



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 13, 2015

DCNR Secretary Addresses Campers on Summer Jobs, Environmental Careers Available With Department

Drums, PA - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn today called upon high school students to consider careers in conservation and recreation, and she reminded the young campers there is no better place to start than a summer job in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

"DCNR actively seeks and supports youth jobs in conservation and recreation, as these help mold the interests and commitment of our future leaders in these fields," Dunn told student campers gathered at Nescopeck State Park as part of a week-long Exploring Careers Outdoors program. "So many of our department specialists -- the foresters, park managers, geologists and biologists, all providing invaluable public service -- can trace their careers back to summer jobs in the outdoors.

"I am happy to say, as part of Gov. Wolf's efforts to hire young workers in summer jobs, DCNR has increased its hiring of youth positions in state parks, bringing the DCNR total this summer to more than 550 positions across the state."

The governor announced in June a \$7.5 million summer jobs initiative to create over 3,700 new jobs statewide. The funding -- \$3.5 million in federal funding and \$4 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds -- will help create summer jobs, primarily in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

The secretary noted this summer DCNR is employing more 180 lifeguards at its state park swimming pools, as well as more than 65 paid interns in field research, office research, GIS mapping, environmental education and other fields. Also, about 300 young, seasonal wage workers comprise roughly 28 percent of the department's seasonal workforce.

Each year, DCNR's Exploring Careers Outdoors Camp introduces 20 to 25 students in grades 10-12 to conservation and environmental careers, and encourages their pursuit. From wildlife projects and stream sampling of aquatic life, to forestry skills, daily activities offer students a hands-on, team-building learning experience in an outdoor setting.

"ECO Camp has become one of DCNR's strongest success stories since beginning 13 years ago," said Dunn. "We've successfully worked with hundreds of young people to hone their awareness of the natural world and the variety of related careers available to them."

The six-day camp began Sunday, July 12, and is based at Episcopal House and Chapel, Mountain Top, Luzerne County. The camp is near Nescopeck State Park and about 10 miles south of Wilkes-Barre.

“Past campers have come from small towns and large cities, forming a unique pool of intelligence, spirit and commitment to environmental improvement,” Dunn said. “In addition, many DCNR employees have supported this camp effort, some coming back year after year.”

The camp introduces 20 to 25 students in grades 10-12 to conservation and environmental careers, and encourages their pursuit. From wildlife conservation projects and stream sampling of aquatic life, to forestry skills, daily activities will offer students a hands-on, team-building learning experience in an outdoor setting.

Participants are exposed to a wide range of career experiences, including water quality assessments, geology field studies, and overnight camping experiences. They also meet conservation professionals to learn about career opportunities.

Offered free of charge, the instruction and daily activities are overseen by specialists and officials of DCNR’s bureaus of state parks, forestry, and topographic and geologic survey. After the camp, attendees will have a chance to seek internships, mentoring and job-shadowing positions.

For more details and applications, visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/ecocamp; email RA-ECO_Camp; write to ECO Camp Coordinator, Bureau of State Parks, Outdoor Programming Services Division, P.O. Box 8551, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8551; or call 724-865-7857.

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