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Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn © DCNR

Profile of a Conservationist

Cindy Adams Dunn: Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

In celebration of National Public Lands Day next month, we want to recognize one of TNC's most important public lands partners in Pennsylvania. Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn has spent the past six years leading DCNR's work force to conserve and sustain Pennsylvania's natural resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

"One of the accomplishments that stands out is the Pennsylvania Outdoors Corps, now in its sixth year of introducing young and diverse people to jobs in conservation," says Secretary Dunn about what makes her proud of the DCNR work force. "Since 2016, the corps has employed and trained 770 members, resulting in a major impact on maintenance and conservation needs in Pennsylvania's parks and forests."

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The Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge is an iconic Pennsylvania wilderness that TNC has helped protect and expand since 2014.
© Nicholas Tonelli

Partnering to Provide Public Lands For All

For 70 years, The Nature Conservancy has endeavored to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends. The strategies that TNC uses to protect lands and waters can be innovative and complex. However, one of the most straightforward ways TNC and other NGOs protect lands and waters is by partnering with state and federal agencies to create and expand public lands.

"TNC has conserved some spectacular properties on the Kittatinny Ridge, which is a priority landscape for climate resilience and connectivity in Pennsylvania."

Cindy Adams Dunn, DCNR Secretary

For example, in 1973 TNC transferred more than 1,400 acres to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Kings Gap State Park was born. Today, tens of thousands of visitors flock to Kings Gap each year to enjoy more than 25 miles of hiking trails,

inspiring views of Cumberland Valley, environmental education, special events and more.

In Delaware, TNC has been working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since the late 1990s to expand the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge, which provides habitat for more than 300 species of birds, 51 species of fish, 45 species of reptiles and amphibians, 37 species of mammals and a vast array of insect and plant species. Partnering with public lands agencies is one way that TNC has an outsized impact on our mission.

As we prepare to celebrate Public Lands Day next month, we are taking a close look at some of the most iconic public lands across Pennsylvania and Delaware and how those lands contribute to our natural heritage, culture and economy.

To learn more, visit: nature.org/PADEPublicLands



A Wilson's warbler is photographed during the migratory songbird study at TNC's Milford Neck Preserve. © Aya Pickett

A Melodic Migration

Study aims to quantify region's significance as a critical migratory stopover

The Delaware Bay estuary has been documented as a critical international stopover site for migratory shorebirds. However, data is lacking when it comes to understanding the importance of the region as a critical resting and refueling site for the migratory neotropical songbirds that also pass through the Bayshore each spring and autumn.

This fall, Dr. Christopher Heckscher of Delaware State University (DSU) will be collecting the final data in a two-year study that aims to better quantify the importance of the Delaware estuary in the lifecycle of migratory songbirds, like warblers. The data for the study is being collected at a site on the edge of the forest and the tidal marsh at The Nature Conservancy's Milford Neck Preserve, on the Delaware Bay. The study was funded by NOAA's Delaware Sea Grant Program administered by the University of Delaware.

"Boreal migrants are of conservation concern considering their recent population declines and the threats they face on their breeding grounds and migratory stopover sites between boreal and tropical forests" says Dr. Heckscher. "To the best of my knowledge, this is the first research project aimed at studying migratory songbird use of Delaware Bay coastal marshes—in New Jersey or Delaware—since 1993."

In addition to collecting data on migratory birds, the study also aims to assess how sea level rise could impact the travel behaviors of birdwatchers who visit coastal Delaware. Once complete, data from the economic study will be used to help policymakers understand current recreational behavior and how birding and coastal public lands visitation could change under future sea-level rise scenarios.

Read the full version of this article, with more photos, at [nature.org/DEbirdstudy](https://www.nature.org/DEbirdstudy)

NATURE PENNSYLVANIA/DELAWARE



Dogfish Head co-founders Sam and Mariah Calagione visit with TNC and Heritage Conservancy staff in Bristol, PA. © Molly Anderson/TNC

Dogfish Head Craft Brewery Supports TNC With New Campaign: "Mother Nature, Let's Do This!"

Last spring, Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, launched a yearlong campaign to challenge beer and nature lovers alike to get outside and get inspired to help protect planet Earth.

As part of the campaign, Dogfish Head produced a docuseries that follows Co-Founders Sam and Mariah Calagione's eco-friendly, East Coast road trip from Miami to Maine. "Our 'Mother Nature, Let's Do This!' road trip was a truly eye-opening and humbling experience," says Sam. "At Dogfish Head, we rely on the bounties of Mother Nature to provide us with the fresh culinary ingredients used in both our off-centered ales and eats. Visiting preserved lands and project sites along the Eastern Seaboard and learning about the climate change impacts each is addressing exponentially increased my appreciation for our planet and reinforced the notion that we have a duty to protect and give back to Earth," concludes Sam.

The docuseries includes stops in Delaware and Pennsylvania, where Sam and Mariah spent time with TNC staff and partners to learn about the great conservation work being led by the local chapter.

To watch the docuseries, visit: www.dogfish.com/TNC