017

*Annual Report*





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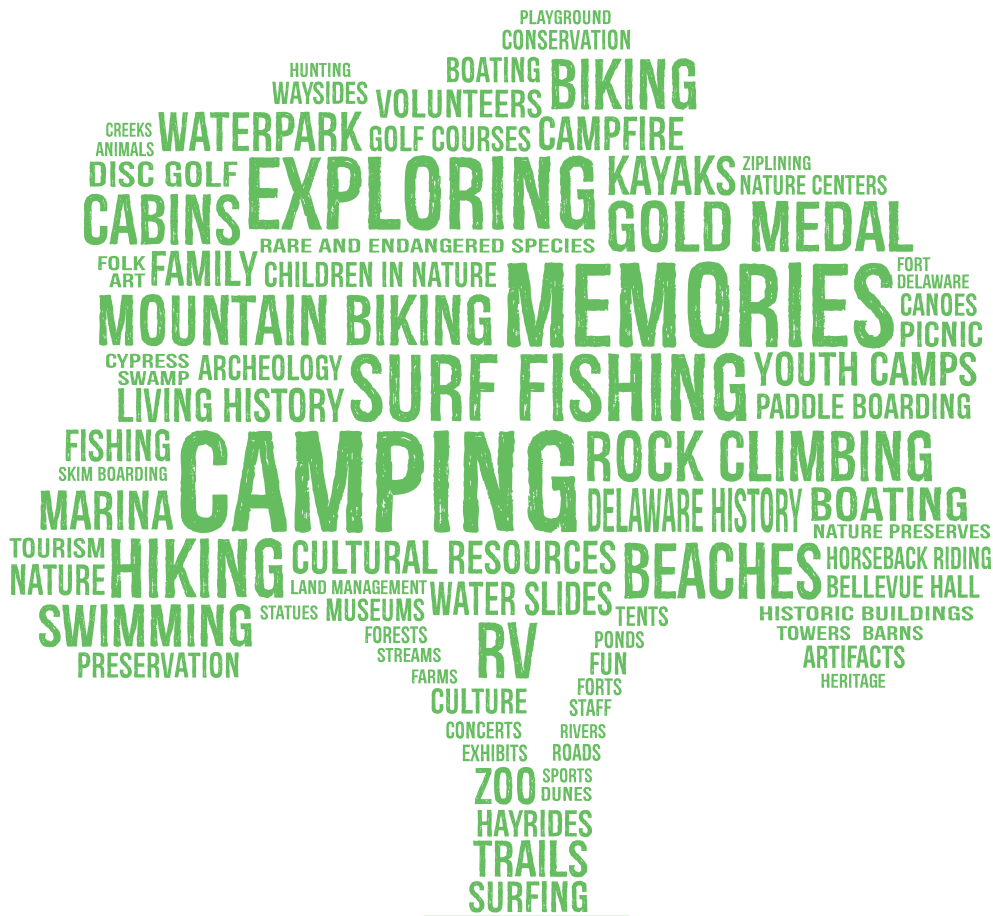
Delaware State Parks

2017

Annual Report

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Voted America's Best



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Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control  
Division of Parks & Recreation



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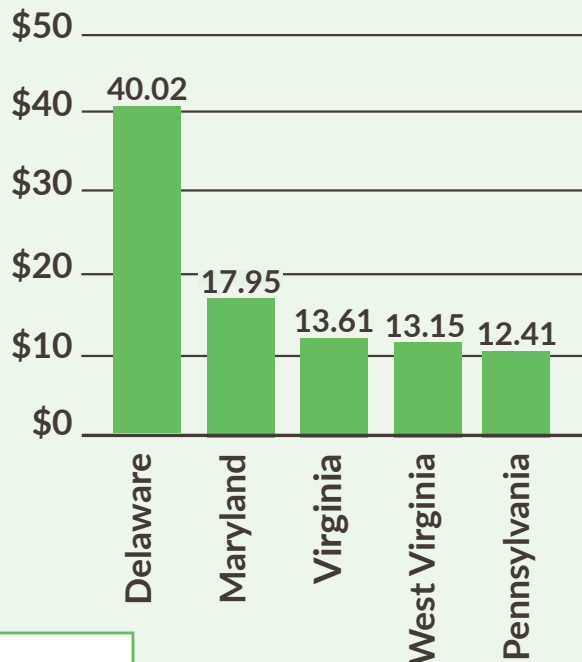
# DELAWARE STATE PARKS

Economic Impact

**FY16/  
FY17**



For every General Fund operating dollar invested in state parks, \$40.02 in economic activity was added to the State of Delaware. This is more than double the value-added amount of surrounding state park systems, including those of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia and Maryland.



**Main Purpose\*  
Park Visitors**

spent **\$398 Million** in Delaware, an average of **\$245** per visitor.



Delaware's state park system supported nearly 6,700 full- and part-time jobs across Delaware.



## Top 5 Parks in Visitor Spending

- 1) Delaware Seashore State Park and Indian River Marina
- 2) Cape Henlopen State Park
- 3) Fenwick Island State Park
- 4) Lums Pond State Park
- 5) Killens Pond State Park

## STATE PARKS WITH CAMPGROUNDS MADE AN OUTSIZED CONTRIBUTION TO THE STATE'S ECONOMY

Visitor spending in the five camping parks – Cape Henlopen, Killens Pond, Lums Pond, Delaware Seashore and Trap Pond – totaled **\$318.9 million** in FY2016/ FY2017, or 82% of the total economic impact of the state park system.



If there were no Delaware State Parks, taxing authorities around the state would need to generate an average of \$151 in additional state and local taxes from each of Delaware's 350,000 households in order to maintain current levels of tax receipts.



Nearly **\$53 million** in state and local taxes were initiated by Delaware's state park system, including \$6.6 million in gross receipts tax, \$1.5 million in hotel taxes, \$4.7 million in income taxes, and \$9.5 million in property taxes.



\*A main-purpose visitor is one who has identified a Delaware State Park site as the principal reason for their visit to the respective destination and has traveled 50+ miles to get there.

# WHAT WE ARE

*The mission of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation is to provide Delaware's residents and visitors with safe and enjoyable recreational opportunities and open spaces, responsible stewardship of the lands and the cultural and natural resources that we have been entrusted to protect and manage, and resource-based interpretive and educational services.*

DELAWARE  
STATE PARKS  
by the  
Numbers:

5   
million+  
visitors

16   
Parks  


26,075  
 Acres 

622  
  
Buildings  
on park land



155  
  
Miles of  
Trails

## OUR PARKS AND PRESERVES

The Division of Parks & Recreation operates and maintains 16 state parks and related preserves and greenways throughout Delaware.

### STATE PARKS:

Alapocas Run	Holts Landing
Bellevue	Killens Pond
Brandywine Creek	Lums Pond
Cape Henlopen	Trap Pond
Delaware Seashore	White Clay Creek
Fenwick Island	Wilmington State Parks
First State Heritage Park	
Fort Delaware	
Fort DuPont	
Fox Point	

### PRESERVES:

Angola Neck	Fork Branch
Auburn Heights	James Branch
Barnes Woods	Lums Pond Woods
Beach Plum Island	Murderkill River
Bellevue Woods	Nanticoke River
Brandywine Creek Valley	Pea Patch Island
Cape Henlopen	Red Clay Creek Valley
Cedar Creek	Rehoboth Bay Marshes
Doe Bridge	Thompson Island
Flint Woods	White Clay Creek Valley

## MORE THAN PARKS

We also:

- Administer Delaware's land protection programs
- Provide educational and interpretive programs on natural and cultural resources
- Acquire and develop recreational lands and facilities
- Provide for the protection of natural areas
- Oversee and plan for statewide recreational needs

# WHO WE ARE

## OUR PEOPLE PUT US ON TOP IN FY17

A wide variety of knowledge and skills are required to keep Delaware State Parks running. Our full-time staff includes:

**15**  park superintendents and assistant superintendents

**17**  park rangers

**5**  animal keepers and zoo managers

**49**  electrical, mechanical, and maintenance staff

**11**  educators

**15**  administrative specialists

**23**  managers and administrators

**1**  director

### Park Rangers

combine duties in law enforcement and protection of Delaware's natural resources and environment.

**17** full-time Delaware State Park rangers handled over **3,000** complaints this year.

We have **662** casual/seasonal staff, including:

- **68** ocean lifeguards to protect swimmers at the Atlantic Ocean beaches
- **56** lifeguards to protect visitors at the Killens Pond Water Park





# WE SUCCEEDED WITH OUTSTANDING STAFF

**Esther Knotts**, Office Manager at the central office in Dover, was selected as Employee of the Year for 2017. Esther's ability to manage a wide-ranging portfolio of responsibilities is well-known throughout the division. Esther is known for her positive attitude and inspiring energy. She exemplifies strong leadership and makes herself available to anyone who needs her.

On March 29, the Division held its Annual Employee Awards Ceremony at the Officer's Club at Cape Henlopen. Staff from throughout the Division was on hand to celebrate the accomplishments of their coworkers and to witness the award presentations. The following staff members were recognized for their outstanding service in FY17:



## Outstanding Customer Service Award

Mazie Barbosa  
Tyeast Amankwah  
Steve Morgan

## Lifesaver Award

Alana Delaney  
John Lister  
Angel Burns  
George Walton

## Outstanding Achiever Award

Alana Delaney  
John Lister  
Lindsey Robinson  
Mike Hitch  
Pat Thompson  
Kristyn Small

## Outstanding Motivator Award

Barbara Woodford  
Sarah Zimmerman  
Jacob Miller

## Outstanding Mentor Award

Greg Abbott  
Shirley Blankers



## Team Award

Parks Special Event Team

## Clyde L. Shipman Award for Excellence in Park Management.

Ron Vickers

Delaware is the smallest state ever to receive the National Recreation and Parks Association Gold Medal Award for Excellence in State Park Management.



## OTHER AWARDS



### Pisces Award

DNREC's water quality project at the former NVF facility in Yorklyn was recognized as an Exceptional Project by the Environmental Protection Agency, winning the coveted PISCES award. One of only five such projects nationwide, the award was granted in recognition of the NVF project's excellence and innovation in clean water infrastructure. Two DNREC Divisions, Waste & Hazardous Substances and Parks & Recreation, collaborated to remediate the zinc-contaminated site at the former factory.



### 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Awards

**Earl Bowman**, a 2017 Veterans Corps team member, was selected as The Corps Network 2018 Corps Member of the Year and also as 2018 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Member of the Year. The award is given in recognition of outstanding leadership skills and commitment to service and civic engagement. Program Director **Karen Minner** was also named as a finalist for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Champion of the Year award, which recognizes the efforts of individuals who engage the next generation of conservationists in Corps programs.

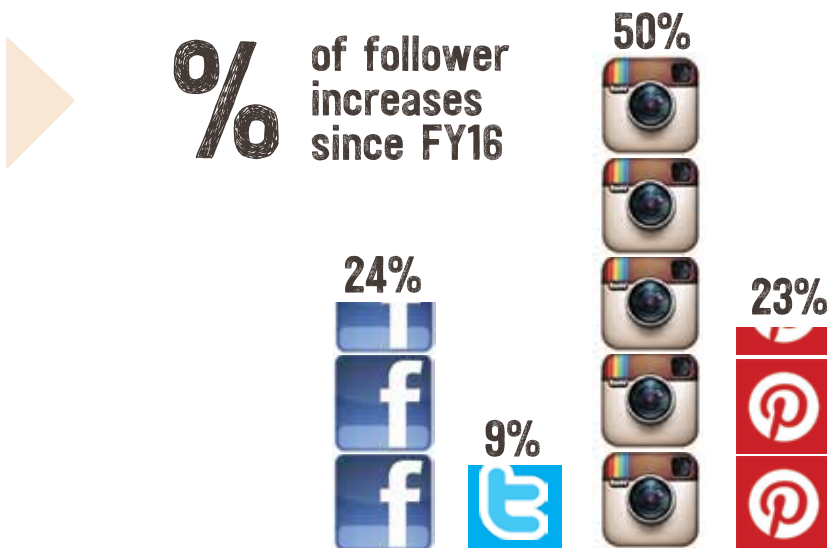


### George T. Sargisson Award

**Bob Ehemann**, Chief of the Park Resource Office, was named the 2017 George T. Sargisson Award recipient by the Delaware Recreation and Parks Society. This award is given annually to an individual employed in the field of recreation, parks, natural and historical resources, and conservation who has contributed significantly in the field over a period of 10 or more years.

## WE ROCK SOCIAL MEDIA!

Social media has continued to grow tremendously for the parks in 2017, with over **21,000** new followers across all four major social media outlets.



Technical.ly Delaware featured Delaware State Parks' Pinterest page on their list of "10 Delaware Brands Totally Crushing It On Social Media."



## WE HAD INNOVATIVE MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

The **Big Chill Beach Club** opened at Delaware Seashore State Park in June 2017. Along with overwhelmingly positive reception from the public and press came some confusion about park entrance fees and access to the venue. The marketing team brainstormed about how to resolve the communication issue, noting the importance of educating Big Chill customers on how their entry fees are used. A time-lapse video was created for Facebook, along with a giveaway contest that included a \$100 Big Chill gift card and a 2017 Delaware State Parks annual pass. Followers entered the contest by commenting on the Facebook post with their favorite thing to do at Delaware Seashore. The contest, which had no advertising money supporting it, became our most successful social media post to date, with the highest engagement level reached in our social media history. The post reached 157,000 people, with more than 1,000 shares and 540 comments.

A video created to cover improvements made to Cape Henlopen State Park and highlight campground renovations was also a well-received Facebook ad. The post reached over 11,000 followers in just a few days.

## WE WERE FEATURED IN MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

Throughout the year, both the individual parks and the organization as a whole were featured in several major publications, including:

- Southern Living Magazine
- The Washington Post
- The Sussex Post
- Outdoor Delaware
- UDaily (Delaware University's newspaper)
- Best of Delaware: Summer Bucket List
- Delmarva Now
- Newark Post



# VOLUNTEERS

**FY17  
volunteer  
assistance  
provided the  
equivalent  
of increasing  
park staff by  
36%.**

People volunteer at Delaware State Parks in many ways. Some are members of the Friends group for a specific park, some are unaffiliated, and some are members of two new programs: AmeriCorps/Veterans Corps, and Delaware State Parks Youth Conservation Corps.

The total impact of park volunteers is tremendous. In FY17, the total number of volunteers grew 31 percent over FY16, and they contributed over 33,000 more hours than last year.

**4,273** volunteers contributed **137,472** hours = **70.5** full time employees  
Value: **\$1,374,720**<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup>Based on average seasonal wage of \$10/hour

*"Delaware [State] Parks was an amazing place to have an internship. I was able to work closely with people in the historical field and learn [from] them. I learned how to bring history to life by learning historical reenactment. Great job to learn skills for a future job or career."*

*— Former intern*

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Interns represented seven high schools and 68 colleges and universities from 19 different states. 54% were Delaware residents. These interns worked and gained experience in the following fields:

- Environmental Education
- Environmental Summer Camps
- Environmental Stewardship
- Historical Interpretation
- History
- Outdoor Skills
- Operations & Management
- Research

The Division of Parks and Recreation also assisted the Division of Fish & Wildlife with placement of five interns.



**159** active interns served **41,864** hours =  
**22** full-time employees (FTE's)

Value of service: **\$418,640**

Cost of program: \$131,800 in stipend payments

Cost per hour: \$3.15

Interns gave the Delaware State Parks internship program a total score of **4.16 out of 5 stars** upon completion of the program.

## YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS

During this eight-week summer program for young people between the ages of 16 and 25, 57 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) participants logged over 8,000 work hours, along with nearly 3,000 career exploration and awareness hours. The hours completed by members over the eight weeks are the equivalent of six full-time, year-round Delaware State Parks employees.



**27** Delaware State Parks seasonal employees started their careers as Youth Conservation Corps members

Supported by grants from Capital One, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Community Environmental Protection Fund, along with additional funding from the New Castle County Summer Youth Employment Program, participants worked on most aspects of running a park, including grounds maintenance, boat rental, program assistance, environmental stewardship, and administration. Members also worked with other DNREC Divisions and community partners, including the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers, and the Division of Energy & Climate, where they worked with, and learned from, professionals in their respective environmental fields.

Education and awareness activities included Career Day, Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics, water conservation, Ethic of Service, and Go Ape zip lining, among others. Program participants rated the program a 4.8 out of 5. While only 38% of participants began the program due to prior interest in a parks or environmental stewardship career, by program's end, 80% were considering parks or environmental stewardship as their career path.

## AMERICORPS VETERANS CONSERVATION CORPS

The Delaware State Parks Americorps Veterans Conservation Corps program engages veterans and military family members in a year of service performing environmental stewardship and trail work throughout Delaware State Parks. Members receive formal training, certifications, and hands-on skills that can lead to employment in the natural resources field, while also assisting veterans with the reintegration process.

During FY17, 22 military veterans and military family members provided 16,684 volunteer work hours as members of the Delaware State Parks Veterans Conservation Corps team. Members improved over 500 miles of trails and treated over 1,200 acres of parkland. At the end of the program year, members received over \$64,000 in scholarships to continue their education or help pay back student loans. The program is competitively funded through a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service and the State of Delaware Governor's Commission on Volunteer and National Service.



# FRIENDS OF DELAWARE STATE PARKS

There are

16

Friends groups that actively support Delaware State Parks.

Friends groups are invaluable partners for our parks. These independent, non-profit organizations of community members are dedicated to assisting a particular park, helping with special events and programs, park maintenance, planning, fundraising, staffing the nature centers, and advocating for the park.

**The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation** - Supports the Indian River Life-Saving Station and the Delaware Seashore State Park region, including the Indian River Marina and Delaware Seashore, Fenwick Island, and Holts Landing State Parks

**The Delaware Zoological Society** - Provides funding and staffing for the Brandywine Zoo

**The Fort Delaware Society** - Conducts tours and sponsors special events at Fort Delaware

**The Fort Miles Historical Association** - Committed to the preservation of the Fort Miles Historical Area in Cape Henlopen State Park

**The Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve** - Maintains the Marshall steam car collection and miniature railway at the Preserve

**The Friends of Bellevue State Park** - Conducts fundraising, sponsors summer camp scholarships and the Summer Concert Series, and provides trail monitoring and cleanup

**The Friends of Brandywine Creek State Park** - Sponsors clean-up projects and provides environmental education scholarships

**The Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park** - Purchased a live Osprey Camera and sponsors the Park Pedalers Program

**The Friends of Holts Landing State Park** - Helps with trail maintenance, promotes Family Fun Nights, and advocates for the park

**The Friends of Killens Pond State Park** - Helps sponsor children's nature programs and the Summer Concert Series

**The Friends of Lums Pond State Park** - Helps with park maintenance and fundraising

**The Friends of Old Dover** - Established the iconic Dover Days festival and supports the First State Heritage Park

**The Friends of White Clay Creek State Park** - Staffs the nature center, monitors bluebird boxes, and conducts trail maintenance

**The Friends of Wilmington State Parks** - Conducts fundraising and helps with park maintenance

**The Port Penn Area Historical Society** - Helps attain funding and provides assistance with the Port Penn Interpretive Center

**Trap Pond Partners** - Sponsors an annual bike rally and provides scholarships for environmental education and funding for other park projects

# THINGS WE DO

*Since the Open Space law was passed in 1990, over 57,000 acres of the Delaware landscape have been protected from development.*

## PRESERVING, SUPPORTING, TEACHING

### WE PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

Natural open space lands contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to Delaware's economy each year by providing areas for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife watching, and tourism. The diversity of plants, animals, and habitats found on these lands also provides invaluable services like cleaning our air, filtering our water, and maintaining the fertility of our soil.

The Land Preservation Office identifies areas of high ecological value and protects these areas by working with landowners who would like to protect their property from development and preserve it in perpetuity. Four state land management divisions qualify for funding under the Open Space Program: the Divisions of Parks & Recreation and Fish & Wildlife (DNREC), State Forestry (Agriculture), and Historical and Cultural Affairs (State).



### WE MAINTAINED STRUCTURES OLD AND NEW

From a civil war fort and World War II bunkers to horse stables, historic homes, former church buildings, and even a 100+ year-old zoo, there is a wide variety of buildings that we manage in state parks, all requiring care and maintenance. The Division manages more historic structures than any other entity in the state of Delaware.

### WE PROVIDED HOME COURSES AND FIELDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE SPORTS

Baynard Stadium in Wilmington State Parks is the home field for 4 high school football teams:

- Howard High School of Technology
- Delaware Military Academy
- Salesianum High School
- St. Elizabeth High School

Alapocas Run State Park is home to St. Mary Magdalen, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Salesianum, and Wilmington Charter soccer teams, Wilmington Charter and St. Elizabeth's lacrosse teams, and Salesianum Rugby.

Our park trails serve most of the high school cross-country meets in Delaware, and White Clay Creek State Park is also the home course for the University of Delaware cross-country team. Killens Pond is the home course for five high schools and averages two dual meets per week from September through November. The park also served as the course for the Henlopen Conference and State Championship meets.

There are  
**623**  
buildings  
in the state  
park system.

Almost  
**600**  
school  
sporting  
events take  
place in state  
parks each  
year.

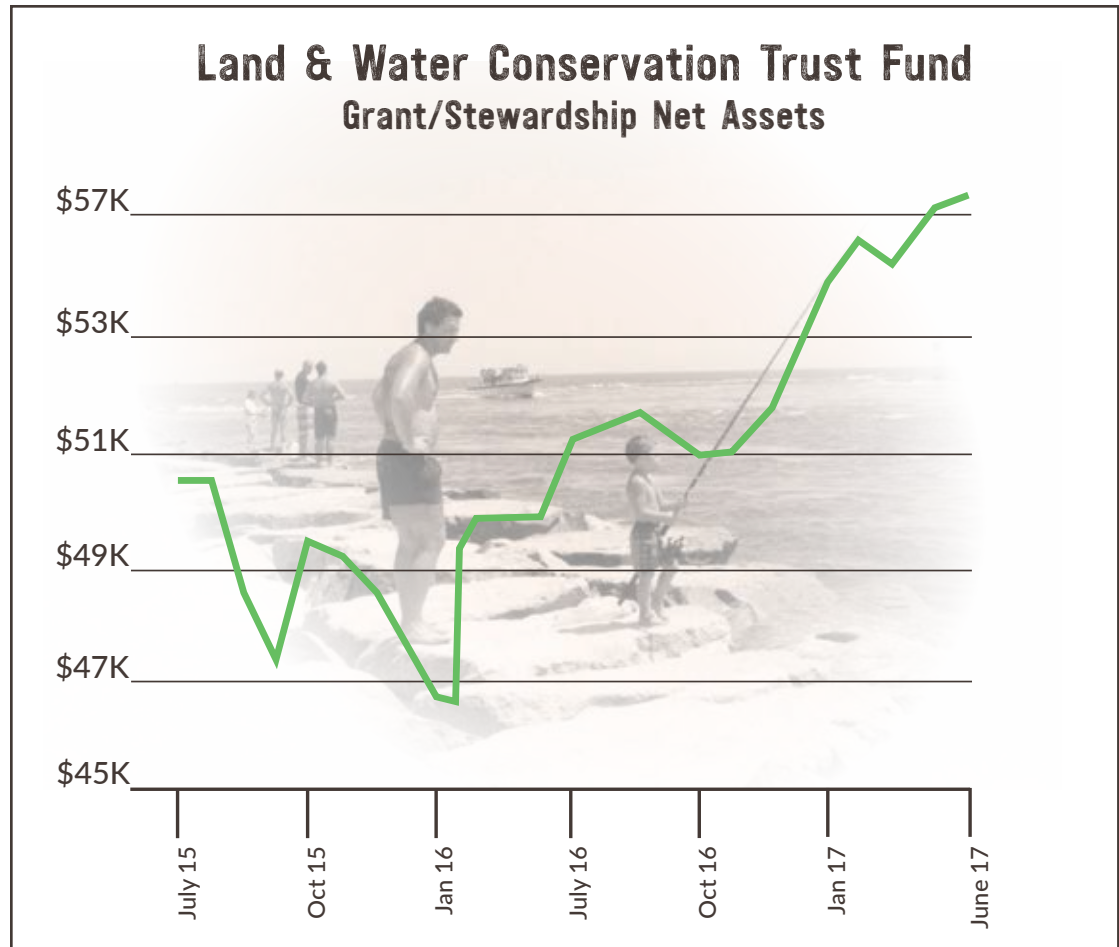
Over **\$29 million** in matching grants have been awarded since 1988.

In FY17, the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Parks and Recreation, awarded over **\$1 million** in grants for 21 new park and trail projects statewide.

## WE PROVIDED GRANTS

### Investment - Delaware Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund

Under the provision of 2015's Senate Bill 75, the Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund endowment allowed for the private investment of the Trust. Three investment companies were selected, each managing a third of the Trust. This investment strategy has resulted in a **17.4% growth** since inception (graph below) including a withdrawal in 2017 to finance the local grant program.



### 2017 Awards - The Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails (ORPT) Program

This program was established in 1986 to provide funding for parkland and greenway conservation and for outdoor recreation facility development. City and county governments and park districts are eligible for grant funding under the program.

ORPT grants assisted with trail improvements for Kent and Sussex Counties, Milford, and Slaughter Beach, as well as playground improvements for Delmar, Kenton, Millville, Newark, New Castle County, Lewes, Farmington, and Wilmington.

To learn more about completed and approved ORPT projects please visit [www.dnrec.delaware.gov/parks/Services/Pages/Grants.aspx](http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/parks/Services/Pages/Grants.aspx)



## WE RECEIVED GRANT FUNDING

Delaware State Parks and Friends Groups received grant funding from private, state and federal funders. In FY17, we obtained funding for:

- **AmeriCorps - Corporation for National and Community Service: \$375,854** for funding for the Delaware State Parks Veterans Conservation Corps
- **Community Environmental Penalty Fund: \$20,000** for the purchase of a trailer and tools for the Veterans Conservation Corps
- **Delaware Division of the Arts: \$10,000** to fund public arts programming at parks
- **Capital One: \$50,000** to fund the Youth Conservation Corps, in partnership with **Friends of Cape Henlopen**
- **Longwood Foundation: \$50,000**  
**Welfare Foundation: \$25,000**  
**Area 10 Rotary Clubs Foundation: \$23,750**  
**ChiChester DuPont Foundation: \$25,000**  
to fund expansion and renovation of the Can-Do Playground at Alapocas Run State Park, in partnership with **Wilmington Rotary Clubs**
- **I Could Do Great Things Foundation: \$5,000** to fund Healthy Kids Day at Trap Pond State Park, in partnership with **Trap Pond Partners**
- **Festival of Cheer: \$5,000**  
**Outdoor Happiness Movement: \$20,000**  
for renovation of the playground at Trap Pond's campground, in partnership with **Trap Pond Partners**
- **CenDel Foundation: \$1,800** to support winter concerts at First State Heritage Park, in partnership with **Delaware Friends of Folk**
- **Delaware Humanities Forum: \$2,500** to fund World War I Traveling Museum at Fort Miles in Cape Henlopen State Park
- **United States World War One Centennial Commission: \$2,000** for Todd Memorial restoration, in partnership with Friends of Wilmington State Parks
- **The Land and Water Conservation Fund: \$1,053,507** to install six cabins at Cape Henlopen State Park

### OTHER FUNDING

- **State Representative Ronald E. Gray and Senator Gerald W. Hocker: \$145,000** in Community Transportation funding for Holts Landing boat launch.
- **Community Transportation funding from State Representative Timothy D. Dukes: \$30,000**  
**The Governor's Trails & Pathways initiative: \$86,530** for the Bethesda Church trailhead.

**TOTAL FOR FY17: \$1,930,941**



# PROGRAMMING BY THE NUMBERS

**Our Programs forge enduring connections to Delaware's natural, historic and cultural resources, inspiring respect, responsibility and stewardship of those resources**

Delaware State Parks offer a variety of programs for all age groups about our environmental, historical, and cultural heritage.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- More than **110,600** people attended over **2,200** free programs, accounting for **5.7%** of all program attendance
- **38.7%** of all state park public programming is free
- More than **129,000** people undertook self-guided tours and explorations of state park nature centers and historic sites in FY17
- **99.7%** of participants reported enjoying the program they attended, and **97.4%** stated that they would attend another Delaware State Parks program



## EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE

- **13%** of all park programs are delivered to school groups
- **780** school programs educated **24,244** school children, totaling **928** contact hours\* and **22,498,432** impact hours\*\*
- In FY17, **201** state park day camps provided nature-based experiences to **2,004** campers
- **44,547** people came out to enjoy over **70** summer concerts

\* Contact hours = the duration of the programs (i.e., the amount of time participants are engaged with park staff)

\*\*Impact hours = contact hours multiplied by the number of participants

## Program Attendance FY17

	Number of Programs	Number of Participants	Contact Hours
Public Programs	<b>4,048</b>	<b>159,402</b>	<b>4,685</b>
Nature Center/Historic Building Visitation		<b>129,531</b>	
School Programs	<b>780</b>	<b>24,244</b>	<b>928</b>
Summer Day Camps	<b>201</b>	<b>2,004</b>	<b>4,302</b>
Summer Concerts	<b>72</b>	<b>44,547</b>	
<b>FY17 Totals - All program types</b>	<b>6,008</b>	<b>357,728</b>	<b>11,066</b>

Please note that our reporting system changed so it is not possible to accurately compare certain categories across years.

# FUNDING THE PARKS

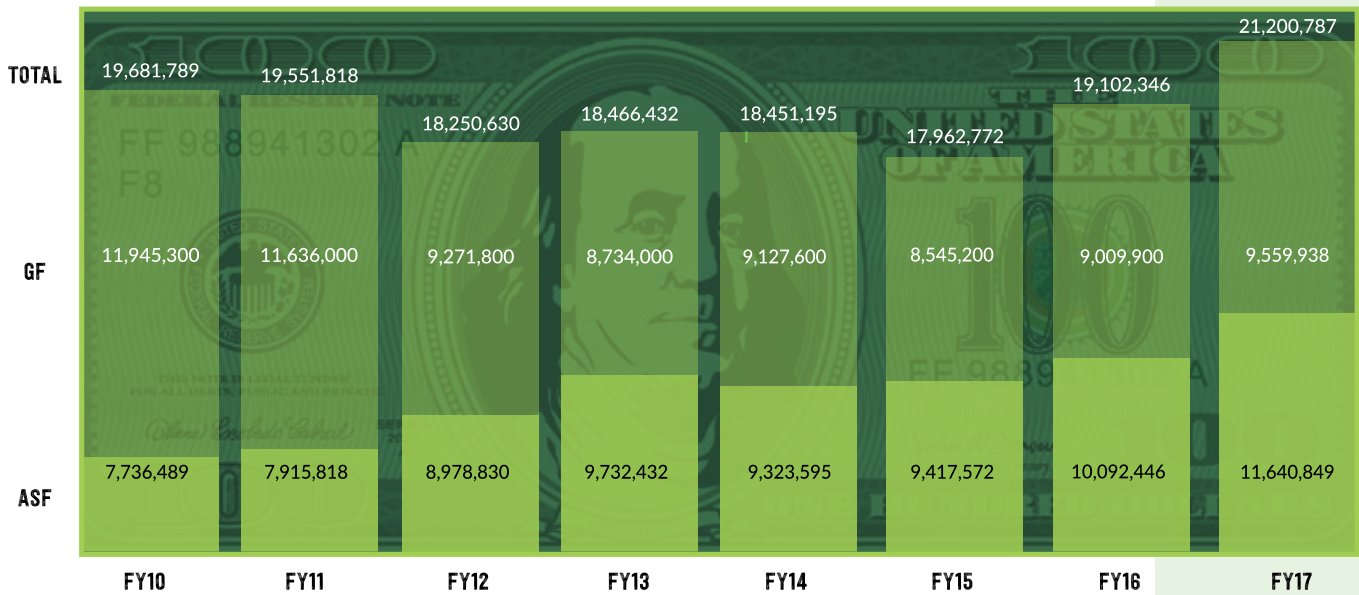
# HOW WE PAY FOR IT

DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation is primarily (65%) self-funded, which is unique within Delaware government. This requires the Division to project and manage a budget of fixed expenses with a revenue stream that fluctuates annually due to variables beyond our control. These include:

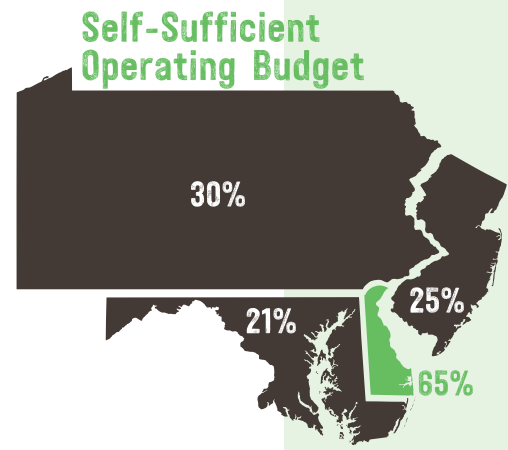
- Weather (rainy summer season, hurricanes, excessive heat, etc.)
- Gas prices and economic swings that affect the amount of discretionary money available to vacationers
- Carrying capacity limitations at ocean parks and other large revenue-generating management units

Annual increases in operating expenses and unfunded mandates are covered by fees and other revenue. A new fee structure went into effect in February 2015, the impact of which is seen in the large jump in FY16 and FY17 revenues.

## OPERATING EXPENSES: FY10 TO FY17



In Delaware, most of the funds for operating state parks come from park-generated revenue such as fees, permits, and passes. Only 35% of park operating funds comes from the state budget. This is quite different from our neighboring states.



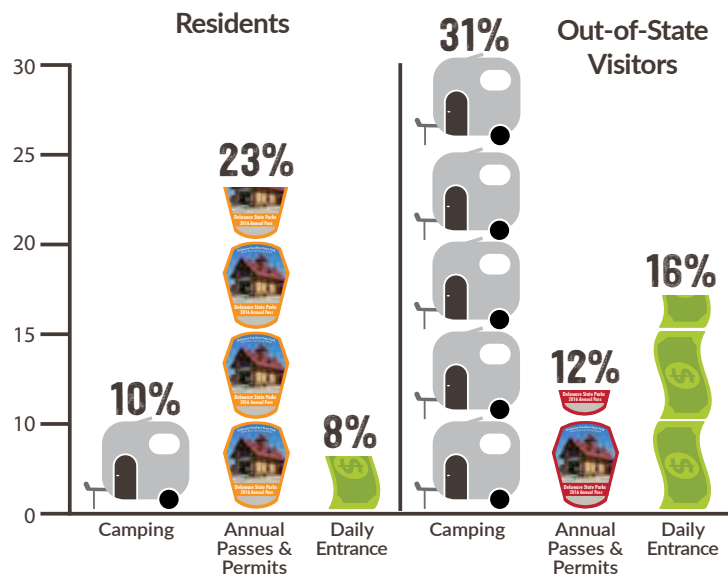


Over **59%** of the revenue came from out-of-state visitors to the parks.

Park fees address day-to-day operational expenses in the state parks and provide critical funding for deferred maintenance on buildings and utilities, and for replacement of aging equipment.

**FY17 revenue from fees totaled \$10,201,834**

## SOURCES OF REVENUE



### Camping By The Numbers

- Camping generates **41%** of park fee revenue
- **32,149** reservations were made for Delaware State Parks campsites, cabins, yurts and cottages across the state in FY17
- The occupancy rate for campgrounds, cabins, cottages and yurts grew from **59%** in FY16 to **61%** in FY17, a **2%** overall increase.

## TAKING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH

In addition to fee revenue, Delaware State Parks has added innovative entrepreneurial sources of revenue.

### Low-Digit Surf Tag Auction

Since the inception of the program the Division has sold **162** plates for a total of **\$371,379.31**

### Yurts, Cottages and Cabins

Yurts, cottages and new cabins have proven to be a good investment. They had a **61%** occupancy rate for the year.

### State Park Concessions

Privately-owned concessionaires and partners run businesses at state park locations and paid **\$328,107** in negotiated fees back to the Division in 2017. Services provided include charter fishing, kayaking, horseback riding, food service, and a high-ropes adventure course.



### Camp Store

The Division opened a new camp store at Cape Henlopen State Park. The store generated **\$109,720** in the first season of operation.

A survey conducted by Well+Good found that Delaware has the **2<sup>nd</sup>** highest rate in America of residents who camp: **48%**, right behind Hawaii.

# INVESTMENTS IN OUR PARKS

This past year has seen the completion of many projects that will enhance visitor experiences and strengthen our parks for years to come. The following are examples from throughout the park system.

- **Seaside Nature Center at Cape Henlopen State Park**

The Seaside Nature Center, the most visited nature center in any state park, was improved to allow for a more open feel to the building, adding new flooring and lighting. A new 495-gallon, two-level touch tank with viewing windows was also added. The aquarium hallway has new lightboxes with updated information about species and habitats.

**Project Cost: \$285,000**



- **NVF Yorklyn Site**

A newly-created two-acre wetland serves as floodwater storage capacity while also removing zinc-contaminated soil from the area. During the site excavation project, over 170 tons (340,000 pounds) of zinc contamination was removed from the soil beneath the former manufacturing facility, and between 500 and 700 pounds of zinc continue to be recovered monthly from the groundwater through the operation of the treatment system. The wetland on this formerly contaminated site has already attracted shorebirds and other birds. Species sighted include Killdeer, Least Sandpiper, and the Spotted Sandpiper (a very rare nesting species in Delaware). The NVF Yorklyn Site wetland project has been selected by the Environmental Protection Agency's headquarters as one of five projects nationwide to receive this recognition. A large portion of the project cost was covered via Hazardous Substance Cleanup Act funding (fuel taxes), with another \$3 million coming from a Clean Water Loan funding stream.

**Project Cost: \$4,500,000**



- **Campground Renovations at Cape Henlopen State Park**

The campground at Cape Henlopen was renovated to better accommodate campers of all kinds. More than 100 RV sites received electrical and water connections, including the first 100-amp electrical service to be added to a Delaware state park, as well as new fire rings and picnic tables. In addition to the site upgrades, improvements also included a new camp store, laundry facility, playground, and parking lot expansion. The project was funded in part by the U.S. National Park Service and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

**Project Cost: \$4,436,837**



- **Park Office at Cape Henlopen**

The entire lobby of the park office was expanded, and a third point-of-sale station was added, a significant improvement allowing staff to serve more customers quickly.

**Project cost: \$110,129**



### ● **Solar Panels at Fort Delaware State Park**

Through a partnership with New Jersey energy company PSE&G, the Division received and installed 600 donated solar panels at Fort Delaware State Park. The panels were placed on the roof of the Endicott section of the fort, 50 feet above the floodplain and not visible from the ground or from within the areas of the fort open to the public. The panels replace a diesel generator damaged during Superstorm Sandy in 2012. The Federal and Delaware Emergency Management Agencies provided \$98,000 for design, engineering and infrastructure construction, and DNREC's Division of Energy and Climate provided \$180,000. The panels were installed in 2017

and provide \$18,000 to \$20,000 of clean, efficient energy per year. This is enough to power the entire facility every day throughout the year, enabling heat, lights, security cameras and dehumidifiers to run, even in the winter months when staff weren't traditionally available to run the generator.

**Project Cost: \$411,382**

### ● **Boat Ramp and Parking Lot at Holts Landing State Park**

The previous boat ramp was removed and replaced with a dual-launch ADA-accessible ramp, and 36 truck and trailer parking spots were added. State Senator Gerald Hocker secured \$300,000 in FY2014 state bond bill appropriations to support the improvements.

**Project Cost: \$477,500**

### ● **Fork Branch Nature Preserve**

1-mile trail loop providing recreational opportunities for the city of Dover and Kent County.

**Project Cost: \$458,847**

### ● **Tri-Valley Trail at White Clay Creek State Park**

Phase 1 of the Tri-Valley Trail construction was completed and open to the public on July 4th. The project will complete an 18-mile network of trails linking the Judge Morris Estate, Middle Run Natural Area, and Possum Hill. Phase 2 is planned to be completed in 2018.

**Project Cost: \$1,912,069**

### ● **Bethesda Church at Trap Pond State Park**

Restrooms were installed at Bethesda Church, and roof work was completed. ADA-compliant doors and walkways were also added.

**Project Cost: \$176,964**

### ● **Oversee Trail/NVF Trails CC ARTS /HI Trail at Auburn Heights**

The Oversee Farm Trail was completed. The trail is on a beautiful piece of land situated on 123 acres of preserved land on Snuff Mill Road. The trail includes over a mile of paved trail, with an accessible loop, a beautiful circa 1802 farmhouse and Pennsylvania bank barn, and a two-tiered pond suitable for fishing. The project was paid for with Governor's Trails and Pathways Initiative funding. The new Yorklyn Bridge Trail, located in the bullseye of the revitalization effort, surrounds a new flood mitigation wetland. The Yorklyn Bridge Trail connects the former NVF site with the historic Garrett Snuff Mills and the Center for Creative Arts. The centerpiece of the trail is the restored foundation of one of the snuff mills, dating back to the 1800s.

**Project Cost: \$1,859,219**

# PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with local and national business, government and nonprofit groups enable Delaware State Parks to offer additional services and programming in our parks.

*“Throughout the process, the Park’s team were great partners to work with, allowing us to create our vision of a hospitality destination as an amenity to our beautiful Delaware Beaches. Together with Delaware State Parks, we felt we achieved that vision and look forward to the partnership moving forward”.*

- Josh Grapski,  
Managing Partner,  
Marketing & Development at  
La Vida Hospitality Group

## Big Chill, La Vida Hospitality

Delaware State Parks partnered with La Vida Hospitality to bring Big Chill Beach Club to Delaware Seashore State Park. Over \$1 Million was invested in the new venue, making it the largest public-private partnership in state park history. Big Chill served over 150,000 people in its opening season. Twenty-two events took place in the event tent during the inaugural season, with 16 already on the books for next year.



## Delaware River and Bay Authority/Cape May Lewes Ferry

A \$15,000 sponsorship from the Cape May-Lewes Ferry supported Cape Henlopen State Park and promoted day use, specifically bike and foot traffic, for the Cape May-Lewes Ferry. New signage provides distances to both the ferry terminal and On The Rocks restaurant from multiple locations in the park, including the Gordon’s Pond Trail and Cape Henlopen campground.

## Escape the Fort

This successful “escape room” experience, a partnership between Escape Room Delaware and Delaware State Parks, took visitors back in time to the summer of 1864 at Fort Delaware. As Confederate prisoners of war, participants solved riddles and tried their hands at scavenger hunts to escape Pea Patch Island and return to the south. The event, which was offered four times during the summer, attracted over 250 “escapees,” sold out in less than 4 days, and was shared on Facebook over 800 times in one 24-hour period. Revenue for the series was \$7,644.

## Hispanic Heritage Festival

The Hispanic Heritage Festival, hosted by Hoy En Delaware, saw 500 attendees in its first year at Bellevue State Park’s Figure 8 Barn, attracting visitors from D.C., Philadelphia, and all three counties in Delaware. Multiple Hispanic countries (Columbia, Dominican Republic, Panama, Mexico, and others) were represented through music, dance, food, and exhibits. Festival attendees paid park entrance fees to attend, while Hoy en Delaware rented the Figure 8 Barn, in addition to providing Delaware State Parks with \$1,000 in trade advertising in their publication. The festival will return in 2018.





### Winter Wonderfest

The Winter WonderFEST Christmas Light Show at Cape Henlopen attracted more than 12,000 vehicles from 24 different states. The Division received a total of \$25,000 for hosting the event. A camping discount for Winter Wonderfest was promoted on social media, radio, and in the Division e-Newsletter, resulting in more than 50 reservations.

### Alapocas Land Swap

The first phase toward residential redevelopment of property owned by the Buccini/Pollin Group began this year. A new parking lot and enhanced public entrance to Alapocas Run State Park are planned as part of the Rockford Falls development project. This was made possible through House Bill 52 that authorized a "land swap/boundary line adjustment" between the Division and Rockford Falls partners on a piece of property located at the former Bancroft Mills Industrial site in Wilmington.



### Vendemmia da Vinci Food and Wine Festival

Benefitting the Società da Vinci, a nonprofit promoting Italian culture, this popular Food and Wine Festival held at Bellevue State Park brought in nearly 2,000 people to enjoy live entertainment, contests, food and wine samples, and more. All profits from the event are returned to the community through family assistance and educational and cultural grants.



### Boo-B-Que by the Sea Festival

The Boo-B-Que by the Sea, a Kansas City Barbeque Society barbecue competition and family festival, took place in October 2017. The festival supported the Delaware Children in Nature Initiative, raising \$14,614.50 for the John and Linda Hollis Children in Nature Fund at the Delaware Community Foundation. The event included a 5K, a barbecue competition, local musicians, a beer garden, and trick-or-treating and costume contests for children. The event was named "Best New Event" of 2016 by Southern Delaware Tourism.



### Cabela's

Cabela's, a major sporting goods retailer, now sells Delaware State Parks annual passes and surf fishing permits at their Newark location. Cabela's also supports programming and events by providing gear and donations.



### Blue Rocks

Delaware State Parks partnered with the Delaware Blue Rocks to provide fans with in-game Delaware State Parks ads, Color Guard sponsorship, and a Fort Delaware-inspired half-time game.



### Lovely Bride

Delaware State Parks partnered with several local businesses and Lovely Bride, a premiere wedding dress retailer out of Philadelphia, to stage a wedding lookbook promoting Delaware State Parks wedding venues. An open model call on the Delaware State Parks Facebook page resulted in the selection of four adventurous local couples who participated in a styled shoot. The images from the shoot will be used to market Delaware State Parks rental venues.





## GeoSwap

Together with Delaware Tourism, Delaware State Parks has partnered with GeoSwap, an innovative mobile app that allows users to discover local events and attractions happening in real time. The app is a new way to market parks and events through a mobile, interactive platform, while providing a revolutionary way for visitors to find new things to do. The partnership involves a \$19,000 investment over two years. Delaware State Parks and the GeoSwap partnership was featured in the National Recreation and Parks Association's *SmartBrief*.

## Delaware Tourism Umbrellas

Through a sponsorship with the Delaware Tourism Office, Delaware Seashore State Park received 50 new beach umbrellas to use as rentals to raise money for Delaware Seashore State Park and the hiring of ocean lifeguards. These new umbrellas help brand Delaware Seashore State Park as a Delaware state park, solving the problem of visitors not being aware that they were enjoying a state park beach. Rentals were up 36% and grossed over \$36,000 in 2017.



## INTERNAL ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAMS

### Corporate/Group Passes

The Corporate Pass Program this year added eligibility for sports league participants, athletic boosters, and parents and students who utilize the athletic fields and cross-country trails during the sporting season. The Corporate/Group Pass Program tripled its original goal of selling 150 passes, with 473 passes sold, bringing in \$14,190 in revenue. Cross-country teams from Ursuline Academy and Archmere Academy, Delaware Premier League cricket clubs, and Delaware Sports League soccer teams participated in the program. The Corporate Pass Program also boosted interest in corporate volunteer projects in the parks.

### Lifeguard Stand Advertising

The Enterprise Development Office increased sales of advertising space on lifeguard stands this year by 95%, raising \$26,400 from stand advertisements. More than half of the advertisers were state/governmental agencies like the Office of Highway Safety, Division of Public Health and DART Transportation. Funds support the Ocean Lifeguard Program.



The Indian River Marina was home to a **24**-boat charter fleet

## SMALL BUSINESSES AT THE PARKS

41 businesses served as concessionaires within the parks in FY17, providing food, experiences, and rental equipment for park visitors.



### Food vendors:

**Hook'em and Cook'em Tackle and Seafood**

### Jay Vending

(at Killens Pond, Cape Henlopen, Fenwick Island and Delaware Seashore State Parks)

### Jay Kay Snacks

**La Vida Hospitality**  
(Big Chill Beach Club)

### Hammerheads Dockside

### Ash Acres

(Fresh Start Market at Trap Pond)

### Pineapple Catering

### Service vendors:

**Hook'em and Cook'em Tackle and Seafood**

### Coastal Kayak

### Go Ape Treetop Adventure

### Excellence Tennis Academy

### Sunset Stables

### Wellspring Farm

### Lighthouse View Bait and Tackle

### ProTrade

### Forewinds Hospitality

(Garrisons Lake and Deerfield)

### Summit North Marina

### Quest Kayak

### Charter Boat Operators

"The greens, the frog hair around the greens and the approach area into the greens are close to perfect. I love those areas. I can't wait until the work on the bunkers is complete. The tee boxes, fairways and the rough continue to improve. Lastly, the crew at the desk have always treated me well.

- Cale,  
about Garrison's Lake Golf Course

Total gross revenue for these businesses was over

# \$11.7 million

This is not all the revenue earned by small businesses in the parks. Caterers, photographers, charter boats, camps, farmers, and other businesses generate revenue from operations in the parks. These revenue numbers, however, are not reported to the parks.



**52**  
couples held their weddings at a Delaware State Park in FY17.



## WE HOSTED WEDDINGS

Popular spots for weddings include Bellevue Hall, the Judge Morris Estate at White Clay Creek, the Baldcypress Nature Center at Trap Pond, Delaware Seashore's Indian River Life-Saving Station, and Cape Henlopen.

# MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE NEEDS

### Why is this an issue?

The Division of Parks and Recreation has a limited capital budget and \$160M in capital needs across our 16 parks. Examples of deferred maintenance and infrastructure projects include:

- Repair and paving of roadways and parking lots statewide
- Bathroom and comfort station repairs and upgrades statewide
- Accessibility improvements
- Preservation of historic structures, barns, and houses
- Repair or replacement of big-ticket infrastructure items, such as Cape Henlopen's fishing pier and sewage treatment plants

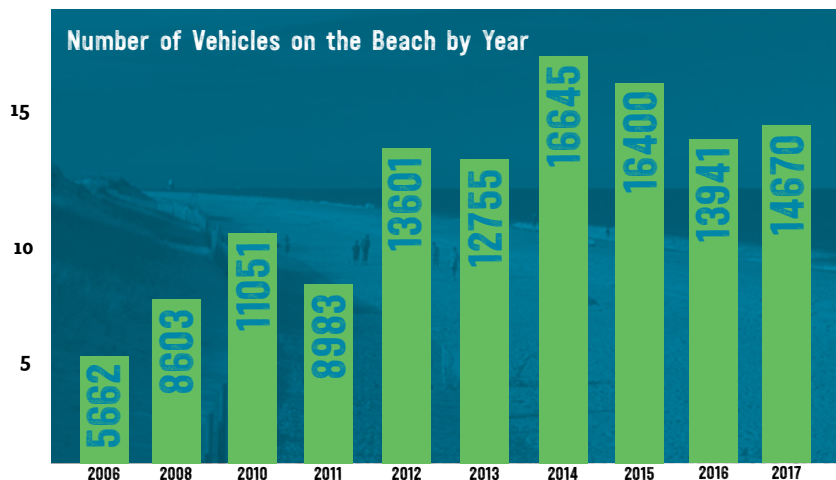


A new arborist contract that handles tree work throughout the Division has provided a total cost savings of **\$218,550**

## CARRYING CAPACITY AT THE BEACH PARKS

### Why is this an issue?

Delaware Seashore, Cape Henlopen and Fenwick Island State Parks regularly fill their parking capacity and are forced to turn vehicles away on most summer weekends. These parks are the main revenue generators for the park system, and limited parking capacity places a cap



on the amount of revenue that comes in from these parks.

Carrying capacity for vehicles on the beach is also an issue. For safety and environmental protection, single-file surf-fishing beach parking was initiated in 2015. This change allows park rangers to efficiently respond to medical emergencies.

Current Employee to Visitor Ratio:

**1** staff member for every **42,931** visitors

## INCREASING NUMBERS OF VISITORS

### Why is this an issue?

Park visitation has grown to over **5,800,000** people annually, an increase of a half-million visitors, while park staffing has remained unchanged since 2011.

## CHALLENGES FROM MOTHER NATURE

### Why is this an issue?

Invasive species have negative environmental and economic impacts on state parks throughout Delaware. Limited staff and funding present a challenge to removing invasives and restoring natural habitats.

Storms damage boardwalks and access points every year and can incur costly repairs. Management of depleted beaches and beach replenishment projects demand staff time and money, and closing a park for storms and cleanup results in lost revenue.



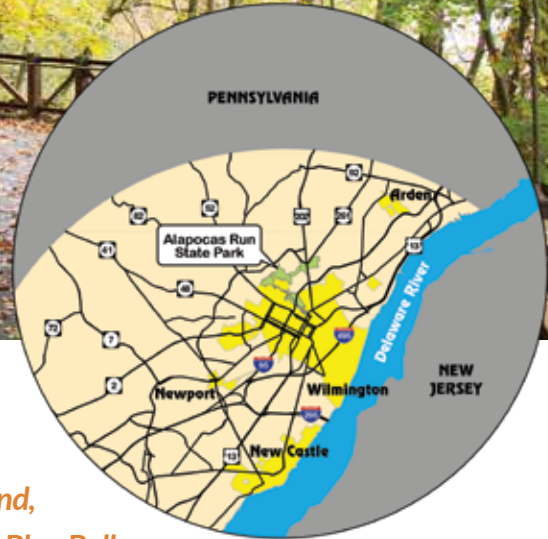
# INFO BY PARK

“ These are the people’s parks,  
owned by young and old. ”

-Harry S. Truman



# ALAPOCAS RUN STATE PARK



*Alapocas Run State Park is a lush getaway in the heart of Wilmington. It offers trails through fields and forest, Delaware's only natural rock-climbing area, and the innovative Can-Do Playground, which gives children of all abilities a place to play together. The park's Blue Ball Barn is the permanent home of the Delaware Folk Art Collection.*

### ALAPOCAS RUN at a Glance

-  **359.28**  
Acres
-  **6.4**  
Miles of trails
-  **123,086**  
Visitors
-  **5/14**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **509**  
Volunteer hours
-  **74/4,168**  
Programs/Participants
-  **2/183**  
Concerts/Attendees
-  **10/81**  
Day Camps/Campers

## FY2017 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Wilmington Area Rotary Clubs, in partnership with the Division, began the **Can-Do Playground** expansion project. The project includes a new nature play area, replacement of worn play units, resurfacing of ramps, and installation of "expression swings" that allow adults and toddlers to swing together.

**Project cost:**  
**\$198,657**



### SPECIAL EVENTS

The **Blue Ball Barn** and the **Can-Do Playground** celebrated their **10th Anniversaries** in 2017. Festivities included family-friendly activities and events, including the unveiling of the playground upgrade plans.

**Touch-A-Truck** at the Can-Do Playground allowed children a chance to "drive" the tractors, mowers, and police vehicles that Delaware State Parks staff use to keep our parks beautiful.

The Blue Ball Barn hosted **Delaware: A Brew Story**, bringing in local historians to discuss the history of Delaware brewing, followed by a craft beverage sampling. Proceeds benefited the "Restore the King" initiative and Wilmington State Park's School Programs Scholarship Fund.

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Electric service to the maintenance facility
- Expansion of the automatic irrigation system to two of three athletic fields
- Expansion of parking facilities at the Blue Ball Barn
- Automated fee-collection system pilot program
- HVAC repairs at Blue Ball Barn



"This is one of the most serene parks located close to everything. Kids love it and it's great for relaxation for adults. Picnic at lunch time is always a great idea here"

- Facebook post  
Anonymous



## SPORTING EVENTS

High school and college Northeast Regional Rugby Tournaments were held at Alapocas Run, and fields are used by the Delaware Rugby Foundation and youth rugby programs.

The Delaware Sports League meets here for adult kick-ball, flag football, and soccer programs.

Delaware Ultimate League uses the Ultimate Frisbee field weekly.

Alapocas Run serves as local high school home fields for soccer, rugby, and lacrosse.

## PARTNERSHIPS

As part of the ongoing partnership with the Wilmington Rotary International Club, the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Can-Do Committee was successful in completing upgrades to the playground.

## FRIENDS OF WILMINGTON PARKS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over 13 sessions, this team put in nearly 300 hours. The last session had a crew of more than 20 people, including students from Salesianum School.



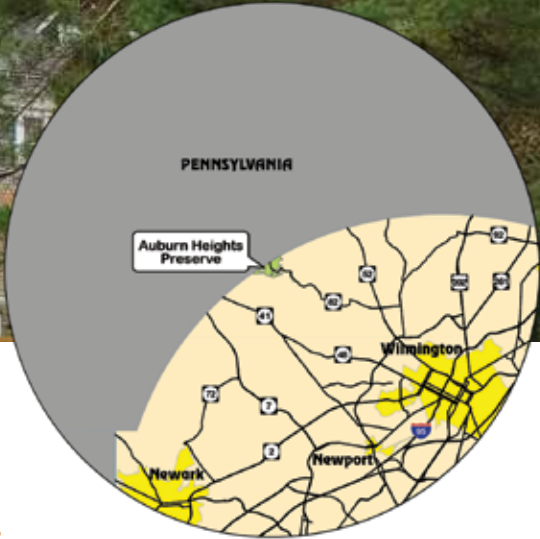
The Brandywine School District's **Young Artist Exhibition** at the Blue Ball Barn featured high school and grade school art submissions. The exhibit was on display for the month of March and brought **2,184** visitors to the Barn.



Three "**Foodie Fridays**" were held at the Blue Ball Barn, in partnership with the Friends of Wilmington Parks and WildWich Food Truck. Each Foodie Friday featured two or three local food trucks, live music, and beer and wine sales, courtesy of the Friends of Wilmington Parks. The series brought in **600** attendees over the course of the three events.



# AUBURN HEIGHTS PRESERVE



Auburn Heights Preserve is home to an 1897 Queen Anne Victorian mansion and the Marshall Steam Museum. The park also includes a 1/8-sized operating railroad system encircling the property. The collection of Stanley Steamer cars in the museum is the largest operating collection in the world.

### AUBURN HEIGHTS at a Glance

-  **246.78**  
Acres
-  **4.56**  
Miles of trails
-  **5,468**  
Visitors
-  **5/4**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **1,796**  
Volunteer hours
-  **112/2,759**  
Programs/Participants

After almost 30 years, the Red Clay Creek is now clean enough to offer stocked trout fishing.

**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

At the **NVF Yorklyn Site**, a two-acre wetland was created that serves as floodwater storage capacity while also removing zinc-contaminated soil from the area. The wetland has already attracted shorebirds and other birds to this formerly desolate parcel. The NVF Yorklyn Site wetland project has been selected by the Environmental Protection Agency as one of five projects nationwide to receive this recognition. See page 20 for more details about this project.

**Project Cost: \$4,500,000**

The **Oversee Farm Trail** was completed in FY2017. The trail is on a beautiful piece of land situated on 123 acres of preserved land on Snuff Mill Road. The trail includes over a mile of paved trail, with an accessible loop, a beautiful circa-1802 farmhouse and Pennsylvania bank barn, and a two-tiered pond suitable for fishing. The project was paid for with Governor's Trails and Pathways Initiative funding.

**Project Cost: \$951,000**

The new **Yorklyn Bridge Trail**, located in the bullseye of the NVF revitalization effort, surrounds a new flood mitigation wetland. The Yorklyn Bridge Trail connects to the CC Arts/Snuff Mill Trail. The trail connects the former NVF site with the historic Garrett Snuff Mills and the Center for Creative Arts. The centerpiece of the trail is the restored foundation of one of the Snuff Mills, dating back to the 1800s.

*"Spent a lovely afternoon walking along the paved and unpaved trails in Auburn Heights, walked the Woodlands and Meadow trails and did the paved loop twice. It was a pleasant walk and very pleasant view. Lovely way to get in some exercise while catching up with a friend!!"*

TripAdvisor review

## SPECIAL EVENTS



Auburn Heights Preserve's **Yorklyn Day**, held in June 2017, included live music, artisans' market and children's art show, sidewalk chalk contest with prizes, antique autos and train rides, kids' activities and crafts, and vendors and food trucks. Over **2,000 people** attended the event.

At Auburn Heights Estate, **Steamin' Day** activities feature train and steam car rides and mansion tours.



In May, The **Delaware Landscape Architecture student club** at the University of Delaware and members of Cooperative Extension's

**Delaware Master Gardeners** in New

Castle County conducted a planting at Auburn Heights Preserve to enhance the curb appeal of Delaware's newest state park and also to give the students a hands-on learning opportunity. Auburn Heights served as an outdoor classroom for the project; in turn, the students provided design ideas for upgrades and improvements to the mansion property.

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Parking lot construction and lighting to facilitate evening events
- Long-term solution to fire suppression
- Restroom upgrades
- Elevator upgrade in mansion to make it code-compliant and accessible for our guests with mobility issues

## FRIENDS OF AUBURN HEIGHTS PRESERVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Delaware State Parks and the Center for Creative Arts inaugurated **Yorklyn Day**, a successful collaborative event.

The Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve celebrated the **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Marshall Steam Team** with the return to operation of both the 1908 Stanley Model K and the 1908 Stanley H-5.

The Friends held a successful **Auburn Heights Invitational** fundraiser on September 25, 2016, raising funds to support their educational programs.

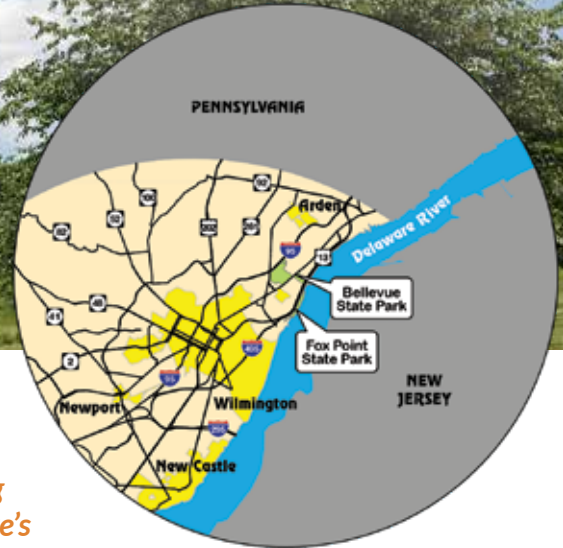
The 340 members of the Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve reported 9,300 volunteer hours for the year.



Friends of  
Auburn Heights Preserve Inc.



# BELLEVUE AND FOX POINT STATE PARKS



Once an elegant estate belonging to the prominent du Pont family, Bellevue State Park features Bellevue Hall, tennis courts, equestrian stables, gardens, and a 1½-mile fitness track surrounding a picturesque pond. Visitors can stroll the grounds, explore the estate's small arboretum, take in a summer concert, or just get away from the hustle and bustle of Wilmington.

Fox Point State Park offers a relaxing outing to stroll, picnic, or just watch the boats go by on the Delaware River. Horseshoe pits, a volleyball court, and a children's play area are some of the more active pursuits available. The park serves as the northern terminus of the 90-mile-long Coastal Heritage Greenway, which stretches south to Cape Henlopen State Park and highlights Delaware's natural, cultural, and recreational diversity. Fox Point is also the eastern-most point of the Northern Delaware Greenway.

## BELLEVUE

### at a Glance



**330.05**  
Acres



**9.16**  
Miles of trails (Including Fox Point)



**345,321**  
Visitors



**8/42**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



**7,365**  
Volunteer hours



**649/49,522**  
Programs/Participants



**44/512**  
Day Camps/Campers



**46/565**  
Day Camps/Campers

**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

With mounting concern for the rapidly-deteriorating condition of the **Mount Pleasant Meeting House Parsonage**, the Friends of Bellevue State Park sought grant funding to restore the parsonage to its former appearance and architectural integrity. The Friends were able to obtain more than \$125,000 in grant funding for the project, including separate \$40,000 grants from both the Longwood Foundation and the Crystal Trust, and a \$5,000 grant from the Crestlea Foundation. Delaware State Parks provided \$40,000 in matching funds for the project. The Mount Pleasant Parsonage is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is often used for wedding ceremonies and social gatherings.

**Project Cost:**

**\$125,000**





## SPECIAL EVENTS

Bellevue State Park celebrated its **40th Anniversary** in FY2017. The park entry fee was waived for the day, and the Friends of Bellevue State Park coordinated several events and activities in honor of the milestone (*see next page*).

The **Vendemmia da Vinci Food and Wine Festival**, a fundraiser for the non-profit Società da Vinci of Wilmington, was once again a huge success. Visitors came to sample great Italian wines and food while enjoying a beer garden, live entertainment, and a handcrafted wine and homemade gravy contest. The Festival was voted the Best Outdoor Festival in northern Delaware by the editors of *DelawareToday* in 2016. All profits from the Vendemmia Festival are returned to the community through family assistance, educational, and cultural grants.

**Bellevue's Summer Concert Series** offered **33** concerts attracting **27,230** attendees.

*"Bellevue is on the site of a former Dupont estate. There are tennis courts, horse stables and a one mile former race track that is now used for walking and bike riding. A stocked pond is open for catch and release fishing and there are many picnic areas. There are also several playgrounds for younger children. Walking trails extend throughout the park, some through picturesque woods with occasional benches for resting. The entrance fee is lower for Delaware residents. All in all, a wonderful place to spend an afternoon."*

*- Robert S.  
TripAdvisor*

## SPORTING EVENTS

### **Cross-country is big at Bellevue**

Bellevue State park serves as a meet location for Brandywine and Mount Pleasant High Schools, Wilmington Friends, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Wilmington Christian schools. The Catholic Conference and Joe O'Neill Invitational meets are also held at the park.

Bellevue State Park is the indoor track training space for Padua High School during the winter months, and Mount Pleasant High School sports teams regularly run and practice in the park.



# FRIENDS OF BELLEVUE STATE PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends organized the Bellevue State Park **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**, featuring the Chester County Concert Band and Category 5, with several family activities and exhibitors to highlight the many programs and amenities at Bellevue State Park. The day also included a Beer Garden, food trucks and tours of Bellevue Hall. The event raised over \$3,200 and was a great success with more than 6,000 attendees.

Friends of Bellevue have applied for two grants totaling \$13,000 for restoration work for the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, including a gate, repairs to the surroundings, wall and grave markers. If awarded, part of the funds will go toward developing a program to relay the history of the Mt. Pleasant Community and the Summer Concert Series.

**The Music Garden**, located next to the Bellevue Arts Center, is now complete and features a sidewalk, benches, a gazebo, and landscaping. A large maple tree was planted in late fall to provide future shade for noontime concerts and events. Additional volunteers are being solicited to work with the Garden Committee to maintain the gardens and flowering areas on a regular basis during the summer.

Board member Lynne Young worked with Bellevue State Park staff to raise, feed and tag over 50 monarch butterflies to release. A tagging event was held for park attendees, and milkweed seeds handed out with a promise of more sessions next summer. Photographer Richard Albertson showed attendees how to take amazing pictures of butterflies in all their stages of life.

The Friends of Bellevue addressed its infrastructure by completing an extensive revision of its bylaws and creating a "Board Roles and Responsibility" document and additional policies, along with formally developing the nominating process and electing a Chair. The group also investigated and purchased insurance and completed an annual audit.

Friends of Bellevue hosted the Statewide Friends Group for a retreat at Bellevue Hall on November 4.

The Friends of Bellevue had 95 members in FY17.

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

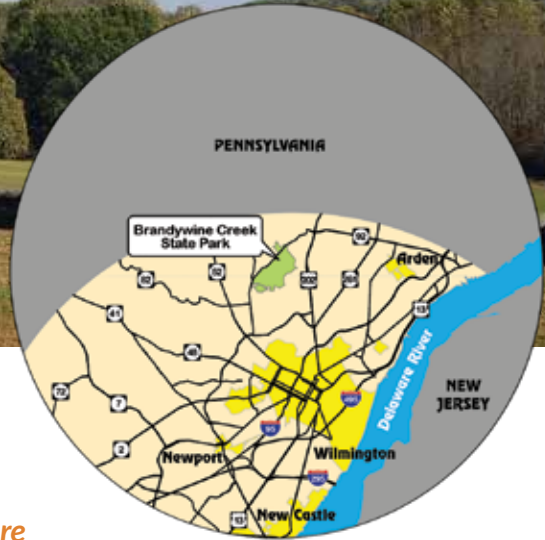
- Paving of parking lots, roadways, Phase II roads, and parking lots at Fox Point
- Renovations of all public restrooms and an increase in the size of the main restroom
- Development and construction of a restroom facility to support the Figure 8 Barn and Hunter Barn for special events.
- Renovations to historic buildings



# BRANDYWINE CREEK STATE PARK



Brandywine Creek State Park is home to many different habitats, from rolling hills and meadows to the forested banks of Brandywine Creek. The variety of birds and wildlife at the park, particularly during the fall hawk migrations, makes this a prime location for nature lovers and birdwatchers. Popular activities include hiking, mountain biking, and leisurely summertime canoe or tubing trips down the creek.



### BRANDYWINE CREEK at a Glance

-  **952.02**  
Acres
-  **18.74**  
Miles of trails
-  **121,254**  
Visitors
-  **4/18**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **6,820**  
Volunteer hours
-  **214/4,204**  
Programs/Participants
-  **23/194**  
Day Camps/Campers

## **FY2017** INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Brandywine Creek State Park installed new aluminum stairs to provide better access for paddlers on the Brandywine River.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The 36th Annual **Gary Lasako Special Needs Fishing Derby** was held, hosting approximately **100 participants and spectators**.



## SPORTING EVENTS

Brandywine Creek State Park serves as the home cross-country course for Ursuline Academy and Concord, A.I. DuPont and Brandywine High Schools, with a total of 31 meets at the park during the season.

### Cross-country is big at Brandywine Creek

Brandywine Creek State Park hosted the following cross country events:

- Salesianum Invitational with 44 schools and 1500 in attendance
- Ursuline Invitational with 12 schools and 1,000 in attendance
- Delaware State Championships included 54 schools with 1,500 in attendance
- Approximately 25 other races



## PARTNERSHIPS

Brandywine Creek State Park is an active partner with the National Park Service's First State National Historic Park, Delaware's first national park. Brandywine Creek has assisted the National Park Service with land maintenance, and the two parks are finalizing the ability to share maintenance equipment resources.



## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Replace failed composting restrooms at Thompson's Bridge
- Make structural investments in four historic barns
- Repair road culverts, road paving, and parking lots
- Make the bathrooms at the park office ADA-compliant and available outside of office hours

*"This is an amazing adventure park with lots of hiking, wildlife, canoe rides, and great scenery: it is great for the entire family, and very worthwhile"*

- Danna L  
Tripadvisor

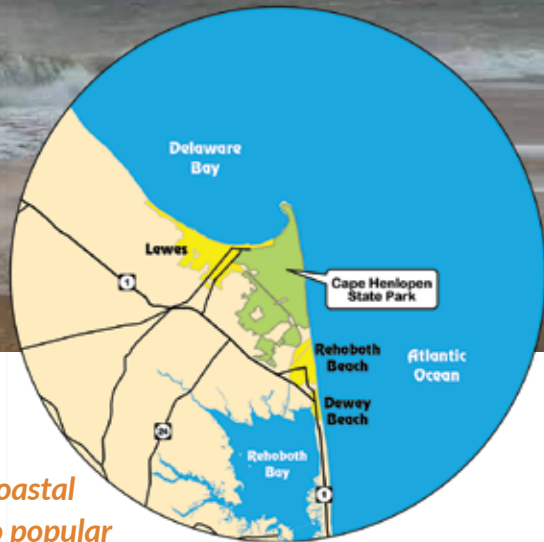
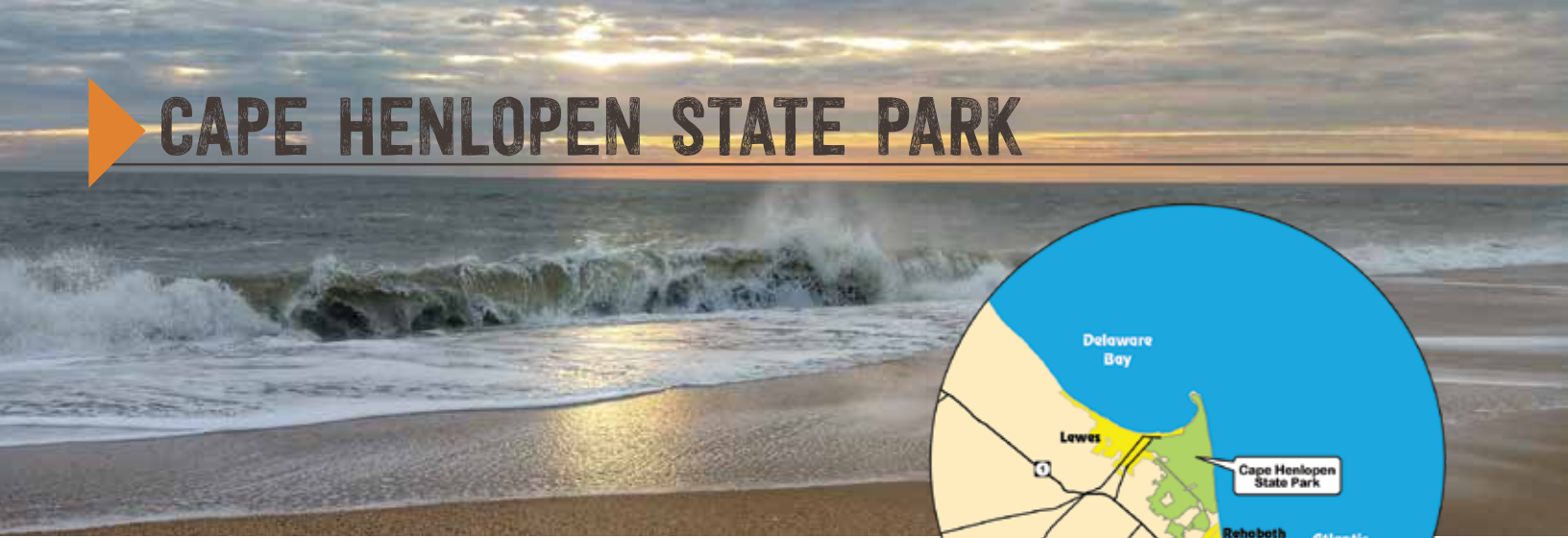
## FRIENDS OF BRANDYWINE CREEK STATE PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Brandywine Creek champion volunteerism, education, and stewardship at the park.



*Brandywine Creek State Park is home to four nature preserves*

# CAPE HENLOPEN STATE PARK



Delaware's largest state park lies along the Atlantic Ocean, providing beautiful beaches, coastal dunes, trails, pine woodlands, and military history. The Cape's Great Dune is one of the highest coastal points between Cape Hatteras and Cape Cod. The park is home to popular swimming beaches, a family campground, a fishing pier stretching into the Delaware Bay, and the Seaside Nature Center, which hosts year-round activities for all ages and houses saltwater aquaria and a gift shop.

CAPE HENLOPEN  
**at a Glance**

- 
5,302.01  
Acres
- 
18.3  
Miles of trails
- 
171  
Campsites
- 
1,399.894  
Visitors
- 
13/80  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
- 
12,236  
Volunteer hours
- 
634/15,705  
Programs/Participants
- 
9/103  
Day Camps/Campers

## FY2017

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

**Cape Henlopen's popular campground** underwent a major renovation to improve the camping experience and address park visitor requests. New roads were designed to increase the amount of environmentally-friendly pervious surface, and the roadways were adjusted to allow 20-, 40- and 50-foot RVs to safely and easily access over 100 upgraded sites. The renovated RV sites now have electrical and water connections, including the first 100-amp electrical service in any Delaware state park. New picnic tables and fire rings were also added.

Tent campers now have 20 walk-in sites adjacent to the Walking Dunes Trail. Additional primitive sites without water or electric hook-ups provide even more options for campers.

In addition to the campsite improvements, Cape Henlopen also has an impressive new camp store that includes an expanded laundry room and camper washer accommodations. The camp store stocks basic supplies, souvenirs, snacks and camping essentials.

A new playground was added near the bathhouse and camp store, creating a convenient meeting spot for campers to shop, do laundry, and socialize.



**Project Cost: \$4,436,000**

**The Seaside Nature Center**, the most-visited nature center in any state park in Delaware, was improved to allow for a more open feel to the building, adding new flooring and lighting. A new 495-gallon, two-level touch tank with viewing windows was also added. The aquarium hallway has new lightboxes with updated information about species and habitats.

**Project Cost: \$285,000**

The entire **lobby of the park office** was expanded, and a third point-of-sale station was added, a significant improvement allowing staff to serve more customers quickly.

**Project Cost: \$100,000**

Beach bathhouse upgrades were supported by State Representative Peter C. Schwartzkopf.

Officer's Club renovations included a roof replacement. Mold abatement and air conditioning work is being studied.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

2,100 people attended the **49<sup>th</sup> Annual Kite Day** Festival in April. This long-running event, held on Good Friday each year in partnership with the Lewes Chamber of Commerce, features flying contests and food vendors, and is a favorite tradition amongst locals.

The **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Children's Fantasy Trail** offered Halloween activities for children, including pumpkin-carving events and a jack-o-lantern walk in the woods. Taking place over three beautiful evenings in October, the Fantasy Trail attracted a record number of more than 3,514 attendees.

**Winter WonderFEST**, a six-week holiday festival organized by nonprofit Festival of Cheer, Inc., set up holiday light shows and entertainment venues in Lewes, raising about \$150,000. 47,000 people from 26 states visited the festival. The event took over most of the Lewes Ferry Terminal complex and part of nearby Cape Henlopen State Park from its official opening in November through New Year's Day. Funds were raised for Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park and other charitable groups, with \$40,000 going to the Cape Henlopen Educational Foundation and Delaware State Parks. Another \$65,000 has been set aside to provide grants for other charities devoted to health, education, culture or environmental causes.

A record 1,200 visitors attended **Delaware Goes to War: Victory in Europe** at Fort Miles in April. Activities in the Cantonment Area and Battery 519 included tours, displays, speakers, and films relating to Delaware's role in World War II, as well as live firing demonstrations. Staff and volunteers sold food, gave tours, drove shuttle buses, and performed a myriad of other duties, making this event one of the best yet.



*"We took our daughters and camped at Cape Henlopen. The facilities were new and the investments impressive, the staff was great, the conditions were really super. I was extremely impressed with the Delaware State Park system. You and your leadership team there at the Cape and at HQ should be proud of what you are doing for Delaware and so many others you serve."*

*- Michael Reynolds,  
National Park  
Service*



*Southern Living featured Cape Henlopen State Park as one of the South's best beaches in their June issue*

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Sewer treatment plant upgrades to ensure environmental compliance.  
Project estimate: \$5,000,000
- Replacement of WWII-era roadways, including Fort Miles' roads, parking, and accessibility
- Replacement of 25-year-old storm-damaged parking lots
- Major renovation and potential expansions of the main beach comfort station in response to increased visitation
- Planning for replacement of the fishing pier

"Cape Henlopen Park is as beautiful in the winter as in the warmer weather. It has fantastic walking and biking paths throughout the woods. For the brave of heart you can walk along the ocean. The Park also has the "Festival of Lights" which runs during the Christmas season. This year it was fantastic! You can take a tour of Fort Miles and see the city underground that was used during WW II... unbelievable experience. Could go on and on... so much to see and do!"

- Review from  
TripAdvisor



## SPORTING EVENTS

The **Kidney Walk** fundraising event was held April.

The **Piranha Triathlon** took place in June. Approximately 350 participants registered this year.

The **Home of the Brave Fishing Outing** was held in June.

The 8th Annual **DEFeet Breast Cancer 5K Run/Walk** was held in May. The walk/run race began at the Tanger Outlet Parking area and traveled on the Junction & Breakwater trail, returning to the starting point. The event included a 1-mile fun-walk course this year, in addition to the timed 5K run and walk

## FRIENDS GROUPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2017 was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the **Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park**. They made the following contributions:

- Thatcher Education Fund continues to provide funding, enabling upwards of 500 students to attend the park's nature programs.
- Building and installation of a second bike barn
- High definition upgrade to the Osprey cam equipment
- Monthly Trails Day and National Trails Day event.

**Fort Miles Historical Association (FMHA)** secured the largest Longwood grant in the state in 2017 (\$569,000). All monies will be used for infrastructure improvements to the Fort Miles Historic Area, including a new parking lot, a new venue at the Fort Miles Museum overlook for weddings and reunions, and museum entrance road improvements.

FMHA secured several additional artifacts for the Fort Miles Museum, including a 1943 aircraft warning shed and a 90mm gun.

FMHA docents ran the Fort Miles Museum every Sunday throughout the summer of 2017, leading hundreds more tours than previously.

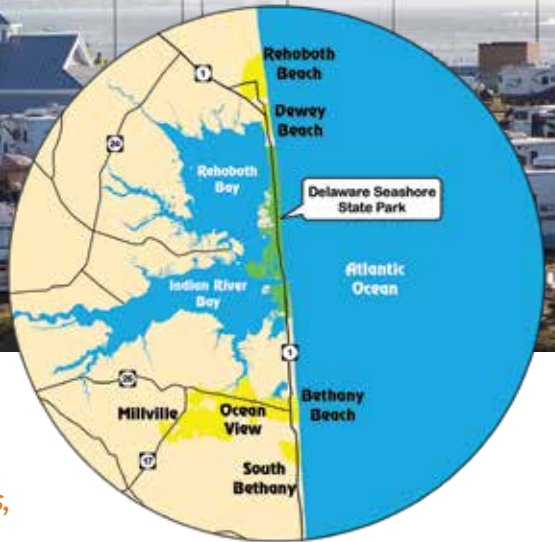
Launched a successful film/lecture series attended by hundreds of interested community members on a variety of topics, including Pearl Harbor, the Doolittle Raid, the German U-boat attack on the east coast, and many other interesting World War II topics.

Hosted the last Doolittle Raider, Lt. Col. Dick Cole, as well as former Delaware Governor Jack Markell and Governor John Carney.

The organization has 400 members and an active board of 12 directors. Board meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.



# DELAWARE SEASHORE STATE PARK



Delaware Seashore State Park borders the Atlantic Ocean and the Delaware Inland Bays with six miles of coastal shoreline. Over two million visitors come each year to enjoy the guarded swimming beaches, saltwater fishing, camping, and many other water sports and outdoor recreation activities.

## DELAWARE SEASHORE at a Glance

- 1,970.05**  
Acres
- 7.54**  
Miles of trails
- 359**  
Campsites
- 1,186,573**  
Visitors (including IRLSS)
- 11,424**  
Nature Center, Historic Site Visitors
- 13/78**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
- 5,488**  
Volunteer hours
- 5/336**  
Concerts/Attendees
- 521/9,613**  
Programs/Participants

**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

In a public/private partnership with the La Vida Restaurant group, the former South Inlet take-out concession stand was transformed into **The Big Chill Beach Club**, a full-service destination restaurant with stunning views of the ocean, inlet and bay. The group upgraded the existing facility to offer casual, outdoor dining on the new rooftop umbrella deck.

Project Cost: **\$1,000,000**

The Big Chill has served over **100,000** tacos since opening.





In response to the Division's camper post-stay electronic surveys, the park repaved the South Inlet RV Camp entrance loop road, which was the most common source of complaints, due to the road's age and potholes.

**Project Cost: \$39,000**

As an enterprise project, the park invested in refurbishing a 3-bedroom bayfront rental property in the town of Ocean View, minutes from Bethany Beach and Delaware Seashore State Park. The rental offers another venue for families to enjoy the park and the coastal region.

**Project Cost: \$90,000**



An old boiler system for tankless water heaters at the South RV Camp bathhouse was replaced to save energy and provide an unlimited, reliable hot water source for the busy family campground.

**Project Cost: \$13,000**

Delaware Seashore State Park purchased \$5,000 worth of decking lumber, and the Veteran's Conservation Corps provided labor and "sweat equity" to remove the old boardwalk decking and install new decking for Towers Ocean Day Area beach bathhouse.

**Project Cost: \$5,000**

*"How very impressed I was with the marina. Staff, cleanliness, etc. It felt like being in a resort... I wanted management to know how pleased I was with the marina and all personnel. Everyone was kind and helpful from boat yard to dock hands and of course the office too!"*

- Mr. McCullough and Mr. Dyer  
about Indian River Marina

### **At the Indian River Marina:**

The cottages have undergone upgrades that include new hot water heaters, new front storm doors, and cottage railing sanding and staining. Several cottages also received new carpet and laminate flooring, window treatments, stovetops, and comforters.

**Project Cost: \$65,000**

Major drystack roof repairs were completed over the summer.

**Project Cost: \$32,000**

Marina fuel dock electrical and pump lines were repaired after damage from extreme high tides and storms.

**Project Cost: \$14,000**

In response to customer requests, a new radio station was purchased with donated funds and installed at the fuel dock:

**Project Cost: \$1,200**

**All dry storage spaces and wet slips were filled in 2017**  
**Total Revenue:**  
**\$3,681,710.96**

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The Boo-B-Que by the Sea Festival, a Kansas City Barbeque Society barbecue competition and family festival, took place in October 2016. The festival supported the Delaware Children in Nature Initiative, raising \$14,614.50 for the John and Linda Hollis Children in Nature Fund at the Delaware Community Foundation. The event included a 5K, a barbecue competition, local musicians, a beer garden, and trick-or-treating and costume contests for children. The event was named "Best New Event" of 2016 by Southern Delaware Tourism.

The **Delaware Seashore 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event series** highlighted fishing, the beach, the bay, and the Indian River Inlet. A surf fishing tournament, hosted by Old Inlet Bait & Tackle, took place in the spring, and a better-than-ever sandcastle contest was held in July to celebrate the beach. The contest had over 50 competing teams and over 500 participants and observers. A four-mile kayak event, "Paddlefest," explored the bayside of the park in August. The final anniversary event took place in September and highlighted the Indian River Inlet. The celebration included live music, food trucks, guided hikes of the bridge, craft projects, and a beach bonfire.

Dozens of visitors contributed to Delaware Seashore State Park's 50th Anniversary **Family Scrapbook** by submitting charming vintage family photos taken at the park, providing a time capsule for a glimpse of the past.

Caroline Green assisted the Indian River Life-Saving Station staff with American Sign Language (ASL) during the first-ever **museum tour for the deaf**. Approximately 20 hearing-impaired visitors from the Bethany Beach/Ocean View area attended. Participants were extremely appreciative of the tour and said they look forward to doing more programs with Delaware State Parks in the future.

The **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Tuna Blast Tournament** was held July 4<sup>th</sup>. 31 boats entered, and the event raised \$7,500 for the Children in Nature initiative.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual **Seafood & Arts Festival** welcomed over **65 art vendors** who brought their nautical handmade and/or recycled artwork to the Indian River Marina for a fun-filled day. The event attracted over **4,000 attendees** and brought in over \$3,100 in revenue for the Marina.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual **Kids Catch-All Fishing Tournament**, with over **75 Anglers**, raised over \$10,000. Proceeds were presented to the Lyme Disease Association of Delmarva, Inc. by State Senator Ernie Lopez, who also presented each winning angler with trophies and awards.

## PARTNERSHIPS

The **Delaware Tourism Office** donated 50 brand-new beach umbrellas for Delaware Seashore State Park's beach accessory rental enterprise.



"Delaware Seashore Park has become our favorite annual trip in our camper. Location, location, location! You can enjoy the ocean and beach, fishing, boating, kayaking and bird watching all while never getting in your car, a definite must visit place if you have never been here."

- Dawn K.  
Tripadvisor

*"We cannot say enough about the new venue and public/private partnership at the Indian River Inlet...There could not be a better example of what can be done when people partner with vision and excellence. You really did manage to put an attraction at an attraction..."*

*- Carol Everhart,  
President of the  
Rehoboth/Dewey  
Beach Chamber  
of Commerce  
about Big Chill  
Beach Club*

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- WiFi for campgrounds and marina
- Towers Ocean parking lot repaving
- Queuing dock extension in permit process
- New travel lift
- Upgrades to water line system on docks

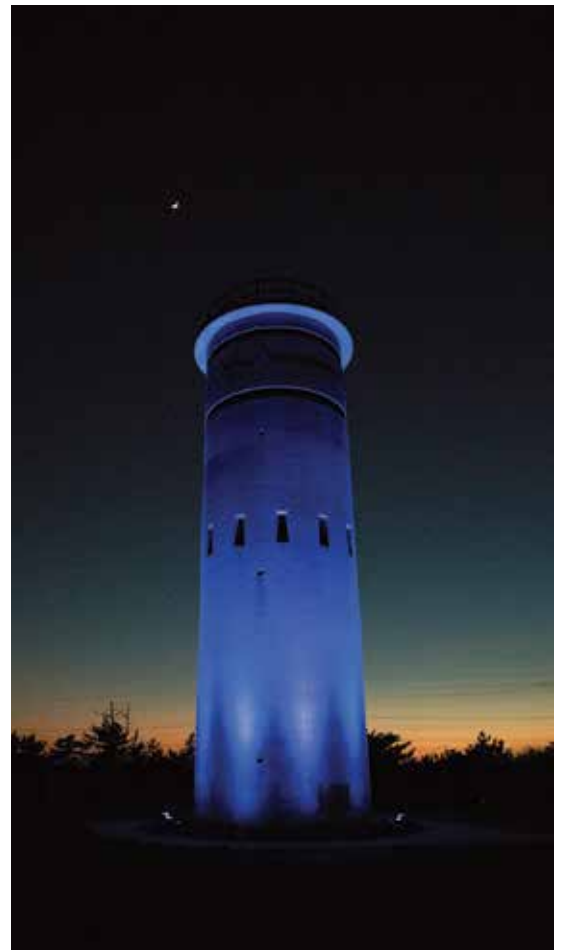
## FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation worked with the Division and the Fort Miles Historical Association to renovate and improve **Fire Control Tower #3**, built during World War II as part of the country's coastal defense. Approximately four tons of sand and debris were hauled out of the tower, and years of moss and graffiti were power-washed away from the exterior. A landscaped concrete pathway was built around the perimeter, with a sidewalk leading to the door from the parking lots. In addition to a new door with a large window for viewing interior interpretive displays, lighting was added to assist with marketing efforts, showcasing the tower in the evening and on special occasions.

The Delaware Seashore Preservation Foundation has a total of 10 members who donated over 658 hours throughout 2017. Through their marketing efforts, they have been featured on WBOC and WMDT TV,

*The Cape Gazette* newspaper, the front page of *The Coast Press*

newspaper, and Delmarva Broadcasting radio stations. The group has generated thousands of dollars in donations through their website and has been successful in obtaining grants from many organizations.










# FENWICK ISLAND AND HOLTS LANDING STATE PARKS



*Fenwick Island State Park has three miles of beautiful beaches along the Atlantic Ocean, and bayside access points along Little Assawoman Bay.*

*Holts Landing State Park is a 205-acre facility popular with locals and visitors alike for its quiet location. Providing both a crabbing pier and access to the Indian River Bay from one of the last public boat ramps along the inland bays, it's a great spot for fishing, hiking, and picnicking.*

**FENWICK/HOLTS**  
**at a Glance**

-  **378/203**  
Acres Fenwick/Holts
-  **2.7**  
Miles of trails - Holts
-  **3**  
Primitive Campsites -Holts
-  **246,830/8,299**  
Visitors Fenwick/Holts
-  **34**  
Casual Seasonal Staff Fenwick/Holts
-  **592**  
Volunteer Hours - Holts
-  **8/567**  
Programs/Participants

## **FY2017** INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The previous boat ramp at Holts Landing State Park was removed and replaced with a **state-of-the-art, dual-launch ADA-accessible ramp**. The new ramp provides 24-hour access.



**Project Cost:**  
**\$300,000**

There is also a project underway to create a new parking lot at the boat ramp.



A large **fire pit** was added with group seating.

**Project Cost:**  
**\$22,000**

Four new interpretive waysides were installed in summer 2017.

The entrance sign was the end result of an Eagle Scout project completed by Will Dowds of the Ocean View, Delaware troop. The bike and kayak racks were the result of Will Keller's Eagle Scout project, also from the Ocean View troop.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

A stand-up **paddleboard and kayaking day of fun** was held at Holts Landing for Operation Second Chance (citizens committed to serving our wounded, injured, and ill combat veterans) with approximately 200 attendees in 2017.

In April 2017, the Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce's **Ocean to Bay Bike Tour** used Holts Landing as rest stop and viewing area for cyclists.



FY16 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Holts Landing State Park. The milestone was celebrated with **Family Fun Nights** that included free concerts and other activities.



## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Fenwick Island parking lot paving
- Fenwick Island bathhouse roof replacement
- New playground at Holts Landing
- Holts Landing trail connector/marsh boardwalk
- Holts Landing comfort station upgrade

## FRIENDS OF HOLTS LANDING STATE PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Park staff and the Friends of Holts Landing State Park worked together to offer the Holts Landing **Summer Concert Series**, which attracted over 1,000 people over the course of the summer. Park staff funded and booked the performances, and the Friends staffed the concert each week. The concert series was well-received by area residents and visitors.



# FIRST STATE HERITAGE PARK



*First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first "urban park without boundaries," linking cultural and historic sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. Each site of the First State Heritage Park has a wealth of stories associated with it, and the sharing of these stories is a highlight for the park's visitors.*

## HERITAGE PARK at a Glance



**12,412**  
Visitors



**4,362**  
Historic Sites Visitors



**2/8**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



**2,807**  
Volunteer hours



**887/8,050**  
Programs/Participants

## SPECIAL EVENTS

First State Heritage Park's signature event, the **7<sup>th</sup> Annual 18<sup>th</sup> Century Market Fair**, drew a crowd of 4,926 people to The Green and the surrounding Dover area, almost tripling in size from the previous year.

A team-building scavenger hunt was created to familiarize groups with First State Heritage Park. The hunt brings teams to each of the park's sites and has them complete a site-related challenge, which earns them a clue that sends them on to the next site. Between challenges, the teams completed photo finds, adding a social media component to the activity. It was tested with teachers from Campus Community School, who thoroughly enjoyed it. The activity will be offered to other groups in the future.



## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Accessible outbuilding restroom and accessible brick walkway at the Bell House.
- Bell House brick front step and railing for safety of visitors entering and exiting the 18<sup>th</sup> century structure
- Bell House perimeter fence to enable the Heritage Park to plant a kitchen garden to use for educational programming.

“My favorite part of ARCH was when we did the crafts because it was something new to me. I also like the crafts because I like to try new stuff it was kinda hard to do it but it was cool and fun and exciting thing to do. Thank you for all you did!”

- Sherlyn,  
Lewis  
Elementary  
School

## PARTNERSHIPS

Students from Caesar Rodney High School directed and starred in *Murder By Mail: True Story of the Poison Candy Murders*, using a script provided by First State Heritage Park. The play took place at the Kent County Courthouse, with four performances that drew over 160 attendees for the First Saturday of October 2017.

Middle school students from Campus Community School's First State Club worked closely with park interpreters to research, write and perform a series of short plays called *Passports Through Time*, about four time periods in Dover history. The plays were presented to 161 people during Dover Days, which takes place annually on the first Saturday in May. For their volunteer efforts, the group was honored with the DNREC Youth Group Volunteer Award. These students continue to volunteer with First State Heritage Park on a regular basis.



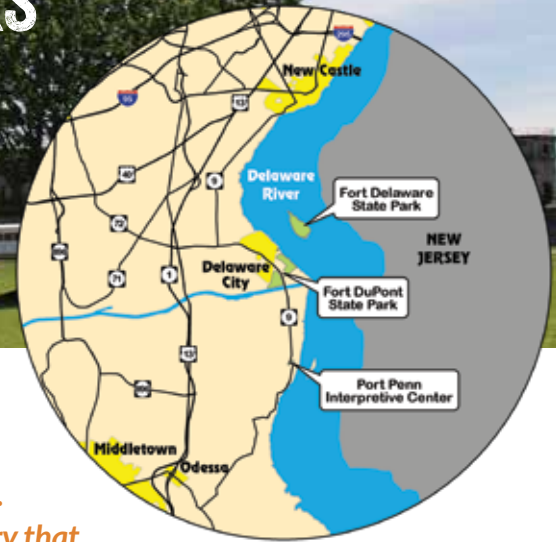
Working with 18 partners from a variety of organizations, First State Heritage Park successfully applied for the National Park Foundation's "Every Kid in a Park" transportation grant to present **ArCH: Arts, Culture and Heritage Preservation Field Days** on The Green. 1,281 students learned about history, culture and lifeways in an interactive and hands-on setting each Monday in May 2017. Funding for this program has increased to reach even more students in 2018.



The Winter Concert Series at the Old State House, a partnership with Delaware Friends of Folk, drew over 315 people to six concerts. The concert series was funded by a grant to Delaware Friends of Folk from the Kent County Fund for the Arts.



# FORT DELAWARE AND FORT DUPONT STATE PARKS



*Fort Delaware was used to house close to 33,000 Confederate Prisoners of War during the Civil War. The fort's living history programming offers visitors the chance to experience life in 1864. Its location, Pea Patch Island, is also home to a large heron rookery that provides outstanding viewing opportunities for birders.*

*During World War II, Fort DuPont served as a training base and also housed German prisoners of war. Both forts tell the story of Delaware's importance in defending our coast. The Port Penn Interpretive Center in the village of Port Penn offers displays and programs about the historic wetland communities along the shores of the Delaware River. Programs and walking tours featuring the town and its scenic marshlands are available.*

**FORT DELAWARE/DUPONT at a Glance**

-  **535.55**  
Acres
-  **1.3/1.1**  
Miles of trails Fort DE/Fort DuPont
-  **23,021**  
Visitors - Fort Delaware
-  **1,498**  
Historic Site Visitors
-  **3/30**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **4,762**  
Volunteer hours
-  **650/16,627**  
Programs/Participants

**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Through a partnership with New Jersey energy company PSE&G, the Division received and installed **600 donated solar panels at Fort Delaware State Park**. The panels replace a diesel generator damaged during Superstorm Sandy in 2012. The Federal and Delaware Emergency Management Agencies provided \$98,000 for design, engineering and infrastructure construction, and DNREC's Division of Energy & Climate provided \$180,000. The panels were installed in 2017 and provide \$18,000 to \$20,000 of clean, efficient energy per year. This is enough to power the entire facility every day throughout the year, enabling heat, lights, security cameras and dehumidifiers to run, even in the winter months when staff weren't traditionally available to run the generator.



**Project Cost: \$411,382**

The east section of Fort Delaware's terreplein was repaired. The area was dug up and a membrane placed above the structure and filled back in with dirt to keep the room underneath from being damaged.

**Project Cost: \$48,000**

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Island tram path repair and resurfacing
- Fort Delaware masonry repairs
- Fort Delaware and Delaware City dock repairs
- Building and maintenance of a landing site on the island
- Replacement and bracing of pilings at the Pea Patch Island ferry landing
- Pavilion construction on Pea Patch Island
- Enlisted barracks room restoration
- Outdoor blacksmith shop

**Maintenance shop chain fencing** was placed around the Fort Delaware/Fort DuPont maintenance shop facility/yard, providing a secure area to park vehicles and equipment.

**Project Cost: \$14,000**

A **restroom was added** to the Fort Delaware/Fort DuPont maintenance shop.

**Project Cost: \$45,000**

Old **interior railings were replaced** and brought up to standards on the multiple levels of the Fort. These railings were custom-built for the areas needed.

**Project Cost: \$25,000**

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The **Diamond State Baseball Club** played games at Fort DuPont, its home field, and at other locations in the area. They are a part of the Mid-Atlantic Vintage Baseball League. The group plays a special game at Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island each year.

A total of **702 visitors** attended two **POW Weekend** events in July and August.

**Fort Delaware Family Campout** took place in September. **46 visitors**, including a cub scout pack, had a great time.

**Dover Air Force Base Campout** was a private overnight stay at Fort Delaware for military members from Dover Air Force Base. This was the first of this type of partnership with the base.

## PARTNERSHIPS

*Escape the Fort*, a partnership between Escape Room Delaware and Delaware State Parks, took visitors back in time to the summer of 1864 at Fort Delaware. As Confederate prisoners of war, participants solved riddles and tried their hands at scavenger hunts to escape Pea Patch Island and return to the south. The event, which was offered four times during the summer, attracted over 250 "escapees," sold out in less than 4 days, and was shared on Facebook over 800 times in one 24-hour period. Revenue for the series was \$7,644. Thanks to continued interest in the event, *Escape the Fort* will continue in 2018.

The **American Birding Association** offered programming and birding cruises at and around Pea Patch Island.

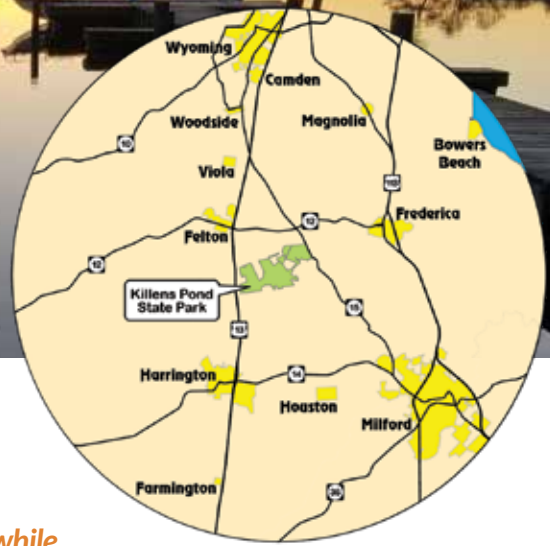
**Diamond State Ghost Investigators** partnered with Fort Delaware for **16 paranormal investigation tours** in October. Money raised by the tours goes to masonry repairs at the fort.

**DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife** conducted "bat tours," educating visitors to Fort Delaware on the importance of bats, the effect of white-nose syndrome on bats, and what people can do to help protect bats.

**Delaware River and Bay Authority** and Fort Delaware offered ferry service to and from Pea Patch Island.



# KILLENS POND STATE PARK



Natural and recreational opportunities abound at Killens Pond State Park. The park's centerpiece is the 66-acre millpond, perfect for boating and fishing. A wooded campground, cabins, and the very popular Pondview Cottage invite visitors to a relaxing stay, while the Killens Pond Water Park offers resort entertainment in a natural setting.

## KILLENS POND at a Glance



**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

Killens Pond State Park worked with Active Network to make **advance ticket sales** available for the first time at the **Killens Pond Water Park**. Visitors are now able to buy tickets before they leave home and either print them out or save them to their phones. The ticket barcode is then scanned at the waterpark. Advance ticket sales allow customers to avoid standing in line or potentially being turned away when the park reaches capacity. The ability to scan tickets also allowed for faster entry and reduced the amount of time guests spent waiting in line.

**Data lines** at the water park were also **upgraded**, another improvement to the customer service experience. With entrance lines moving at faster speeds, park staff are able to provide quicker, more efficient service to guests. The new data lines run to the boat rental facility, allowing for credit card processing and contributing to an overall increase in revenue.

*The water park hosted 54,353 people over the 76 operating days of the FY17 season, an average of 715 people a day.*

**Five panels** designed by Chris Bennett, Delaware State Parks Environmental Stewardship Program Manager, fabricated from laser-cut steel and depicting the habitats within the Murderkill Watershed, were **installed at the Killens Pond Nature Center**.

**Project Cost: \$24,000**



Killens Pond State Park received *Delaware Today's Best of Delaware 2017: Best Place to Cool Off* award for the newly-renovated waterpark



## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Trail around the pond, including a separate bridge off of Killens Pond Road and over the spillway
- Additional phases of the waterpark, to include the splash park/kiddie area, new concession building, and new guard house
- Full hookups and expansion of the campground pads for larger RVs
- Boat ramp repairs and courtesy dock

"We can't wait to come back again (this was our first time)! The trails were so great for a family hike, the nature center was SO cool with its turtles, snakes, and fish that put on quite a show. The park/cabins are beautifully maintained leaving a welcome distraction from daily necessities to the realities of what's important... family and nature. Thank you for providing this."

- The Morgans  
Cabin guests

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Killens Pond State Park held its first annual Healthy Kids Day on October 19, 2016. 300 third graders participated in activities focused on healthy living, nature, and fitness.

**Girls on the Run** took place in November, with **650** runners and **1,500** spectators.

**Healthy Delaware - Harvest Havoc Fun Run** took place in October with a "Motivate the First State" theme. The event had over **200** participants.

## SPORTING EVENTS

### Cross-country is big at Killens Pond

Killens Pond is the home cross-country course for five high schools, averaging two dual meets a week from September through November.

The park also hosted the following cross-country events:

- State Championship (50 schools)
- Mid Atlantic Championship
- Kent County Championships



- Henlopen Conference
- Lake Forest Invitational

## FRIENDS GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Killens Pond continue to be great supporters of the **Summer Concert Series** through sponsorship

and donations. Last year, the Friends sold ice cream and drinks and donated more than **\$2,100** to the summer concerts to assist with hiring bands.

The Friends supported arts and education at the park by providing need-based scholarships to summer camp attendees and supporting field trips for Title I schools. They also purchased flowers, hunting harnesses, and maintenance supplies, and participated in park events.



# LUMS POND STATE PARK



*A dense forest of oak, poplar, and other hardwoods surrounds Delaware's largest freshwater millpond at Lums Pond State Park. This is one of the First State's most diverse parks, offering everything from a relaxing paddle around the pond to the excitement of a first-class ropes course, making it a perfect day trip or a fun family camping destination.*

## LUMS POND

### at a Glance



**1,791.24**  
Acres



**19**  
Miles of trails



**81**  
Campsites



**310,512**  
Visitors



**8/30**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff



**5,514.25**  
Volunteer hours



**102/1,309**  
Programs/Participants



**18/172**  
Day Camps/Campers

**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Go Ape concession added a junior course to its popular tree-top adventure course. **Go Ape Treetop Junior** provides younger visitors with the chance to climb rope ladders, swing from trees, and zoom down zip lines just like their older family members. This is only Go Ape's fourth Treetop Junior course nationally, making it a unique Delaware attraction.

**Project cost: \$200,000**

The park's facilities for cricket playing were improved through partnerships with the two main cricket leagues that use the park. The Delaware United Cricket League added an improved turf pitch to the cricket field in Area 1, and the Delaware Premier Cricket League added an additional field in Area 3.

**Project cost: \$6,000**

The Scout Venture Crew, which meets once a month at the Lums Pond Nature Center, installed used fishing line receptacles along the pond in Areas 1 and 5 to reduce the occurrences of egrets and other wildlife getting tangled in fishing line along the pond's edge.

**Project cost: \$300**



"We live close to this park so we go there often. We have walked most of the trails, kayaked on the water, zipped through trees, biked on trails. Last weekend we decided to enter through the boat ramp entrance and walk from there. The trail was well kept and we barely saw other people. So all I can say: there is something to do for everybody and it so conveniently located."

- Andrea B.  
TripAdvisor

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The **Piranha Sports Delaware Diamondman Challenge Festival** was held at Lums Pond on September 9th, 2016 with over **500** attendants.

The **War Birds Over Delaware** event was held at the park's radio-controlled flying field in July 2016. Parking was at the campground, and a shuttle brought spectators to the event field. There were approximately **500** people at this event.

The **Wilmington and Penn Treaty Kennel Club's Dog Show** took place over four days in April 2016. The group reserved the entire campground for the duration of their show. Over **1,000** dogs were exhibited each day.

**The Delaware Charity Challenge Event**, a team-based 5K run/walk/adventure race in its second year, raised over \$24,000 for numerous charities, including Girls, Inc., Meals on Wheels, and Faithful Friends.

## SPORTING EVENTS

Local sports teams that used the park's facilities included the Bear-Texans youth football team, Delaware United Cricket League, and local schools that practice on the tennis courts. **21** meets were held on the cross-country course.

### Critical

#### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Storage building for rental boats
- Improvements to aging restroom facilities in Day Use Area 1
- Improvements to roadways and parking lots throughout the park
- Development and construction of a new nature center
- A new playground pavilion and overflow parking for the campground
- Accessible walkway at the campground, accessible boat rental dock, and a pontoon boat

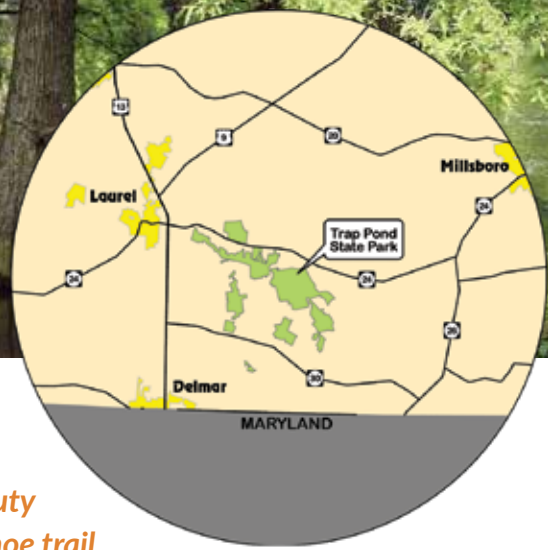
## PARTNERSHIPS

A new nature program for school students was developed by programming staff called "Eco System Connections" which is designed to help students see the connections between what they're learning and everyday life. This was done through the **Making Climate Change Clear** grant program.

## FRIENDS OF LUMS POND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Lums Pond installed benches and helped with upkeep of the dog park area, enjoyed by many in the Newark area.

# TRAP POND STATE PARK



One of Delaware's first state parks, Trap Pond is home to the northernmost natural stand of baldcypress trees in the U.S. The park provides visitors with many opportunities to explore the beauty of the wetland forest and swamp through hiking, paddling the canoe trail, fishing, camping, birdwatching, and stargazing.

### TRAP POND at a Glance

- 3873.29**  
Acres
- 11.57**  
Miles of trails
- 142**  
Campsites
- 129,533**  
Visitors
- 9,558**  
Nature Center Visitors
- 6/29**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
- 8,167**  
Volunteer hours
- 435/6,787**  
Programs/Participants
- 3/256**  
Concerts/Attendees
- 15/86**  
Day Camps/Campers

## FY2017 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

**New signage for the disc golf course** was installed. The course was delineated by GPS this year, and everything is up-to-date. New score cards are available at the camp store.

Bethesda Church improvements include new restrooms, roof replacement, and ADA-compliant doors and walkways.  
**Project Cost: \$170,803**

**New ADA Accessible boat launch** was installed in the campground.  
**Project Cost: \$42,726**

**Bob Trail Bridge Reconstruction on Trap Pond Road**  
 The bridge repair included the removal and replacement of the wooden railing on the pedestrian bridge. The scope of work also included installing additional joists, blocking, support, and built-in-bench seats, and replacing decking under benches.  
**Project cost: \$48,817**

**Both yurts received new canvas** and insulation packages that include heat and A/C, allowing year-round rentals.  
**Project cost: \$11,186**

**C-loop campsites were improved** with upgrades to electric, water, fencing, and grading on the sites and paths. New frost-free spigots make all sites available for winter camping.  
**Project cost: \$115,000**

"I spent the afternoon at Trap Pond State Park kayaking & I was simply blown away. This park is so beautiful, the nature center is top notch & it feels like a hidden gem. Kudos. Thank you for all you do to make Delaware such a fun place to explore (as I did here in Laurel!)."

- Madeleine Overturf, reporter for WBOC

A new bulletin board was installed next to the campground's A-loop bathhouse.

**Project cost: \$4,079**

Staff used 4"x4" and 4"x6" lumber salvaged from the C-loop campground upgrade project, along with some purchased lumber, to build **26 benches** that were placed throughout the park.

**Project Cost: \$35 per bench**

**Fresh Start Market**, a grocer/deli, opened. Renovations to the building include an ADA-compliant ramp, plumbing and electrical upgrades, and new HVAC.

**Project cost: \$6,868**



## SPECIAL EVENTS

**The Delmarva Stargazers** continued to visit the park for the clear view of the stars and the planets at Cypress Point field. Their annual **Star Party**, recently featured in *AAA Magazine*, saw **100** participants.

More than 3,000 people attended the **26<sup>th</sup> Annual Halloween Howl** in October. Families trick-or-treated and took part in Halloween crafts, pumpkin carving, costume contests, and hayrides.

**Healthy Kids Day** at the park welcomed **325 students**, as well as volunteers from the Youth Conservation Corps, Seaford Life-Skills Club, and National Honor Society.

Throughout the second week in May, Trap Pond held programs for students and visitors that included pontoon tours, seining, *Tracks and Traces*, *Power of Water, Soils, Macro Invertebrates*, mobile science labs, and water quality testing with more than **330 participants**.

The park also held its **Wetlands Celebration Festival** and the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services held its 5K fitness event with a total attendance of **575 adults and children**.

The **Laurel Lions Club** hosted a **Journey for Sight walk**, an annual walk that raises money for vision research.

As part of Great Outdoors Month, the **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Governor's Capital Campout** at Trap Pond State Park engaged families that typically do not visit our parks and introduced them to camping in a safe and enjoyable manner. The 45 campers also had the opportunity to try outdoor activities such as kayaking and wildlife identification. This free event encourages healthy lifestyles for young children and families and helps to strengthen the relationship between Delaware State Parks and our community.

Trap Pond hosted the first **Trailblazers Day Camp** in the Delaware State Parks system with 10 participants.

The **First State Antique Tractors Club's** annual antique tractor parade attracted 20 to 30 participating tractors and drivers. The parade is held annually and ends at the park with a picnic at Cypress Point.

**Perdue's Project Clean Stream** brought in **65 volunteers**, who picked up trash and planted trees.

### The park also hosted the following events:

- Atlas 50k Run
- MS Society Walkathon with 125 walkers
- Tour de Sussex with 65 participants
- Run the Pond with 375 registered participants
- Cheer Picnic - 500 participants
- Teen Challenge - 750 participants
- Wade In - 75 participants



## SPORTING EVENTS

Trap Pond hosted the park's first cross-country quad meet in October. The race was a big success and the coaches liked the environment.

## PARTNERSHIPS

**Jeep Jamboree**, a partnership with the **Laurel Chamber of Commerce**, returned for the second year, showcasing **65 jeeps**. The weekend-long event included a Jeep Show-N-Shine, monster trucks, food, vendors, music, and a scavenger hunt.

The Trap Pond Partners received a \$5,000 Urban and Community Forestry Chesapeake Bay grant from the **Delaware Forest Service** and the **Delaware Urban and Community Forestry Council** that provided 75 trees for the campground and some around the nature center.

Trap Pond State Park provided six RV campsites to volunteers for **Sussex Habitat for Humanity** Care-A-Vanners for a week. The sites enabled the organization to advance their construction schedule and building capacity. The group has already made plans to return for two weeks in 2018 for another project.

## TRAP POND PARTNERS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Trap Pond Partners collaborated with Laurel Public Library to place an interactive display case promoting the park in the library. Displays are switched out each month highlighting events, activities, and fun information about Trap Pond State Park.

Trap Pond Partners hosted their third annual **Beer, Wine, and Spirits Festival** in September. A total of **650** tickets were sold. There were 10-plus beer and wine vendors and an additional 20-plus craft and food vendors. Proceeds raised will be used, along with grants and legislative assistance, to build a new playground on the campground side of the park.

The Friends group supported the Laurel Chamber's **Bike and Brew**, an event that included over **510** cyclists, by providing a pit stop at Trap Pond. The stop is a favorite every year, with baked goods, clean bathrooms, beverage stations, maps, and air pumps provided for the bike riders at no charge.

Trap Pond Partners held the **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Get-In-Gear Family** Bike Rally in partnership with Delaware Wetlands.



## Critical

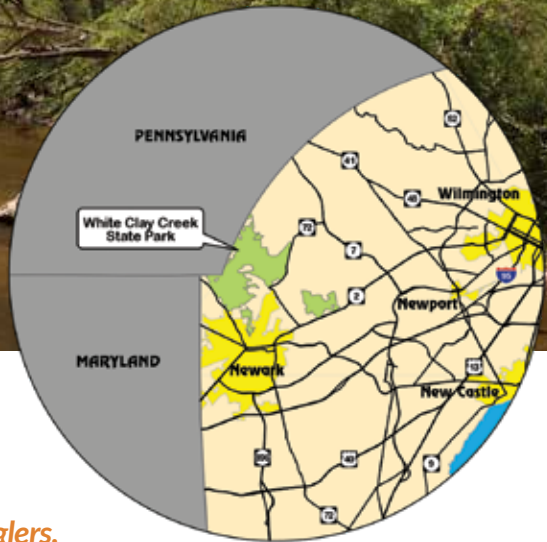
## CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Campground dock replacements for fishing and boat access
- Hitch Pond Road parking area construction to provide safe access to the James Branch canoe trail
- Full-service restroom with showers to support the cabin complex
- Campground infrastructure upgrades: replace aging water lines, replace 30-amp electrical service in C and D loops with 50-100 amps, and enlarge sites to accommodate modern rigs
- Improvements to campground playground in partnership with Trap Pond Partners



Trap Pond Partners

# WHITE CLAY CREEK STATE PARK



Located along White Clay Creek, a nationally-designated Wild and Scenic River, White Clay Creek State Park offers something for everyone. Hikers, bikers, runners, and birders enjoy nearly 40 miles of trails, and the park is a regional trout destination popular with anglers. The park offers summer concerts for music enthusiasts and is home to a very popular disc golf course.

### WHITE CLAY CREEK at a Glance

-  **3,522.58**  
Acres
-  **37.84**  
Miles of trails
-  **168,115**  
Visitors
-  **4,642**  
Nature Center/Historic Sites Visitors
-  **8/22**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **12,224**  
Volunteer hours
-  **328/22,954**  
Programs/Participants
-  **11/14,109**  
Concerts/Attendees
-  **27/317**  
Day Camps/Campers

## FY2017 INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

**Phase 1 of the Tri-Valley Trail construction** opened to the public. The project will complete an 18-mile network of trails linking the Judge Morris Estate, Middle Run Natural Area, and Possum Hill.  
**Project Cost: \$1,912,069**



### SPECIAL EVENTS

More than **850** visitors and exhibitors attended the **White Clay Creek Fest**, and more than 600 visitors, students, teachers and parents took part in White Clay Creek programs that week. Programs included

The Ebb and Flow of Climate Change, Sand and Soil, roving interpretation, Beginning Birding, Living Things of the Creek, Forest and Field, and Extended Geology.



Staff from DNREC's Divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Parks & Recreation stocked **11,250** pounds of brown and rainbow trout. Volunteers also assisted with the effort. The total weight of fish stocked in New Castle County came to **16,000** pounds.



Deer hunting remains popular at White Clay Creek State Park, with hunters taking advantage of the park's 40 deer stands (seven of them designated for permanently disabled hunters), 47 archery pins, and three hunting zones. Hunters harvested 142 deer this year.

**Congratulations to the 2017 staff of White Clay Creek for being voted "Best State Park/Upstate" by Delaware Today readers!**

## Critical

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- Nature center complex redevelopment plan for the Robinson House and current Chambers House Nature Center
- Park Office relocation to Carpenter Recreation Area
- Renovation of the Niven House as a market rental to generate revenue
- Renovation to Krapp House for a bed-and-breakfast concession

## FRIENDS OF WHITE CLAY CREEK ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of White Clay Creek provided volunteers to help install a new trail bridge and a new bike station.

The Friends received a **\$10,000** grant from **REI** for primitive camping and developed an implementation agreement with the Division.

The Friends of White Clay Creek conducted successful fundraisers, including 50/50 raffles at concerts that raised **\$2,952**.

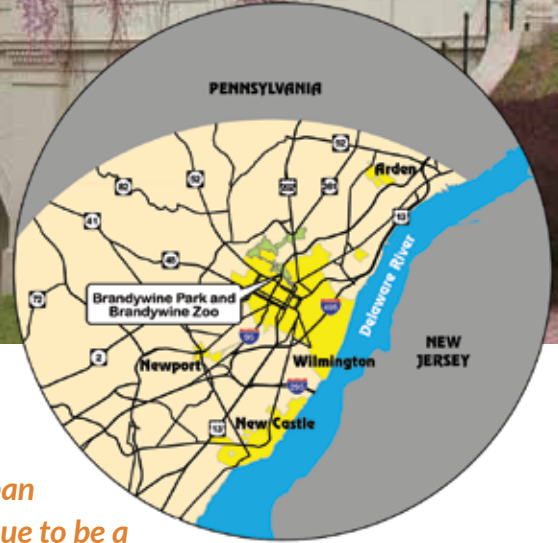
The Friends of White Clay Creek's 280 members donated a total of **1,668** volunteer hours in FY17.

*"From biking, hiking, or horseback riding theres so much to see and enjoy here. I'm blessed to live so close to his wonderful place. Fishing, hunting, and just enjoying the creek and nature. What more could you ask for?"*

- Dan S.  
TripAdvisor



# WILMINGTON STATE PARKS BRANDYWINE ZOO



Wilmington State Parks — comprising Brandywine, Rockford, and H. Fletcher Brown Parks — embrace the rich history of life in Delaware’s largest city. The park areas here have served as an urban retreat for the citizens of Wilmington since 1883, and they continue to be a vital part of daily life in the city. On any given day, visitors of all ages participate in all types of recreational pursuits: tennis, baseball, softball, football, lacrosse, soccer, track and field, kickball, rugby, Ultimate Frisbee™, kickball, and basketball. The Brandywine Zoo, located in Brandywine Park, is home to birds, reptiles, and mammals, including bald eagles, condors, and the world’s largest rodent, the capybara.

## WILMINGTON STATE PARKS at a Glance



**FY2017**

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

The Friends of Wilmington Parks completed the 10-year-long restoration of the Sugar Bowl in Brandywine Park.

Project cost: **\$650,000**

The awarding of a construction contract marked the continuation of the restoration of the Josephine Fountain. The project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2018.



Baynard Stadium rehabilitation work addressed safety concerns on existing east-side stand structures, including demolition of steel frames and aluminum seating, which were replaced by temporary aluminum frame stands.

Demolition of the Brandywine Zoo's tiger exhibit is complete. Repurposing of the area is underway, including the addition of an amphitheater and tent area.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**The Wilmington Flower Market**, held at Rockford Park since 1952, again drew thousands of people.

**The Brandywine Festival of the Arts** and the **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation** hosted major fundraising events at Rockford Park.

**Brew at the Zoo** is the Delaware Zoological Society's largest fund raiser. In its sixth year, the event sold out in advance, attracted 600 patrons, and saw a 38% increase in revenue.

The **Boo at the Zoo** Halloween event hosted 2,656 attendees over two nights. Many local businesses and community organizations participated by handing out candy to trick-or-treaters.

Five breakfast events — **Star Wars, Breakfast with the Beasts**, and **Breakfast With Santa** — brought in 286 attendees.

The Brandywine Zoo hosted a symposium on American Kestrels, with 253 attendees from around the country.

## SPORTING EVENTS

Baynard Stadium is a popular venue for high school and youth sporting activities, including football, soccer, lacrosse, and track and field. It is the home stadium for Delaware Military Academy, St. Marks High School, Salesianum School, Howard High School of Technology, and St. Elizabeth High School. High-profile tournaments included:

- New Castle County Track and Field Championships
- Catholic Youth Ministry Track and Field Championships
- City of Wilmington Flag Football Championships

*"Yes, it is important for all people to have the peace and serenity and beauty of our parks to lift their hearts. Personally, I especially enjoy seeing the cherry trees each spring. Hooray for the wise old men who cared enough to create our park system and for those today who keep it going."*

*- Friends of  
Wilmington Parks  
Member*

**BRANDYWINE ZOO**  
*at a Glance*

-  **12**  
Acres
-  **47**  
Animal Species
-  **82,900**  
Visitors
-  **7/16**  
Full Time/Casual Seasonal Staff
-  **13,804.80**  
Volunteer Hours
-  **1,011/51,896**  
Programs/Participants
-  **32/338**

## DELAWARE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Delaware Zoological Society (DZS) received a \$30,000 grant from the Timken Foundation for completion of the Brandywine Zoo's amphitheater and nature play area.

DZS participated and ran multiple successful events, including the Brew at the Zoo and the popular Boo at the Zoo Halloween event, among others.

The Delaware Zoological Society had 959 members in FY2017.



*"This is a small but really wonderful zoo. Ideal for young children and very accessible for elders. Interesting animals and habitats- be sure to brush the goats and listen to the chattering parrot, he has quite a vocabulary... Staff is very friendly and eager to share their knowledge with guests."*

*- LynnVB  
TripAdvisor*

## FRIENDS OF WILMINGTON PARKS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Friends of Wilmington Parks saw volunteer events grow from 16 in 2016 to 55 in 2017, and volunteer hours to 1,360, a 380% increase.

### Critical

#### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

- *Rehabilitation of Baynard Stadium to address aging infrastructure. There is demand for an all-weather playing surface, parking and lighting improvements, and permanent replacement of the temporary bleachers.*
- *Relocation of the Wilmington State Parks office to a permanent structure*
- *Renovation of the Lovering Street tennis and basketball courts*
- *Todd Memorial renovation*
- *Rehabilitation of H Fletcher Brown Park and the restoration of the Josephine Fountain in Brandywine Park will be completed in the summer of 2018.*
- *Zoo hospital and quarantine upgrades, required for AZA recertification*
- *Implementation of the Zoo master plan*
- *Major updates to the Brandywine Zoo's power and water services to accommodate the \$10 million rainforest exhibit announced by the Governor in 2014 and a \$4-5 million expansion along the top ridge of the zoo*

The Friends held their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual **Jasper Crane Rose Garden Party** on June 1 in Brandywine Park, benefiting the Friends' family-friendly programs and events. Major fundraiser Joseph Melloy, Sr. was honored at the event, and approximately **300 guests** attended. The team volunteered more than 600 hours leading up to the event in the spring— weeding the beds, pruning the rose bushes, and performing detailed landscaping.

The Friends conducted a detailed soil test study of the rose garden, which revealed that third-party companies had over-fertilized in previous years, leading to unnecessarily high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous. The group chose not to fertilize this year and had more people help with pruning, resulting in reduced runoff into the Brandywine and improved health and bloom for the roses. The Friends saw a record number of visitors to the Rose Garden over the summer.



The Friends of Wilmington Parks initiated a **Summer Concert Series** in partnership with Gable Music at the Sugar Bowl in Brandywine Park. This seven-concert series featured local performers, including talented up-and-coming artists.

The Friends continued their sponsorship of STEM-based education for Title I urban schools and community groups, impacting more than 1,600 students.

The Friends organized a Native Habitat Restoration Volunteer Team. Volunteers cleared and replanted an area at the bottom of Rattlesnake Run in Brandywine Park.







Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control  
Division of Parks & Recreation  
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