



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 23, 2020

DCNR Extending Closure of State Park and Forest Facilities Statewide, Open Spaces will Remain Accessible as Part of COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced that all facilities at state parks and forests in Pennsylvania will be closed until April 30 to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The public will still be able to access trails, lakes, forests, roads, and parking areas for passive and dispersed recreation, such as hiking.

Dunn noted this includes campgrounds, cabins and all overnight accommodations. Anyone with reservations in this time period will be contacted, and full refunds will be made.

“During the past week we’ve seen many people hiking trails and heading to the outdoors as a way to get exercise and relieve stress,” Dunn said. “We remind everyone that it’s OK to go outside, but we should still be practicing social distancing to do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19.

“This means we should spread out for outdoor activities – if you visit a public place and the parking lot or trailhead is crowded, try another spot, or head back to your neighborhood to take a walk if that’s possible,” Dunn said.

Closed DCNR facilities include:

- Park and forest offices and visitor centers
- Restrooms
- Campgrounds, cabins and all forms of overnight accommodations
- All reservable facilities
- Public programs, events, and trainings are canceled through April 30

The best advice to slow the spread of the coronavirus is to stay home. If you are looking to be outdoors, stay as close to home as possible including your backyard, neighborhood, or local park or trail unless they are crowded (check first to make sure they are open, as some local parks are closed).

Visitors can help keep state parks and forest lands safe and clean by following these practices:

- Avoid crowded parking lots and trailheads

- Use the bathroom before you visit
- Bring a bag and carry out your trash
- Clean up after pets
- Avoid activities that put you at greater risk of injury, as there is limited staff to assist

To help avoid exposure to COVID-19 and still enjoy the outdoors:

- Don't hike or recreate in groups – go with those under the same roof, and adhere to social distancing (stay 6 feet apart)
- Take hand sanitizer with you and use it regularly
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, and nose
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or flexed elbow
- If you are sick, stay home

Pennsylvania has 121 state parks, and 20 forest districts.

Information about state parks and forests is available on the [DCNR website](#). Updates also are being provided on DCNR's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.