



Discover the Power of Parks is an interactive series of interpretive programs for visitors to New Hampshire's State Parks. The program is a collaboration between the Division of Parks and Recreation, the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and Public Service of New Hampshire (PSNH) with program support from the Corporation for National Service (AmeriCorps) and the Tillotson Foundation for interns at Lake Francis and Umbagog Lake State Parks.

## Program Overview



Figure 1 From Left to Right: Deb Brozowski, Rachael Esh, Kelsey Johnson, Nicole Juppe, Emily Barry, Caleb Savage, Andrew Post, and Steve Gang.

Eight college-age interns were recruited and trained by SCA NH Corps to provide guided hikes, interpretive tours and imaginative environmental workshops for children, families and other visitors. Interpretive programs focus on connecting participants with nature and building appreciation for New Hampshire's natural heritage.

The parks included in this year's program were: Greenfield, Monadnock, Pawtuckaway, Bear Brook, Umbagog Lake, Lake Francis, White Lake, and Franconia Notch State Parks. A website and a URL are maintained by the

Division for the program, [www.discoverpowerofparks.com](http://www.discoverpowerofparks.com).

## Measuring Success

### *Conservation Education Program Field Trips*

The Discover the Power of Parks interns get their first experience in leading programs by hosting the Manchester and Allenstown 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes that are part of the SCA NH Corps environmental education program. In early May, the interns lead 3 weeks of school field trips to Bear Brook State Park and guided 873 students in an investigation of aquatic and terrestrial life.

### *Great Park Pursuit*

The SCA NH Corps was the event day host for the 2013 Great Park Pursuit kick-off on June 15<sup>th</sup> at Bear Brook State Park. The interns developed and presented four guided programs; Ponder This, Trees You See, Mystery of our History and CSI Bear Brook to over 80 program participants. The conservation crew members helped with set up and break down and hosted the self-guided activities such as nature crafts, face painting and s'mores.

### *State Park Programs*

With guidance from the SCA NH Corps Service and Education coordinator, Clare Croteau and State Park staff, the interns created imaginative programs to connect families with the outdoors.

While there are programs that are given at every site like ponding and night hikes, the creativity of the interns make each season special.

The interns provided information and delivered environmental education programs to thousands of visitors, campers, hikers and local citizens. They were asked to keep track of the number of visitors they reached and reported the following:

<b>2013</b>	<b>Program Attendees</b>	<b>Informal Contacts</b>	<b>Fall Outreach</b>
Bear Brook	1,670	1,256	983
Franconia Notch	1,184	11,030	
Greenfield	1,125	632	
Lake Francis	575	563	452
Monadnock	1,764	4,463	267
Pawtuckaway	1,436	366	
Umbagog Lake	663	632	
White Lake	1,288	1,449	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,705</b>	<b>20,391</b>	<b>1,702</b>

**Total Visitor Contact = 31,798**

#### *Program Attendance History*

Park	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012 <sup>1</sup>	
	Program	Contact	Program	Contact	Program	Contact	Program	Contact	Program	Contact	Program	Contact
Bear Brook	125		158	163			344	246	264	369	-----	-----
Pawtuckaway	228		365	216	393	545	365	394	772	283	-----	-----
Greenfield	1,200		813	630	267	367	355	552	336	465	623	2,233
Monadnock		24,000	321	9,890	57	3,230		3,628		3,289	28	6,282
Franconia	587	6,950	847	8,167	485	2,200	632	7,945	1,181	4,600	1,139	7,926
White Lake			580		955	845	871	646	542	255	759	1,383
Fall			245		55		1,055		364		757	
Total	32,730		22,345		10,113		17,033		12,786		21,124	

#### *Fall Outreach*

Interpretive programs were offered to schools, community organizations, and clubs in the Greater Merrimack Valley Area and the upper Great North Wood Region at no cost Labor Day through Columbus Day (Tuesday-Friday). In addition, the Monadnock interpreters visited community groups prior to their visit to talk about Hike Safe principals. The interns developed three programs for groups to choose from and programs were offered in the park or at their site. There were a total of 1,702 participants.

#### *Social Media Outreach*

This summer the interns took turns providing blog posts twice a week (for a total of 24) and took part in five informational You Tube videos which provided a special glimpse into the parks the

<sup>1</sup> In 2012 programming was only offered at four sites.

interns were serving at and their experiences in NH. The blogs had 9,593 unique page views and the videos 2,568 views!

These posts were shared through our other social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter. The blogs are archived under each author at, <http://www.nhstateparks.org/whats-happening/discover-the-power-of-parks/interpreters.aspx> and the videos, <http://www.youtube.com/user/nhstateparks>.

### *Program Marketing*

In mid-July a program brochure and patch were developed. If program participants attend 5 different programs they will receive a complimentary Discover the Power of Parks in recognition of their accomplishment. 28 patches were awarded in 2013.

### **Building on a Successful Program**

The Division of Parks and Recreation has contracted for six interns for the 2014-2015 biennium and the SCA has submitted a grant application to the Tillotson Foundation continue the program at Lake Francis and Umbagog Lake State Parks. The program will continue to offer a mix of campground and day-use programming to interest a broad range of visitors.

Some programmatic goals we will be working on include:

1. Advertising and Marketing
  - a. Develop a weekly schedule template for interns to fill out and submit.
  - b. Timely printing and distribution of schedules.
  - c. Purchase or construction of advertising sandwich boards.
  - d. Direct email to incoming guests with program schedule.
  - e. Advertising programs through subscription lists maintained by the Divisions of Travel and Tourism and Parks and Recreation.
2. Programming
  - a. Expand pilot on water nature programming developed in Great North Woods region to other parks.
  - b. Include carryin/out message in programs.
  - c. Reach out to partners to collaborate in programming.
  - d. Programs should grow and change as the season progresses to stimulate the interns and guests.
  - e. Start fall outreach program development and scheduling August.
  - f. Update program participant survey.
3. Communication
  - a. Continue to improve communication among interpreters, park managers and SCA Service and Education Coordinator.
  - b. During training, interns will contact park managers to discuss their program ideas and park needs to begin the collaboration with the park managers.

## **Sample Program Descriptions**

### **Hike Safe - Hike Smart**

Monadnock can be a strenuous hike for even the most experienced of hikers. It is important to know how to keep yourself and others safe while heading up the mountain. Join us for a program that covers the essential items you will need, what to do in case of emergencies, and how to get the most out of your hiking experience! We will come with games, examples, and tips... you will leave a safe and prepared hiker!

### **Afternoon Crafts**

Have you heard White Lake's majestic call of the loon? Or perhaps a "loony laugh" while walking the trail? Gather 'round to learn more about these mysterious creatures, and then make your very own loon!

### **Discovery Station**

Ever felt a fox's fur? Seen a porcupine skull? Stop by the discovery station to check out some animal facts and tracks, and even test your tree identification skills. If you have time, then make a pine cone creature or a leaf rubbing to take home with you!

### **Landscapers of Bear Brook**

Long before Bear Brook was a state park, glaciers tore through the land, forests were sculpted by fire, and trees were cleared for farmland. Join me on a hike as we learn about nature's resilience and why Bear Brook looks the way it does today.

### **Marsh Marvels**

There is a marvelous world hiding within Burnham's Marsh! Come discover the dragonflies, frogs, salamanders and more that make up this lively ecosystem. Hang out for the full hour or drop by for ten minutes to see what you can find. Nets and viewing buckets provided just bring your curiosity! Look for the table set up between the beach and park store.

### **Moose on the Loose**

What do you know about the renown symbol of the Great North Woods! Come test your knowledge as well as learn some new facts about Moose.

### **Investigate the Connecticut River**

Take an hour hike along the river meandering through a dense spruce-fir forest while identifying some of the local trees and fauna found throughout the area surrounding Lake Francis! Meeting location is at the Campground Store.