



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 2, 2020

DCNR Provides Guidance on Outdoor Activities During Coronavirus Outbreak

*[Guidance on Spending Time Outdoors](#)
[Protect Yourself and Others Outdoors](#)
[Practice Social Distancing and Leave no Trace](#)*

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn reminded Pennsylvanians that being outdoors is good health care and self care, but recommendations for social distancing to slow the spread of the coronavirus still apply.

“During this time of significant changes to our daily routines it’s clear that our need for and appreciation of nature is greater than ever,” Dunn said. “Outdoor activities are a great idea to relieve stress and as immunity boosters, but they should not include exposure to high-touch surfaces or other groups of people -- we need to spread out.”

Dunn noted the best advice to slow the spread of COVID-19 is to stay at home. Engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking, or running is allowed if social distancing is maintained.

Some tips for avoiding groups of people outdoors include:

- If you have a yard, spend time there outdoors every day.
- If possible, take a walk around your neighborhood with the people in your family, as long as you can stay six feet away from neighbors.
- If you decide to leave your neighborhood, plan for several alternate locations, so if you arrive at your first one and there are crowds, you can move on.
- Choose a less busy time of day, such as early morning.
- Find a local park or trail that offers enough space for social distancing. Pennsylvania has more than [6,000 local parks that are identified on an interactive map](#).
- Some municipalities have closed local parks to protect visitors and employees, so check the status of the park before you go. If the park is open, bathrooms and water fountains likely will not be, so plan ahead.
- There also are more than 12,000 miles of trails in Pennsylvania, most of which remain accessible during this period. Find a nearby trail at trails.dcnr.pa.gov.

State and local parks, state forests, and trails are seeing record numbers of visitors, with more anticipated as the weather turns warmer and fishing season begins.

From March 17 to 25, Presque Isle State Park in Erie saw an average 165 percent increase in visitation from the same dates last year.

State park and forest facilities such as restrooms, playgrounds, and all overnight accommodations are closed, and staff is limited. The public can access lands and trails.

Be respectful of natural places by practicing [Leave No Trace ethics](#):

- Avoid crowded parking lots and trailheads – find a different spot.
- Use the bathroom before you visit.
- Bring a bag and carry out your trash.
- Take your trash home with you, as there is limited staff emptying trash cans.
- Clean up after pets and carry out the bags.

Pennsylvania has 121 state parks, and 20 forest districts.

Information about state parks and forests is available on the [DCNR website](#). Updates also are being provided on DCNR's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

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