



## **Fire Ring Installation Project Completed**

Taking advantage of a higher than normal river level this summer, stewards were able to install the final shipment of heavy duty fire rings. Now, all but Island 101 have permanent rings, designating the SRTA sites as permanent, unless other islands suffer the fate of #101 and slowly wash away! As long as the river just washes away debris and delivers us fresh firewood each season, we'll be satisfied.

### **If Only Our Log Books Were Available for Entries in 1892**

“Our American sunrise had ushered in a noble summer’s day. There was not a cloud; the sunshine was baking; yet in the woody river valleys among which we wound our way, the atmosphere preserved a sparkling freshness till late in the afternoon. It had an inland sweetness and variety to one newly from the sea; it smelt of woods, rivers, and the delved earth. . . and I beheld the sun striking among shapely hills and his light dispersed and coloured by a thousand accidents of form and surface. . .

“And when I had asked the name of the river from the brakeman, and heard that it was called the Susquehanna, the beauty of the name seemed to be part and parcel of the beauty of the land. . . That was the name, as no other could be, for that shining river and desirable valley.”

*-Robert Louis Stevenson, 1892*

### **(April 24) is Arbor Day: time to reflect on what forests do for us**

*An Op-Ed Article reprinted from the Harrisburg Patriot News on Friday April 24, 2009*

Pennsylvania is blessed with some of the most valuable forests in the world. That's the reason William Penn, in 1682, called the commonwealth "Penn's Woods." Today is Arbor Day -- a day set aside to recognize the value of trees -- and it's good to think about the importance of our forests and the services they provide to all Pennsylvanians.

Our forest resources have shaped our state and nation from the Colonial period through the Industrial Revolution to modern times. Today, they continue to play a vital role in our economy, environment, sense-of-place and quality of life. If our rich forests have played a lead role in defining the state, they play an even greater, more important role in shaping its future. Forests produce clean, cold-water streams and the water from your tap. We can thank them for preventing our rivers from flooding, the clean air you breathe and the materials they provide for our homes -- the floors you walk on, the cabinets in your kitchen and the pellets that heat your home. They are places to hike, camp and hunt, and they are reservoirs of diverse plant and animal life.

Despite their undeniable value, we haven't always treated our forests well. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, our forests were devastated from exploitive timber harvesting that left little regard for the future. We harvested trees to fuel our iron furnaces, build our homes, barns and ships, and prop up our coal mines. We cleared our forest to plant our crops, and we stripped the bark from our state tree -- the hemlock -- to tan leather. We are fortunate that after this shortsighted neglect, our forests returned with remarkable vigor, but it wasn't all luck.

Visionary citizens, such as Dr. Joseph Rothrock and Myra Lloyd Dock, recognized the importance and value of our forests and called for their conservation and protection. As a result, millions of acres, many that at the time were still barren tracts of slash and brush piles, were set aside for future generations.

The state forestry department, today the DCNR Bureau of Forestry, was formed to protect and manage these recovering forests. These acres form the backbone of Pennsylvania's 2.1 million acres of state forest land, recently recertified as "sustainably managed." Our forests face challenges perhaps far greater, complex and more challenging than a century ago. Invasive insects and diseases threaten our ash, oak and beloved hemlock trees. Acid in our rainfall is stressing our sugar maples. Deer herds, which, in many corners of the state are still out of balance with available habitat, continue to suppress new growth. Statewide, fewer than 50 percent of our forested acres have enough regeneration to replace themselves.

Seventy percent of Pennsylvania's forests are privately owned and there is growing concern about the long-term sustainability of these forests. Large tracts continue to be subdivided and cleared for residential and commercial development, resulting in forest fragmentation and a loss of many values and ecological services. Unsustainable harvesting practices on privately owned land diminish the forest's long-term economic and ecological productivity. This is happening all while society is demanding more from our forests. They are being looked to as a source of renewable energy, such as cellulosic ethanol. Many of the state's natural gas reserves, including the Marcellus Shale, lay beneath private and public forest land. More and more, forests are being relied upon to provide clean water for industrial, commercial and residential use. And as the specter of global climate change nears, we're counting on our forests to help offset the impacts.

In the long term, our forests will not be able to provide all of these benefits to society unless we manage them wisely for their future health. We can no longer afford to view our forests as simply the landscape in the background, but rather the resource very much in the foreground of our economic and environmental future. Of course, Arbor Day is a day about hope for the future, about getting involved with your fellow citizens in recognizing the value of our trees and forests. So I urge Pennsylvania citizens to celebrate this day.

But most of all, no matter where you live, plant a tree. It's a simple but important act. Doing so will make you a part of our rich forest conservation legacy and help ensure a sustainable future.

*by Daniel Devlin, Pennsylvania State Forester and director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry*

Note: All SRTA island campsites are located on state forest land and are maintained in cooperation with the staff of the Bureau of Forestry.



Susquehanna River Trail Association, Inc.  
PO Box 62023  
Harrisburg PA 17106-2023

1st Class  
Stamp

➡➡➡➡ LIST OF TRAIL GUIDE VENDORS ⚡⚡⚡⚡

Copies of the Susquehanna River Water Trail Map (Middle Section) are available at the following locations:  
(Links to further information are provided on the SRTA website home page)

Bellefonte – Tussey Mt. Outfitters  
Binghamton NY – Eureka! Camping Center  
Harrisburg – Wildware Backcountry  
Lewisburg – Susquehanna Valley Visitors Bureau  
Lock Haven – Rock River & Trail Outfitters  
Marysville – Blue Mountain Outfitters

Montoursville – Country Ski & Sports  
Montoursville – Lyon Camping and Supply  
State College – Eastern Mountain Sports  
Sugar Run – Endless Mountain Outfitters  
Sunbury – Southside Bait and Tackle  
Wilkes-Barre – Country Ski & Sports  
Wrightsville (Long Level) – Shank’s Mare

**Secure credit card purchases may also be made by internet** through Hike-advice.com – by going directly to their order page via the SRTA website: [www.susquehannarivertrail.org](http://www.susquehannarivertrail.org) More in-store locations will be announced on the SRTA website as they become available. There is also a limited supply of flat, un-folded trail guides.

**Contributions and Gifts-in-Kind**

Unless otherwise designated, additional contributions to SRTA made by members and readers will be directed toward development of island trail facilities. Example: Purchase and installation of “flood proof” fire rings at all campsites.

John & Patricia Zinn

**New Memberships and Renewals**

Ty & Mindy Gamberling &  
Hayden Waltman

David Dalbey  
Frank & Bonnie Malloy

Richard & Carol Worrell  
John & Patricia Zinn