



Leadership 2025

Proceedings and Recommendations from the
**2018 Recreation and Conservation
Leadership Summit**

December 5-6, 2018
Toftrees Resort, State College, PA



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The Summit was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, using Environmental Stewardship Funds, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Purpose

The Summit convened to establish bold direction and objectives for the future of the recreation, parks and conservation industry and professional practices in Pennsylvania. Through facilitated discussions of macro issues, summit attendees developed creative solutions, an action plan, and a shared vision for the coming seven years.



Outcomes

1. The publication and distribution of *Leadership 2025*: a visionary plan with articulated issues, goals and objectives at local and state levels.
2. Establishment of annual professional leadership and mentorship development programs.
3. Supporting input and documentation for the development of the 2020-2024 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Summit History

The first Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit of 2010 produced a significant advance in new initiatives and professional practices throughout the state. Issues studied included: Urban Park Trends; Making the Health & Recreation Connection; Green, Healthy & Playful Parks; Reconnecting with Nature and the Outdoors; Funding for Community Recreation and Parks; Positioning Recreation & Parks as an Essential Community Service.

Among its results, the 2010 Summit contributed directly to the development of the *Good For You, Good For All* statewide marketing and branding campaign for Pennsylvania parks and recreation; the Green and Playful Parks Advisory Committee and the funding of more than a dozen new nature play areas; and the establishment of the Pennsylvania Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance to confront the unique issues and problems facing urban areas.

Summit Planning



A planning team consisting of seasoned professionals representing the PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society began planning the Summit and its outcomes a year in advance.

Critical Issues

The team determined that five main issues framed the most critical challenges, threats, and opportunities facing the recreation and conservation profession in the coming years. Separate writing teams, consisting of experts in each of the fields, further developed these topics as draft white papers prior to the Summit:

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
2. Health and Wellness
3. Park Maintenance and Infrastructure
4. Sufficient and Sustainable Funding
5. Professional and Leadership Development



Invitees

Approximately 100 emerging and seasoned leaders in recreation, parks and conservation were invited to prepare and participate in the Summit. Chosen for their commitment to learning, leading and the profession, they agreed to:

1. Read all five issue papers, along with each of their required linked/attached articles or videos.
2. Review the discussion questions listed in each paper, and determine ways to contribute to the discussions during the input sessions.
3. Consider the suggested attendee challenges for each issue, and determine how to contribute to the advancement of the Summit strategies.
4. Abide by the PRPS Member Code of Ethics and Volunteer Committee Service Responsibilities.

Facilitation and Engagement

The planning team engaged the services of a professional facilitator to develop and implement a Facilitation Plan to match facilitation styles to the anticipated dialogs for each input session.

As the participants rotated through five input sessions, the writing teams solicited discussion and further input. Upon its conclusion, the teams incorporated recommended improvements and submitted a final draft for publishing in this *Leadership 2025* report.



Offsite Tour

To showcase leadership in action, Summit attendees visited a number of facilities of Centre Region Parks and Recreation, an agency of the Centre Region Council of Governments. Five municipalities contribute shared funding to support regional year-round recreation and park operations.

The bus tour consisted of stops at the Centre Region Active Adult Center, Welch Community Swimming Pool, Oak Hall Regional Park and Hess Softball Complex. Participants shared lunch and a brief walking tour at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, where Centre Region COG Executive Director Jim Steff spoke of the leadership challenges in stewarding shared resources and facilities.



Luncheon Remarks

Cindy Dunn, Secretary, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, welcomed all attendees and commended everyone for making the commitment to participate. DCNR played an active role in the first Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit in 2010, which produced many good works. While many believe our field is all fun and games, it is hard and serious work to do it right. Secretary Dunn briefly explained how DCNR is working to improve its own operations with respect to the critical issues addressed at the Summit.





Keynote Speakers

Tom O'Rourke, Professor of Practice, Clemson University, addressed the Summit attendees on *The Role of the Leader in Parks and Recreation's Future*. He asserted that leading a park and recreation agency takes an additional set of leadership abilities—including the skills of a negotiator, listener, chameleon, and planner—while being the most fierce, strong, and principled person. With the proper plans, built by everyone, and adopted by those in charge, Pennsylvania's recreation and conservation leaders can stay on track to accomplish all of our goals.



Kathryn Ott Lovell spoke at the general session on *Activating the Superpowers of Parks and Recreation for Equity, Justice, and Social Connection*. From her perspective as the Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, she affirmed that parks and recreation can play a critical role in reversing social isolation, concentrated poverty and economic inequality. While many herald the traditional benefits of parks and recreation services, we must make an indisputable case for their social impacts, now more than ever before. Pennsylvania recreation and park leaders must reevaluate our priorities and realign our resources to combat inequity and disconnection in our cities.



Both Mr. O'Rourke's and Ms. Lovell's visual presentations are accessible at www.prps.org/leadershipsummit.

Sponsors

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has always taken a strong interest in the state of our profession, in addition to their many other charges, and provided the major source of funding for the Summit. Many thanks to the Department's senior leadership for their great and visible commitment.

The Summit is also grateful to its corporate Sponsors for additional funding and their vital contributions:

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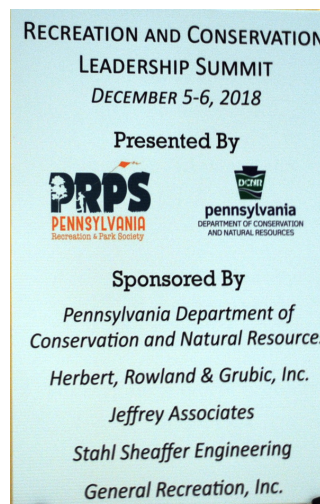
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Top Priority Statewide Strategies

Based on the input of the Summit attendees and planning team, the following actions are prioritized from 33 statewide strategies and recommendations of the five issue papers.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. DEI Toolkit. Create a toolkit/guidelines for ways to design, market, implement, and evaluate diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. Have specific criteria for assessment on multiple levels (e.g., policies, recruitment strategies, number of people attending programs, perceived sense of welcome and belonging, etc.).

2. Welcoming Culture. Provide guidelines for establishing a welcoming culture in parks, facilities, and programs, especially with regard to suggestions for addressing language barriers (translation systems, multilingual guides, etc.) and promoting a two-way system of cultural education between immigrants/refugees and other community members.



Health and Wellness

1. Provide training and resources. Develop a park prescription tool kit municipalities can take to a health care institution to help them get their foot in the door. Create a “Culture of Health” curriculum for OST/summer camp programs. Offer training for staff and/or partnership building for mental health and wellness programs. Create a SOPARC webinar to address need for quantifiable data collection and develop a fact sheet for how park use counts benefit parks and recreation and how to do counts. Develop opioids-related park maintenance and general communication tool kits and identify ways municipal parks and recreation departments can support on-going opioid advocacy and prevention efforts.

2. Support and advance campaigns. Create a statewide campaign to partner with a major health care institution. Encourage park and recreation directors to get their elected officials to support the national “10 Minute Walk” campaign.

Maintenance and Infrastructure

1. PA Park Maintenance Institute. Establish the Institute as a statewide resource to help local community parks and recreation agencies with the latest tools, techniques and strategies for efficient park maintenance.

2. Advocacy and Incentives. Create a Pennsylvania advocacy campaign under the Institute, perhaps around plastic water bottle trash or another critical issue, to address a systemic problem of maintenance by changing behaviors. DCNR could fund maintenance plans and training for park maintenance professionals, on a regional or local level.

Sufficient and Sustainable Funding

1. Advocate. Advocate for sustainable funding from local and state governments. Align with parallel-missioned organizations like Growing Greener Coalition for greater impact. Promote the proven value of existing funds like the Keystone Park, Recreation and Conservation Fund, and the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

2. Statewide Consortium. Develop statewide consortium or cooperative that could advise small agencies on fundraising strategies at an affordable cost. Expand and improve partnerships with other organizations to advocate for sustained and improved funding.



Professional and Leadership Development

1. Leadership Development Academy & Mentoring Program. Establish and conduct the annual program of the PRPS Leadership Development Academy. Develop the program, eligibility and incentive guidelines, secure and compensate instructors, and conduct annually. Create and conduct an annual Mentorship Program as an auxiliary component of the Leadership Academy. Develop the program, eligibility and incentive guidelines, solicit and train mentors, and conduct annually.



2. Educators Summit. Coordinated with and among Pennsylvania universities and colleges that offer recreation, park, tourism and related majors, PRPS and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education host a Summit that identifies education gaps in the profession, facilitates dialog, proposes supplements to curricula, and better prepares and engages future professionals.



Top Priority Local/Regional Strategies

Based on the input of the Summit attendees and planning team, the following action steps are prioritized from the 22 local/regional strategies and recommendations of the five issue papers.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. Welcoming Culture. Establish partnerships with community groups and utilize multilingual communication (e.g., promotion, marketing) to engage with diverse audiences and convey a welcoming atmosphere in park and recreation facilities and programs.

2. Integrate Diversity in Planning. Agencies should work toward establishing communication and trust with diverse audiences through promoting engagement of diverse populations in master planning processes (e.g., policies, facilities, programs, evaluation criteria).

Health and Wellness

1. Measurement Tools. Develop quantifiable measurement tools to communicate benefits of parks and recreation in your community.

2. Diversify Expertise. Recruit a pediatrician or healthcare provider to serve on your local Parks and Recreation Board within five years.



Maintenance and Infrastructure

1. Develop/Review Plans. Initiate the development of a new Parks Maintenance Plan for your agency, or annually review or update your existing plan.

2. Friends Groups. Contact three to five organizations or individuals to help start a Friends Group to maintain a local park (for example, a park that you manage or consult for).



Sufficient and Sustainable Funding

1. Educating/Advocating. Create an advocacy campaign to foster education of decision makers and community on the essential services of recreation and parks. Provide documenting data to decisions makers. Invite elected officials to events and experiential outings. Create park report cards and add legislators' names to them. Piggyback with the statewide Good for You, Good for All branding and marketing campaign for local parks and events. Recruit PRPS District Advocacy volunteers who will support District members in meeting with local politicians. Require PRPS Board Members to meet with a minimum of three elected officials every year to communicate the value of parks and recreation and robust nature of a "Recreation Economy."

2. Training. Invest in training to better document value and tell the compelling stories. Provide PRPS District level training on how to utilize fundraising tools and how to engage with local politicians.



Professional and Leadership Development

1. Skill Development Workshops. Offered twice a year at a price, and with CEU credits, PRPS Branches and Districts conduct more in-depth day-long or multi-day workshops that develop technical and leadership skills in their specialty areas.

2. Regional Summits. Establish regional exchanges and summits to bring together learners and experts on a variety of topical interest areas, coordinated and conducted semiannually by the Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance, Get Outdoors PA, Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute, and other organizations. Outcomes of each event include contributions to the body of knowledge in an online, on-demand e-Learning Hub, housed on the PRPS website.



Personal Strategies

The following suggestions are culled from the issue papers' challenges and can serve as a starting point for difference-making personal involvement.

Contribute

- Serve on your local school district's wellness committee or another health/wellness group.
- Volunteer to teach or help in the presenting/teaching educational programs.
- Become a mentor.

Collaborate

- Identify three new funding strategies you can implement for your agency.
- Establish two new donation/sponsor sources for new or existing programs.
- Develop two new collaborative partnerships for your parks, programs or facilities. Create an ongoing advisory committee to help identify strategic partnerships.

Advocate

- Develop four arguments you can use with elected officials or other oversight body, to increase funding for your agency.
- Contribute to establishing agency policies for ongoing/annual continuing education for all employees.
- Add a drug use prevention and/or advocacy piece to your community-wide special events.

Develop

- Create an annual personalized training plan and follow it.
- Work toward becoming certified in your profession and specialties.
- Seek opportunities to lead.



2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit

Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

“Because Everyone Deserves a Great Park”

“That is not just a slogan. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) works to ensure that every member of every community has access to the many great benefits that parks and recreation offer” (NRPA, 2018, p. 2).

“Reinforcing this belief, NRPA’s Social Equity pillar focuses on ensuring all people have safe access to quality park and recreation facilities and programming. NRPA is leading this effort by investing in park improvement projects for in-need communities, providing resources and tools to park and recreation professionals on developing equitable communities, and supporting programs and policies that protect and enhance our most vulnerable communities from environmental and health hazards” (NRPA, 2018, p. 2). Pennsylvania should be following the lead of NRPA.

Many times, when people hear the term social equity, they may think only of race or ethnicity. However, diversity and social equity are much broader than that. Diversity refers to individuals or groups from different demographic backgrounds and identities. The scope of diversity is very extensive, and includes race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc. Equity refers to providing fair access and opportunity, while also working toward eliminating barriers for diverse populations.

“NRPA defines inclusion as removing barriers, both physical and theoretical, so that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation. [The Parks for Inclusion] initiative emphasizes reaching the most vulnerable individuals and families—those who suffer from higher rates of health disparities and a diminished quality of life” (NRPA, 2018, p. 2). Moreover, inclusion means making our programs and facilities welcoming to diverse audiences, no matter their demographic background. In this white paper, challenges and strategies for diversity, equity, and inclusion are discussed at the broadest levels.

“While park and recreation agencies strive for greater inclusion, they face significant challenges in delivering on this promise. In some cases, agencies have limited financial and staffing resources that can make it difficult to serve those who may benefit the most from quality park and recreation services. In other cases, park and recreation agencies lack a clear understanding of the needs and desires of members of their city, town or county” (NRPA 2018, p.2).

In 2017,” NRPA conducted a survey to gain greater insight into how agencies across the United States ensure that all members of their communities can enjoy parks and recreation” (p. 2-3). There was a wide response representing urban, suburban, and rural communities. The findings are presented in the *NRPA Park and Recreation Inclusion Report (2018)*. The report is a practitioner friendly document that includes

statistics as well as program examples. The *NRPA Park and Recreation Inclusion Report* served as the backdrop of the Leadership Summit's diversity, equity, and inclusion discussion topic.

Changing Demographics of Pennsylvania

The changing demographics of the United States and more specifically of Pennsylvania suggest a need to consider the diverse recreation interests of various populations. Pennsylvania's racially and ethnically diverse population has grown by 33 percent, or 1.9 million people, since 2000 (Mowen, Graefe, Elmendorf, & Barrett, 2014). Moreover, older adults are our fastest growing segment of the population (Mowen et al., 2014) and more than 13 percent of Pennsylvanians live with a disability (Erickson, Lee, & von Schrader, 2014). All of these populations have diverse recreation needs (NRPA, 2018). However, as Myrick (2018) noted in her editor's letter in *Parks & Recreation Magazine*, diversity does not equal inclusion. Inclusion of diverse populations requires intentional, culturally sensitive efforts which emphasize social equity among diverse individuals (NRPA Social Equity, n.d.).

Our Mission

Central to the existence of public parks and recreation is the concept that all people—no matter their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, income level, ethnicity, beliefs, or physical or cognitive abilities—deserve access to opportunities, facilities, and places that enrich their lives. However, social, economic, political and cultural factors can often lead to uneven or unfair access to community resources and opportunities (Hughey et al., 2016; Rigolon & Németh, 2018). Where obstacles and differences divide us, park and recreation services can foster social equity, intercultural sensitivity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural inclusivity. We must work not only to address perceived needs, but also to identify and eliminate barriers that limit connections, access, and inclusivity.

Some park and recreation agencies already offer programming to address the diverse recreation needs of their communities. For example, most park and recreation agencies offer programs and activities specifically for people with physical or cognitive disabilities. Furthermore, some agencies have events and programs geared towards cultural and racial diversity as well as LGBTQ and refugee/immigrant communities. However, less than half of all recreation and park agencies have formal inclusion policies (NRPA, 2018). While taking steps to be more inclusive of the recreation needs of diverse populations may represent an initial financial and temporal investment, the resulting value of social equity should not be understated.

This Leadership Summit collaboration between DCNR and PRPS resulted in participants assessing the state of parks and recreation in Pennsylvania relative to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Listed below are the summarized results of the participant input at the Leadership Summit. Based on the dialogue from participants, several local/regional and statewide strategies for diversity, equity, and inclusion in Pennsylvania have been identified.

Discussion Questions

1. How inclusive are your parks? Are your parks accessible to all residents? Do people of different backgrounds feel welcome in your parks?

Participants recognized that the landscapes of their communities are changing as well as the overall demographic profile of PA. As such, there were representatives from communities that engage a vast

array of diverse consumers in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age and disability, and others that see very little diversity. Given the nature of community/municipal recreation, the intent is to be as welcoming to everyone as possible, but most acknowledged that it could be better. There were a number of barriers identified that impacted full inclusion and how welcome a consumer may feel. Some of the issues impacting inclusion included: increasing language barriers, community boundary issues, limited transportation opportunities, inclusive marketing strategies, challenges of gentrification and transitioning communities, and innovative inclusive programming ideas that engage their various constituents. Because of these issues, there were challenges with full access and how welcomed a consumer perceives the environment to be. Many of the participants felt their facilities met accessibility standards. However, most acknowledged that they are struggling with aging facilities, limited resources for facility and infrastructure updates, and a lack the assessment tools to determine if their facilities meet current guidelines.

Local/Regional Strategies

- Develop comprehensive marketing tools with best practices for language, imagery, and techniques for reaching diverse markets.
- Develop a network of organizations/partners to facilitate outreach to diverse consumers.
- Create “Best Practices” training with topics focusing on innovative programming, consumer insights, communicating across cultures, universal design, etc.

Statewide Strategies

- Consider developing PRPS Connect (similar concept to NRPA SmartBrief) with bi-weekly or monthly online Open Forums where professionals across the state can share ideas and showcase success, happenings, etc.
- Provide language training/interpretation resources.
- Develop an updated accessibility assessment tool with accommodation strategies.

2. What programs/facilities does your organization offer that appeal to diverse audiences?

What programs/facilities draw less interest/utilization?

Participants identified programs appealing to diverse audiences as those which are inclusive to all or are targeted toward a subpopulation or interest group within the community. Moreover, events, programs, and activities which are free, low cost, or subsidized for individuals of low socioeconomic status and help to establish connections, trust, and positive relationships with diverse audiences have been successful. Examples of successful initiatives included renting facilities to ethnic minority groups for functions, bringing parks to the people (e.g., outreach to schools or urban communities), and specifically inviting diverse groups to participate in events and programs. Some programs or facilities intended to attract diverse audiences have had low attendance, but recreation leaders did not always know why. Leaders recognized that low attendance rates may not equate to a lack of interest, but rather a perceived lack of safety, sense of welcome and belonging, or accommodation of different languages.

Local/Regional Strategies

- Agencies should work toward establishing communication and trust with diverse audiences through promoting engagement of diverse populations in master planning processes (e.g., policies, facilities, programs, evaluation criteria).
- Provide programming which is relevant to the community and their expressed needs.

- Establish partnerships with community groups and utilize multilingual communication (e.g., promotion, marketing) to engage with diverse audiences and convey a welcoming atmosphere in park and recreation facilities and programs.

Statewide Strategies

- Create a toolkit/guidelines for ways to design, implement, and evaluate diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. Have specific criteria for assessment on multiple levels (e.g., policies, recruitment strategies, number of people attending programs, perceived sense of welcome and belonging, etc.).
- Develop a case study guide which describes successful diversity, equity, and inclusion programs or practices from rural, suburban, and urban agencies and organizations. Consider reviewing past and current PRPS award winners for this.

3. What are the challenges you face in your community/organization for promoting a diverse workforce? What are recruitment practices that have yielded increased diversity in your workforce?

There was an overall frustration among participants to identify, recruit, and hire diverse workers. Civil Service was cited as a barrier to creating and promoting a diverse workforce. While the Civil Service system was developed to protect workers and provide fair access to employment, participants noted that the current system actually inhibits diversity. There was a perceived and often actual lack of qualified candidates for vacancies in recreation and conservation careers. Participants identified that exposure to the outdoors can positively influence youth and teens to pursue employment and careers in recreation and conservation.

Local/Regional Strategies

- Provide diversity and unconscious bias training for local and regional staff.
- Connect with local schools, community colleges, universities, etc. to develop career pipelines through presence at career days and bringing awareness to park and recreation career opportunities.
- Create and promote paid internships to attract lower income college students. While internships serve as gateways to careers, many students cannot afford not to get paid.

Statewide Strategies

- Develop career pathways in the recreation and conservation fields for people with disabilities, people of color, disconnected youth, and adults lacking necessary workforce skills.
- Develop a recruitment toolkit for local agencies to increase diverse candidates for both Civil Service and open competitive jobs/careers in the recreation and conservation industry.
- Convene a (brainstorming) forum to develop strategies to expose the next generation of youth to recreation and conservation employment. Invite representatives of non-profits who are conducting park, recreation and outdoor programming for DEI audiences, as well as statewide and local agencies' leadership.

4. Given the current political climate, how can parks and recreation be more proactive in addressing the new crisis affecting immigrants or refugees in our communities?

Participants frequently identified the need for recreation and conservation to adapt accordingly with population changes. They noted that recreation leaders need to be flexible and understanding of different cultural norms and practices. Many emphasized the need to reach out to diverse minority groups, including immigrant and refugee communities, in their native languages to let them know what their departments have to offer and that both the programs and facilities are available for their use. Some participants recognized that parks and other facilities can serve as safe havens and can offer a sense of normalcy for people experiencing turmoil. There was an overall consensus that parks should be safe for all individuals and we should encourage existing residents of the community to welcome diverse audiences in the parks. Participants suggested that a two-way street of education that is between immigrants and other community members, could help promote sharing of culture as well as educate newcomers on the laws as well as available offerings from the park and recreation agencies.

Local/Regional Strategies

- Strengthen community partnerships with social service agencies to determine needs of the community, establish open lines of communication, and assist immigrant communities in their adjustment to a new culture.
- Encourage representation of immigrant and refugee populations in advisory groups and planning processes.
- Utilize multilingual communication and signage to convey welcoming messages as well as to show when groups or individuals have reserved areas of the park to reinforce that they are welcome to be in the space.
- Provide opportunities for the sharing of culture to help foster positive intercultural interactions among diverse individuals and support the development of intercultural competencies across the community.

Statewide Strategies

- Provide guidelines for establishing a welcoming culture in parks, facilities, and programs, especially with regard to suggestions for addressing language barriers (translation systems, multilingual guides, etc.) and promoting a two-way system of cultural education between immigrants/refugees and other community members.

5. Based on the above questions: how do you know? What are the challenges to achieving this in your community?

Participants noted informal feedback in their communities, but in general, did not know how they were doing with diversity, equity, and inclusion, largely due to the lack of a structured evaluation method.

Statewide Strategies

- Convene educators, evaluators, and practitioners to develop an accessible, practitioner friendly evaluation tool and provide training on its use and implementation.

Top Strategies and Recommendations for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

1. **Integrate Diversity in Planning.** Encourage agencies to work toward establishing communication and trust with diverse audiences through promoting engagement of diverse populations in master planning processes (e.g., policies, facilities, programs, evaluation criteria).
2. **DEI Toolkit.** Create a toolkit/guidelines for ways to design, market, implement, and evaluate diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. Have specific criteria for assessment on multiple levels (e.g., policies, recruitment strategies, number of people attending programs, perceived sense of welcome and belonging, etc.).
3. **Welcoming Culture.** Provide guidelines for establishing a welcoming culture in parks, facilities, and programs, especially with regard to suggestions for addressing language barriers (translation systems, multilingual guides, etc.) and promoting a two-way system of cultural education between immigrants/refugees and other community members.
4. **Career Pathways.** Develop career pathways in the recreation and conservation fields for people with disabilities, people of color, disconnected youth, and adults lacking necessary workforce skills.
5. **Evaluation Tool.** Convene educators, evaluators, and practitioners to develop an accessible, practitioner friendly evaluation tool and provide training on its use and implementation.

Personal Strategies

1. **Inclusion Statement.** Create an Inclusion Statement for your agency OR revise your Inclusion Statement if it is more than five years old.
2. **Partnerships.** Bring to the table three (3) to five (5) new organizations that you can partner with and describe what that partnership would entail.
3. **Assess & Comply.** Commit to assessing your agency's philosophy, policies and procedures, staffing, partnerships, collaborations, and programming for individuals and groups of individuals within the NRPA inclusion definition.
4. **Implement.** Commit to implementing one strategy adopted in the 2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit within 6 months of the Summit.

Further Reading/Viewing

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2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit

Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Status of Community Health and Wellness in Pennsylvania

As Pennsylvanians of all ages continue “to face serious health issues, including rising rates of chronic disease, an increased prevalence of sedentary lifestyles, and poor nutrition habits”, local park and recreation agencies can offer crucial, affordable, and accessible wellness opportunities for all (NRPA, n.d.-b). Supporting research that links healthy living with abundant access to parks and recreation is very strong, and documents diverse value-added benefits to the healthcare community. In a nationwide study conducted by National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), frequent park users were more likely to report high levels of self-rated health than non-frequent users—even after controlling for socio-economic/demographic characteristics and park proximity. Likewise, those who participated in organized recreation programs sponsored by local parks and recreation were more likely to report high self-rated health than non-participants (Pitas et al., 2017).

In Pennsylvania, several health relationships have been identified in the 2014 research for the state’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). For example, 73 percent of a statewide sample of Pennsylvanians agreed that parks, trails, and open space are an essential element of the healthcare system. This result indicates widespread belief in parks as a solution to contemporary health challenges facing society (Mowen et al., 2017). Regarding local park and recreation services in Pennsylvania, an estimate from the SCORP’s economic report indicated that the total health cost savings attributable to outdoor recreation at local or county parks (excluding indoor recreation, and youth activity) exceeds \$275 million (Mowen, Graefe, Elmendorf, & Barrett, 2015).

Pennsylvania municipal parks and recreation departments most readily identify with the promotion of physical health and wellness. Emerging trends include health and wellness fairs and community-wide initiatives. An example of a successful community-wide initiative is Willistown Township’s GoWilma! program that blends a youth summer reading program with hiking in various parks in Chester County. The Lancaster Recreation Commission’s Red Tornado program offers free and reduced fee sports to its resident: in 2016 nearly 5,000 children participated and \$75,000 in scholarships were distributed. The Centred Outdoors program, a partnership between the ClearWater Conservancy and over a dozen local non-profits and state agencies, acts as the Centre Region’s answer to Mount Nittany Health’s 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment. Centred Outdoors goals include battling chronic disease and improving mental health through guided outdoor adventures; the program has helped over 2,000 participants lead happier and healthier lives. The WalkWorks program, a collaboration between the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, seeks to increase opportunities for physical activity through community-based walking routes and walking groups. Communities in rural counties such as Blair, McKean, Monroe, Schuylkill, and Tioga have developed 30 fun, fact-filled walking routes and adopted five plans or policies that include language in support of environmental changes for enhancing places for physical activity with an emphasis on walking. Trail use continues to grow, and park and recreation leaders view them as vital

components of the health and wellness system, and are working to incorporate them into future planning efforts.

Obesity

Pennsylvania park and recreation agencies stand at the forefront in addressing the rising tide of obesity. As owner-operators of free public parks, trails, and facilities, we are uniquely positioned to help residents address this issue. Obesity was identified at the 2010 Leadership Summit as a key problem facing Pennsylvanians. After two decades of consistent increases, the percentage of residents who are overweight or obese has plateaued at 64 percent, when analyzing 2011-2016 (*CDC, 2016*). While this information is available at the state and county levels, most local municipalities do not know their obesity statistics or trends nor understand its need or potential impacts. At the national health care system level, the definition of obesity is changing. The shift is towards a more holistic approach to the problem, seeking to understand mental and emotional health challenges as contributing factors in obesity. Park and recreation agencies should continue to educate, motivate, and promote healthy living through vibrant programming and clean, safe, and accessible parks and trails.

Out-of-School-Time

Park and recreation agencies have been successful in providing wonderful out-of-school-time (OST) activities to youth in Pennsylvania. Nationally, more than 10.2 million youth attend an OST program daily (Colman, 2018). More specifically, many OST activities also serve to provide and promote healthy snacking options for those who otherwise would go without proper nutritive foods. In fact, “park and recreation agencies are the largest public provider of healthy meals and snacks to children outside of schools” (NRPA, n.d.-c). In 2014, NRPA launched Commit to Health, a campaign devoted to creating healthier OST programs in local parks and recreation. The Health Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards were created to provide evidence-based practices to support nutrition and physical activity children in grades K-12 attending OST programs (NRPA, n.d.-a). In Pennsylvania, Silver Spring Township has created a “culture of health” program at its summer camp that includes a turn-key curriculum for its camp staff that encourages children to eat better, be active and make better food and exercise choices. Associated cooking demonstrations give kids the tools to not only identify and taste fruits and vegetables, but incorporate them at home at mealtime. The Allentown Department of Parks and Recreation sponsors a fruit and veggie truck every summer, making weekly stops at all its playground sites. Many Pennsylvania school districts have wellness committees, with the goal of promoting wellness in their student populations. This could be an additional area of opportunity for community engagement and partnerships.

Park Prescriptions

People who walk, run, bike, and play outside are healthier. By partnering with health care professionals in a parks prescription program, recreation professionals can position their parks and programming as essential aspects of a well-rounded wellness lifestyle. This can include incentive-based programs that partner with local businesses and healthcare providers to offer prizes for taking part in healthy activities outside. Many parks and recreation departments have tried to begin a partnership with their local health care system. These partnerships are time and resource intensive, and results have been mixed. A state-wide partnership or templated resource may benefit local municipalities with limited resources to begin a parks prescription program. Similarly, an emerging trend towards corporate wellness programs and incentive-based health insurance policies presents another area to address community health and wellness. A family-centered method connects kids and families to their local parks through in-school and out-of-school activities and resource guides. Finally, a clinical model brings outdoor play into the

doctor's office, where integration with electronic health records allows healthcare providers to connect families with local park resources (DCNR, 2014).

Accessibility

While many park and recreation agencies have outstanding parks and facilities, accessibility is an issue facing many Pennsylvania municipalities. Communities built in the 1960s and 1970s continue to lack sidewalks or trail connected park systems. Compounding this problem is that Millennials, the largest American generation (those born between 1981 and 1996) are choosing to live in communities where municipal land uses are connected. "A survey by the American Planning Association found that more than half (56 percent) of Millennials desire to live in walkable communities with nearby amenities. Three times more Millennials, according to the survey, would rather live in a suburb with walkable amenities than a suburb where people drive most places" (Dutzik et al., 2014, p.25). Millennials aren't the only population group looking for outdoor connections. Pennsylvania has one of the largest 60+ populations in the country, who increasingly look for options to remain active, while aging in place. Communities lacking land use connectivity will need to address planning, zoning and walkability to meet the needs of current and future residents, who will be looking to live within a 10 minute walk to a park. Specifically, communities should be looking at their municipal land development ordinances to improve walkability through dedicated trail and park space requirements.

To address community accessibility and walkability, NRPA launched the "10-Minute Walk" campaign in 2014, with the intention of ensuring all Americans live close to a park. Additional outcomes include the promotion of long term healthy living lifestyles and obesity management. Within Pennsylvania, urban communities tend to have more accessible parks. Suburban communities, as noted above, are looking at long term solutions to noted connectivity deficiencies. Interestingly, it may not be feasible for rural Pennsylvania to apply this concept to their communities, given the distance between parks. NRPA's "Safe Routes to Parks" program has good resources available to help communities develop safer connections.

Addictions, Mental and Social Health

An emerging challenge for park and recreation agencies will be preparing for the new definition of community health and wellness that includes opioid addiction, mental health, and social isolation. Our profession's health and wellness vernacular has long focused on promoting physical wellness. While physical wellness remains of the utmost importance, the rising wave of drug addiction and highly visible school shootings challenges the park and recreation professional to understand socially taboo subjects and then allocate already stretched resources across new community needs. For 2018 Leadership Summit attendees, there was general agreement that the opioid epidemic was a serious problem, yet impacts in the state ranged from unseen to ever present. Of concern to the vast majority of parks staff was how to tackle cleaning up drug paraphernalia in public parks. For communities hit hardest by the opioid epidemic, the statistics are startling. In 2016 alone, 4,642 drug overdose related deaths were reported statewide, a 37 percent increase over 2015 (DEA Philadelphia Division & University of Pittsburgh, 2017). Moreover, public parks can become a haven for those battling with addiction as they offer "a free place to interact with other users, sell or use drugs, and even potentially hide from law enforcement" (Ibrahim & Cort, 2017). The rise of drug use in parks has created health and safety issues for other users as well, with many areas being littered with drug paraphernalia (Ibrahim & Cort, 2017). In Bristol Township for example, drug overdoses at playground sites have become so frequent, drug use deterrence has become a deciding factor in playground design, to include limiting places to hide, removal of tube slides, tube connectors and play panels.

Park and recreation departments can also affect positive change by supporting community efforts in advocacy and prevention. This can come in the form of offering meeting space, hosting Narcan training, giving community recovery groups off peak sports field time, as well as joining county level task forces. Jackie Dwyer, Executive Director for the Gettysburg Area Recreation Authority, sits on the Healthy Adams County Board of Directors. From this position of leadership, GARA is able to assist the Health Adams County opioid task force in a number of capacities.

Parks and recreational programming can also promote mental health well-being. In fact, “physician-diagnosed depression was 33 percent higher in the residential areas with the fewest green spaces, compared to the neighborhoods with the most” (NRPA, n.d.-d, p. 1). “People who lived in close proximity to natural space had significantly improved mental health even up to three years after their move” (NRPA, n.d.-d, p.1). While these numbers are impressive, many parks and recreation staff do not know how to identify or articulate perceived mental health benefits from current programming. Mental health training, similar to CPR training, may be beneficial at the state level.

Those suffering from decreased mental health may also suffer from feelings of social isolation and loneliness. As former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy (2017) put it, “Loneliness is a growing health epidemic” in the United States, affecting “people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.” Seniors with mobility issues may feel disconnected from those around them, and children spending endless hours on social media may not be developing impactful connections to their communities. In a recent study, 46 percent of Americans reported sometimes or always feeling alone (Cigna, 2018). Taking it one step further, feeling isolated negatively affects our health, in fact, “loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, making it even more dangerous than obesity” says Douglas Nemecek, MD, Cigna’s chief medical officer for behavioral health (Tate, 2018) Park and recreation programming can encourage meaningful social interaction and foster friendships through activities, social clubs, sports and community-wide events. In addition, communities can incorporate “town square” concepts into future facility planning to encourage social interactions.

Technology

Technology today is not a part of our lives; it is a part of *everything* in our lives. While smart devices help us live efficiently in numerous ways, the amount of time spent glued to our phones is problematic. School-aged children today spend an average of seven hours in front of a screen (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). It is not surprising then, that these children are more likely to be overweight, experience social development delays, inhibited sleep patterns, exercise less, and make poor food choices. But it is not enough to simply reduce screen time; to be healthy, kids need to be physically active (Towe, 2018). As park and recreation agencies, the dilemma is harnessing the power of technology and screen time in positive ways, to elevate the health of our communities. The most successful example to date was the Pokémon Go phenomenon, which organically thrust millions of kids out into parks and public spaces and set their daily step counts ablaze.

While technology can be problematic in ways, it may also serve as catalyst to solve an ever present problem in the field of parks and recreation – quantifying impacts. Less than half of all departments currently track park use. When completed, this generally comes in the form of tracking numbers in fitness classes or car counts at special events, but no further analysis as to what those numbers mean. While all departments acknowledge the need for more insightful and comprehensive statistics, most simply do not have the manpower, time or financial resources to meet the need. The SOPARC (System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities), an iPad-based free application, may help to address

this issue. It tracks exercise intensity, gender and age with a user friendly format that can utilized to quantify health benefits.

Park and recreation agencies have a wonderful mission—to make the lives of Pennsylvania residents wonderful, memorable, and healthy. How will you make that happen over the next ten years?

Local/Regional Strategies

1. **Health Assessments.** Identify and analyze local and regional community health assessments for applicability within your department (obesity, OST/healthy foods, opioid use, parks prescription programs).
2. **Connectivity & Compliance.** Examine your current built environment for trail connectivity, accessibility and compliance with NRPA’s “Ten-Minute Walk” to a park initiative (accessibility, built environment).
3. **Education.** Educate park maintenance staff regarding drug paraphernalia clean up BMPs and partner with doctors, hospitals or community organizers in drug use prevention efforts (opioid use, mental health).
4. **Gap Assessments.** Identify gaps in healthy food accessibility in your community and develop partnerships to address shortcomings (OST, healthy foods).
5. **Tech Programming.** Develop programs that utilize technology in an immersive, physically active platform as well as “tech-off” programming (technology).
6. **Diversify Expertise.** Recruit a pediatrician or healthcare provider to serve on your local Parks and Recreation Board within five years.
7. **Measurement Tools.** Develop quantifiable measurement tools to communicate benefits of parks and recreation in your community.

Statewide Strategies

1. **Support and advance campaigns.** Create a statewide campaign to partner with a major health care institution. Encourage park and recreation directors to get their elected officials to support the national “10 Minute Walk” campaign.
2. **Provide training and resources.**
 - a. Develop a park prescription tool kit municipalities can take to a health care institution to help them get their foot in the door.
 - b. Create a “Culture of Health” curriculum for OST/summer camp programs.
 - c. Offer training for staff and/or partnership building for mental health and wellness programs.
 - d. Create a SOPARC webinar to address need for quantifiable data collection and develop a fact sheet for how park use counts benefit parks and recreation and how to do counts.

- e. Develop opioids-related park maintenance and general communication tool kits and identify ways municipal parks and recreation departments can support on-going opioid advocacy and prevention efforts.
3. **Healthy Foods.** Sponsor a healthy vending machine/traveling fruit stand pilot program.
4. **Rural Connectivity.** Develop a rural walkability/connectivity recreation strategy and provide guidance for creating a safe 10 minute walk in urban and suburban communities and ideas for how to encourage park connectivity in rural areas.
5. **Update Grant Incentives.** Update DCNR's statewide grant program criteria to better incorporate park accessibility and health in planning and development grants.

Personal Strategies

1. **Prevention/Advocacy.** Add a drug use prevention and/or advocacy piece to your community-wide special events within six months. Host a Turn Your TV Off event within one year.
2. **Evaluate.** Conduct an evaluation of your area's most recent community health assessment report within one year. Evaluate your parks, facilities and programs for ease of access within two years.
3. **Contribute.** Serve on your local school district's wellness committee or another health/wellness group.

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Being Our Best Selves: A Call to Action for Park Maintenance and Infrastructure

“It may not seem fun or sexy, but maintenance is radically progressive, sustainable, and even subversive—challenging our societal preference to value new things more than things we inherit” (Mason & Greenspan, 2018).

There’s no ribbon cutting ceremony when it’s time to pick up the trash. Over the lifetime of a park, maintenance represents 75% of the total cost (Lay, 1978). That’s right, the least celebrated task is the most important. A well-maintained park system is a source of pride, an economic asset, and central to the health and quality of life in a community. A poorly maintained park becomes a liability. No councilman, commissioner or supervisor wants to hear complaints about the park system. Yet the people charged with caring for parks seldom have the resources—people, budget and expertise—to do the job.

The full extent of the maintenance backlog for Pennsylvania’s 340 public park and recreation agencies, 121 state parks, and 6000+ local parks is undocumented, but likely reaches \$2 billion. The two agencies that fund parks, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), report spending more than \$500 million over the past decade, for 3,000 local park improvement projects (S. Hoover, personal communication, October 2018). When you consider that the municipality provides at least a 50 percent match, the park projects represent \$1 billion in public infrastructure investment at risk due to deferred maintenance. And, these are not the only investments in parks and recreation. In the public realm alone, DCNR estimates an additional \$500 million *each* in deferred maintenance for state parks and state forests, comprising a second billion dollars in public infrastructure at risk.

Resources at Risk: Why the Time is Right to Address Maintenance

The condition of park and recreation assets affects health, safety, property values, access to recreation, and the economic vibrancy of our communities. For too long, many municipalities have built and improved parks and facilities without commensurate support for adequate upkeep, causing backlogs of deferred maintenance. In a 2017 PRPS Park Budget and Salary Survey, 38 PA park and recreation agencies reported capital rehab and major maintenance needs with a median of \$400,000 per agency (Kim & Mowen, 2017). Pennsylvania’s Outdoor Recreation Plan (2014) confirms public support, stating, “Maintaining existing park and recreation areas was the most important funding priority across all provider groups, which mirrors the response given by Pennsylvania’s citizens. Eighty-five percent of provider respondents believe maintenance is important or extremely important, and 64 percent said it was their top funding priority” (Leslie, 2014). And, maintenance is gaining attention as a national crisis. Larry Summers, the Harvard economics professor and former Secretary of the Treasury, speaking of maintenance of all civic infrastructure, suggested that a non-governmental agency should help

benchmark the maintenance neglect, likely to “be like the poverty line” and he went on to suggest “...the federal government could make funding for states and localities contingent upon maintenance efforts” (Olson & Wessels, 2017). A July 2017 *New York Times* Opinion observes that maintenance is big business for some, “industrial corporations like General Electric and Boeing make heavy investments in ...predictive maintenance, since their success depends upon the reliability of their products” (Russell & Vinsel, 2017). It’s time we viewed civic infrastructure—including park maintenance—as worthy of public investment.

The Real World of Park Maintenance

At the local level, park maintenance staff may struggle to complete the most basic tasks of trash removal, mowing and ballfield maintenance. Adding to the complexity of park maintenance, an undetermined number of municipalities place park maintenance under the Public Works division, instead of, placing such supervision under a Parks and Recreation division. Absent the rare cases where a Public Works Director has a parks and recreation background, this approach may further diminish park maintenance as a priority. Municipalities that fall under the Clean Water Act MS4 permitting process have further reasons/obligations to maintain parks as the required permit plans rely heavily upon public lands as locations for rain gardens, stream stabilization and other public infrastructure that manage stormwater and reduce pollutant loads into streams. DCNR’s (2015) *DCNR and Climate Change: Planning for the Future* emphasizes that now more than ever, public parkland is critical to mitigating stormwater runoff, extreme weather events and longer term trends due to temperature warming. Park maintenance requires an ever more sophisticated knowledge of maintaining land for multiple purposes and users.

In spite of dire needs for maintenance, municipal leadership abounds in Pennsylvania. In South Middleton Township, Cumberland County, the Board of Supervisors is known to publicly state that it wants its parks to look as good today as they did at the ribbon cutting. When Plymouth Township, Montgomery County held a Community Fair and invited residents to vote for their favorite of 17 services, Schools, and Parks and Recreation, scored first and second. This vote of confidence has given Township Council more reasons to dedicate resources to a well-maintained park system. In Fayette County, economic development staff note that employers want to locate in communities with well-managed parks and public facilities: the key to attracting a workforce. Across Pennsylvania, and the country, communities are collaborating with local non-profits to form volunteer “Friends” groups to assist with park maintenance.

A Call to Action

At the 2018 ASLA national conference, NRPA President Kevin O’Hara led a session, *Returning to Our Roots: It’s Time for a 21st Century Parks and Recreation Movement*. Among the findings that support park maintenance, an observation that parks are one of the few government functions that receive consistently high public approval ratings. As stated by Robert Garcia, City Project in Los Angeles, at the national ASLA Conference, “where our Nation is hurting, parks heal” (R. Garcia, personal communication). From the late 1890’s rise of parks during the City Beautiful Movement, to the early 1900’s Playground Movement, to the 1930’s Urban Reform and the 1960’s beautification efforts, led by Lady Bird Johnson, it’s time to stop our parks from crumbling before our eyes. The public and private sectors need to advocate for maintenance, as was done for the Americans with Disabilities Act, now a staple of every public design. As Pennsylvania’s Keystone Fund celebrates its 25th anniversary, it’s time to honor those investments with the level of care that went into conceiving them in the first place.

Statewide Strategies and Recommendations

1. **PA Park Maintenance Institute.** While PA DCNR or another state agency *could* take on the role of park maintenance expertise, it is not realistic for these agencies to add maintenance to already over-burdened agendas. The most promising strategy for effectively addressing park maintenance resulted from a 2018 PRPS grant from DCED and DCNR to carry out a priority recommendation of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan to explore the establishment of a Maintenance Institute. The Institute would be a statewide resource to help local community parks and recreation agencies with the latest tools, techniques and strategies for efficient park maintenance. Four major findings from this project emerged: 1) investment at risk; 2) maintenance information is available, but disparate; 3) no one organization exists with the sole mission of park maintenance; and, 4) there's a positive public and practitioner response to the formation of a park maintenance institute.

The study concluded that in order to maximize the existing grant programs, one statewide organization should be established, dedicated to park maintenance. It is important to note that the study also concluded that such an Institute could be housed within PRPS and become financially sustainable within five years. The business plan projected that after raising \$300,000 in start-up funding, the Institute would be able to support a director, part-time support staff and intern primarily through membership, certification and conference sponsorship revenue. The business plan for the Institute, also called for a professional organization, housed within PRPS that would provide maintenance training, technical assistance and certification; host regional information exchanges; lead a behavior modification initiative around a critical issue such as plastic water bottle trash elimination; and, provide advocacy at both the legislative and potential funder levels. The Institute would also be well-positioned to lead the way with new technology, such as robotic mowers.

While a statewide institute, housed at non-profit PRPS and dedicated solely to maintenance, appears the ideal solution, additional, albeit disparate, strategies could be employed.

2. **State Grant Incentives.** Specifically, DCNR could allocate a percentage of all park improvement grants to a three year, post construction maintenance contract, implemented by the municipal grant recipient. [Editor note: Without a change to the Legislative Authority that created the Keystone Fund, DCNR is not permitted to fund maintenance.] DCNR could also fund maintenance plans and training for park maintenance professionals, on a regional or local level.
3. **Advocacy Campaigns.** The Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute, or a state agency, are ideal advocates for changing behavior around issues critical to maintenance, such as plastic water bottle debris. On the national level, one of the most successful campaigns, Don't Mess with Texas, reported a 34 percent decrease in visible roadside trash between 2009 and 2013.⁵ A Pennsylvania campaign, perhaps around plastic water bottle trash, or another critical issue, can be underwritten by state agencies, or ideally by the Institute, and address the more systemic problem of maintenance by changing behavior.

Local/Personal Strategies

1. **Friends Groups.** Contact three to five organizations or individuals to help start a Friends Group to maintain a local park (for example, a park that you manage or consult for).

2. **Contribute.** Volunteer to teach or help in the planning of the PA Parks Maintenance Exchanges.
3. **Develop/Review Plans.** Initiate the development of a new Parks Maintenance Plan for your agency, or annually review or update your existing plan.

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2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit

Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Sufficient and Sustainable Funding for Recreation and Conservation in Pennsylvania

Funding parks and recreation initiatives is a challenging and changing endeavor in the current social, economic and political times. In exploring a wide range of agencies and organizations to study these trends, there are some universal obstacles and challenges to address.

Some of these are related to limited funding from government sources, including the challenge of flat or reduced incomes while costs continue to grow. Others are related to the organization's ability to raise its own funds, through revenue producing programs and activities or through effective fundraising efforts. Unexpected challenges to structures or equipment, changes in staff, or the loss of grant source funding all compound the issues. In some cases, the very municipal structure that is in place to support an agency of parks and recreation is also the same structure that prevents that agency from actively fundraising, creating new budgetary structures, and exploring new development options. Over time, these issues will impact an organization's reputation in the community, its ability to grow and to address new needs in the community, and even its ability to remain sustainable.

Summary of Summit Sessions and Feedback from Professionals

At the summit, discussions in the five sessions led by this team were spirited and thorough, including both positive thinking and the opportunity to express frustrations among peers. Several themes emerged in both obstacles that are being faced by professionals as well as solutions for those obstacles. While obstacles seem to be somewhat universal, solutions and options for what is possible based on elected officials, strict budgets, grant funding, etc., seemed to limit the solution options available in many cases. Frustration was high when discussing these strong challenges. One thing that was very clear was the passion and dedication of these amazing professionals, many of whom are working for low pay with few perks to keep the parks they love open in the communities they live in.

Highlights from the Summit include the challenges of working with elected officials, competition among budgets, the changing workforce and inability to keep up with growing staff costs, as well as an aging infrastructure and the inability to keep pace with these costs. Solutions focused on a variety of ways to influence decision makers, keep generated revenues within their own budgets instead of going into a general fund, creative solutions for repair and maintenance such as using volunteers, and finding fundraising solutions within the restrictions set by their leadership. Communication was at the root of many of the discussions, including educating those who make decisions about the reality of the field and influencing them for the better.

Obstacles

- **Politics and Leadership**, including issues of making promotion of recreation a higher priority; educating elected officials on essential services/benefits of parks and recreation; unrealistic

budgets; turnover of officials; and a disconnect between what community says it wants and what it is willing to pay.

- **Staff Challenges**, including lack of or maintaining competitive wages; increasing staff costs, benefits; union contracts; changes in workforce and required skills; hiring talent; and competition for entry-level positions.
- **Maintenance/Aging Infrastructure**, including unfunded maintenance; rising capital improvement expenses; inability to save for proactive infrastructure investments; keeping up with replacement schedules, growth, and demand.
- **Lack of Funding and Competition**, including unfunded mandates, such as MS4 or ADA requirements; no funding for capital projects; regulatory restraints; competition for revenues and grants, traditional sources changing; incentivizing opportunities for funding; flat budgets; and undervaluing services that generate revenues.
- **Planning and Priorities**, including lack of planning to prioritize projects; insufficient action to carry out plans; lack of funding for planning; need for metrics and local data; and changing and competing priorities.
- **Fundraising Challenges**, including developing comprehensive sponsorship strategies; people resources for fund development; availability of grant match funds; foundation and donor saturation; meeting foundations' giving priorities; local government not allowing sponsorships; reluctance/approval to fundraise; inability to recognize donors in a meaningful way; securing foundation vs corporate dollars; perceptions that tax revenue already meets needs; and no fundraising staff

Funding Resource Overview

“On average, park and recreation agencies derive three-fifths of their operating budgets from general fund tax support, although the percentage of funding from general fund tax support tends to be lower at agencies with larger operating budgets. The second largest source of funding for most agencies is earned/generated revenues, accounting for an average of 25 percent of operating expenditures. Some agencies depend on special, dedicated taxes for part of their budgets. These park and recreation districts obtain the majority of their funding from tax levies dedicated to park and recreation purposes approved by citizen referenda” (NRPA, 2018, p. 22).

The exploration of new revenue sources, the use of a business model for financial oversight, using a realistic approach regarding expenditures and essential needs, and active fundraising may all provide solutions toward meeting funding goals.

Partnerships are also an option worth investigating, on a statewide scale as well as locally, to share the burden and the resources available to meet the overall goal of providing community health and wellness, recreation, and greenspace goals. Partnerships outside the norm, and consideration of the motivations and viability of unique partners in communities are also encouraged.

Fundraising and stewardship are additional pathways that many recreation organizations could utilize more effectively. In many cases, recreation organizations are not widely known or are taken for granted as a service provided by tax dollars. Organizations must address their image in the community, whether it's through media and outreach, through mending relationships with local elected officials who may be negative toward their work, or through addressing customer service and staffing issues that have led to a change in reputation or drop off of participation in the past. By improving the image in the community, organizations are better able to begin connecting with local donors and philanthropists who believe in supporting wellness, recreation, and open space.

Funding Resource Partnerships and Stewardship

Connecting to resources provided by more global entities such as the National Recreation and Park Association will also help organizations with resources in the form of statistics, research documents and infographics to begin working in their own community to more thoroughly address the importance of parks and recreation as an essential service in the community. Expanding programmatic reach to include diverse and underserved populations, social issues such as obesity and health, and encouragement of active recreation styles will connect organizations to new participants and additional dollars through those connections.

Conservation and protection organizations that have a purpose to protect and conserve land for the future, through conservation easements, sustainable building practices, and preservation of natural open space are also a part of the overall funding package. Financial backing for these projects, sometimes reaching into the millions, is essential to protect well fields, restore lost habitat, and protect endangered forests. Outreach and education around these endeavors are vital to connecting people to their local landscape and bringing to the forefront important impact and conservation issues that mainstream society may not be aware of. Fundraising and partnerships for these projects are also essential to their success, where many times municipal and local tax based funding is not available.

Agency-Specific Solutions

“The typical park and recreation agency generates \$19.36 in revenue annually for each resident living in the jurisdiction it serves. Agencies operating in lower-density population areas generate less revenue than do those in areas with a higher population density. The typical agency—operating in a jurisdiction with fewer than 500 people per square mile—makes \$7.27 in revenue on a per capita basis per year compared to a median of \$28.71 for agencies serving a jurisdiction with more than 2,500 people per square mile” (NRPA, 2018, p. 22).

On a broad scale in the field of parks and recreation, agency staff may also need the assistance of skilled consultants. For example, a fundraising consultant that can assist with setting up in-house processing systems to receive donations, develop online donations options, write effective fund drive mail appeals, and make recommendations on the best way to raise funds would have a substantial impact on reaching funding goals. Many organizations, however, cannot afford consultants and instead expect their already overworked staff to learn and execute fundraising. A skilled consultant is also able to lead strategic planning, develop a business plan for sustainable growth for the organization, or a capital campaign plan that can lead to sizeable dollars. These are all needed skills to support the growth of organizations. On the statewide level, a consortium may be developed allowing skilled consultants to be available on a project basis to advise local agencies. This would share the cost and the need to seek new advisors for each community project. A consortium or co-op that matches the skilled resource to the department in need would become an invaluable resource.

Creating a “Recreation Economy” and putting systems in place that incorporate and include recreation and park activities in every aspect of the community is essential to the future viability of this field. Supporting and sustaining parks as well as the recreation and sports activities they support is an important part of the status, wealth, and health of a community and must be acknowledged as such. Building in communication and outreach structures that remind the community at large that parks and recreation is an essential service falls on the shoulders of the people who run these organizations every day. Part education, part outreach, part exposure, this mix results in finding the sustainable and sufficient funding that these vital organizations need to remain so.

Local/Regional Strategies

1. **Operating Revenues.** Re-examine agency fee structures; determine a revenue threshold beyond which a certain amount from operations comes back to the department and not to the general fund. Explore new revenue generation possibilities.
2. **Business Plans.** Develop business plans to drive funding and demonstrate sustainability to elected officials. Institute cost-recovery policies with respect to user groups.
3. **Fundraising.** Establish a non-profit arm of an agency for major donor fundraising. Solicit local businesses and neighborhood groups for funding/sponsorship. Create Friends groups. Partner with local retailers in consumer-based fundraising. Piggyback with nonprofits for funding. Invest in training for fundraising. Utilize software to assist in issuing letters of support and sign petitions related to state and federal funding.
4. **Educating/Advocating.** Create an advocacy campaign to foster education of decision makers and community on the essential services of recreation and parks. Provide documenting data to decisions makers. Invite elected officials to events and experiential outings. Create park report cards and add legislators’ names to them. Piggyback with the statewide *Good for You, Good for All* branding and marketing campaign for local parks and events.

Recruit PRPS District Advocacy volunteers who will support District members in meeting with local politicians. Require PRPS Board Members to meet with a minimum of three elected officials every year to communicate the value of parks and recreation and robust nature of a “Recreation Economy.”

5. **Training.** Invest in training to better document value and tell the compelling stories. Provide PRPS District level training on how to utilize fundraising tools and how to engage with local politicians.

Statewide Strategies

1. **Statewide Consortium.** Develop statewide consortium or cooperative that could advise small agencies on fundraising strategies at an affordable cost. Expand and improve partnerships with other organizations to advocate for sustained and improved funding.

2. **Expand Statewide Marketing.** Further develop “Good for You, Good for All” promotional tools, including talking points, case statements and engaging visuals that communicate the essential services of parks and recreation (update these tools annually and provide new graphics every 6-months to keep communications fresh and relevant).
3. **Advocate.** Advocate for sustainable funding from local and state governments. Align with parallel-missioned organizations like Growing Greener Coalition for greater impact. Promote the proven value of existing funds like the Keystone Park, Recreation and Conservation Fund, and the Environmental Stewardship Fund.
4. **Benchmarking.** Utilize the PA Park Maintenance Institute research, tools, and benchmarking to justify staff and equipment expenditures related to park maintenance.
5. **RecTAP.** Expand and promote RecTAP as a technical assistance resource that can activate solutions to funding issues.

Personal Strategies

1. **Funding.** Identify three new funding strategies you can implement for your agency. Establish two need donation/sponsor sources for new or existing programs.
2. **Collaborations.** Develop two new collaborative partnerships for your parks, programs or facilities. Create an ongoing advisory committee to help identify strategic partnerships.
3. **Advocate.** Develop four arguments you can use with elected officials or other oversight body, to increase funding for your agency.

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Appendix: Other Funding Opportunities

1. Tax/Levied Sources

- Special Service District
- Business Improvement District (tax)
- Tax Increment Finance District (tax)
- Sales & Use Tax
- General Obligation Bond
- Levy on Property tax
- Special Purpose Levy
- Parking Fees (municipal)
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Open Space Tax
- Tourism “Pillow” Tax / Grants
- Fee-in-lieu

2. Capital Development Sources

- Capitalize Maintenance Cost
- Park Dedication Fee (developer dedicated use)
- Zoning Incentives
- Transfer Development Rights
- Impact Development Fees
- Easements
- Greenways
- Conservancies

3. Public-Private Partnerships

- Schools
- Municipalities
- Public/Local Agencies

- State and/or Federal Agencies
- Corporate (ex: REI)
- Foundations
- Special Interest Groups / Clubs
- Individuals

4. Operational Fees (Annual)

- Programming Fees
- Advertising
- Exclusive Product Placement
- Contractual Fees
- Concessions
- Admission Fees
- Parking Fees (facility)
- Outsourced programs
- Grants
- Endowments

5. Donated Fees / Development / Philanthropy

- Donations / Stewardship
- Crowdfunding
- Scholarships
- Sponsors - private & corporate

6. Naming Rights

7. Bequests

2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit

Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Professional and Leadership Development in the Recreation and Park Industry

The growth of park and recreation services, and the increased popular recognition of their essential value, is directly attributable to the professional development of providers, and the sharing of that expertise in practical ways.

Developing and empowering industry leaders as trusted change agents, interpreters of societal trends, community problem-solvers, and skilled advocates of public policy can exert a profound influence for our colleagues, profession and public.

Building a culture and a path that recognizes and rewards better training, in turn, builds better professionals. This paper examines some of the resources and methods to achieve such a goal.

In a 2018 national professionalism and credentialing survey, Pennsylvania professionals ranked the average importance of its attributes at a higher level (4.90) than the national average (4.66) (Beason, Cable, & Brunton, 2018). Results of this survey with regard to attributes of professionalism, earning CEUs, and obtaining professional credentials are shared below.

Attributes of Professionalism. *(PA level of importance of factors, ranked highest to lowest)*

1. Professional Associations and Continuing Education *(higher than national average)*
2. Ethics
3. Sense of Calling *(PA mean and national mean)*
4. Peers as Referents
5. Certification
6. Peers as Judges of Competence and Performance
7. Indispensable Service
8. Autonomy *(ranked closely with the nat'l average)*

Earning CEUs. *(PA level of importance of factors)*

3 highest: Increase my competence level; Increase my skill level; Paid for by my organization.

3 lowest: Anticipated change in job function; Increase in salary level; Actual change in job function.

Obtaining Professional Credentials. *(PA level of importance of factors)*

3 highest: Better qualified/trained; Keep current on specific practices; More experience in specific topics

2 lowest: Prestige enhancement; Desire to be licensed.

While the comparative data is interesting and encouraging, several constraining issues and current transformations in the professional workforce present particular challenges to emerging leaders and

practitioners. Overcoming these limitations and managing change will be critical to developing and sustaining highly competent and effective leaders and professionals.

Constraining Issues

A variety of conditions and perceptions constrain a uniformly well-developed professional workforce. In many agencies, ongoing training is neither expected nor required, or is an organizational priority. Many professionals lack the necessary time, funding, or personal motivation to hone or gain new skills.

Professional Readiness and Integration. Many routes lead into our industry in a changing society, and many professional and volunteer contributors emerge from other than accredited higher education recreation and park-related programs of study. “The comprehensive park and recreation industry includes many diverse disciplines and related fields, but a lack of full and continual interagency and interdisciplinary awareness, cooperation and integrated services [among practicing professionals] impedes the highest effectiveness and influence of the entire profession” (Herd, 2017).

Advocacy and Engagement. Many recreation and conservation professionals need to develop political engagement and advocacy skills. This demands a collective leadership effort that supports incoming professionals through formal and informal opportunities to learn the hard and soft skills necessary to navigate and succeed in their unique municipal recreation environments.

Certifications. Although an array of national professional certifications have been established; among approximately 2050 Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society members, just 4 have earned the CPRE, 90 possess the CPRP, 65 hold the CPSI, and 31 are CTRS. There are no Pennsylvania agencies who have earned national accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

Next-Gen Preferences. Millennials are now the largest generational cohort in the workforce and Gen Z is right behind them. These next-gen professionals prefer “microlearning” in small, specific bursts of information tied to immediate job demands, available at a time of their choosing—incorporating personalization; state-of-the-art tech platforms; curated content; plenty of networking in their field; and a sense of meaning. ASAE’s ForesightWorks (2018) reports that Millennials are especially enthusiastic about using mentoring as a path to learning. Studies also show that formal mentoring programs help bridge leadership gaps.

Higher Education. While the knowledge economy places a premium on analysis and thinking, it is also creating new alternatives that threaten to transform how students receive postsecondary instruction. Traditional higher education models are under tremendous pressure as changes in work, technology, and student expectations demand innovations in curricula and instruction. ASAE forecasts that the value debate of colleges as social institutions versus professional training arenas will grow. How Pennsylvania universities will respond to such demands is unknown.

Workforce and Leadership Transformations

The Brandon Hall Group, 2015 (as cited by Velasquez, 2017) identified the following:

- “10,000 baby boomers are retiring each day; 48 percent of the workforce will be millennials by 2020. Meanwhile, 67 percent of millennials are looking for a new job, and 91 percent plan to

stay at their current job fewer than three years. Which might be why 84 percent of organizations anticipate a shortfall of leaders in the next five years.”

- “83 percent of organizations say it is important to develop leaders at all levels, but only 5 percent have fully implemented development at all levels. 25 percent of organizations say less than 10 percent of their critical leadership positions have ready and willing successors.”
- “58 percent of organizations’ top priority is closing leadership skill gaps; 43 percent of organizations’ top priority is closing gaps across all leader levels.”
- “Only 18 percent of organizations say their leaders are “very effective” at meeting business goals, but only 19 percent of organizations say they are “very effective” at developing leaders.”
- “More money is invested in leadership development than any other area of corporate training, yet 71 percent of organizations do not feel their leaders are able to lead their organization into the future.”

According to the study by the Brandon Hall Group, four contemporary transformations underscore the ability to implement effective leadership development that can transform and sustain business success:

Transformation	What’s out	What’s in
Leadership Demographics	Boomers, Gen X leaders	Millennial Leaders
Re-focused development	Primary development on executives, high potentials	All leader levels, with emphasis on Millennial leaders
Learning Delivery	Traditional programs that build skills leader by leader	Ongoing immersion of leaders to build functional experience
Leadership Analytics	Program completion metrics	Leadership skill requirements and capability forecasts

It is within such industry-level and society-wide trends that the park, conservation and recreation profession must adapt to thrive. Establishment of an annual professional leadership development and mentoring program may contribute to productive opportunities to create more unified, competent, and engaged professionals—and in turn, a more responsive and valued industry.

Learning by doing has proven much more effective when training is focused on real-life “at work” projects for direct applications. The following recommended strategies should incorporate the above trends to implement through in-person and virtual formats, based on the learning styles and preferences of their target audiences, and utilizing the latest software and technological opportunities whenever practical.

Local/Regional Strategies

1. Individualized Training Programs.

Employers encourage and facilitate the use of ITPs to assist employees in identifying, integrating and enabling personal and organizational goals, learning objectives, and development activities.

2. Community Apprenticeship Programs. With the assistance of the PA Dept. of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship and Training Office, employers and NGOs establish local workforce apprenticeship programs.

3. Professional Learning Communities. Offered free to engage new members and assist in identifying their training needs, PLCs are two hours of facilitated discussion among a limited audience of 40. Conducted twice a year by each PRPS Branch and District, topics would be based on member needs.

4. Skill Development Workshops. Offered twice a year at a price, and with CEU credits, PRPS Branches and Districts conduct more in-depth day-long or multi-day workshops that develop technical and leadership skills in their specialty areas.

5. Cooperative Exchanges. Coordinated by and between PRPS, its partners and allied organizations, these annual opportunities would bring together working professionals and representatives from state Departments, Commissions and Councils to learn and discuss collaborative actions.

6. Regional Summits. Establish regional exchanges and summits to bring together learners and experts on a variety of topical interest areas, coordinated and conducted semiannually by the Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance, Get Outdoors PA, Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute, and other organizations. Outcomes of each event include contributions to the body of knowledge in an online, on-demand e-Learning Hub, housed on the PRPS website.

Statewide Strategies

1. PRPS Leadership Development Academy. Establish and conduct the annual program of the PRPS Leadership Development Academy. Develop the program, eligibility and incentive guidelines, secure and compensate instructors, and conduct annually.

2. Mentorship Program. Create and conduct an annual Mentorship Program as an auxiliary component of the Leadership Academy. Develop the program, eligibility and incentive guidelines, solicit and train mentors, and conduct annually.

3. Professional Competencies Training Series. Create and offer a full slate of Professional Competencies Trainings, based on the subjects of *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, 4th Ed.

4. Certifications and Accreditation. As a state affiliate of the National Recreation and Park Association, PRPS will promote the value and benefits of attaining personal Professional Certifications and Agency Accreditation.

5. Educators Summit. Coordinated with and among Pennsylvania universities and colleges that offer recreation, park, tourism and related majors, PRPS and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education host a Summit that identifies education gaps in the profession, facilitates dialog, proposes supplements to curricula, and better prepares and engages future professionals.

6. PA Parks Maintenance Institute. Assist in the development of the PA Parks Maintenance Institute and other special conferences, in which many related organizations contribute.

7. Professional Development Scholarship Fund. Establish a Professional Development Scholarship Fund to offer assistance or program credit incentives to PRPS members.

8. Statewide Conferences and Summits. PRPS, PALTA, PEC and other allied statewide organizations each conduct annual state conferences for their membership. Seek mutual promotion and collaborative opportunities among them for the benefit of all working professionals and volunteers.

9. Integrated Professionalism Forum. To facilitate the sharing of expertise across disciplines and jurisdictions, initiate an annual forum among working professionals in recreation, parks, conservation, health, public works, maintenance, transportation, urban resources, land use planning, economic development, therapy and social work, etc. Contribute to a Resource Library of topical information shared among all types and sizes of agencies.

10. On-demand e-Learning Hub. Through cooperation with an institute of higher learning, and perhaps a grant, PRPS and such a partner may establish and curate an online, on-demand e-Learning Hub, housed on the PRPS website. The site would include archived presentations and webinars, training modules, research studies and papers, recommendations from summits and exchanges, and other informational resources related to the recreation and parks industry and its wide-reaching connections.

Personal Strategies

1. Advocate. Contribute to establishing agency policies that require professional certifications for employees, as appropriate. Advocate for ongoing/annual continuing education for all employees.

2. Develop. Create an annual personalized training plan and follow it. Work toward becoming certified in your profession and specialties.

3. Mentor/Lead. Contribute to establishing internal mentoring programs for new employees and/or interns. Become a mentor. Seek opportunities to lead.

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Andrew Mowen, Ph.D., Professor, The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management

Samantha Powers, M.S., Graduate Student, The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management

The Status of Community Health and Wellness in Pennsylvania

Jason Lang, MS, CPRE, (Team Leader), Director of Parks and Recreation, Farmers Market Manager, East Goshen Township

Kathryn Hunninen, Senior Manager of Special Initiatives, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

Diane Kripas, CPRP, Chief, Greenways & Conservation Partnerships Division, DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation

Mike Kukitz, Executive Director, Northern Lehigh Recreation

A Call to Action for Park Maintenance and Infrastructure

Ann Hutchinson, AICP (Team Leader), *Senior Director of Community Planning, Natural Lands*
 Derek Dureka, CPRP, *Director, Parks and Recreation, Upper Dublin Township*
 Michael Gable, CPRP, *Director, Department of Public Works, City of Pittsburgh*
 Judy Houck, CPRP, *Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities, Township of Spring*
 Ann Toole, CPRP, *Parks and Recreation Planner, Toole Recreation Planning*

Sufficient and Stable Funding for Recreation and Conservation in Pennsylvania

Molly Hetrick (Team Leader), *Manager of Philanthropy, Schlow Library Foundation; Trainer, Training With Molly*

Emily Gates, *Director of Strategic Partnerships, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*

Deb Nardone, *Executive Director, ClearWater Conservancy*

Todd Roth, CPRP, *Aquatics Supervisor, Centre Region Parks and Recreation*

Professional and Leadership Development

Tim Herd, CPRE (Team Leader), *Chief Executive Officer, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*

Jeremy Bean, PROSCI, *Organizational Change Consultant, Penn State Finance & Business, Office of Organizational Change Management*

Niki Tourscher, CPRP, CPSI, *Director of Training and Get Outdoors PA, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*

Facilitator

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Editor

Tim Herd, CPRE, *Chief Executive Officer, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*

Design

Emily Schnellbaugh, *Communications Manager, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*



Attendees

Tammy Agesen	Lancaster County Department of Parks and Recreation
Kevin Bacon	Pine Township Parks and Recreation Department
Brian Barrett	Haverford Township Recreation Department
Rochelle Barry	Collier Township Parks and Recreation Department
Linda Bires	Penn Trafford Area Recreation Commission
Christopher Biswick	Upper St. Clair Township Recreation and Leisure
Debra Blair	Temple University
James Bobeck	Muhlenberg Township Parks and Recreation Department
Tonya Brown	Mechanicsburg Area Recreation Department
George Calaba	Washington Crossing Historic Park
Carrie Chiusano	Presbyterian SeniorCare
Bryan Cope	Northampton County
Randy Cope	South Whitehall Township Parks and Recreation
Scott Cope	Wildlands Conservancy
Andrea Crouse	Carlisle Parks and Recreation Department
Andy Cush	General Recreation, Inc.
Heather Cuyler	Pashek + MTR
Timothy Denny	Haverford Township Recreation Department
Cindy Dunlap	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Cindy Dunn	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Jackie Dwyer	Gettysburg Area Recreation Authority
Margie Earnest	Manheim Township Recreation and Park Planning Department
Michael Eschenmann	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Nicole Faraguna	Pennsylvania Land Trust Association
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Jared Fencil	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Tom Ford	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Jessica Fox	Bristol Township
Jason Fralick	Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Inc.
Kathy Frankel	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Jeff Garrigan	Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Inc.
Emily Gates	Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society
Pete Geis	Cranberry Township Parks and Recreation Department
Josh Green	Mechanicsburg Area Recreation Department
Jay Gregg	Chester County Facilities and Parks
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Karen Hammond	Masonic Village at Sewickley
Mark Hansford	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Michele Harmel	Peters Township
Chalet Harris	Dover Township Recreation and Park Department
Karen Hegedus	Lower Providence Township Parks and Recreation
Emily Hendrickson	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Tim Herd	Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society

Attendees

Molly Hetrick	Training With Molly
Earl Hockenberry	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Judy Houck	Spring Township Parks and Recreation
Kathryn Hunninen	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Ann Hutchinson	Natural Lands
Dave Hutner	Cranberry Township Parks and Recreation Department
Lauren Imgrund	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Robert Jackson	Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Chris Jeffrey	Jeffrey Associates
Clifford Kitner	Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority
Daphne Klahr	Reading Recreation Commission
Patricia Kleban	The Pennsylvania State University
Diane Kripas	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Mike Kukitz	Northern Lehigh Recreation Authority
Jason Lang	East Goshen Township Park and Recreation Department
Kenneth Lehr	West Goshen Township Parks and Recreation Department
Rob Lewis	Wyomissing Parks and Recreation
Thomas Marino	Richland Township Parks and Recreation Comm.
Ashley Marsteller	Millcreek Township Recreation and Parks Department
Lydia Martin	Lancaster County Conservancy
Andrew Mowen	The Pennsylvania State University
Marci Mowery	Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation
Kathleen Muller	Muller Recreation
Valerie Murphy	Cranberry Township Parks and Recreation Department
Deb Nardone	ClearWater Conservancy
Andrew Oles	Abington Township Parks and Recreation Department
Chris Ortiz	Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, The Pennsylvania State University
Kristy Owens-Moore	Silver Spring Township Parks and Recreation
Mark Palerino	Blue Mountain Recreation Commission
James Pashek	Pashek + MTR
Beth Perkowski	Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
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Lorne Possinger	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Samantha Powers	Penn State University
Kirk Rakos	Masonic Villages
Orlando Rendon	Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Michael Richino	Whitpain Township Parks and Recreation Department
Camila Rivera-Tinsley	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Brian Rogers	Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living
Todd Roth	Centre Region Parks and Recreation
Doniele Russell	Lawrence County

Attendees

Pamela Salokangas	Centre Region Parks and Recreation
Bill Salvatore	Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Kevin Sanders	Harrisburg Department of Parks and Recreation
Joanna Sharapan	Plymouth Township Recreation and Park Department
Paula Simmons	South Fayette Township
Jennifer Steffenauer	Upper Providence Township
Robert Stoudt	Montour Area Recreation Commission
Brian Stouffer	Stahl Sheaffer Engineering
Melissa Swedish	Allegheny County Parks Department
Tiffany Thurman	Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Ann Toole	Toole Recreation Planning
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Rick Tralies	Natural Lands
Bill Wert	Northampton Township
Leah Williams	Stahl Sheaffer Engineering
Lori Yeich	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Ann Yost	YSM Landscape Architects
Kristin Zeigler	Carlisle Parks and Recreation Department





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