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The Latest South Mountain Partnership News

Power of the Partnership Wrap-Up



The South Mountain Partnership's 15th Annual *Power of the Partnership* Celebration brought together more than 95 attendees from across the region for a day of learning, networking, and inspiration at the Cameron-Masland Mansion. Special shout out to our hosts Kings Gap Environmental Education Center staff, for welcoming us so kindly into their incredible space.

Highlights included engaging community conversations on timely regional topics, the presentation of the *Spirit of South Mountain Award* to the Tuckahoe Acquisition project, and a powerful keynote panel on creating local impact through collaboration and shared values. Speakers emphasized that conservation is not just a “nice to have,” but essential to our collective future—economically, environmentally, and socially.

Over \$50,000 in Mini and Flex Grants were awarded to support ongoing conservation efforts, and attendees left energized to continue strengthening the partnerships that sustain our region.

Read the full event wrap-up and learn how to get involved: [Read More](#)

(Don't forget to complete our [post-event survey](#) to share your feedback!)

Thank you to our generous Sponsors:



Tuckahoe Project Receives “Spirit of South Mountain” Award



South Mountain Partnership (SMP) awards the *Spirit of South Mountain* each year to an individual, project, or organization that has made exceptional efforts to promote good stewardship of the South Mountain Region. This year's awardee was the Tuckahoe Project, enacted by Central Pennsylvania Conservancy (CPC), Cumberland County, York County, and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The award ceremony was held at SMP's 15th annual Power of the Partnership event on Friday, September 12, 2025.

The Tuckahoe Project involved acquiring a tract of approximately 900 acres around Camp Tuckahoe, an active Boy Scouts of America (BSA) camp in Dillsburg, Pennsylvania. Located near state game land and the Appalachian Trail, the Tuckahoe Tract protects critical habitat for important plants and wildlife, safeguards the water quality of Dogwood Run, a tributary of the Yellow Breeches Creek, and provides a buffer for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. This core conserved area of South Mountain was at risk for development and will now serve and be enjoyed by generations to come.

Read our [full press release](#) and check out [DCNR's fact sheet for the future site](#).

SMP Awards Over \$50,000 in Grants to Local Conservation Projects



Through their Mini-Grant Program and Flex Grant Program, South Mountain Partnership (SMP) awarded eight organizations a total of \$51,800 for various conservation projects throughout the region. The awards ceremony was held at the 15th annual Power of the Partnership event on Friday, September 12, at the Kings Gap Environmental Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Mini-Grant recipients include: The Conococheague Institute, The Cumberland Valley Rails to Trails Council, Gettysburg College, The Social Enterprise Institute, and South Middleton Township.

Flex Grant recipients include: Southampton Township, Southern Appalachian Woodland Network, and Perry Yingling.

[Read More](#)

Summer Friends Update



Our Summer Friends Appeal raised just over \$800! Thank you to friends, both new and old, for helping provide more funding for our flex grants. These grants go to people and organizations investing in the future of South Mountain — its forests and farms, its towns and trails, its people and places. If you would like to give, there is still time!

[Make your donation today](#)

South Mountain Region Mini Watercolor Landscape Sticker Series



We are partnering with South Mountain Region artist [Seth Holmes](#) to create a three-part South Mountain Sticker series. But our first question is, what subjects should he paint?

We are seeking your suggestions on regional locations for this collection. Suggest via the form below your favorite places, and SMP staff will share top suggestions with Seth. Keep in mind, these places should be relatively small in scale (single building or a view), appropriate for sticker size, and visible to the public.

[Submit your ideas](#)

SMP Podcasts with Hemlocks to Hellbenders



Katie and Julia were thrilled to be a guest on Hemlocks to Hellbenders this September. If you don't already follow this podcast, now is your chance! We talked through who SMP is, as well as what makes the South Mountain Landscape so special. Give it a listen below, or on your preferred streaming platform.

Hemlocks to Hellbenders is a biweekly podcast that highlights Pennsylvania's state parks, forests and great outdoors. Hosted by Christian Alexandersen, the podcast highlights our beautiful public lands, dedicated outdoors organizations and so much more.

Hemlocks to Hellbenders features a wide variety of guests from park managers and environmental educators to volunteers and scientists. In addition to focusing on individual parks and forests, podcast episodes also cover topics critical to the Pennsylvania outdoors.

[Listen to the podcast](#)



Become a Partner

We are always looking to work with organizations in the community who share our goals! By becoming an official “Partner”, you can help support our vision and mission of the Partnership by attending meetings/events, keeping us informed of your organization’s related activities and increasing access to the natural, cultural and recreational resources of our region to all! Becoming a partner is easy and free! Find more information [here](#).

Partner News

Join the Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative!

Join the...

Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative

Together, we do better.

📢 Two Informational Webinars available 📢
📅 Applications Due October 31, 2025 📅
Apply Early! Acceptance on a rolling basis.

Why join?

- Free, one year long timeline of support
- Customized professional technical assistance & resources
- Peer-to-peer learning
- Funding access & navigation
- Networking & increased visibility
- Build a bigger conservation toolbox for your community

Now accepting community applications through October 31, 2025

The ATCCC is an open invitation to communities within or partially within the Appalachian Trail Landscape in Pennsylvania to form community teams and apply. The Collaborative will help you to build community-led conservation projects and action plans and will provide customized technical support and peer exchange, and more – see all of the benefits in the General Information for Communities & Partners.

All communities interested in joining the Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative must submit a community application by October 31, 2025. The purpose of this application is to provide an opportunity to share more about your community and your motivations to joining the Collaborative and to help us be better prepared to meet your expectations. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and

acceptance into the Collaborative will remain open until 15 communities are committed to the project.

[**Learn More & Apply**](#)

Your Voice Needed: Cumberland County Survey



Cumberland County is asking for input from residents as [they work to update their 5-year strategic plan](#). Participate by sharing what aspects of the county you care about!

As the county works to define its mission, vision, priorities, and goals for an updated strategic plan, community input is essential. Resident feedback will help ensure the plan reflects what matters most to the county's more than 275,000 residents.

If you are interested in sharing your perspectives, please complete the [Strategic Planning Survey](#) by **Friday, Oct. 10**. Cumberland County will incorporate resident ideas and priorities into the final plan.

DCNR Urges Caution to Prevent Wildfires Amid Increased Risk Due to Dry Conditions

More Partner News of Note:

- **[Community Conversation: Food Waste Reduction and Diversion](#)**: On October 14 from 6-8pm, join Cumberland County Food System Alliance for an informative panel discussion where experts will share actionable strategies, innovative solutions, and inspiring success stories. From backyard composting to biodigesters and statewide recycling efforts, this panel will explore how individuals, communities, and institutions can work together to tackle food waste. Find more information and register [HERE](#).
- **[Fall Furnace Festival October 18-19](#)**: This two-day family-oriented festival includes live music, craft and food vendors, hayrides by DCNR, visits by Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl, pumpkin carving, historical demonstrations, and on Saturday evening a pumpkin parade followed by the "Legend of the Hairy Hand." **SMP plans to be tabling Saturday - come find us!** Learn more [here](#).

Employment and Funding Opportunities

Grants

- **[2025 Community Conservation Partnerships Program Statewide Annual Grant Workshop](#)**: This free, virtual workshop is designed to help applicants develop project ideas in preparation for submitting a grant application to the 2026 Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2). DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation staff will present about grant program selection criteria, review current program priorities, and discuss eligible project types. Register [HERE](#).
- **[2025 PA Water Trails Mini-Grants](#)**: Applicants can request up to \$7,000 for projects such as creating recreational opportunities for all Pennsylvanians on water trails, developing trails that support sustainable use of natural resources, and more. Application deadline is Friday, Oct. 31 at 5pm. Learn more [here](#).
- We were excited to participate in CAEDC's Outdoor Recreation Funding Seminar, read the wrap up to learn about funding opportunities in the Cumberland Valley and view presentation materials [here](#).

View our listing of [Regional Funding Opportunities](#) on our website, and suggest funds we should add.

Job Opportunities

- **[Pat & Ron Ferris Museum Director](#)**: The Pat & Ron Ferris Museum Director oversees the curation and care of the Cumberland County Historical Society's Museum Department. The position is responsible for developing and implementing yearly rotating exhibitions, overseeing the Museum's collections, including accessioning and deaccessioning, as well as Museum programming and budgeting for the Museum Department.
- **[Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps](#)**: The Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps provides youth and young adults with paid opportunities to gain competitive job readiness skills to prepare them for careers in environmental conservation through a partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

View our [Regional Job Board](#) on our website, and send jobs we should add.

Events

- **[Hiss & Sop Academy | Saturday, October 11 from 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Shippensburg Community Parks & Recreation Authority](#)**: Come join Tom Horvat to learn about Pennsylvania's reptiles and amphibians, how to identify local species, and craft your own snake "skin". All ages welcome to participate (ages 6 & beyond use payment option and ages 5 and under must register but should use free option). \$5 per person. [Register](#)

- **Pumpkins & Pippins Fall Festival | Saturday, October 18 from 12-4 p.m. | Buttonwood Nature Center:** The festival includes a full slate of activities and fun for all ages, including a 'kid zone' with yard games, a StoryWalk® hike & activity, a photo stand and more. [Learn more](#)
- **Trail Work Volunteer Day | Saturday, November 1 @ 9 a.m. | Friends of Pine Grove:** Join trail crew volunteers to improve the hiking experience at Kings Gap! Work may include: Installing signs, trail evaluations, maintaining and opening trails, cutting new trails, rock work, painting blazes, drainage work, tree work, trail surfacing, installing bridges, etc. [Learn more](#)
- **Does Your Land Need a Brand? Workshop | Wednesday, November 5 from 12 - 1 p.m. | Network for Landscape Conservation:** In this Workshop you will: Clarify your vision to immediately connect with ideal funders and collaborators, Express the unique value of your place or project, and Identify your next steps to getting funders and collaborators to take action. [Register](#)
- **Central Pennsylvania GIS Day | November 19 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | Harrisburg University:** GIS Day is an excellent opportunity to participate in an international celebration of GIS technology. We welcome you to spend this exciting day with us! [Learn more & register](#)

View these events and more on our [Partner Events calendar](#)! You can add your events directly onto our calendar or email them to jchain@appalachiantrail.org.

Social Media Catchup

Click to explore our social media channels. Follow us for the latest news, upcoming events, and more!





Live, Grow, Lead Healthy.

Despite the different opinions, perspectives, and worldviews that each of us carry, we all share a common trait: we call the South Mountain landscape home. We believe in the power of this common ground to build conversation around the future of this landscape - and our future while living within this landscape.

Learn more at southmountainpartnership.org

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**SOUTH MOUNTAIN
PARTNERSHIP**
CONSERVATION NETWORK



The South Mountain Partnership [SMP] is managed as a public-private partnership by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. SMP is financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, the Environmental Stewardship Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Unsubscribe [here](#).