



2018 Discover the Power of Parks Annual Report



Figure 1 Interpretive Rangers kneeling from left to right are Rand Michaels, Kate Seader, Kelly Graner, Rachel Shoemaker, Brianne Bishop, Tom Fischer, Claire Adams, Kim Snyder, Beth Bryant and not pictured is Haley Lesmerises

Discover the Power of Parks is a series of interactive interpretative programs for visitors to New Hampshire State Parks. The program is a collaboration between the Division of Parks and Recreation, the Student Conservation Association (SCA), and Eversource Energy with program support from the Corporation for National Service (AmeriCorps).

Program Overview

SCA NH Corps recruited and trained ten young adults to provide guided hikes, interpretative tours, and educational workshops for children, families, and park visitors of all ages. These Interpretive Rangers provided programs that focused on connecting participants with nature and building an appreciation for New Hampshire's natural and cultural heritage.

The state parks included in this year's program were: Greenfield, Monadnock, Pawtuckaway, Bear Brook, Pillsbury, Kingston, Hampton Beach, Wallis Sands, White Lake, Franconia Notch, Crawford Notch, Ellacoya, Odiorne and Umbagog State Parks.

Measuring Success

Conservation Education Program Field Trips

The Discover the Power of Parks Interpretative Rangers get their first experience in leading programs by hosting 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classes from Manchester, Hooksett, Deerfield and Allenstown that are part of the SCA NH Corps winter environmental education program. In early May, the Interpretative Rangers led 15 field trips at Bear Brook State Park. This year the rangers guided nearly 1,000 students in an investigation of aquatic and terrestrial life in Bear Brook's vernal pools, ponds, and forests.

State Park Programs

With guidance from the SCA NH Corps Team Manager Davis Brush, Education Coordinator Kari Amick, and State Park staff, Interpretative Rangers created imaginative programs to connect families with the outdoors. While there are programs that are given at most sites like ponding and night hikes, the creativity of the Interpretative Rangers make each program year unique. Interpretative Rangers also took feedback from the Division to develop programs targeted at specific park needs.

Some new programs that the Interpretative Rangers lead this year include:

- Kimberley Snyder's Civilian Conservation Corps program at Pillsbury State Park, where she dressed up as a CCC member and introduced the history of the program in New Hampshire to park visitors.
- At Umbagog State Park, Brianne Bishop brought her interest in photography to visitors through iPhone photography seminars where she taught guests to better document their trip to NH State Parks.
- Bethany Bryant, at Bear Brook State Park, created an archaeology program to teach guests about some of the historical sites at Bear Brook. For this program, she built a sandbox where guests could engage in a mock archaeological dig.
- Rachel Shoemaker did Yoga on the Beach at White Lake on Sunday mornings.
- At several of the state parks with campgrounds, including Greenfield, Bear Brook, Franconia, and Pawtuckaway interpretative rangers created programs to help visitors properly sort their trash and recyclables on Sunday mornings.

During their work, the Interpretative Rangers interacted with thousands of visitors, campers, hikers, and locals. They recorded the number of visitors they reached and reported the following:

Park	Interpreter	Total # of Program Attendees	Total Park Visitor Contacts (In addition to program attendees)
Greenfield State Park	Claire Adams	1504	1283
Monadnock State Park	Thomas Fisher	1059	1717
Bear Brook State Park	Bethany Bryant	890	404
Pawtuckaway State Park	Rand Michaels	1090	103

Franconia Notch State Park	Kate Seader & Haley Lesmesrisis	3482	11049
<i>Northern Rover</i>			
Ellacoya State Park	Rachel Shoemaker	376	n/a
White Lake State Park	Rachel Shoemaker	1750	1233
<i>Southern Rover</i>			
Kingston State Park	Kimberly Snyder	125	237
Pillsbury State Park	Kimberly Snyder	190	277
Seacoast Parks	Bethany Bryant & Kimberly Snyder	1190	n/a
Crawford Notch	Kelly Graner	1120	4066
Umbagog State Park	Brianne Bishop	428	454
Miller State Park (Sept/Oct only)	Rachel Shoemaker & Kimberly Snyder	1716	90
Greenfield/Monadnock Outreach	Brianne, Claire, Kimberly, Thomas	1265	n/a
Bear Brook Outreach	Bethany, Kelly, Rand	1035	n/a
Totals		17220	20913

This means the total visitor contacts were 38,133; of those, 2,300 occurred through fall outreach programs.

Outreach Season

This year we had seven of the ten Interpretative Rangers leading fall outreach programs. These Interpretative Rangers were based at Bear Brook State Park in the Merrimack Valley and at Greenfield State Park in the Monadnock region. This fall the members lead programs that ranged from an hour to a half day at a local school, and in some cases lead a series of programs for an organization. In total, the rangers worked with 48 community organizations and lead 75 programs during the five weeks of fall outreach. Interpretative Rangers also tabled at the Warner Fall Foliage Festival and Hooksett Old Home Days, and lead bus talks at Monadnock and Miller State Parks.

Social Media Outreach

The Interpretative Rangers contributed to the NH State Parks blog, producing 28 blog posts during their service terms. Four posts were completed during the education portion of the program, and 24 were added by the interpreters during the summer and fall. They wrote about collecting wild blueberries, wildlife management, recycling, the subnivean zone, hiking safety, and much more.

Program Marketing

Discover the Power of Parks participants that take part in five programs are awarded a Discover the power of Parks patch. This year seven of those patches were awarded; six completed all their programs at Umbagog and one completed programs at Bear Brook and Pawtuckaway.

Building on a Successful Program

The Division has committed to contract ten Interpretative Rangers again for the 2019 calendar year (two Interpretative Rangers will be in-kind). It is expected that programs will be offered at all current program sites in 2018, though Odiorne Point State Park may replace Hampton Beach State Park. We are also planning to have some outreach extend into the summer season at parks where attendance is lower on certain weekdays.

Some programmatic goals we will be working on include:

1. Administration
 - a. Provide Interpretative Rangers with adequate housing and office resources throughout the program year from June through October.
 - b. State Park supervisors will complete a performance review and an evaluation of the Interpretative Ranger and their programs to assist the Education Coordinator in providing the Interpretative Rangers with feedback and ensuring the program continues to improve.
 - c. The Education Coordinator will work to plan a mid-season training day to allow the Interpretative Rangers to prepare for outreach and to build new, innovative programs for later in the season.
2. Advertising and Marketing
 - a. Continue to write and publish blogs during the SCA NH Corps program year (January through October) to highlight the service being done for New Hampshire as well as provide nature education to those who may not be able to attend programs.
 - b. Interpretative Rangers will contact outreach partners as early in the season as possible to continue building and strengthening the relationships between local community and New Hampshire State Parks.
 - c. Interpretative Rangers will begin providing outreach programs during summer weekdays at parks where visitation is lower.
 - d. Next year we plan to pilot an 'Umbagog News' program at Umbagog State Park, where the Umbagog Interpretative Ranger will produce a weekly news flyer with park rules, local events, and information about their interpretative programs.
3. Programming
 - a. Interpretative Rangers will reach out to partners and other community resources to collaborate in programming. This past year we worked in collaboration with the Allenstown Historical Society to open the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum in addition to the Allenstown Old Meeting House at Bear Brook.
 - b. Programs should grow and change as the season progresses to ensure visitor engagement; Interpretative Rangers will also work to develop innovative programs to engage visitors who return year after year and may be familiar with programs from past years.

- c. Continue to build on the success of recycling programs at parks this year.
- d. Continue engaging with day camp groups as the schedule permits.
- e. The education coordinator will work to find bilingual Interpretative Rangers, when feasible, who can serve the diverse population seen in many parks like Kingston and Pawtucakway.

Appendix A

	Organization	Organizations Location
<i>Merrimack Valley</i>	Hooksett Public Library	Hooksett
	Deerfield After School	Deerfield
	Weare Boys & Girls Club	Weare
	Barrington Public Library	Barrington
	Beaver Meadow School	Concord
	Girls Inc.	Manchester
	Sutton Central School	Sutton
	Lamprey Elementary School	Raymond
	Cub Scouts	Gilmanton
	Hillside Middle School	Manchester
	Beech Hill School	Hopkinton
	Derryfield School Trail Day at Bear Brook	Manchester
	Girl Scouts	Taught at Pawtuckaway
	Harris Hills Center	Concord
	Homeschool Group	Taught at Sculpted Rocks
	Newbury Public Library	Newbury
	Sutton Boys & Girls Club	Sutton
	Jennie D. Blake School	Hill
	Deerfield Parks and Recreation Afterschool Program	Deerfield
	Bow High School	Bow
	Goffstown Parks & Recreation	Goffstown
	Granite Ledges Assisted Living	Concord
	Derryfield School	Service day at Bear Brook
	White Birch Community Center	Henniker
Henniker Community School	Henniker	
Weare Middle School	Weare	

	Inti Academy	Manchester
Monadnock	Lawrence Academy	Monadnock State Park
	Jaffrey Public Library	Jaffrey
	Olivia Rodman Memorial Library	Nelson
	Harrisville Public Library	Harrisville
	Greenfield Elementary School	Greenfield
	Hampshire Country School	Rindge
	Dublin Christian Academy	Dublin
	Robins Nature Nest Preschool	Peterborough
	Cutler Elementary School	Swanzey
	Wheelock Elementary School	Keene
	Stephenson Memorial Library	Greenfield
	Harrisville Public Library	Harrisville
	Troy Elementary School After School	Troy
	The Well School	Peterborough
	Shedd Porter Memorial Library	Alstead
	Gilsum STEAM Academy	Gilsum
	Symonds Elementary School	Keene
	Rindge Memorial School	Rindge
	Peterborough Town Library	Peterborough
	RiverMead Life Care Community	Peterborough