



Friends of Maryland State Parks Foundations Welcomes You to the 2015 Trails Summit

- The Friends are honored to sponsor this year's summit.
- Trails are an integral part of recreation in Maryland State Parks!
- Over 11 million visitors enjoy hiking on Maryland State Park Trails.





Friends Organization Information

- The **Friends of Maryland State Parks** is a statewide non-profit, independent, all volunteer, citizen's 501(c) 3 organization formed in 1997 to preserve, protect, enhance and advocate for our state parks — one of Maryland's most precious treasures. We believe state parks are public lands that belong to "all citizens" and future generations.
- **Our Mission:.....developing a constituency of citizens and elected representatives and officials** who believe in the advocacy and support of our Maryland State Forests and Parks.
- **Background of our Board Members:**
 - Members and volunteers in state parks' Friends groups
 - Retired Maryland Park Service rangers (over 100 years of park expertise)
 - Executive Director, MD Recreation and Parks Association
 - County tourism director
 - Retired corporate executive
 - President of a state parks Friends group
 - National Park Service Superintendent
 - Retired Department of Defense Senior Executive Service
 - Retired military
 - Members of Conservation groups
- **Significant Fact:.....Over 8,000 Volunteers give over 100,000 hours or 50 FTE's valued over \$2 million in support of 66 Maryland State Parks.**



Visitor Study

The 2010 Economic Impact and Visitor Study demonstrate State Parks are highly valued by our citizens: Overall visitors rated State Parks the **highest for the quality of their natural scenery, affordability, customer service, and recreation opportunities.**

- More than 96% of visitors said that **they felt safe** while visiting State Parks. Leading indicators such as # of visitors, # of field personnel, # of Law Enforcement Officers (NRP & MPS) for protection of the public, show degradation.
- 95% of visitors rated State Parks highest for "providing an important way to **escape from the stress and demands of daily life.**"
- More than 90% of survey respondents agree or strongly agree that Maryland State Parks offer a **safe and affordable way to escape from stress, connect with nature, and offer a positive experience for their children.**



Plans for 2015

1. Focus on **Constituency Building** w/ the Administration, the Legislature, like-minded Organizations, and the public at large---Maryland citizens who love our parks, recognize their societal contributions, and are willing to help State Parks prosper.
2. Continue to develop the **Friends of MD State Parks Foundation**.
3. Develop and continue to stress: **It is time to invest** in State Parks as a high priority **Strategic Investment** with its \$25 to \$1 ROI and proven job creation capability to “Move Maryland Forward” and ensure a heritage and legacy for current and future generations of Marylanders.



Friends of MD State Parks Foundation

The Friends of Maryland State Parks Foundation focuses on investing in our state parks to provide: **economic value to local economies, nature programs, for children, critical maintenance and capital improvements for our parks, and healthy lifestyles for park visitors.**

The Friends of Maryland State Parks Foundation offers three levels of membership; **Friend, Patron and Founder**. All levels will receive a semi-annual e-newsletter updating members on activities and issues in Maryland State Parks.

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Friends of MD State Parks Foundation

The Friends of Maryland State Parks Foundation will enhance our advocacy for the values of our state parks and will focus on the following key benefits for safe and enjoyable state parks:

- **Healthy Lifestyle**
- **Environmental Education and Appreciation**
- **Cultural and Historical Preservation and Restoration**
- **Economic Development**

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Friends of MD State Parks Foundation Priorities

Membership: The Friends of Maryland State Park Foundation strives to grow a grass roots membership organization. Transparency is critical and all of the Foundations' information can be found on the Guide Star Exchange.



Giving: If you shop at Amazon, a portion of sales will be donated to the Friends of Maryland State Parks Foundation if you use Amazon Smile . Visit our website and click on Amazon Smile. It's easy and costs you nothing extra.



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