

Friends of South Mountains State Park

February 15, 2016

Dear Friend:

Did you know that throughout 2016, North Carolina's state parks system is celebrating its centennial? One of the nation's first state parks was created March 3, 1916 at the summit of Mount Mitchell, and since then, the system has grown to nearly a quarter-million acres set aside for conservation, recreation and education. Our local jewel, South Mountains State Park, is North Carolina's largest state park at nearly 20,000 acres with nearly 45 miles (and growing) of trails and welcomed over 248,000 visitors during 2015.

During 2016, each of North Carolina's state parks will be hosting special events to commemorate the centennial. Friends of South Mountains State Park is pleased to be a part of this celebration. Please mark your calendars and join us for these upcoming events at South Mountains State Park:

- April 23, 2016 – Park staff and Friends will host a volunteer work day from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in commemoration of Earth Day (April 22nd). Projects are still being determined, but may include work on the [TRACK](#) trail enhancements to the River Trail, beautification of the Jacob's Fork picnic areas, and work on the new trail (still under construction and yet to be named) connecting the Visitor's Center to the trail system via Turkey Ridge Trail.
- May 28-30, 2016 – Come out and participate in the Centennial Scavenger Hunt, created by Park staff and sponsored by Friends, where you will have the opportunity to get out, enjoy nature, and "hunt" for tagged items throughout the Park. Prizes will be available for the first 50 participants to turn in a completed checklist.
- June 4, 2016 – Park staff and Friends will once again host an event to coordinate with National Trails Day. Participants who complete a designated hike will be rewarded with a prize sponsored by Friends. Register between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. and return to the registration area by the designated time to claim your prize. Equestrian registration is also available.
- September 24, 2016 – Friends Annual Meeting and Nature Day. Times and events to be announced.

In case you missed our premier viewing of UNC-TV's "Saving the Best: North Carolina State Parks at 100" you can view it by clicking [here](#) or going to <http://player.pbs.org/viralplayer/2365652565/>.

Finally, you may have heard the [Connect NC Public Improvement Bond](#) is on the March 15, 2016 ballot for approval by North Carolina voters. The Connect NC Bond proposes funding for economic development and infrastructure in 76 North Carolina counties, of which \$75 million is apportioned for North Carolina state parks including \$2.25 million for improvements at South Mountains State Park. On February 9, 2016, the Executive Board of Friends passed a resolution in support of the Connect NC bond referendum. More information on Connect NC Bonds can be found [here](#).

For more information about Friends and upcoming events, visit and like us on [Facebook](#).

Celebrate with us and rediscover North Carolina's state parks as places to learn about our environment, to relax with family and reconnect with nature. Thank you for your time and commitment to North Carolina State Parks. We look forward to seeing you again, or meeting you for the first time, at South Mountains State Park.



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Join or renew
TODAY!

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Photos Courtesy of the NC Division of Parks and Recreation. Photos by W. Stubbs (waterfall) and T. Johnson (vista).