

RE-ENGAGING 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



OVERVIEW

2021 has not been the clean break with its predecessor that everyone had hoped. The pandemic and its wide-reaching effects will continue for an extended period. Change continues at an increasingly rapid pace, requiring all of society, as well as its organizations and systems, to adapt or fail.

Even before the pandemic, professional associations have been shaken by the drastic changes in membership needs and expectations over the past 30 years. Remaining relevant to their constituents is a daily challenge. Fortunately, PRPS has been among the earlier adopters of organizational change, thanks to its Board leadership, and has both persevered and prospered, despite external threats.

This report highlights the accomplishments of the Society in a year in which our members reopened and reconnected park and recreation services to their public, although in limited and transformational capacities, and reengaged with their peers through PRPS networking and training opportunities, which were also transformed by pandemic necessities.

GOVERNANCE

MISSION

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society empowers recreation and park professionals and citizen advocates to enhance life-enriching services for all Pennsylvanians.

VISION

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society will improve environmental, economic and social health and wellness for current and future generations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The organizational culture of PRPS is expressed in the collective behavior of our leaders and members and how our actions are perceived and received by others. To facilitate the highest levels of relevance, capacity and influence, we integrate these six core values into all operations with consistency and unity:

- Integrity
- Excellence
- Innovation
- Education
- Equity
- Empowerment

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tonya Brown, CPRP, AFO, CPSI – President
Ken Lehr, CPRP – President-Elect
Jason Lang, MS, CPRE – Secretary
Todd Roth, CPRP, AFO – Treasurer
Kim Batty, Ph.D. – Educators Director
Jeremy Mortorff, CPRP, CPO –
Aquatics Branch President
Courtney Meehan, CPRP –
Community Branch President
Derek Dureka, CPRP – Interim
PR Branch President
Lee Dillon – Pennsylvania State
Parks Branch President
Becky Kandrac, CTRS – Interim
TR Branch President
Michele Harmel, CPRP – District 1 President
Doug Knauss, CPRP – District 2 President
Mike Richino, CPRP – District 3 President

ADMINISTRATION

STAFF

Tim Herd, CPRE – Chief Executive Officer
Niki Tourscher, CPRE, CPSI – Director of
Training and Get Outdoors PA
Emily Gates – Director of Strategic Partnerships
Brian “BK” Koehler, CPSI, CPRP – Director, Park
Maintenance Institute
Tracy Robert – Membership Services Manager
Emily Schnellbaugh – Communications Manager
Joleen Kough – Controller
Dan Hendey, CPRP, CPSI – Education Manager
Jane LaMar – Administrative Assistant
Lauren Ansell – Marketing Engagement Intern

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

The annual Administrative Plan is developed by the staff to implement the policies and priorities of the Board of Directors. It also advances the actions of the Society’s allied work plans: the PRPS Strategic Plan, Leadership 2025, the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute Business Plan and the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Incorporated into the document are summaries of separate plans for professional development, membership development, communications and marketing, partnership development, and Pennsylvania park maintenance institute development, contributed by staff members and their respective teams.

FINANCIAL STANDING

Annual Audit. PRPS financial statements and accounting practices are annually reviewed by

the independent CPA firm of MaherDuessel. For 2020, the auditors identified no material deficiencies in internal control and declared that the financial statements are presented correctly in all material respects.

Investments. Certain PRPS funds are invested with the objective of preserving the long-term real purchasing power of assets, while providing a relatively predictable and growing stream of annual reinvestments in the Society. As of December 31, 2021, these funds include 114,096 shares of Microsoft Corp. and 28,531,245 shares of the Vanguard Balanced Index Admiral Fund, with a combined current value of \$1,579,917. From its inception in September 2015, the fund has yielded 12.5 percent and has produced investment returns of \$440,624.

Operating Reserve. The Operating Reserve is an unrestricted fund balance set aside to stabilize finances by providing a cushion against unexpected events, losses of income and large unbudgeted expenses, and it consists of operating surpluses invested in the Vanguard investment fund and other unrestricted net assets (such as cash, retained earnings and other assets). Of the portion that is Board-designated in the Vanguard fund, \$642,580 is restricted for the People, Parks & Community Fund. \$937,337 is set aside as the Operating Reserve, which is equal to 83 percent of total annual expenses.

2021 Budget. In June, PRPS received the forgiveness of a second federal Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$112,500. At the end of the year, total revenues amounted to \$1,744,269, with expenses of \$1,124,467, resulting in a net income of \$619,802. Results outperformed the budget due in large part to a significant increase in Friend Memberships.

Assets & Liabilities. As of December 31, 2021, net assets amount to \$2,239,849 (consisting of total assets \$2,419,827, minus total liabilities \$179,978).

MEMBER-DRIVEN COMMITTEE WORK

BRANCHES AND DISTRICTS

The three geographical districts and five professional track branches each have an elected executive committee with officers who conduct related business meetings and organize socials and fundraisers for the good of their members.

CONFERENCE (VIRTUAL!)

The decision to transition to a virtual conference for 2021 was made on December 3, 2020, due to the persistent COVID-19 pandemic. PRPS engaged Tim Lamont of Lamont & Associates for contract negotiations, and Hershey released PRPS of the 2021 contract and worked with us to finalize a contract for March 18-22, 2023.

The timing of the decision allowed PRPS to offer a completely in-house conference. Event dates and times were adjusted to better accommodate attendees and presenters, and the conference still provided 35 virtual educational sessions. All sessions were available during the live event and for three months following, allowing attendees to earn CEUs without missing crucial work hours.

Utilizing Squarespace and Zoom, staff worked diligently to develop a conference website to serve as the hub for event details, educational sessions, and more. All presentations were set up using Zoom, with sessions recorded for future viewing. This in-house process allowed PRPS to continue offering a quality event, yet minimizing financial strain.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Governmental Affairs Committee develops and updates PRPS legislative priorities and position statements; issues action alerts, opinion-editorials and media releases; and drafts various correspondences and support letters. The 2021 session of the Pennsylvania General Assembly was a busy and productive time for PRPS as we made progress on most of our top legislative priorities.

Provisional Hiring. House Bill 764, sponsored by Rep. Brett Miller (R-Lancaster), restores a provisional hiring option for Pennsylvania employers such as municipal recreation programs, camps, pools, and others who hire employees to work in direct contact with children. The bill allows a 45-day provisional hiring period, provided certain safeguards are maintained. Late in the year, the bill was approved by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, and on February 17, 2022, was signed into law by Gov. Tom Wolf as Act 12 of 2022, effective immediately.

Municipal Pre-school Recreation Programs. PRPS continues to work with stakeholders on moving House Bill 1155 out of the House Children & Youth Committee. This bill would allow municipal preschool recreation programs to

continue without having to be licensed as daycare facilities by the Department of Human Services. In October, the PRPS Board of Directors modified its Protocol for Public Preschool Recreation Programs with an eye toward a potential committee amendment. House Bill 1155 is sponsored by Reps. Barry Jozwiak (R-Berks) and Mary Jo Daley (R-Montgomery).

Limited Liability Protection for Volunteers and Volunteer Organizations. The House unanimously passed House Bill 1694 on the last session day of 2021. PRPS and the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation have taken the lead in championing this bill, which would provide volunteers and volunteer organizations, like park friends groups, enhanced protection from frivolous personal injury lawsuits. These lawsuits have caused a substantial increase in liability insurance and resulted in at least one organization being forced to disband. The bill is sponsored by Reps. Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana), Mike Driscoll (D-Philadelphia), Martina White (R-Philadelphia) and Perry Warren (D-Bucks).

Use of Open Space Funds for Maintenance. House Bill 221 would allow municipal governments to use up to 25 percent of open space funds for maintenance purposes, regardless of how the land was acquired. Current law limits using funds for maintenance to lands acquired under the Preserving Land for Open Air Spaces Act. This bill would allow municipalities to better maintain lands used for parks and recreation purposes. In May, the bill was passed unanimously in the House and referred to the Senate Local Government Committee. PRPS supports this bill and is working with the prime sponsor, Rep. Jack Rader (R-Monroe).

Growing Greener Funding. In fall, the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee approved Senate Bill 525, which would allocate \$500 million of Pennsylvania's share of Federal American Rescue Plan monies for certain Growing Greener programs including those benefiting community and state parks. PRPS is working closely with coalition partners on this legislation. We expect the bill to be further considered closer to the passage of the 2022-23 fiscal year budget. SB 525 is sponsored by Sen. John Gordner (R-Columbia), and Rep. Lynda Culver (R-Northumberland) will be the prime sponsor of a forthcoming companion bill in the House.

FINANCE

The Finance Committee reviews the annual budget and investments, and it monitors their management. It also reviews the annual audit and its recommendations, if any, and updates the Financial Management Policy as needed.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

The Health & Wellness Committee develops and disseminates information related to health priorities, trends, technical assistance and partnerships, to elevate the connection between parks and recreation and personal, community, economic and environmental health. In 2021, the committee worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to advance wellness in nature by encouraging park and recreation departments to host Walk with a Doc events as part of a statewide movement to promote health, nature, parks and trails during September's Pennsylvania Trails Month, and supported the expansion of the state's park prescription programs.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Due to COVID restrictions, the Urban Park and Recreation Exchanges were postponed; however, PRPS continued its important work on diversity, equity and inclusion issues (DEI) in 2021. A membership survey on DEI issues revealed a need for continued education and implementation ideas among the membership. A listening tour in the second half of the year met with underserved teenage youth in seven different locations across the state to hear their views on parks and learn about their experiences with outdoor recreation. From the survey, our work in the field, and research, PRPS has developed a DEI toolkit for our members, along with various written documents summarizing our findings. In the fall, the Board of Directors expanded the Committee's DEI work to include PRPS as an organization.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee meets monthly to monitor, develop and implement member recruitment and retention strategies. In 2021, the PRPS Leadership Development Academy Class chose to develop a membership engagement plan, called Level Up, which will launch at the 2022 Conference. For 2022, with a goal to increase overall membership by 10 percent, the committee's tactics include new marketing recruiting techniques, expanding outreach to new audiences, tailoring recruitment messages

and promotions to each unique group of prospective members, and tracking and analyzing the effectiveness of each campaign. The committee's members continually strive to connect our new and existing members to practical training, resources and networking opportunities, and they strive to encourage full use of member benefits.

RECOGNITION & AWARDS

In 2021, the PRPS Recognition & Awards Committee decided to change up the awards process due to the ongoing pandemic. The program was revamped to accept submissions from member organizations that specifically highlighted the outstanding Society, affiliated organizations of PRPS and service to the candidate's employing agency and or community.

PRPS member organizations submitted text and pictures describing significant and unique programming that took place in 2020 that was a direct result of the global pandemic. Submissions were not scored or ranked (as typical) to collectively recognize all those organizations that provide information at the Awards Banquet.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

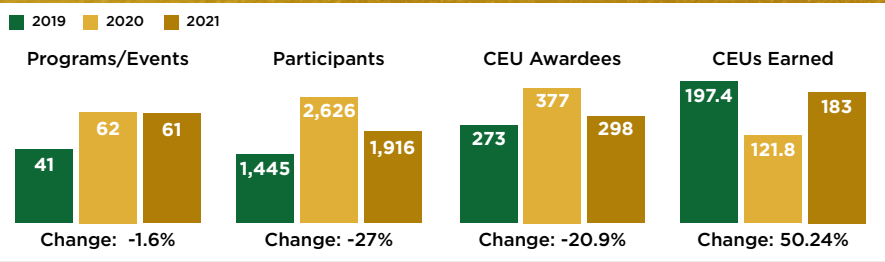
MEMBER BENEFITS & ENROLLMENT

PRPS actively promotes the economic, environmental, social and personal benefits of parks and recreation; advocates in support of recreation and park funding; monitors key legislative actions that impact the profession; and provides up-to-date information on safety standards and best practices. Member benefits include access to members-only publications; free posts on the PRPS Job Center; and eligibility for scholarships, mini-grants and the Recognition & Awards program.

In 2021, our membership rolls increased by a modest 2 percent, as our members and potential members continue to recover from the pandemic. We saw a significant increase in our number of Professional Members after implementing a new pricing model for large group memberships, which we plan to expand even further in 2022. Our biggest loss in enrollment was in the Commercial/Corporate category, as companies have been unable to fully participate in our virtual annual conference and expo, and many were harder hit by pandemic-related restrictions.

Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society

PRPS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ENROLLMENTS



MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENTS	DEC. 2020	DEC. 2021	CHANGE
Professional	725	810	12%
Associate	110	105	-5%
Student	656	646	-2%
Retiree	37	37	0%
Patron	0	1	100%
Life	20	20	0%
Complimentary	38	31	-18%
Honorary	44	43	-2%
Board	322	323	0%
Corporate	98	70	-29%
Total	2,050	2,086	2%
Friends	17,981	44,063	145%

COVID-19 RESOURCES

As the depth of the pandemic extended far into 2021, and the need for updated guidance grew, PRPS revised its previously published guidelines and released a 14-page PRPS Recreation and Park Facilities Re-Opening & Re-Engaging Recommendations on March 5. Similarly, the PRPS Pandemic Resources Center on the website was updated as needed and remained an important source of guidance for our members.

PRPS RESEARCH: RECREATION AND PARK PROVIDERS

PRPS engaged Penn State's Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management (RPTM) to evaluate local park and recreation providers' perceptions of local parks and recreation relative to contributions, investment and equity in a post COVID-era.

The full study comprised the findings and analysis of two surveys: one of local park and recreation

directors of the PRPS membership; and the other of municipal recreation and park providers, conducted among the memberships of Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Pennsylvania Association of Boroughs, the Pennsylvania Municipal League and the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania. The study concluded in early 2022, with its results presented at the Annual Conference, and published following.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although the pandemic stretched into 2021, PRPS continued to offer virtual education and training to meet the needs of members. A combination of virtual and in-person events will commence in 2022.

INCLUSION

In 2021 PRPS accomplished several goals in response to June 2020's Call to Action. A member

Another "Good" Year 2021 Review

Reached
1,607,337

Engaged
57,074
park lovers in PA
across social media
and email efforts

Directed
29,090
park lovers in PA
to our website

Welcomed
900+
new park lovers
to the Good for PA
community

Featured
6,100+
local parks with our
Park Finder tool



Park and Rec Professionals Day

With PRPS, Good for PA held the 3rd annual Park and Rec Professionals Day. *Spotlight Celebrations* were held across the state of PA in Cranberry Township, Mechanicsburg, and Warrington Township. Park and Rec Day was also featured on the *American sitcom*. Parks and Recreation's social media channels with a following of over 2.2 million!



2021 Good Job Award
The 2021 Good Job Award was awarded to Emily Crooks, Director of Parks & Recreation at Springfield Township.



Content Creation and Campaigns

In Partnership with #GetOutdoorsPA, we also implemented the "Why I #GetOutdoors" campaign where we featured 5 PA park lovers where they answer the question "Why do you #GetOutdoors."

In 2021, we released 21 blogs highlighting seasonal activities, useful tips and tricks, and overall promotion of PA's local parks for the Good for PA community to read and share



survey (56 respondents) helped us to identify member needs. PRPS also increased training for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) related issues through webinars and conference and fall meeting sessions. In 2021 PRPS hired an intern from Temple University who assisted with DEI research, identifying contacts and developing questions for a listening tour of teens from underserved communities. The listening tour consisted of seven stops across the state to meet and talk with more than 90 teens about their impressions and experience with parks and outdoor recreation. Based on the survey, research and tour input, PRPS has developed a white paper and the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice Toolkit for Park and Recreation Agencies that is currently in distribution.

PARK MAINTENANCE INSTITUTE

The Institute experienced a positive year for raising brand awareness and growing its subscription base. The Institute was highlighted in multiple industry periodicals over the year, and it exhibited or presented at several conferences, including the Pennsylvania State Mayors' Association, the West-

ern Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Conference, the National Association of State Parks Directors Conference, and the Pennsylvania Municipal League's Leadership Summit.

Due to hesitation about physically gathering through most of the year, the Institute primarily continued offering "Shop Talk" sessions and park maintenance roundtables, hosting 16 events throughout 2021. Additionally, the Institute hosted its first Field Day in North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, along with representatives from E.H. Griffith. The Institute looks to expand its collaborations in 2022 with Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, American Public Works Association and the Pennsylvania Municipal League, among others.



PARK MAINTENANCE INSTITUTE

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

The communications team ramped up the PRPS social media presence, spearheading a

2021 Communications Snapshot

7,613 Engagements FB, IG, Tw, Li	6,378 Followers FB, IG, Tw, Li	45,577 Impressions LinkedIn & Twitter	50,256 Reach FB & IG
820,875 Total Emails	161,788 Website Pageviews	3,686 Blog Views	

Top Performing Facebook Post



Reach 6,418

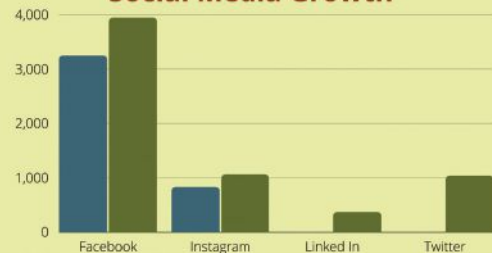


Reach 2,598

Top Performing Blog

The Windshield is Bigger than the Rear View Mirror – Look ahead, while reflecting on the Past

Social Media Growth



broader reach to our members and other industry stakeholders outside Pennsylvania. Our social media reach and virtual workshops created the beginnings of an entirely new peripheral audience. To continue to serve this audience as "The Resource" to our industry, the communications team included a PSU work-study student and a part-time marketing assistant. Together, the team has grown more active, able and agile in generating and publishing engaging content in a timely fashion.

Displaying the commitment to practical technologies, PRPS has invested in the marketing software Airtable to create, track, manage and streamline the interconnected, interdepartmental process of approving, scheduling and tracking all social media posts.

COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

PRPS continues to develop an ever-expanding portfolio of industry partners and donors, with more than 60 companies as corporate members. Despite hosting no in-person events in 2021, due to the lingering pandemic, PRPS continues

to build and strengthen a variety of educational, advocacy, and business partnerships to advance mutual goals.

THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DCNR)

DCNR and PRPS meet regularly to discuss and determine initiatives that are advantageous to park and recreation providers and users. DCNR staff regularly present at the PRPS Conference & Expo and hold advisory roles on multiple PRPS initiatives, including the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute, Healthy Lands Week, RecTAP, Get Outdoors PA, the Health & Wellness Committee, and Good for You. Good for All campaign.

HEALTHY LANDS WEEK

Healthy Lands Week is a new statewide initiative focused on the beautification, restoration and celebration of Pennsylvania's green spaces via the completion of unified, systematic, volunteer park cleanups across the state. The initiative raises awareness for stewardship of public lands and strengthens volunteer opportunities. The initiative's inaugural launch will be September 24, 2022, (National Public Lands Day) and extend through October 2, 2022, (Walk in Penn's Woods). It markets to land trusts, friend groups, park and recreation departments, state park volunteers, trails groups, and community volunteer citizens. Led by PRPS, the Healthy Lands Week partnership team outlined the resources needed for project success, including the development of marketing materials and a marketing plan, technical assistance resources, and a website. The initiative's current partners include Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, WeConservePA, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Fairmount Park Conservancy, the Philadelphia Parks Alliance, and the city of Philadelphia.

GET OUTDOORS PA

The Flagship Team comprises eight partners, including the PRPS, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, WeConservePA, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental

Educators. From its inception, Get Outdoors PA has focused on providing information to both the public and community partners. In late 2017 the flagship partners made the strategic decision to refocus the target audience of Get Outdoors PA primarily on community partners and providing them with the necessary tools and information to help them better deliver outdoor recreation programs to the citizens they serve.

Over the past two years, engagement from partners has diminished due to the pandemic and other obligations. In 2021, PRPS staff conducted focus groups of community partners and met with the Flagship Team to discuss the status of the program. From these findings, PRPS developed a set of recommendations to DCNR about the future of Get Outdoors PA. For the meantime, PRPS will continue to manage the Get Outdoors PA mini-grant program while DCNR determines the future of the program.

RECTAP GRANTS

The Recreation and Parks Technical Assistance Program (RecTAP) is a statewide technical assistance grant program designed to help organizations receive expert advice on maintenance, recreation, park and trail issues. It matches recreation, park and trail professionals with municipalities and nonprofits to provide advice and assistance on specific issues that can be addressed within a limited amount of time.

The pandemic continues to prolong the completion of many RecTAP projects; however, the following entities started or completed their projects: Dauphin County Parks and Recreation, Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority, Waymart Borough, Lansford Borough, Westmoreland Historical Society, Dalton Borough, and Milford Borough.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the program, PRPS worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to survey the program's peer consultants concerning trainings, funding, technical resources, project timelines and other aspects. PRPS will issue updates to the program in 2022.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATORS

In 2021, PRPS built and/or maintained strategic collaborations with:

- City of Philadelphia

- County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
- Council of State Executive Directors
- E.H. Griffith
- EarthShare
- Fairmount Park Conservancy
- Grassland Equipment and Irrigation
- Growing Greener Coalition
- Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful
- Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization
- National Recreation and Park Association
- New Jersey/Eastern Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Association
- Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Municipal League
- Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation
- Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
- Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
- Penn State University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management
- Penn State University Extension Department of Agriculture
- Philadelphia Parks Alliance
- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- Sybertech Waste Reduction Ltd.
- Toro
- Trust for Public Land
- Turf Equipment and Supply Company
- Vortex Aquatic Structures
- WeConservePA

SPONSORS

PRPS is grateful to have teamed up with the following sponsors in 2021:

- Boyce Associates
- George Ely Associates
- General Recreation Inc.
- Herbert, Rowland & Grubic Inc.
- MyRec.com Recreation Software
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Snider Recreation
- Topp Business Solutions
- USTA Middle States
- Vortex Aquatic Structure