



Why Volunteer?

Citizen participation is more important than ever before in the history of the division. Without the help of concerned and dedicated volunteers, we cannot provide the standard of service the public has a right to expect.

Volunteers have carried on a proud tradition in parks all across our nation. Many parks owe their very existence to the efforts and generosity of private citizens. With the establishment of the volunteer program in the North Carolina state park system, we continue this tradition that is so much a part of our nation and state heritage.

As early as the 1930s, school teachers volunteered their time and expertise to give nature programs to youth groups camped at Singletary Lake State Park. And, many private donations of land and money to purchase proposed land for state parks have been made. In fact, more than a tenth of the acreage in the state park system has been obtained through the efforts of private citizens.

As the parks system has grown, however, the need for additional facilities and staff to serve the needs of visitors has grown as well. We are confronted with the task of providing the highest standard of public service despite a budget that has failed to grow at the same pace as our needs.

Statewide, our field staff consists of approximately 425 permanent personnel. More than 17.3 million people visit our parks and recreation areas every year. In operating these areas, our field staff is responsible for providing educational programs, law enforcement, visitor safety, resource management, search and rescue and fire fighting. Staff must also perform maintenance and administrative duties.

A goal of the Division of Parks and Recreation is to obtain sufficient staffing and funds to maintain park facilities and provide for a safe and enjoyable experience for our visitors. Help from volunteers is critically important in order for the division to fulfill its responsibilities to the public.

In April, 1980, Executive Order 48 established policies concerning the use of volunteers in state agencies. It authorized and encouraged state agencies to recruit, train and accept the services of qualified volunteers to assist in programs administered by state agencies for the benefit of the people of North Carolina.

The volunteer program for North Carolina state parks was formalized in 1988, and volunteer participation has increased each year. Today, every state park and state recreation area has identified specific needs that cannot be met by existing staff. Volunteer position descriptions have been written and job opportunities for volunteers are as varied as the many tasks performed by our permanent staff.

Many parks owe their very existence to the efforts and generosity of private citizens. Through the volunteer program in the North Carolina state park system, we continue this tradition that is so much a part of our national and state heritage. Our volunteers serve North Carolina State Parks in a number of functions including oyster shell bagging, constructing picnic tables, working special events, tree planting, removing invasive species and helping around the office, among others.

Do you have a special skill set that would benefit our parks? If so, contact your nearby state park and become a volunteer.