



MARYLAND PARK SERVICE

VOLUNTEER MANUAL



WELCOME

Welcome to the Maryland Park Service volunteer program. You are joining thousands of other generous individuals and groups who volunteer their time and talent to help make the state parks a fun and educational experience for millions of visitors each year. It is our desire to provide you with a challenging and rewarding experience that is beneficial to you, the park and our visitors.

As a volunteer, you play an important role in the overall mission of the Maryland Park Service by helping to preserve and protect these special places while providing for their use and enjoyment by our visitors.

Mission Statement

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources preserves, protects, enhances and restores Maryland's natural resources for the wise use and enjoyment of all citizens.

Mission Statement

Maryland Park Service

To manage the natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to provide the best use for the benefit of people

Volunteering Is Important

Volunteering is an opportunity to help preserve our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Volunteers are park ambassadors.

Volunteers help to create a better understanding of our state parks and build a meaningful bond between a local community and a park.

Volunteers provide support to enhance park operations.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many ways for a person to become involved in the Maryland Park Service as a volunteer. Listed below are some opportunities offered to those who would like to be a volunteer. Not all opportunities are available at every park / forest.

Volunteers: The "general" volunteers found in and around the parks usually fit in this category. They perform a variety of tasks and assist in the operation of the park.

Some of tasks may include:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Trail Maintenance | Gardening |
| Planning / Staffing Special Events | Photography |
| Conducting Historical Research | Tree Planting |
| Building Bird Boxes | Sign Making |
| Carpentry Work | Historic Interpreter / Docent |
| Registering Campers | Mowing |
| Leading Canoe Trips | Painting |
| Leading Nature Hikes | Desktop Publishing |
| Computer work | Visitor Center Receptionist |
| Sign Language Interpreter | Volunteer Coordinator |
| Presenting Campfire programs | General Maintenance / Repairs |
| Organizing slide and photograph files | Historical Interpretation |
| Assisting in development of trail maps, brochures, etc. | |



Finding the Right Opportunity for You: In April 2011, the Maryland Park Service launched an online volunteer system. Volunteers can search the entire state for opportunities at state parks and register for them online. Opportunities can be searched by park name, activity or zip code. To get started, please visit the “Volunteer with the Maryland Park Service” web page at the following URL:

<https://ec.volunteernow.com/custom/1289>

Once there, click on “Opportunity Search” in the Volunteer Menu in the left margin. Then use any of the five search features to find opportunities that are of interest and/or convenient to your location. If you find any opportunities that are appealing to you, click on “sign up” and complete the registration form online. You can establish your own volunteer account with a personal User ID and password. Signing up for an opportunity will automatically put you in touch with the park’s volunteer coordinator. If none of the current opportunities are what you are looking for, you can still register and sign up for the default opportunity “Contact the Volunteer Coordinator.” You can then discuss what you are looking to do and see if the park(s) have any opportunities that would match up. Once registered volunteers returning to the web page may log-in using their User ID and password.

There are also detailed instructions online at <http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/volunteerinstructions.asp>

Member of a “Friends of...” Group –

Many parks have formed “Friends of...” groups. These volunteers, in addition to doing the tasks listed above, may also be involved in fund raising. “Friends of...” groups are private organizations which have a DNR / Maryland Park Service liaison and are required to have legal agreements with the DNR / Maryland Park Service.



Camp Host –

Camp Hosts are considered unique “volunteers”, as they receive free camping in return for performing park duties throughout the campground. Hours accrued after working the required number of hours per week should be recorded volunteer hours.



Volunteer Ranger – This program is available for volunteers 18 years of age and older who want to assist the regular ranger force with operations, programs and public service. After accruing 40 hours of volunteer service within the park, the volunteer attends training and is provided with a uniform. A commitment of 100 hours of Volunteer Ranger service is required each year.



Volunteer Mounted Patrol (VMP) –

These Volunteer Rangers perform their duties on their own horses. They also must attend training, as well as a horse assessment. The VMPs look for violations and problems and assist park visitors. All Volunteer Mounted Patrol participants are trained in CPR and first aid.



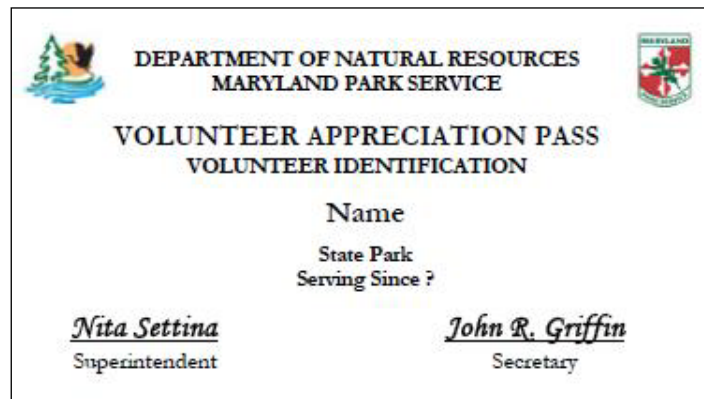
Volunteer Bike Patrol (VBP) – Bike patrol volunteers, using their own bikes, report downed trees on trails, washouts and other problems in places that the rangers may not see on a regular basis. They also look for violations and may perform on-the-spot trail maintenance as they ride the trails. All Volunteer Bike Patrol participants are certified in CPR and first-aid.



Scales and Tales - This program offers wildlife and resource management educational programs. Volunteers assist with care of the animals used in the programs, and with program presentations. There are Scales and Tales aviaries in several locations around the state – Rocky Gap, Patapsco Valley, Cunningham Falls, Pocomoke River and Tuckahoe state parks, and Deep Creek Lake Discovery Center.



VOLUNTEER BENEFITS



ANNUAL PASSES/IDENTIFICATION CARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

As our way to show our appreciation, volunteers are entitled to earn annual passes for free admission to all Maryland State Parks based on the amount of time they have donated. This policy does not preclude managers from issuing any local privileges to volunteers for free admittance to their park.

POLICY

- Annual passes may be given to any volunteer who has volunteered for at least 100 hours during a calendar year (January 1-December 31). The passes are issued every February to those volunteers who have reported 100 or more in the online volunteer system.
- The pass is good for one year from the date of issuance.

HOW TO OBTAIN ANNUAL PASSES

- 1) As soon as possible after performing any volunteer activity, volunteers should log-in to their accounts and report their hours. Volunteers should also ensure that all of their information in the volunteer profile is accurate and up-to-date. To receive credit for volunteer hours in any calendar year the hours must be reported by no later than January 31 of the following year.
- 2) On or about February 1 a report will be generated by the volunteer system identifying all volunteers statewide who reported 100 or more hours during the previous calendar year. Passes will be prepared at Maryland Park Service Headquarters in Annapolis for all volunteers included in the report. The pass will include from the volunteer's profile:
 - The eligible volunteer's name;
 - The State Park at which they volunteered, and;
 - The year they began their volunteer service.The pass may indicate the specific park in cases where multiple State Parks are managed as one complex.
- 3) Passes will either be issued directly to volunteers or distributed to the Volunteer Coordinators at the state parks to present to the volunteers.

REGISTRATION

All Maryland Park Service volunteers must be registered prior to performing any volunteer activity. The volunteer system database is the only official record of a volunteer. Once officially registered, all volunteers are covered for liability and medical as follows:

Liability

Although not a compensated employee of the State, a volunteer is included in the definition of "State personnel" within the meaning of a law that protects State employees from liability. The law provides, "State personnel . . . are immune from suit in courts of the State and from liability in tort for a tortious act or omission that is within the scope of the public duties of the State personnel and is made without malice or gross negligence."¹ Thus, the State will represent and defend a volunteer sued for commission of a tortious act provided the volunteer's conduct falls within the stated limitations: the act is committed (a) within the scope of the volunteer's service, (b) without malice, and (c) without gross negligence.

Medical Insurance Coverage

A volunteer worker for a unit of State government is a covered employee under the Maryland Workers' Compensation Act; specifying that, for certain purposes, the State is the employer of a certain volunteer worker; limiting the benefits provided to a volunteer worker to medical services and treatment under Subtitle 6, Part IX for a compensable injury. Workers' Compensation claim forms must be submitted through the appropriate channels within thirty (30) days of the date of the accident/injury.

When an accident or injury occurs, the Volunteer Coordinator or Project Supervisor is to call the Injured Worker's Insurance Fund **Injury Hotline at 1-888-410-1400** to report the injury within 24 hours. A Customer Service Representative will take all the necessary information. You will be asked to provide the unit policy number which is 90-80-20.

Code of Responsibility for Volunteers

Be Sure – Look into your heart and know that you really want to help other people.



¹ Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, §5-222(b). The law is known as the Maryland Tort Claims Act. See State Government Article, §12-101(a)(3) and COMAR 25.02.01.02B(8) (State personnel include individuals not paid by State who are participating in formal volunteer program).

Be Convinced – Do not offer your services unless you believe in the value of what you are doing.

Speak Up – If you have a question, ask about things you do not understand. Do not hide your doubts and frustrations until they drive you away or turn you into a problem worker.

Be Willing To Learn – Training is essential to any job well done.

Welcome Supervision – You will do a better job and enjoy it more if you are doing what is expected of you.

Be Dependable – Your word is your bond. Do what you have agreed to do. Do not make promises you cannot keep.

Be a Team Player – Find a place for yourself on the team.



WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN EXPECT FROM THE MARYLAND PARK SERVICE

RESPECT: Volunteers will be regarded as colleagues, with mutual goals. The volunteer will be asked his/her opinion and will receive answers to the questions. The volunteer will receive courteous treatment from Park Service staff.

GUIDANCE: Volunteers will receive clear and concise directions in all assignments.

CHALLENGES:

The Maryland Park Service will make every effort to insure volunteer assignments are meaningful and match their abilities and interests.



OPPORTUNITY: Volunteers will have many learning experiences. The volunteer will be able to express his/her views and ideas, meet new friends who share similar interests, willingness to work hard, and have measurable results to show for the efforts.

TRAINING: The Maryland Park Service will provide opportunities for volunteers to attend in-service trainings.

WHAT THE MARYLAND PARK SERVICE CAN EXPECT FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS

We seek volunteers who exhibit commitment, enthusiasm, cooperation and dependability.

Volunteers represent the Maryland Park Service when they are dealing with our visitors and are expected to be courteous, know the local and state policies and procedures, and have an understanding of the resources and recreational opportunities at their site.

ENTHUSIASM:



You should have a genuine interest in nature and conservation. You will find the job much more rewarding when you can inspire others through your love of the outdoors. Make every effort to make the visitors feel welcome.

COMMITMENT:

The park relies on volunteers to be present at the times agreed to so that activities can be planned and staffing needs can be met accordingly. Accept assignments which are within the level of responsibility you can handle.

DEPENDABILITY:

You should work in a responsible and efficient manner. Never report for or perform volunteer activities under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.

INDEPENDENCE:

You may be responsible for completion of various assignments. In addition, you may be asked to initiate, develop, and finish certain projects in line with your interests and abilities.

COOPERATION:

You must be willing to follow instructions and work as part of a team. Accept the guidance and decisions of the supervisors.

APPEARANCE:

You should present a neat, well-groomed appearance, especially when volunteering in a public contact position.

TRAINING:

You should be willing to learn and participate in orientation, training programs, and meetings. Learn and obey all park regulations and policies.

RECORDS:

All volunteers should keep accurate and up-to-date records of service to the park.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

- Volunteers are given an orientation at the park where they volunteer.
- Ongoing training is provided as the need arises. Check with your Volunteer Coordinator to find out what training is available.
- As volunteers spend more time at the park, duties may change. Formal and informal training will help prepare volunteers for these changes.
- Volunteers are encouraged to take advantage of the various training opportunities that are offered during the year.

- Training opportunities may include:
 - Scales and Tales
 - Project Wet
 - Living with Bears
 - Project Wild
 - First Aid / CPR
 - Project Learning Tree
 - Certified Interpretive Guide
 - Leave No Trace
 - National Coalition Building Institute Training



Report writing
Critical Incident Stress Management
Trail maintenance
Fundamentals of Search & Rescue (FUNSAR)
Maintenance
Voluntary Compliance

- The Volunteer Coordinator or the Park Manager will initiate the registration for any of these opportunities.
- The Maryland Park Service Training Division maintains a website with the current available training opportunities.
<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/training/>



MARYLAND PARK SERVICE GUIDELINES

1. Records

Records are maintained for each volunteer at the Maryland Park Service in the park in which he/she is volunteering. These records include dates of service, training, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work, and awards received.

Volunteers and appropriate staff are asked to submit any necessary records and information to the park Volunteer Coordinator. These records include volunteer hours and any training that may be taken off-site.

2. Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy

Any volunteer is prohibited from purchasing, transferring, using, or possessing illicit drugs or using alcohol or prescription drugs in any way that is illegal. Volunteers will not be terminated for voluntarily seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem; however, performance, attendance, or behavioral problems may result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Alcohol and drug abuse have an adverse effect on performance, create dangerous situations, and serve to undermine the community's confidence in the organization. Our purpose in implementing this policy is to provide a drug and alcohol-free workplace in order to ensure a safe, healthy and productive work environment for all volunteers and employees.

3. Harassment

It is illegal to harass others on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, age, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, citizenship, disability and other personal characteristics. Jokes about ethnic or other groups, or verbal, physical and visual behavior will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Propositions, jokes, sexually provocative pictures and other verbal, physical and visual harassments are prohibited. The harassment of any volunteer or employee by another volunteer or employee will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination in cases of misconduct.

Any volunteer who feels harassed should speak with his/her staff or volunteer supervisor, or if the supervisor is not appropriate, to the next level supervisor, or any other staff person in management, in an attempt to reach a resolution. It is the supervisor's duty to hear such complaints and to refer them to the appropriate authority.

4. Equal Opportunity

The facilities and services of the Department of Natural Resources are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or physical or mental disability.

5. “No Shows”

“No-Shows” can dilute the quality of programs at the state forests and parks by leaving those relying on the volunteer’s presence with insufficient help. A “no-show” is a term applied to a person who fails to show for an event or work assignment and does not notify the immediate supervisor that he/she will not be reporting as scheduled.

6. Promptness

Volunteers should be prompt. Being late inconveniences others. When the volunteers are assisting with groups (school and others) the volunteer should be aware that groups do not always arrive at the scheduled time. Plan to arrive approximately 15 minutes before a group is scheduled to arrive.

7. Vehicles

Volunteers are permitted to drive state vehicles if they hold a valid driver’s license, are 18 years of age or older, and have less than 6 points on their driving records. Volunteers driving a state vehicle must be carrying out an assigned task.

8. Access to Equipment and Materials

As appropriate, volunteers will have access to park property and the materials necessary to fulfill their duties. Training will be given in the use of the equipment, when appropriate. Property and materials are to be utilized only when directly required for park projects. Park property may NOT be used for personal reasons.

9. Termination

Parks accept the service of volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the park. Volunteers agree that the park may, at any time, decide to terminate the volunteer’s relationship with the park. Notice of such a decision is communicated promptly by the volunteer’s supervisor. Completion of an application/registration does not guarantee placement within the park’s volunteer program.

10. Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not observe the rules and regulations of the Maryland Park Service and the policies of the Volunteer Program, or who fail to satisfactorily perform their assignments may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has an opportunity to discuss the reasons for dismissal with the staff and park Volunteer Coordinator.

If a volunteer blatantly violates any laws, policies, rules or regulations, immediate termination can be expected.

Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of park equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of visitors or co-workers; failure to abide by Maryland Park Service procedures; failure to abide by the park’s rules and regulations; misrepresentation of the park or the Maryland Park Service’s position on issues affecting the Service; failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

11. Grievances

When a volunteer has a complaint, regardless of its content, he/she can request an appointment with the staff or volunteer supervisor assigned to that volunteer. The supervisor will handle the complaint in the appropriate manner, which may include mediation, conflict resolution, investigation, and/or corrective action. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this level, the volunteer may request an appointment with the staff Volunteer Coordinator who will follow the same procedures. If the complaint cannot be resolved with the staff Volunteer Coordinator, the next person in the chain of command will be contacted. When filing a complaint, a verbal report will be sufficient; however, the volunteer may be requested to present the complaint in writing.

12. Safety

Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older to operate any power tools, equipment, machinery or vehicles and required to be trained prior to use.

HISTORY OF MARYLAND STATE PARKS



(A more complete history is available on the DNR web site:
<http://www.dnr.maryland.gov>)

Maryland's state parks grew out of the state's early efforts at forest conservation. By 1912, a portion of the Patapsco Forest Reserve had been developed and dedicated specifically for public recreational use, and as early as 1910 this parcel had been referred to as "Patapsco Park." Campers, picnickers and swimmers flocked out of Baltimore to recreate alongside the Patapsco River. Now it encompasses 14,000 acres, extending along 32 miles of river.

Similarly, in 1922, the state purchased another forest reserve/park (it's called both in early records). It was Fort Frederick, a ruined relic of the French and Indian War, which historic preservationists wanted protected and restored by the state. Now a 600 acre state park, with the partially restored fort, Fort Frederick annually serves 127,000 visitors, especially history lovers.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Forestry was the initial interest, and it came in the early 20th century. At this time, Maryland's forest resources, all privately owned, were in a state of near total devastation. Two and a half centuries of uncontrolled exploitation, and especially the tactics of get-rich-quick, cut-and-run lumbermen, had left the state with scarcely a stand of first growth timber. Unchecked forest fires and erosion worsened the situation.

To challenge Maryland state government into doing something about this situation, brothers John and Robert Garrett, heirs to the B&O Railroad fortune, donated nearly 2,000 acres of cut-over land in Garrett County to the state. The donation was based on the condition that the state institute policies and governmental machinery to begin scientific management of this and other potential Maryland forest resources.

The state responded accordingly, passing a forestry law in 1906 establishing an official Board of Forestry to oversee acquisition and wise management of this and other forest reserves, provide for a system of forest fire suppression, hire a state forester, and to provide technical assistance to private owners of woodlots. (The Garrett bequest is now part of Potomac and Garrett State Forests in Garrett County.) Though this law is mostly about forestry, a section tucked in it detailed the duties of the state forester. It referenced "the protection and

improvement of state parks and forest reserves." Other than that, there is nothing specific about state parks. However, the following year, another publicly spirited citizen named John Glen donated 43 acres along the Patapsco, the nucleus of Patapsco Forest Reserve -- and Maryland's first true state park.

Fred Besley deserves great credit for establishing extensive forest conservation, as well as a system of parks in Maryland. He was a tireless advocate of wise forest conservation, even long after his retirement. One of his first accomplishments as state forester was personally to find, inventory and record every stand of trees in the state larger than five acres! It took him years of traveling by train, horse and foot, later recalling "I tramped every cow path in Maryland." In 1916 he published the results of his work in a memorable book, *The Forests of Maryland*. Fred Besley was the embodiment of ethical public service and natural resource conservation.

FORESTS AS PARKS

State forest land acquisition continued apace, and along with it, public expectation of recreational use of public forest preserves.

Stephan Ting Mather, the first director of the National Park Service, was a strong advocate of systems of state parks to supplement the burgeoning system of national parks. Fred Besley routinely recognized the need for state parks in his forestry work. In 1923, Governor Albert C. Ritchie overhauled the state's unwieldy system of 85 independent boards and commissions, such as the Board of Forestry, reducing them to 14. Forestry, in the form of a five-man forestry advisory board, was placed under auspices of the Board of Regents of the University of Maryland, because that body was regarded as non-political (Besley fought hard to keep politics out of forestry), and because Besley was teaching forestry at the University. Besley and his new staff became the Department of Forestry, charged with executing the forestry policies of the Board of Regents and acting on advice from the forestry advisory board.



CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

By the early 1940's, considerable Maryland public forest lands had been developed for recreational use as parks, thanks to the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.). The C.C.C. was a massive federal works program during the Great Depression. In Maryland, the C.C.C. put a total of 30,000 young men to work reclaiming natural resources and building facilities for public accommodations in the outdoors. The C.C.C. built lakes, cabins, pavilions, trails, campgrounds and other visitor amenities all over the state, though principally in Western Maryland. The C.C.C. also restored Fort Frederick's wall and reconstructed the Washington Monument (originally built in 1827) near Boonsboro. Herrington Manor, Swallow Falls, New Germany, Washington Monument, Gambrill, Fort Frederick, Patapsco, Elk Neck and Pocomoke River State Parks were the primary beneficiaries of C.C.C. park development, and in fact, most of the C.C.C.-built facilities are still in use across Maryland's state forests and parks.

The Great Depression and World War II temporarily decreased public benefit these projects, but in the late 1940's and 1950's, with the return of prosperity, and a newly mobile American public (cars, roads and leisure time), there was a boom in public demand for outdoor recreational opportunities.

OUTDOOR RECREATION ON PUBLIC LANDS

Starting in the post war, late 1940s and on into the 1950s, the demand for outdoor recreation grew at an alarming rate. The Avalon Area of Patapsco State Park was surveyed as the most densely used recreation site in Maryland. On Friday nights at Swallow Falls, verflow campsites were created rather than turning people away. The CCC facilities were wonderful, except there just weren't enough of them to meet the growing popular demand.



PROGRAM OPEN SPACE

Program Open Space imposed a one-half of one percent tax on all real estate title transfers in Maryland, with the proceeds dedicated to the acquisition and development of park lands. Half the money was retained at the state level for land acquisition only, and the other half went to counties and municipalities, which could use their share for both acquisition and development. A unit named "Program Open Space" handled acquisition for the state and parceled out the local government's shares. Additional matching funds came from a Federal source called the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which vastly increased the contributions.

In its first 20 years, Program Open Space added nearly 60,000 acres to Maryland's state park holdings, a 57 percent increase. POS was reauthorized in 1989, and is yet augmenting state park holdings, though since the 1980s, federal matches have dropped off precipitously and there have been no Federal appropriations for the past several years. POS has been wildly successful in saving natural lands from loss due to commercial and residential development. The legislature fully funded six of the ambitious master plans of the 1960s. The included Point Lookout, Cunningham Falls, Greenbrier, Shad Landing (now Pocomoke River), Elk Neck and Deep Creek Lake state parks. Others were only partially funded, and many not at all.

MARYLAND PARK SERVICE

In the meantime, state government continued to reorganize the governmental machinery that administered parks. In 1969, Governor Marvin Mandel adopted a cabinet form of government for the state and established today's Department of Natural Resources, with a cabinet level Secretary reporting to him. Former Governor J. Millard Tawes was the first Secretary of Natural Resources.

Today, Maryland's state forests, parks, natural resources management areas, and natural environment areas comprise over 260,000 acres of public land (five percent of Maryland's land mass). It is managed by approximately 200 employees. State forest and park resources are diverse and include, natural wonders, as well as number of highly significant historic sites.



ECONOMIC IMPACT:

Each year, a network of 66 Maryland State Parks welcomes nearly 10 million day visitors and 1 million visitors who stay overnight in campgrounds and cabins.

- Maryland State Park visitors directly spend more than \$567 million during their trips to State Parks, producing a total economic impact of more than \$650 million annually.
- State park visitor spending supported more than 10,000 full-time jobs and generated more than \$39 million in state and local retail, gasoline, hotel, and income taxes.
- 70 percent of spending and employment impacts are concentrated within 20 minutes of State Parks in local, "gateway communities," often in rural settings.
- 49 percent of overnight visitors and 29 percent of day visitors are from out-of-state.
- 95 percent of day visitors and 94 percent of overnight visitors had expectations met or exceeded during their trip to a Maryland State Park.
- 48 percent of day visitors and 63 percent of overnight visitors come to the State Parks with children. One in 10 groups came with five or more kids.
- Visitors ranked hiking/walking as the most popular activity in State Parks during the time of the survey followed by: general relaxation, swimming, sightseeing, and picnicking/cooking out.
- Maryland State Parks offer a safe and affordable way to escape from stress, connect with nature, and offer a positive experience for their children.

DNR Website

Visit the Maryland Department of Natural Resources website: www.dnr.maryland.gov

Public Lands: <http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands>

Volunteer: <http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/volunteer.html>



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The facilities and services of the Department of Natural Resources are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or physical or mental disability.

TTY users call via the MD Relay
Toll Free # - 1-877-620-8DNR

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