

Forests for All: DCNR Unveils New Plan to Connect People to Pennsylvania's Forests

By DCNR Staff

PA - On International Day of Forests on March 21, a day dedicated to recognizing the essential role forests play in sustaining life on Earth, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) launched a new plan to ensure the state's forests remain healthy, accessible, and resilient for future generations.

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and Pennsylvania State Forester Seth Cassell unveiled Forests for All – A Plan for Pennsylvania's Forests and People, a forward-thinking strategy to protect, enhance, and connect Pennsylvanians to the state's 17 million acres of forests.

"Our forests provide all Pennsylvanians with so many values—including clean air and water, jobs, wood products, and outdoor recreation opportunities that support our economy and more," said Secretary Dunn. "It's important that we anticipate and respond to potential opportunities and challenges and use our staff, funding, and resources wisely."

The plan is a roadmap to ensure Pennsylvanians' Constitutional right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the environment while strengthening forestry management and public engagement all across the Commonwealth.

This plan expands upon the foundations laid in the previous plan – Penn's Woods – Sustaining our Forests – published in 1995. Penn's Woods established strong resource management foundations and opened the gate for better technical assistance to landowners.

"Just as forests evolve and adapt, so must we," said Cassell, who serves as DCNR's Director of the Bureau of Forestry. "This plan reflects our commitment to modern resource management and stronger connections with the people who live, work, and recreate in Pennsylvania's forests."

Trees span a considerable distance at Tiadaghton State Forest.

Tiadaghton State Forest

The plan focuses on three strategic priorities:

Strengthening the Bureau of Forestry's Resource Management Foundations – Ensuring forests remain healthy and productive for generations to come.

Growing Public and Community Engagement – Expanding efforts to connect Pennsylvanians with forests and the many benefits they provide.

Investing in People and Teams – Supporting staff, partnerships, and resources to enhance conservation efforts through workforce development.

Each strategic priority includes specific goals for implementation.

The 40-page plan was developed with input from hundreds of staff, resource managers, partner organizations, and the public.

Nearly 60 percent of Pennsylvania is forested, with the Bureau of Forestry managing 2.2 million acres of state forest land across 50 counties. Staff from the bureau provide guidance and assist private forest owners with planning and management of 12 million acres of private forestlands.



Heros

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They ran to check on homes. That's when Dane discovered his neighbor in a pool of ash. "He was. If it wasn't for these two, he might still be there," said Catherine Capozzolo.

Dane stamped out rem□

Officials say Louis is alive, thanks to the pair. He did need hospital treatment. "I have a few burns, have some on my legs, too. My face is all there again," said Louis.

Louis, Catherine, Ellie and Dane were neighbors before. Now, they'd call each other friends. "I knew them. I didn't realize how great they were," said Louis with a smile.

"Absolutely," said Catherine. "We owe them." Family, meantime, is so proud of the two.

"I was in shock but not surprised. They're two wonderful kids. I'm so proud of Dane and Ellie for what they did," said Dane's mother. If you ask the teens what they thought in the moment, they didn't. They just acted. Would they do it again without all the recognition? "Yes. Of course," they said, almost in unison. "This is what happens when you have good parents. Very proud to have them as neighbors," said Catherine.

The fire, meantime, did not spread to any homes. Fire crews arrived and extinguished the flames.

Northampton County to Accept Applications for 2025 Grow NORCO Program Grants

By Jessica Berger

Northampton County, PA – County Executive Lamont G. McClure and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) announce that the County of Northampton will accept applications for the 2025 Grow NORCO Program from April 21st until 4:00 PM on May 30, 2025.

Grow NORCO grants are available to a federally registered non-profit entity, 501(C)(3) or 501(C)(4) or a municipal entity located within Northampton County. Grant funds can be used for Capital Improvements, Quality of Life Initiatives, Façade Programs, Operations and Community Planning. Eligible organizations can apply for up to \$50,000.

Awards will be announced in December 2025 and all projects must be completed by December 31, 2026.

Interested organizations can apply by visiting the Northampton County Participant Portal hosted by Neighborly Software at:

<https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/NORTHAMPTONCOUNTYPA/participant>

Registration is required on the Participant Portal in order to apply.

Program inquiries should be directed to:

Northampton County Department of Community & Economic Development

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