



Park Manager's Report

The PA Game Commission is asking for our help when it comes to the health of our eagle populations across the state. They are asking that hunters bury their grounds after the are killed. A fare number of eagles are dying from acute lead poisoning. They believe that one way they are getting lead in their system is from eating the carcasses of killed ground hogs. Earlier this year a sick eagle was found in the park and ended up succumbing to lead poisoning. Eagles are opportunistic hunters and will take an easy meal whenever they can. A second eagle was also found in the park only a few weeks ago, I have yet to receive the details on it however

Another beloved animal in PA is also facing some extreme challenges. Two diseases affecting our deer population is Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD).

As some of you may know , there is currently an outbreak of a Hemorrhagic Disease in deer in Western Pennsylvania. Currently, approximately 1,000 deer have died so far in Allegheny, Beaver, Washington, Butler, and Lawrence Counties.

Hemorrhagic Disease (HD) is caused by either two closely related viruses, Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) and Bluetongue Virus (VT). It is often difficult to initially determine which virus is causing the disease and is therefore, collectively called Hemorrhagic Disease.

HD is one of the most common diseases of white-tailed deer in the eastern US and can cause high mortality rates. Although 1,000 deer sounds significant, the disease is actually more contained and has impacted less deer than previous outbreaks at this point. Typically, the virus dies out with the first hard frost.

EHD is not spread from deer to deer contact. It is spread by a midge (small fly). Female midges pick up the viruses by ingesting the blood of an infected animal, and they then transmit the viruses when they feed on an uninfected animal. Midges are found near mud, which is their preferred breeding habitat, so outbreaks usually occur when deer congregate in wet areas at the driest part of late summer and early fall when seasonal midge activity is also at its peak. They end when the first hard frosts take their toll on the midges and the virus dies with the insects.

Symptoms are very similar to CWD. Deer with EH initially lose their appetite and fear of humans and grow progressively weaker. Symptoms include a disheveled appearance, lethargy, disorientation, drooling, bloody patches of skin, and a bluish tinge inside the mouth. There is no remedy for HD, but some deer survive. Those that die succumb to extensive hemorrhages five to 10 days after contracting the disease. Infected deer are frequently found near water, probably because they are feverish and thirsty. As always, please contact the PA Game Commission if you encounter sick or injured animals.

See you on the trail,

Dave Hallman



Picture was taken by Bently Morrow. He is a local nature photographer. Thank you Bently!

Chicks in the Sticks 2017

Chicks in the Sticks was held on June 17th this year. It was an excellent day with over 25 workshops. Below are some scenes from the day. Next year Chicks will be June 17, 2018. Registration will begin in March 2018 As the date gets closer, more information on next year's event can be found on our website :

www.friendsocsp.org

Below are scenes from a few of the many workshops.



Pictures::

- Yoga- Peg Teeter instructor. Students were able to participate in yoga in a beautiful setting. Peg has been a yoga instructor for many years.
- Kayaking- Barbra Lake- Palmer instructor and Bruce Getsinger co instructor. Students learned basic kayaking skills while enjoying practices in Oil Creek
- Making herbal tinctures- Leslie Alexander. Students learned how to locate herbs and make tinctures.
- Pinch Pots- Angie Bowersox instructor. Students used nature inspired ideas to make clay pots. The pots were fired and later picked up
- Bike maintenance and correct practices- Brian Hoffman. Instructor. Students learned skills such as how to change a tire, how to shift correctly, and how to keep bike tuned.

Oil Creek Biathlon 12th year

2017 was the 12th year for The Annual Oil Creek Biathlon. It was held August 12, and the weather was excellent. There were 32 volunteers with over 300 volunteer hours. 79 people participated in the biathlon. They came from many states including Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Maryland, and Virginia. This event continues to be a major fund raiser for the Friends of Oil Creek. It was a great day and all had a good time.

For results and info go to our website : www.friendsocsp.org



Participants run a 1.2 mile course three times. After the first lap, they stop at the range and shoot at the target in a lying down position trying to get five hits, then they run another lap and again shoot at the target in a standing position hoping for five hits, and lastly they run a final lap and are done. (After individual shooting laps, participants need to run a penalty lap for each target missed.)



Upcoming Events:



The Friends
of
Oil Creek State Park
are a chapter of the
Pennsylvania Parks and
Forest Foundation



FRIENDS OF OIL CREEK

MISSION STATEMENT :

“The Friends of Oil Creek State Park support the Park’s mission to preserve, protect, and interpret our natural environment while providing recreational and educational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Region.”



Ski Trail Work Days:

Meet at the ski lodge at 1:15. Bring shovels and any tree and trail trimming tool you might have such as a small saw.

- November 5
- December 3

Events

- Chicks-in –the Sticks: June 16, 2018
- Oil Creek Biathlon August 11, 2018
- Other Park events will be listed on our web site and in future newsletters as they become official.

www.friendsocsp.org .

WORKING ON THE TRAILS

The first work day of the season for the cross country ski trails was Sunday, October 22, and we had a great time on a beautiful day. It was sunny and warm (warm is okay until winter!), with the fall foliage approaching its peak. We put up trail difficulty signs, cut down trees, and cleared the trails in preparation for the upcoming ski season, which we hope will be better and offer more days of skiing than last season’s mild weather allowed. We also enjoyed a nice walk in the woods! The remaining work days are on November 5 and December 3 (both Sundays) at 1:15 pm. We meet at the ski trail parking area. Bring a pair of work gloves and come join us!



If you are interested in making a more serious contribution to the many miles of hiking trails at OCSF, also consider joining the Over-the-Hill Gang. This group meets every Wednesday at 7AM at Sam’s Restaurant in Titusville to plan their activities for the day and to have breakfast. Around 8AM after breakfast, they are out on the trails. The Gang clears trails and makes improvements, including building bridges and “fenders” to prevent the trails from eroding. Their indefatigable efforts keep the dozens of miles of hiking trails in tip-top shape for the Oil Creek 100 and other races, as well as for backpackers and the many folks just out for a walk on some of the best trails in the area. The Gang has been active for many years, and “new blood” is always appreciated.

So if you enjoy being outside and making our beautiful park even better, consider helping out on the trails!

Bruce Getsinger

Over-The-Hill-Gang

The Over the Hill Gang has been very busy this summer. They built beautiful new steps at the Jersey Bridge which connects the east and the west sides of the Girard Trail . They have also been working on and have completed boardwalks bridging perennial wet stretches in the Wildcat Hollow. The OTHG also completed boardwalks at the Drake Well trailhead where wet spots were quite a hazard.. In addition to the above mentioned projects, the OTHG has kept the trails updated by removing fallen trees and any other basic maintenance needed. The OTHG had the trails in excellent shape for the OC100 which was run on October 14-15. The Friends group is happy to extend any help they can to the Gang. They have contributed lumber, chain saws, and any equipment the Gang needs. A nailer was bought for them by two fellows from Erie. The nailer has been a huge advantage with their efforts. They greatly appreciate it.



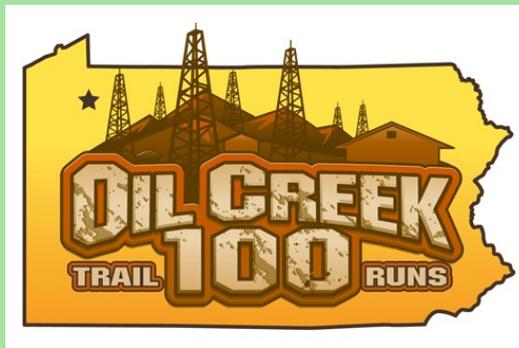
Boardwalks at Wildcat Hollow



Jersey Bridge steps connecting the east and west sides of the Girard Trail



New boardwalks at the Drake Well trail head.



The OC100 was held October 14-15. this year. The weather for two day event was beautiful and balmy -perhaps a bit too warm for the runners..

A few notes on the race:

- The 100 K — 62 miler -winner was Nick Hanson of Kalamazoo MI. He broke his own course record and won with 9.hours 50 minutes. He has won six times in a row
- In the 100 miler, Dave Oskvig has won the race three out of four times in about 18 hours. The race record is still held by Nick Kopp from WA with a time of 17.4 set in 2015.
- The 50 K was won by Brian Frank from Clarion Pa with a time of 4:41.

Photos by David Schmude



Photo By Jeff Nelson



“ I cannot endure to waste anything so precious as autumnal sunshine by staying in the house.”

[Nathaniel Hawthorne,](#)

[The American Notebooks](#)

[*Notebook*, Oct. 10, 1842]”

President's Report

Loyal Friends

According to the dictionary I have on my iPad, a definition of loyalty is “devoted attachment and affection” for something. It can also mean steadfastness, faithfulness, and allegiance. Oil Creek is blessed to have many loyal friends.

One area of devotion is our Board of Directors. Most of our board has been serving for 5 or more years while a few members have been with the board for over 15 years! We also have many members who join FOCSP faithfully each January when renewal time comes. Maybe one of you out there might consider serving on the Friends of Oil Creek Board? We meet once a month on the first Thursday.

Then there is the “Over The Hill Gang”. These steadfast men have been meeting each Wednesday and doing work on the Gerard trail for years and years. They are like the Nights of the Round Table making Oil Creek trails our Camelot.

Our volunteers are the best. They give up their time for such things as monitoring blue birds, counting bats, weeding and planting flower gardens, and searching for Orphan Wells. I could go on and on, but I will say we would put our volunteer forces up against any park in the state for the work they do.

We have Biathletes who have competed in the Biathlon all 12 years and a few who have competed 10 or 11 years. Most of our volunteers have been with us from the start and we have devoted sponsors who have given donations for this event every year.

There are countless anglers, hikers, cyclists, runners, skiers, and picnickers who keep returning to Oil Creek over and over again. Why? Because they have a “devoted attachment and affection” for the park.

If you have a devoted attachment or affection for Oil Creek it is never too late to become a loyal Friend. You can go to our website and become a 2018 member for only \$10 for individual or \$25 for a family. Check out our website for volunteer opportunities and events. Pledge your allegiance as a Loyal FOCSP today!

Happy Trails,

Peg Sims, President

Membership

The Friends of Oil Creek would like to thank everyone who renewed their membership and to thank the many new members.

Your membership helps maintain existing projects in the Park. Your contributions also support new initiatives throughout the Park. Your dues contribute to the trail maintenance of the Gerard trail, the bike trail, and the ski trails. In addition, these resources help fund the "Over-The Hill Gang's" efforts to keep the trails clear and to erect and maintain the many bridges and benches along the Gerard trail.

If you haven't renewed your membership or would like to join the Friends of Oil Creek, follow the link on our web page ... www.friendsocsp.org . The membership prices are : single \$10, family \$25, and corporate/business/group \$100.

You can become a member or renew your membership by contacting the FOCSP in one of the ways listed below. Our web site has a direct link.

- **Oil Creek Office**
305 State Park Road
Oil City, PA 16301
Park Office Phone: 814-676-5915
- **E-Mail: oilcreekfriends@gmail.com**
- **Website: www.friendsocsp.org**



**Keep up to date
with Oil Creek activities
by visiting our new website at:
www.friendsocsp.org**