

2021 PAEP KARL MASON AWARD RECIPIENT



Marci Mowery, President / PA Parks and Forests Foundation

Marci Mowery entered the conservation arena 29 years ago and has served as the President of the PA Parks and Forests Foundation since 2005. Her passion is to connect people to the outdoors. The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF) began in 1999 as a statewide nonprofit organization to provide a voice for the Commonwealth's 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of forest land. With PPFF, citizens can donate or bequeath money to state parks and forests, become active and involved volunteers in the park and forest system, and find some fun and educational opportunities. PPFF's status as a registered charity allows chapter friends groups to operate on our state's public lands for the benefit of everyone. Ms. Mowery holds a BS from Penn State University in Education and a MS in Geoenvironmental Studies from Shippensburg University.

Ms. Mowery is responsible for overall organizational leadership of the PPFF including building and continuing to build the Foundation team, providing board support, fundraising, visioning, launching and supporting friends groups, and relationship building. She has initiated key programs such as accessibility improvements on public lands, the Great Pennsylvania Outdoor Challenge, funding of key projects in parks and forests, and messaging on the economic, emotional and intrinsic value of public lands. She has also completed research for publications, overseen major projects for the PPFF, recruited interns, and mainly serves as a voice for public lands.

The PPFF has four founding principles: Stewardship, Education, Recreation and Volunteerism. Each of these principles rounds out what the PPFF plans for the future. In partnership with parks and forests staff, the PPFF work to provide resources, both human and capital, to ensure the natural, cultural, and aesthetic values of our lands remain for today and future generations. PPFF is committed to helping visitors and decision-makers better understand our natural world and the needs of our parks and forests, as well as the physical, mental, and emotional health benefits of spending time outdoors. We have long said that our goal is to ensure a place and an experience for **everyone** in the outdoors. We work to remove real and perceived barriers to "getting out", such as our work to place ADA canoe and kayak launches; apply universal design principles to the places we all go for fun and relaxation; to inform and build confidence for outdoor enthusiasts; and improve communication. The PPFF work to make volunteerism easy for individuals as well as corporations, and serve as an umbrella to more than 48 friends groups. Please see their updated 2020 5-Year Strategic Plan at <https://paparksandforests.org>