

New Hampshire Conservation Corps (NHCC) Interpretive Ranger - Discover the Power of Parks Program 2024 Annual Report



*Presented in collaboration with
the Student Conservation
Association and made possible by
financial support from Eversource.*



Partnerships

The NHCC program would not exist without its programmatic partners. AmeriCorps has been a partner since its inception in 1993, and our partnership with Volunteer New Hampshire provides funding for our AmeriCorps members to meet critical conservation and education needs across the state. NHCC also serves in conjunction with New Hampshire State Parks who has been a vital part of the program since the beginning - NHCC is based out of the historic Spruce Pond Camp in Bear Brook State Park. Eversource has also provided critical funding for our service work through the Discover the Power of Parks program. Additionally, partnerships with schools and after school programs, where we provide environmental education programs, are also key to our success. Many of these service partners have worked with the NHCC since it began its educational programs. Thank you to everyone who has chosen to work with us over the years and again in 2024! For a complete list of all 2024 program partners, please see appendix D.

Since 2007 the Discover the Power of Parks Interpretive Ranger program has been supported with generous funding from Eversource Energy. This capital has helped the NH Corps hire, train, and supply the Interpretive Rangers with the resources needed to deliver quality environmental, historic, and recreational programs to New Hampshire's residents and visitors. The NHCC appreciates this continued support and looks forward to finding new, mutually beneficial ways to collaborate and meet the ever-evolving needs of NH's communities and their recreational and environment resources.

About the SCA

Since 1957, SCA programs have been serving communities and lands throughout the United States - completing conservation services that enhance and protect environmental and recreational resources. Beyond direct field service, the SCA also provides educational opportunities that promote the understanding, protection, and stewardship of these natural areas. The New Hampshire Conservation Corps (NHCC) continues this legacy through the lens of the SCA mission – Building the next generation of conservation leaders and inspiring lifelong stewardship of our environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.

Orientation and Education Training – April 2024



NHCC Interpretive Rangers arrived in New Hampshire in early April to begin their five weeks of service training and preparation. During the first three weeks, the members were introduced to their new home in Bear Brook State Park, as well as AmeriCorps and SCA policies, and received their Wilderness First Responder medical training. The last two weeks of training immersed the Interpretive Rangers in environmental education. Training topics covered included the ecology of New Hampshire, place-based education, and pedagogical skills with the NHCC Education Coordinator. During this time Lindsay Webb of NH Fish and Game provided further training on wildlife education. Thank you to Lindsay for enhancing our member experience by assisting us with these fantastic trainings. Additionally, the Interpretive Rangers participated at the Farm, Forest, and Garden Expo alongside the NH Division of Parks and Recreation. At this event the Interpretive Rangers set up table-top activities to engage visitors and promote the DPP program.

Interpretive Ranger Spring Programming– May 2024



In May the Interpretive Rangers started delivering programs for schools and after school programs in the Merrimack Valley Region. Armed with their new knowledge and skills a total of 108 different programs were delivered in just 4 weeks! See Appendix A to read the programmatic data by the numbers.

It can be difficult to quantify the full magnitude of any education program. However, the goal is for lessons to impact students through building scientific literacy and encouraging an interest in conservation and outdoor recreation – empowering students to explore New Hampshire’s outdoor spaces and State Parks. Although we do not know if these programs will drive students and their families to visit New Hampshire’s State Parks or serve as the foundation for a student’s future interests. What we do know about the impact of these programs comes from the qualitative feedback received from our program partners.

“Our students would not have had the chance to think about the insects/animals/land around our school. It enriches their understanding of the environment around them. This is such an important opportunity for our students”.

Alyssa Clement- McDonough Elementary School

Results of our partner surveys show that most students enjoyed spending time outside, being able to learn about and interact with animal pelts and skulls, and the interactive educational games as a primary method of engaging with the material. All our partners indicated that they were satisfied with the programming, which helped met their curriculum goals.

For the first time since the pandemic, the program conducted fieldtrips at Bear Brook State Park! Beech Street Elementary School of Manchester spent the day exploring the ponds, vernal pools, forests, and fields of the park. The teachers had been bringing their students on this fieldtrip prior to the pandemic and were elated to be back and continue this tradition.



Preparation for DPP Summer Programs at NH State Parks – June 2024

During the first week of June, members participated in Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) training through the National Association of Interpretation. This training was a great way for the Interpretive Rangers to take their knowledge of formal education in public schools and apply it to the informal interpretive education they would be doing at their assigned state parks for the remainder of their service term. They learned how to develop and structure programs for multi-aged audiences and how to run table-top/drop-in activities vs formal 45-minute programs. The additional training helped members mentally shift to the next phase of their position.

After the CIG training, the Interpretive Rangers updated programs based on previous program successes, as written in advice letters from previous members, as they transitioned to the new programmatic format at their assigned parks. Building upon this program knowledge they also created lessons and activities based on their own interests. Beyond their park programming they familiarized themselves with the communities surrounding their new service sites – becoming informed visitor services personnel is an important part of the position.

Discover the Power of Parks Programs: June-October 2024

In what seemed like a blink of an eye, school was out for the summer and visitors began to flock to New Hampshire State Parks. The members hit the ground running offering a variety of programs for park visitors. From June to October, the Interpretive Rangers positively impacted the experience of thousands of park patrons delivering 877 DPP programs, with 27,645 park attendees. In addition to this, they connected with an additional 24,110 park goers in a visitor service capacity. In total this cohort engaged 51,755 park visitors. These numbers are truly impressive and shows their dedication to service, the environment, and New Hampshire (Please see Appendix B for specific details/data).

In the Great North Woods, the daytime programming locations were adjusted to reach a larger audience. The Interpreter shifted the daily schedule moving to Dixville Notch two days a week while maintaining evening programs at Mollidgewock. Having an Interpretive Ranger at Dixville Notch was successful and valuable to the North Country. While at this new program location the interpreter stationed themselves at park trailheads to educate park visitors about hiker safety and Leave No Trace. It is also a great experience for the member in the Great North Woods to interact with an audience focused on hiking. In August five programs were offered and 27 folks attended.

In the seacoast region, Rye Harbor does not draw many visitors, however, meaningful connections were made with those who attending programs here. Park patrons loved learning about the lesser-known history of the Isle of Shoals and an expanded NH coastal history. The program time was reduced at Rye Harbor in favor of Hampton Beach State Park's South Beach location. This park has higher visitation and gives the interpreter a chance to do more beach and coastal ecology programming - this includes the importance of sand dunes for nesting shorebirds and coastal resiliency.

Additionally, in the Monadnock region, some wildflower walks were offered at Rhododendron State Park during the peak bloom period. The two programs had 33 visitors. Looking ahead to 2025, we hope to build on these successes as the program seeks to engage more visitors and highlight some of the smaller more unique NH state parks.





"I had the pleasure of bringing DPP programs to Rhododendron State Park this year and I believe they were a success. The walk highlighted the rhododendrons but also dived deep into the park's history, as well as other notable wildflowers in the park. Attendees seemed to enjoy themselves and were amazed even after most blooms were past their prime. There is a great opportunity to host programs here in future years." Kyle Durant, SCA Interpretive Ranger

One of the best aspects of the Interpretive Ranger program is annual change in the service members. Each new member and cohort brings different skill sets, experiences, and knowledge, keeping programming exciting for returning park visitors. As a result, each group develops new programs and activities for visitors to enjoy. Some new program examples include:

- Wildlife CSI
- Bigfoot Olympics
- Landscape Painting
- Duck Discovery
- Legends of the Lake
- Abenaki Fishing net crafts

While new programs are always exciting, there are some DPP programs that prove to always have strong attendance. The most popular programs in 2024 were:

- Night Hikes
- Ponding
- Tree Detectives
- Fuzzy friends of New Hampshire
- Mighty Moose
- Beaks, Feet, and Feathers
- Ten essentials and leave no trace



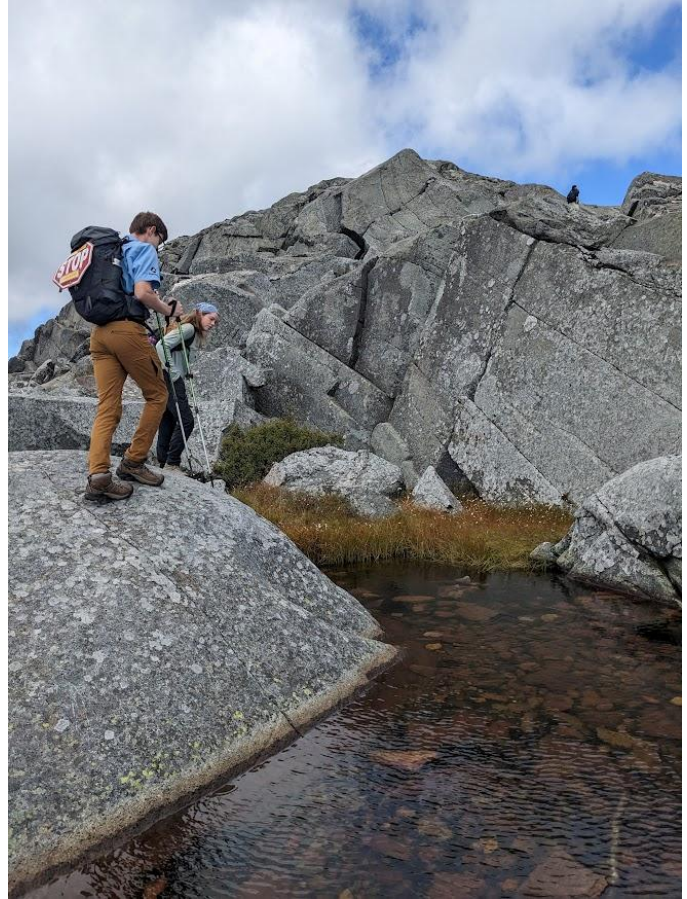
As the Interpretive Rangers evaluated their programs and interactions with visitors, they adapted their them to meet the interests and needs to their audiences. As an educator, being able to evaluate oneself through reflection is paramount to one's continued professional development. The NHCC is thrilled that this cohort of Interpretive Rangers were able to successfully grow personally and professionally throughout the service term.

2024 Interpretive Ranger's Legacy Projects

Interpretive Ranger DPP Legacy Projects have evolved over the past 2 years creating a special experience for the Interpretive Rangers. Allowing members to focus on a topic and project of their choice is meaningful and empowering. Here is a quick synopsis of the legacy projects that the interpretive rangers completed this season:

- Abenaki Resource Document for future reference and DPP program materials
- FNSP Accessibility guide
- Exhibit layout plans for the Hiker Cabin at FNSP
- An adorable comic book about ducks and why they should not eat human food
- First time hikers' video for Mount Monadnock
- Pawtuckaway Program Locations and Parking Area Maps
- A digital interpretive guide, Crossroads, to the trails at Monadnock
- Plant and tree identification program and resource guide

All of this season's legacy projects are valuable program resources for future cohorts. They will ensure the future members continue to build on the legacy of the DPP program – providing engaging and informative programs for years to come.



Interpretive Ranger Fall Outreach Season – September/October 2024

Fall Outreach was a time for some of the Interpretive Rangers to try new things. They developed programs for new audiences and were accountable for their own programmatic scheduling with local schools, nonprofits, and other community organizations. Members reached out to and delivered programs for new groups and organizations - see Appendix C for more details. The Interpretive Rangers displayed the educational skill and creativity that proves they grew by leaps and bounds throughout their service term and are well on their way to becoming highly successful environmental educators.

In 2024, fall outreach programming in the Merrimack Valley region, Monadnock region, and the Carrol County/Lakes regions of New Hampshire. Expanding to additional communities in New Hampshire resulted in an abundance of new partnerships. Our new program partners for 2024 included:

- Bear Brook Trail Marathon Event – Bear Brook State Park, Allenstown, NH
- Candia Congregational Church – Candia, NH
- David R. Cawley Middle School - Hooksett, NH
- Gilmanston Year-Round Free Library – Gilmanston, NH
- Girl Scout Expo Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains – Expo @ New Hampshire Sportsplex in Bedford, NH

- Girls Scouts of Dover – Dover, NH
- Greenfield Elementary School – Greenfield, NH
- Inter-Lakes Daycare – Meredith, NH
- KaiPod Learning – Dover, NH
- Loudon Homeschool Group – Loudon, NH
- Ossipee Central School – Ossipee, NH
- Pleasant Street School Afterschool – Laconia, NH
- Tamworth Homeschool Village – Tamworth, NH
- Vaughan Learning Center – North Conway, NH
- William B Cashin Senior Activity Center – Manchester, NH

For a complete list of all 2024 program partners, please see appendix D.

Conclusion - Wrapping up the 30th year of SCA NHCC

After Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day, the NHCC members returned to Bear Brook State Park. They participated in facility projects at Spruce Pond Camp, to leave the facilities and surrounding environment better than it was when they arrived. Also, during this time, we celebrated their dedication to service with a fun fieldtrip to Portland, Maine and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. After the final few weeks at Spruce Pond Camp, the NHCC members left the program with a deeper sense of themselves, place, and service. They have also gained a plethora of hard and soft skills, everlasting friends and memories, and a jumpstart on their career path to becoming the next generation of conservation leaders!

Appendix A

Total Number of Programs Offered for Spring 2024

After-School Programs	20
Field Day Programs	3
School Programs	84
Bear Brook Field Trip	1
Total number of programs delivered	108

School Partners 2024

School Name	Town	Grade Level	Number of Classrooms
Webster Elementary	Manchester, NH	4 th	4
Allenstown Elementary School	Allenstown, NH	4 th	1
Deerfield Community School	Deerfield, NH	3 rd	3
Hooksett Memorial School	Hooksett, NH	5 th	6
Hooksett Memorial School	Hooksett, NH	3 rd	7
McDonough Elementary School	Manchester, NH	4 th	4
Beech Street Elementary	Manchester, NH	3 rd	4

After-School Program Partners 2024

Center for New Americans	Manchester, NH
Pleasant Street School	Laconia, NH
MPDAL (Manchester Police Department Athletic League)	Manchester, NH
Abbot-Downing School	Concord, NH

Appendix B

2024 Discover the Power of Parks Programs – Programming and Visitation by the Numbers

Below are monthly charts displaying the number of DPP programs offered by park. Program visitors include park guests that attended a DPP program. Non-program contacts represent the number of park visitors that the Interpretive Rangers interacted with and assisted in a visitor service capacity.

June 2024

June 2024 DPP Program Numbers	Number of Programs Offered	Number of Visitors that Attended Programs	Number of Non-Program Visitor Contacts
Umbagog Lake State Park	8	44	29
Mollidgewock State Park	4	1	6
Franconia Notch State Park	22	1,306	327
White Lake State Park	12	191	79
Echo Lake State Park	5	142	12
Ellacoya State Park	2	48	22
Bear Brook State Park	11	138	29
Pawtuckaway State Park	10	67	83
Wallis Sands State Park	2	19	11
Rye Harbor State Park	2	1	1
Pillsbury State Park	4	9	15
Lake Sunapee State Park	2	51	23
Miller State Park	6	39	36
Monadnock State Park	11	188	236
Combined Parks Totals for June	101 Programs Offered	2,244 Visitors that Attended Programs	909 Non-Program Visitor Contacts

July 2024

July 2024 DPP Program Numbers	Number of Programs Offered	Number of Visitors that Attended Programs	Number of Non-Program Visitor Contacts
Umbagog Lake State Park	18	194	275
Mollidgewock State Park	11	16	83
Androscoggin Wayside	5	1	0
Franconia Notch State Park	44	3,892	2,542
White Lake State Park	15	495	284
Echo Lake State Park	8	272	63
Ellacoya State Park	9	103	39
Bear Brook State Park	23	175	116
Pawtuckaway State Park	29	149	365
Wallis Sands State Park	7	111	31
Rye Harbor State Park	7	3	1
Music by the Sea Events at Odiorne State Park	3	373	85
Pillsbury State Park	6	37	19
Lake Sunapee State Park	16	148	75
Miller State Park	20	106	95
Monadnock State Park	37	604	562

Rhododendron State Park	2	33	6
Combined Parks Totals for July	260 Programs Offered	6,675 Visitors that Attended Programs	4,640 of Non-Program Visitor Contacts

August 2024

August 2024 DPP Program Numbers	Number of Programs Offered	Number of Visitors that Attended Programs	Number of Non-Program Visitor Contacts
Umbagog Lake State Park	19	189	326
Mollidgewock State Park	6	16	60
Dixville Notch	5	27	0
Franconia Notch State Park	31	4,842	4,617
White Lake State Park	35	567	342
Echo Lake State Park	17	360	131
Ellacoya State Park	6	153	102
Bear Brook State Park	34	174	119
Pawtuckaway State Park	29	158	568
Wallis Sands State Park	5	97	27
Rye Harbor State Park	3	0	2
South Beach at Hampton Beach State Park	5	116	43
Music by the Sea Event at Odiorne State Park	1	193	76
Pillsbury State Park	10	83	48
Lake Sunapee State Park	10	196	93
Miller State Park	10	149	177
Monadnock State Park	38	793	1,018
Combined Parks Totals for August	264 Programs Offered	8,113 Visitors that Attended Programs	7,749 Non-Program Visitor Contacts

September 2024

September 2024 DPP Program Numbers	Number of Programs Offered	Number of Visitors that Attended Programs	Number of Visitor Contacts
Franconia Notch State Park	18	3,879	2,408
White Lake State Park	13	71	105
Bear Brook State Park	14	104	65
Pawtuckaway State Park	17	145	103
Miller State Park	15	264	177
Monadnock State Park	51	710	692
Combined Parks Totals for September	128 Programs Offered	5,173 Visitors that Attended Programs	3,550 Non-Program Visitor Contacts

October 2024

October 2024 DPP Program Numbers	Number of Programs Offered	Number of Visitors that Attended Programs	Number of Visitor Contacts
Franconia Notch State Park	22	4,312	5,081
White Lake State Park	6	136	79
Bear Brook State Park	8	52	38
Pawtuckaway State Park	10	197	869
Miller State Park	10	265	251
Monadnock State Park	533	478	944
Combined Parks Totals for October	128 Programs Offered	5,440 Visitors that Attended Programs	7,262 Non-Program Visitor Contacts

TOTALS for the 2024 DPP Season

877 Programs	27,645 Program Visitors	24,110 Non-Program Visitor Contacts	51,755 total visitors that Interpretive Rangers engaged with in 2024
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Appendix C

Total 2024 Fall Outreach By Region

Southeast Region

	Number of Programs Offered	Total Number of Program Participants
Tucker Free Library	1	16
Chester Library	1	3
Smyth Public Library	1	1
Fuller Public Library	2	23
Epsom Public Library	1	8
Gilmanton Year-Round Free Library	1	14
Candia Homeschool Group	5	35
Allenstown Community School	3	126
Auburn Village School	1	72
Hooksett Memorial School	4	480
Epsom Central School	1	19
Center for New Americans	2	22
KaiPod Learning	1	9
Candia Congregational Church	1	21
David R. Cawley Middle School	1	7
Girls Scouts of Dover	1	8
BioBlitz – Seacoast	1	45
Bear Brook Trail Marathon	1	50
Girls Scouts Expo	1	484
	1	8
William B Cashin Senior Activity Center	1	15
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTNERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS OFFERED	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
21	32	1,466

Monadnock Region

Program Partners	Number of Programs Offered	Total Number of Program Participants
Ingalls Memorial Library	2	6
Richards Free Library	1	12
Olivia Rodham Library	2	13
Frost Free Library	1	4
Mt. Ceaser Union Library	1	5
Harrisville Library	1	6
Greenfield Elementary School	2	22
Victory High School	1	35
Loudon Homeschool Group	3	17
Robin Nest Pre-School	6	75
Cheshire Children's Museum	1	10
The River Center Pre-School	1	16
Rivermead Assisted Living	1	18
Harrisville Children's Center	1	20
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTNERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS OFFERED	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
14	24	259

Carrol County/Lakes Region

Program Partners	Number of Programs Offered	Total Number of Program Participants
Cook Memorial Library	1	11
Freedom Public Library	1	6
Chocorua Public Library	1	14

Robert Frost Charter School	2	21
Ossipee Central School	2	15
Effingham Elementary	7	128
Kingswood Youth Center	2	26
Pleasant Street School Afterschool Program	2	20
Tamworth Homeschool Village	2	16
Vaughan Learning Center Pre-School	4	57
Inter-Lakes Daycare	2	20
Taylor Community Woodside	3	43
Taylor Community Back Bay	1	5
Taylor Community Rolling Hill Drive	1	13
Tilton Veteran's Home	1	35
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTNERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS OFFERED	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
15	32	430

Combined Totals for All 3 Regions

Total Number of Fall Outreach Partners	Total Number of Programs Offered	Total Number of Program Participants
50	88	2,155

Appendix D

DPP Partnerships 2024:

Abbot-Downing School
Allenstown Community School
Auburn Village School
Bear Brook Trail Marathon
Beech Street Elementary School
BioBlitz – Seacoast
Candia Area Homeschool Group
Candia Congregational Church
Center for New Americans
Cheshire Children’s Museum
Chester Library
Chocorua Public Library
Cook Memorial Library
David R. Cawley Middle School
Deerfield Community School
Effingham Elementary
Epsom Central School
Epsom Public Library
Freedom Public Library
Frost Free Library
Fuller Public Library
Gilmanton Year-Round Free Library
Girl Scout Expo
Girls Scouts of Dover
Greenfield Elementary School
Harrisville Children’s Center
Harrisville Library
Hooksett Memorial School
Ingalls Memorial Library
Inter-Lakes Daycare
KaiPod Learning
Kingswood Youth Center
Loudon Homeschool Group
McDonough Elementary School
Manchester Police Department
Athletic League
Mt. Ceaser Union Library
National Association for Interpretation
(Nancy Ritger)
NH Fish and Game (Lindsay Webb)
Olivia Rodham Library

Ossipee Central School
Pleasant Street School Afterschool Program
Richards Free Library
Rivermead Assisted Living
Robert Frost Charter School
Robin Nest Pre-School
Smyth Public Library
Tamworth Homeschool Village
Taylor Community Back Bay
Taylor Community Rolling Hill Drive Taylor
Community Woodside
The River Center
Tilton Veteran's Home
Tucker Free Library
Vaughan Learning Center
Victory High School
Webster School
William B Cashin Senior Activity Center