



# Friends of State Parks

Supporting the State Parks of North Carolina Since 1973

Winter 2014

PO Box 37655  
Raleigh NC 27627  
Web: [www.ncfsp.org](http://www.ncfsp.org)

## Message from the President

*David Pearson*

The Forever Business...

For the first time in the history of America's State Parks the nonprofit organizations supporting them got together. On January 16, 2014, twenty one friends representing thirteen different states and their respective state park nonprofit group met in San Francisco, California. The event was organized by the California State Parks Foundation and the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation. The organizers did a great job of getting corporate sponsors which covered a significant portion of the cost associated with the trip.

The objective of the meeting was to get to know others across the nation with a passion for State Parks and share ideas. The attendees were diverse, from citizens wanting to organize a friends group for their state to one group that has a \$20 million annual budget and over 30 employees. Topics covered were social media and internet branding, fundraising including corporate contributions, advocacy, volunteers, membership, and endowments. For two days we had round table discussions sharing ideas, concepts, strategies and materials. It was a very productive experience that I believe will benefit Friends of State Parks forever. We also had a presenter from the National Association of State Park Directors who spoke about the creation of the America's State Park Foundation and their association's plans to develop a national brand for State Parks.

It was interesting to learn how other states manage their parks and natural resources. Some combine their parks with historic places, forest, or wildlife resources. Some nonprofits support parks and a combination of other agencies depending on how their state manages the resources.

We learned there are a total of 35 states in the US that, like North Carolina, have a nonprofit group supporting their state parks. These groups have a wide assortment of structure, organization and abilities. One thing that seemed apparent, State Park nonprofit organizations are a growing trend across the nation as many states recognize the significant impact citizen based nonprofit groups can make.

I think many will agree, a trip to San Francisco would not be complete without a visit to Muir Woods. And it was just a few miles up the road. So, I along with a few friends took some time one afternoon to venture out into the Golden Gate National Park where we were staying. Muir Woods is just the kind of place and natural resource nonprofit groups like us support and advocate for. Most of the trees are reported to be 500 to 800 years old with the oldest estimated at 1,200 years old. In the early 1900s if it had not been for some friends this forest would have been lost forever!

Just like Muir Woods in California, we have significant natural resources in North Carolina that have been preserved forever because of friends. From Mount Mitchell to Jockeys Ridge our parks are the product of citizens banding together to protect areas of the state that we love and we want to ensure these resources are around forever.

About a 100 years ago the citizens of North Carolina began organizing and preserving our natural resources. Forty years ago a few friends got together and organized a nonprofit "Friends Group" dedicated to the understanding, enjoyment, and protection of North Carolina's State Parks.

As we look to the future, Friends of State Parks must grow in order to fulfill its mission. We need more local groups, new members, volunteers, and donors. We need to build a strong organization to forever protect these unique natural resources we all love.

After all, Friends of State Parks is in the forever business.



State Parks Friends at National Conference



FSP Board Members at Weymouth Woods  
*photoby Bob Sowa*

## Board Meeting Highlights

*by Mary Penny Thompson*

The quarterly Board of Directors meeting was held January 25 at Weymouth Woods Sandhills Natural Area. After David Pearson opened the meeting, Brad Ives, the Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources at NC DENR, spoke candidly about the current turning point for state parks with the search for a new Parks Director, a Centennial celebration coming up in 2016, and opportunities to generate supplemental funding for state parks. District Supt. Jay Greenwood and Park Ranger Nancy Williams gave presentations on the history and unique resources of Weymouth Woods.

After the initial presentations, members were updated on a range of topics:

- Estate planning gifts to state parks
- Charitable giving programs to non-profits like Amazon Smile and Network for Good
- Opportunities to expand youth programs in state parks
- Availability of funding for state park projects
- Updated North Carolina State Parks Map Guide
- First meeting of organizations across the nation that support state parks
- A new budget for 2014 based on increased income from license plate revenues
- Refinement of committee descriptions and need to increase member participation

A copy of the meeting minutes will be posted to the FSP website [www.ncfsp.org](http://www.ncfsp.org) after the Board reviews them on April 26.

## New Release: Updated Map Guide

The North Carolina State Parks Map Guide Third Edition is now available. This 143 page comprehensive guide to the State Parks of North Carolina has updated park maps and information for all active parks and natural areas including Chimney Rock and Carvers Creek State Parks.

This 8.5" x 11" coil bound book works as a coffee table book for trip planning and as a back pack reference guide. To view sample contents and order the book visit FSP website :

[www.ncfsp.org/Merchandise/MapGuide/mapguide.html](http://www.ncfsp.org/Merchandise/MapGuide/mapguide.html)

There is a detailed map of each park showing trails and facilities. The accompanying text gives a brief description of the park, directions to the park, information on available visitor facilities, and trail descriptions. The coil binding makes it easy to view the maps by allowing the pages to lie flat.

FSP members who purchase the book can receive free updates as maps are added or changed.

Order now! [www.ncfsp.org](http://www.ncfsp.org)



Map/Guide Cover

## FSP Expands Funding for Grants

*by Cindy Weeks*

Friends of State Parks is in an exciting position in 2014 to significantly increase our grant funding to NC State Parks. As a result of a change in funding allocation from the State Park License Plate Program, we now have \$25,000 in the budget for 2014. We are hoping our parks and local Friends chapters take full advantage of this to initiate creative and innovative ways of supporting our wonderful NC State Parks.

In the past we have funded numerous worthwhile proposals including but not limited to professional

development for our park rangers, educational programming, and construction of interpretive and wildlife displays. This past year our grants supported a black bear mount at Dismal Swamp State Park and a coyote exhibit at Eno River State Park. Because our budget this year has increased five fold, from \$5000 to \$25,000, we now have the capacity to provide more grants to more parks and to take on significantly larger projects.

Please consider how your park might benefit. Discuss it with your Park Superintendent and complete an application. Applications are available from your local superintendent. Keep in mind that we encourage local groups to raise and contribute up to half of the allocated funds. We do make exceptions for newly organized groups. Once the grant request is received you will be contacted by one of our committee members.

Grants are being accepted now and we encourage you to get your applications in as soon as possible.

## Youth in Parks – Environmental Education (YIP-EE)

### Junior Ranger Program

Lake Singletary has now joined all the other state parks in having its own uniquely designed Junior Ranger Patch.

Sean Higgins, I & E Lead Interpreter for the Division, reports that last year saw a dramatic increase in the number of youth participating in the Junior Ranger Program. Several parks organized Junior Ranger camps. AmeriCorps will be organizing Junior Ranger camps in six parks. Patches and Junior Ranger Activity guides have been funded by Great Outdoor Provision Co.



Lake Singletary Junior Ranger Patch

### YIP-EE Grants

FSP has awarded three \$400 YIP-EE field trip transportation grants for 2014: East Albemarle Elementary School to Morrow Mountain State Park; Old Town Elementary School to Hanging Rock State Park; and Lakewood Elementary School to Eno River State Park. Friends Groups and Park Superintendents are reminded to visit the FSP website at [www.ncfsp.org](http://www.ncfsp.org) for information and to apply. Funds are still available.

## Blue Ridge Foundation: Kids in Parks

The Division I & E staff has been working in partnership with the Blue Ridge Park Foundation with a Kids in Parks program which gets youth involved in developing trails with trailhead signs and a self guided brochure. Sixteen trails have been developed so far with a goal of developing 30 by the end of this year.

### In the Sandhills: Exploring Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve

by Jane Hunt

In Moore County, one mile southeast of Southern Pines turn off a country road into the park and be immediately surrounded by tall long leaf pines. One of the pines has the tell tale signs of a red-cockaded woodpecker hole with the milky sap stains dripping down from the opening.

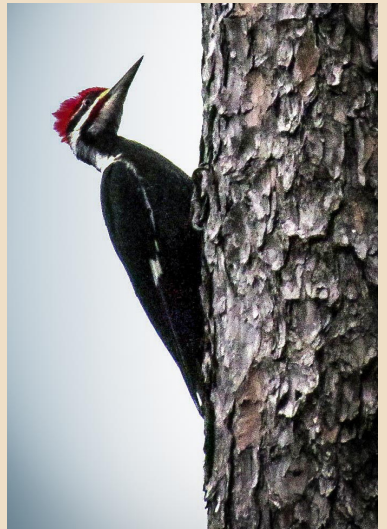
The ground is covered with brown grasses and small oak trees, mostly clear because of controlled burning which is necessary for the reseeding of the pines which creates a habitat for the birds and lets the sunlight stimulate the growth of wildflowers.

The Sandhills region is a swath of nearly one million acres in south-central North Carolina

reminding us of the location of our ancient ocean shore. Walk on the trails of sand and you will be able to find



“Here’s to the land of the long leaf pine...”



Pileated Woodpecker at Weymouth Woods

the oldest long leaf pine tree, about 466 years, and also another tree which is the second largest in North Carolina; my guess is it’s about 100 feet tall. It’s very hard to determine their age because of the resin which is in these trees. The resin is similar to Gorilla Glue and it is nearly impossible to get a bore (which is how age is determined in living trees) into the heart of the tree

and then get it out again. In the 1800s the resin was very



important to the production of turpentine. North Carolina produced 1/3 of the world's supply at that time.

The Preserve has three different sections. The Weymouth Woods section has a visitors' center and small museum. The names of the trails give you clues to what you will find there...Bower's Bog, Pine Barrons, Lighter Stump, Holly Road, Gum Swamp and Pine Island Trail. The black water James Creek runs through this section providing the moisture for the swamps, bogs and pocosins. A pocosin is an extremely dense mass of vegetation with its feet in marshy wetlands, one very hard to navigate. There are only about 4 miles of trails and they are all labeled "easy", so I guess they don't attempt a pocosin.

The Boyd Tract is where you will find the large and old long leaf pines dating back to the 1550s. The Boyd family were the ones who donated the first tract of land to the State, becoming the first natural area in the State Parks system. There is a one mile walking trail through this section and much longer equestrian trails. In the Paint Hill section you can find pixie moss, a rare woody perennial which blooms very early in the year. The Fox Squirrel trail in this area reminds me it is the home of this squirrel -- a very large one which looks a bit like a skunk. There are stuffed ones in the museum if you can't locate any outside. The name of this area comes from the rocks found there, easily crumbled sandy ones, which can be mixed with water for a reddish paint.

## News from State Parks

### Carol Tingley Steps Up As Acting Division Director

Carol Tingley rang in the New Year by taking on the role of Acting Director, but she practiced the job long before the title became effective. She served as Deputy Director when Lewis Ledford announced his retirement effective January 1, 2014. Prior to the official retirement date, though, Lewis needed to take some time off to transition to the private sector and Carol bridged the gap for the last few months of 2013.

Carol is a knowledgeable and passionate steward of the state's natural resources. Although she was born in Corning, New York and spent some time in Texas, she was drawn to North Carolina to study with Dr. Al Radford, a long time and active Friends of State Parks member. After obtaining her master's degree in botany, she joined the Division of Parks and Recreation as a natural resource specialist. Her expertise in natural resources earned her a promotion to Section Chief of Natural Resources. Her leadership role expanded when the section chief job changed to include planning as well as natural

resources. With this experience, she was a natural fit for her next promotion to Deputy Director. Throughout her career, Carol managed numerous natural resource issues, planning challenges, and land acquisition opportunities. Now she will have an opportunity to have an even greater influence on state parks in her new role as Acting Director.

Want to know more about Carol and her vision for state parks? Look for a follow-up article in the next newsletter when we have a chance to sit down and talk with her in person.

### Parks Welcome New Superintendents

Billy Hartness, has been promoted to superintendent of Weymouth Woods-Sandhills Nature Preserve. His prior work in state parks beginning in 2005 includes ranger positions in Weymouth Woods and at William B. Umstead State Park. He holds certifications in environmental education, advanced law enforcement and prescribed burning. He succeeds Scott Hartley who retired in 2013.

Joy Greenwood has been named superintendent at Merchants Millpond State Park. Prior positions have been at Goose Creek, Pettigrew and Dismal Swamp where she has been serving as superintendent. At Dismal Swamp she is credited with increased visitation, revenue generation, strides in the Swamp's hydrological restoration and gaining public support for an upcoming park operation.

### AmeriCorps at Work in State Parks

NC State Parks has six AmeriCorps national service members working for a year at the New River, Eno River, Falls Lake, Carvers Creek, Cliffs of the Neuse and Haw River state parks. The service members are dedicated to education and coordinating volunteer projects. A major focus is connecting under-represented groups with our parks.

Kate Boysen is the AmeriCorps member working at Falls Lake. "My goal is to reach out to the community get them to come to the state parks and experience our offerings, such as wildlife hikes and canoe paddles as well as other programs. I've contacted Boys and Girls Clubs in Raleigh and Durham, county libraries and other community groups we can partner with", Kate said. "They are asking me when I can start the field trips. They want as much as 4 field trips a month.



Kate Boysen,  
AmeriCorps worker

I don't know if I'll be able to do that but they're really interested and excited about the opportunity to go to state parks."

In addition, Kate and State Parks staff will be holding general public programs. An owl prowl hike on a recent evening drew 65 people. So there is a strong desire for more programs at Falls Lake.

At the end of their term, AmeriCorps members receive an educational award to repay student loans or pay for educational and training programs.

## **Crowders Mountain State Park Named Park of the Year**

Congratulations to Crowders Mountain State Park for its designation as 2013 Park of the Year. The park was chosen for its "exemplary contribution to the North Carolina state parks mission of stewardship, public service and education," and specifically recognized for initiatives in natural resource management, volunteerism and expanded recreation opportunities. "Crowders Mountain has developed into one of our busiest state parks with more than 300,000 visitors each year, yet the staff has found time to develop new ideas in recreation, protection of natural resources and involvement with the community," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director. "This exemplary performance led to its selection as Park of the Year."

Crowders Mountain State Park was authorized in 1971 following a citizen-led campaign to protect the Crowders and Pinnacle summits from mining, and is under the direction of Superintendent Larry Hyde. The park encompasses 5,126 acres and reported 321,448 visitors in 2012. The Division began naming a park of the year in 2010 with nominations from each of four districts. Hanging Rock State Park was honored in 2012.

## **2013 State Park Attendance at Record Level**

North Carolina's state parks and state recreation areas continue to register record level attendance with 14.2 million visits in 2013. Among 40 state parks and state recreation areas, 19 reported increases in attendance in 2013. Those with highest attendance: Fort Macon State Park in Carteret County at 1.19 million visits and Jockey's Ridge State Park in Dare County with 1.18 million visits.

A recent economic study revealed that travelers spend an average \$23.56 a day to enjoy the state parks. The analysis by North Carolina State University's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management estimated the state parks system's total annual economic impact at more than \$400 million.

## **William B. Umstead State Park Challenges Bird Watchers**

William B. Umstead State Park is planning its own big year in 2014. The park will be holding an informal competition among birders – experienced and beginner – to see who can see or hear the most birds in a calendar year. To get the newbies started, rangers and interpreters will be holding public programs throughout the year on identification, creating backyard habitats, birding by ear and birding for beginners.

A "Happy Birds" game launched in January with various ways to earn points and potentially win prizes by sighting bird species. There will be monthly winners as well as a 2014 champion.

For up-to-date Parks Division news:

<http://ncparks.gov>

<http://ncstateparks.wordpress.com/>

## **News from Friends Groups**

### **Friends of Sauratown Mountains**

*By Jay Young*

The Friends of Sauratown Mountains is beginning our fourth year with enthusiasm. In early January we reviewed and updated our strategic plan adopted last year. We noted that most of our goals for 2013 were achieved and we had even made progress on some long term goals. We welcomed new board member Don Bergey who is also a board member and officer of FMST. In 2014 we plan to offer a "members only" hike or other activity at least once monthly. Hikes are often to features found in the two parks not readily known to most park users such as obscure waterfalls or the site of a 1963 plane crash. For our Spring membership meeting we are incorporating a workday at Pilot Mountain to plant native grasses and shrubs along Horne Creek where we are also building a relocated hiking trail. Horne Creek flows into the Yadkin River within the park boundaries just downstream from our worksite. Volunteers will be rewarded with a noon cookout and we will be joined by DENR Assistant Secretary Brad Ives.

### **Eno River Association Adds Land to Eno River State Park**

*by Cynthia Satterfield*

Four acres of riverfront property, long identified by Eno River State Park as a priority for acquisition, has finally been protected thanks to the nonprofit Eno River Association. The conservation group, which has been working on land and water protection for more than 45 years, is



credited with getting the Eno River State Park established in the 1970s and has been saving land along the Eno in Durham and Orange counties ever since.

“This beautiful tract is surrounded by other parkland and was prime for development,” says Executive Director Robin Jacobs. “We are very grateful to the landowner, who contacted us directly before putting it on the open market.” The Eno River Association purchased the four-acre property, located in Durham County, in June 2013. The group then transferred ownership to Eno River State Park on December 18.

The Eno River supplies drinking water for the Town of Hillsborough and the cities of Durham and Raleigh, flowing 33 miles from its headwaters in northwestern Orange County through Durham County and into Falls Lake. “Acquiring this property will help us maintain water quality,” says Keith Neelson, Superintendent of the Eno River State Park. “It will allow local residents better access to the river, and enable us to manage and maintain a continuous area of wildlife habitat now and in the future.”

### **Eno River Upcoming Events:**

iWalk the Eno Science and Nature Camp for rising fourth, fifth and sixth graders. Two camps are being held in Eno River State Park: June 16-20 & 23-27. Registration open! Go to <http://www.iwalktheeno.org/> to register and for more information.

### **Festival for the Eno, July 4 & 5**

(Visit [ncfsp.org](http://ncfsp.org) for links to Friends Group websites, Facebook pages and twitter feeds.)

### **Friends of Morrow Mountain State Park**

*by Tanya Davis*

Friends of Morrow Mountain State Park (FMMSP) recently wrapped up an inaugural year with many highlights and accomplishments. The Board of Directors began a membership renewal campaign in the fall, and we are pleased to report successful promotion with 132 FMMSP memberships and growing for 2014.

In June, 2013, Morrow Mountain State Park was hit by a severe storm with destructive high winds that resulted in thousands of downed trees and damaged structures. The park was forced to close through peak summer and fall months while park officials continued to clear trees and clean up from the storm. FMMSP Trail and Hiking Committee members provided four days of volunteer services to park officials to assist with clean-up as well. We are happy to report that the park is open, and there is even a silver lining in all of this. The vista at the top

of the mountain is simply majestic, with gorgeous views that can now be seen for miles!

Other highlights for FMMSP include receipt of a \$1,000 grant from ALCOA for the purpose of digitally organizing and archiving historical park photos and documents, and a packed lodge on October 20<sup>th</sup> for a presentation on the History of Morrow Mountain by Dr. Jeff Michael. We are extremely pleased to announce that Dr. Randolph Daniel, Professor at East Carolina University, will present on Sunday, May 18, 2014 from 2-4 p.m. at the MMSM Lodge. Dr. Daniel is a leading scholar on the history of early human occupation of this region, and author of the book: *Hardaway Revisited: Early Archaic Settlement in the Southeast*. His presentation will focus on early American history of the Uwharrie region with emphasis on the Hardaway Site and Morrow Mountain. This is an important piece of North Carolina history as the first Carolinians called this area “home” more than 12,000 years ago. There is no charge, but we ask those interested to register by calling the park office at (704) 982-4402 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Hope to see you in May!

### **Two Parks Rangers and their Dogs**

*by Jim O'Reilly*

Mary Smith, Lead I & E Ranger at Crowders Mountain State Park, started as a deputy sheriff in Transylvania County. “I was in schools trying to make a connection with the kids. When I got Gibbs as a puppy from



**Mary Smith and Gibbs**

the shelter, I started obedience training him and learned that he could be certified as a therapy dog and could work in the schools. So I used Gibbs as a reading assistant. Kids having a hard time learning to read were more motivated to read and practice their skills if they would read to the dog.

“When I came to the Parks I wanted to keep using my dog and train him be able to bring him to work and fit him in the parks setting. I discovered that at Crowders Mountain there are a lot of dog owners who bring their dogs for hikes and many would become overheated and exhausted because they are not used to hiking. So we have done quite a few dog rescues at the park. So I start an educational a program on dog safety and hiking etiquette with Gibbs.

“I also worked with local groups that are helping produce pamphlets and brochures on what to do with your dog in the park. Also I’ve found that Gibbs is helpful with special needs groups to break the awkwardness that sometimes takes place. You can talk about the dog. And of course the dog offers a lot of love in return.

“Using a dog is not something that a ranger can do formally or specialize in. It is something we do on our own time, training and taking care of the dog.”

Jason Murveen is a ranger at Kerr Lake. In addition to his normal duties, he is the search and rescue person for the park. In that role he maps out search segments. “Because I work with dogs it’s a lot easier to know which areas the dog could go in versus areas people should go in. So if somebody does come missing the maps are already printed out—people are going here, dogs are going here.”

Jason is training his 15-month-old German shepherd Bear as a search and rescue dog. On his own time Jason is active in the volunteer group Southern Pride Search and Rescue and hopes Bear will be certified in the coming months.

Jason’s parks work covers a wide range -- from law enforcement, wild land fire fighting, in summer assisting campers, educational programming, which can be anything from teaching people about native American influences to how to fish. This year canoes and kayaks will be added so there will be different paddling opportunities.



Jason Murveen and Bear

## Junior Ranger Program Marks Tenth Year

# CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

fishing

games

crafts

smores



## Junior Ranger Earth Day Celebration

April 23rd (Wednesday)

3 pm - 6 pm

William B. Umstead State Park  
Camp Laphio, Glenwood Ave Entrance

Geared for ages 5-12, but all ages welcome.

Sponsored by Friends of State Parks, Americorps and  
Great Outdoor Provision Co.

NC STATE PARKS...NATURALLY WONDERFUL!

In the winter time he is taking pictures of different animals throughout the park that are not always here year round. The pictures will be posted on the state parks web site.

Jason frequently takes Bear with him in the campgrounds. “We put his search vest on him, have him on a leash and take him down to the campgrounds and introduce him. If someone comes up to you, you’ll introduce the dog because if he’s going to find a stranger out in the woods, he needs to be friendly with people.”



Monarch Butterfly  
2014 is the Year of the Lepidoptera



# Friends of State Parks

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Friends of State Parks, PO Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627

___ Student _____	\$10.00	___ Donor _____	\$50.00
___ Senior Citizen ___	\$10.00	___ Organization ___	\$35.00
___ Single _____	\$15.00	___ Family _____	\$20.00
___ Patron _____	\$100.00 (or more)		

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2014 Board Meetings

April 26	11 a.m. Kerr Lake State Recreation Area
July 26	10 a.m. South Mountains State Park
October 25	11 a.m. Lake Norman State Park

## FRIENDS OF STATE PARKS OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Official organization address: P.O. Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627

Telephone: 919-827-1088, Website: [www.ncfsp.org](http://www.ncfsp.org)

### Executive Committee

President - David Pearson, Swansboro	<a href="mailto:davidp@ncfsp.org">davidp@ncfsp.org</a>
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Secretary - Mary Penny Thompson, Apex	<a href="mailto:maryt@ncfsp.org">maryt@ncfsp.org</a>
Treasurer - Doug Youngblood, Charlotte	<a href="mailto:dougy@ncfsp.org">dougy@ncfsp.org</a>

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