



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER
**AROUND
SOUTH MOUNTAIN**

The South Mountain Partnership works best as a network of people and organizations working toward common goals.

Our common goal? Making the future of our region better.

The Latest South Mountain Partnership News

Make a Year-End Gift That Stays in the Community



It is hard to believe that 2025 is quickly drawing to a close. As the year winds down, We've been reflecting with deep gratitude on the many ways our community has shown up for South Mountain Partnership.

Through every shift and season, your support has remained steady and acts as a reminder of what truly matters: strong community, people who care, and the essentials we should never take for granted. Clean air. Healthy land. Fresh food. Safe, beautiful places to walk, explore, and feel at home.

Yes, our landscape is beautiful. But all of you make this place incredible.

If you haven't yet made your year-end gift to help us continue this essential work, there's still time. Help us protect what matters most — right here at

home. Thank you!

Support the Friends of South Mountain Partnership Today

If you'd like to support us while also enjoying incredible music, cider, and food, join us at **Cidernalia this Saturday, December 13** at the National Apple Museum. Every December, Ploughman Cider celebrates its longevity by gathering the community together to mark the end of another growing season and put some amazing musicians on the stage of the National Apple Museum and look back on another year with proceeds benefiting the Friends of South Mountain Partnership.

2025 Holiday Gift Guide



Looking for meaningful, local gifts this holiday season? Our **2025 South Mountain Holiday Gift Guide** is here! Explore ideas for outdoor enthusiasts, food lovers, local shoppers, adventure seekers, and more—

plus festive regional events like **Cidernalia MMXXV**. Discover new ways to celebrate and support the places that make South Mountain special.

[View the Gift Guide](#)

Save the Date: Winter Meeting



Mark your calendar for Friday, January 30 from 9am-12pm and join us at Norlo Park Community Center in Chambersburg for the 2026 Winter Partnership Meeting!

Twice annually, the Partnership holds a meeting in which all partners and interested parties are invited to come together and build relationships and collaborations across the region.

It will be a New Year, and we are diving into opportunities to leverage our Partnership for learning and connection. Have you ever wondered what new smart planning tools and best practices are out there for managing water and data centers in your community? Or how best to balance conservation and development? Then this meeting could be for you! Hear from the Susquehanna River Basin Commission on a new study and the Piedmont Environmental Council on lessons learned from Data Centers in Virginia.

Special guests from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the new CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy tentatively plans to welcome us. Our hosts, Franklin County, will share their news, and we have an exciting panel of new faces from our Land Trust Partners, whom we can't wait to introduce you to.

Stay tuned for more details! Registration coming very soon...

ADD TO YOUR CALENDAR:

- **Google Calendar**
- **iCalendar**
- **Outlook 365**
- **Outlook Live**

Get a Free, Limited Edition South Mountain Sticker Made by Local Artist Seth Holmes!



South Mountain Partnership has teamed up with acclaimed local artist [Seth Holmes](#) to create three *brand-new, totally exclusive* stickers celebrating the natural, historic, and cultural treasures of South Central PA! We've already gotten sneak peeks — trust us, you're going to want one.

A limited batch is FREE while supplies last! Sign up by clicking the button below to claim yours arriving this February!

Send Me A Sticker!

Join South Mountain Partnership

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 SMP meetings and events
- Keeping us informed of your organization's related activities
- Increasing access to the natural, cultural and recreational resources of our region to all.

Becoming a partner is easy and free!

Become a Partner

Partner News

Vote for Us! 2025 Hellie Awards

VOTE FOR US!

FOR THE CATEGORIES:
FAVORITE ORGANIZATION GUEST
FAVORITE EPISODE

VOTE BY DECEMBER 25!

SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP
CONSERVATION NETWORK

The Hellies celebrate the incredible guests who joined the *Hemlocks to Hellbenders* podcast throughout the 2025 season. These awards recognize the inspiring stories, meaningful conversations, and dedicated work of organizations and individuals across the region. Winners in each category will receive a custom plaque from the podcast team as a fun and heartfelt tribute to their contributions.

This year, SMP is honored to be nominated for:

- **Favorite Organization Guest**
- **Favorite Episode** for “**Connecting communities through conservation with South Mountain Partnership**”

We are grateful for the opportunity to share our mission and the work happening across the South Mountain landscape.

Vote for your favorite guests and episodes now through December 25!

Start the new year with First Day Hikes

Begin 2026 by putting your best foot forward during this nationwide annual hike! The PA DCNR is hosting hikes throughout the state, including one at Kings Gap Environmental Education Center.

[Find your nearest hike here.](#)

Appalachian Trail redefines what it means to ‘take a hike’

The ATC is celebrating 100 years by [highlighting nature’s mental health benefits.](#)

DCNR Grant Videos Published

A video playlist of all 2026 **Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant workshop sessions** is now available. The 2026 grant round opens in about two months, on Monday, January 12.

Apply for the 2026 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence!

If you or your team have taken action to care for PA’s land, air, or water, now’s your chance to shine!

Businesses, schools, farms, nonprofits, local governments, and more can apply! [But make sure to get your application in by January 16, 2026!](#)

Events

Blue Ridge Summit Free Library Yuletide Celebration

Saturday, December 13 from 4-6:30pm - Enjoy a magical evening for families including live music, fire truck rides, cookies, cider, and more.

Kings Gap Holiday Open House

Sunday, December 14 from 12-4pm - Sponsored by the Friends of Kings Gap, enjoy music of the season and holiday treats as you stroll

[Learn More](#)

Winter Solstice Celebration

Sunday, December 21 from 5-7pm - Buttonwood Nature Center is hosting its fifth annual Winter Solstice Celebration. The event is free and open to the public.

[Learn More](#)

through the historic mansion. All ages welcome.

[Learn More](#)

School's Out Day Camp: Solstice Celebration

Monday, December 22 from 9am-4pm - Strawberry Hill hosts a day camp filled with winter fun for ages 5-8. Participants provide their own lunch; snack provided. Cost is \$55 per child.

[Learn More](#)

[View More Events](#)

Grants

Grants for Tourism Businesses in Cumberland County - Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC) offers a variety of grant opportunities to Cumberland County partners to increase visitation to Cumberland Valley or enhance the visitor experience in a measurable way. There are currently three tourism-specific grant programs available: Tourism Product Development Grant, Tourism Partnership Grant, and Destination Sales Grant. Application Deadlines: February 6, 2026, May 6, 2026, August 7, 2026, and November 6, 2026.

Land Partnerships Grant Program - The Cumberland County Land Partnerships Grant Program provides financial assistance to municipalities and non-profit organizations for the purpose of agriculture preservation, natural resource protection, creation of parks, trails & greenways and

planning and ordinance assistance projects. Financial assistance falls under three separate categories: Land Acquisition; Park, Trail and Greenway Development; and Conservation & Recreation Planning. Grant Deadlines: December 12, 2025 and June 26, 2026

More Regional Funding Opportunities

Job Opportunities

Board Member: Partnership for the National Trails System - PNTS is seeking 3 new directors to serve on its governing board. Responsibilities include governance over budgeting, fiscal management, hiring, supervision and evaluating the executive director, maintaining employment practices and contracts for services. Terms are for 3 years. [Learn more](#); If you are interested, contact courtney@pnts.org.

Board Member: Cumberland County Planning Commission - The Planning Commission is seeking a new member to help shape the future of our communities! They work with urban, suburban, and rural areas across the county to promote economic development, expand housing and transportation choices, and protect clean air, land, and water. [Learn more and apply](#).

Are you hiring? Submit your organization's job posts to our board by emailing jchain@appalachiantrail.org.

[View Our Job Board for More](#)

Social Media Catch-up

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

Support Our Efforts - Donate



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](#).