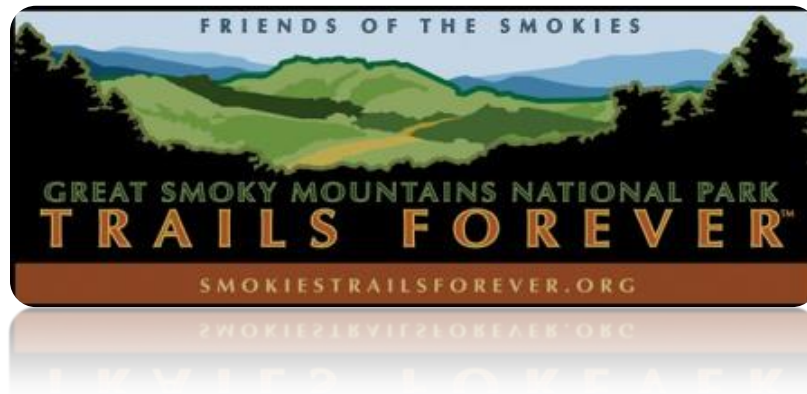


## Summary of Support- Calendar Year 2012

### Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park



During the calendar year of 2012, Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park provided \$1,032,893 to fulfill its commitment to support ***Resource Management and Science, Resource Education, Facility Management, and Resource and Visitor Protection.***

Since 1993, Friends of the Smokies has had the privilege of funding a number of key projects for many consecutive years. Among those are the following:

- protection and treatment of eastern hemlock trees
- support for the Appalachian Bear Rescue Center
- maintenance and replacement of bear cables at 120 backcountry sites and shelters
- providing Student Conservation Association interns
- Parks as Classrooms program expansion and curriculum revisions
- preservation of historic log cabins and churches
- funding for volunteer programs such as the Volunteer Visitor Assistance and Elk Bugle Corps

In 2012 park staff presented Friends with a number of exciting new opportunities to highlight and preserve the natural resources and cultural history of the Smokies. The organization proudly supported the new **Adopt-a-Cabin** volunteer program, the first-ever **Artists in Residence** in the Smokies, and celebrated the completion of the Forney Ridge Trail reconstruction by the **Trails Forever** crew, as well as fully funding the \$4 million Trails Forever endowment.

Across Great Smoky Mountains National Park, volunteers responded enthusiastically to the **Adopt-a-Cabin** program. Requirements include volunteering 4 to 8 hours weekly, and the duties involve cleaning and maintaining the appearance of historic structures by sweeping, collecting litter, diminishing removable graffiti using approved techniques, and reporting any issues (broken boards, safety issues) to the Historic Preservation Crew. Julie Whitted, a program participant who adopted the Ownby Cabin on the Fighting Creek Nature Trail along with her husband Don, described her enjoyment of her service this way, "We love the mountains, and we love history, and we'd like to preserve it so if we ever have grandkids, they can enjoy it, too!"

**Six artists** lived and worked at their craft in Great Smoky Mountains National Park thanks to the **Artist in Residence** program. Videographer Michael Burke “has a passion for

## 2012 ARIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM



connecting youth to natural areas. In particular, Michael hopes to connect youth, who are becoming increasingly both dependent and distracted by technology, to national parks and environmental stewardship.” While in the Smokies, Michael performed many duties in his V.I.P. uniform, and a seed was planted for the possibility of a future feature-length documentary about Arthur Stupka. He was often amused at the perceived authority and knowledge that his official attire created in the eyes and minds of park visitors. On his blog, he describes a typical day in Cades Cove-

*“Today, I lost count of the number of little kids who shouted from the back seat of the family minivan, “Are there any bears out today!?” Now, since I am not a biologist, nor am I psychically in tune with the feeding patterns of the [bears] in the Smokies, I obviously have no idea. Yet...I feel a responsibility to get these kids excited about their visit to the park. So every time, I try my best to smile and say something like, “Well, we see them all the time. You never know with wild animals, but I bet you’ll see something out there!” Odds are they actually will see something, and I feel that if I got them up on the edge of their seat instead of faces down in their Nintendo DS’s, I’ve done a good job, not my job, but still a good job.”*

It is clear that when the jurists chose Michael Burke to participate in the inaugural program class they saw his understanding of “the mission of the National Park Service and the park’s interpretive themes”. (Sources- 2012 Artist in Residence (selections); 2012 Artist in Residence Program (brochure); <http://mikeinthesmokies.blogspot.com>)

On May 22<sup>nd</sup> the board and staff of Friends of the Smokies joined with park management and Trails Forever crew members for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Forney Ridge trailhead along with a group of invited donors. The purpose of the celebration was twofold- to applaud the efforts of the Trails Forever crew and volunteers on three years of reconstruction of the Forney Ridge Trail out to Andrews Bald and to laud the generosity of approximately 1000 donors from 37 states who helped Friends of the Smokies raise \$2 million to meet a challenge grant from the Aslan Foundation of Knoxville. Interest income from the \$4 million Trails Forever endowment is helping to fund a third, permanent trail maintenance work crew to perform sustainable improvements to iconic trails in the Smokies. With all 1.8 miles of the Forney Ridge Trail finished, the priority project for the Trails Forever crew over the next three years is Chimney Tops Trail. Under the direction of Tobias Miller, Facilities Operations Specialist- Trails work began in April 2012. This popular trail was closed Monday through Thursday until the month of October so that the crew members and volunteers could work uninterrupted and to maintain visitor safety. Fortunately the park could offer hikers the alternate route out to Andrews Bald via Forney Ridge!



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*Assembled for the ribbon cutting were Friends of the Smokies President Jim Hart, Board Chair Rev. Dr. Daniel P. Matthews, Supt. Dale Ditmanson, Margaret Stevenson Wednesday Hiker Debbie Way, Lindsay McDonough of the Aslan Foundation, Tom Cronan Pathfinder Fund Co-Chair Joan Cronan, Mark Williams of the Friends and Aslan Foundation boards, and Park V.I.P. Danny Bernstein plus one day hiker who happened by!*

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One of the goals of Trails Forever was to involve volunteers in trail work. Volunteer contributions to the Trails Forever program since it began in 2008 are represented in the chart below-

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
# of hours	469	3341	4863	6641	6566
# of volunteers	48	85	401	442	320



**BEFORE** PHASE 1 OF CHIMNEY TOPS TRAIL WORK



**AFTER** PHASE 1 WORK

### **Additionally some important program updates from 2012 are below:**

- In the Winter of Fiscal Year 2012, all **hemlock trees** in front country areas received an annual foliar application of horticultural oil totaling 600 acres. Any trees in campgrounds and heavily visited areas were retreated with systemic insecticides if needed. Additionally, the vegetation management team moved forward to treating smaller diameter trees on park roads. Costs of systemic treatments continue to drop and the treatments provide longer lasting benefits than time-consuming foliar spray operations. Also in 2012 use of new stem injection methods resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of streamside hemlocks treated. A new neonicitinoid chemical called Safari (dinotefuran) can be applied systemically and is showing rapid results in controlling HWA on some of the largest old growth trees in poor health. It moves much faster than imidacloprid to the crowns of these giant trees. In the 102 conservation areas, which now total 4409 acres, very large trees received a second systemic treatment, new conservation areas were established, and existing ones were expanded. Of the 200,000+ trees systemically treated since the program began, more than 25,000 were treated in FY 2012. Finally, in 2012 15,699 St (*Sasajicymnus tsugae*) and 1,908 Ln (*Laricobius nigrinus*) predatory beetles were released, bringing the total of biological control specimens released in the park since 2002 to 540,000+. (Source- Great Smoky Mountains National Park Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Program Report: October 2012)

- Through funding from Toyota and other funds from Friends of the Smokies, the Park continued to offer its popular in-park, field-based program for students in grades K-12, known as **Parks as Classrooms**. In Fiscal Year 2012 (October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012) the program served 11,459 students and 2,275 adults (teachers and chaperones). The Parks in Classrooms program offered in schools during the winter months served 3,812 students and 219 adults. Additionally, more than 6,000 students participated in Conservation Field Days and other special events. Park staff members have completed revisions to ten existing programs and are utilizing Toyota funding to develop new programs for elementary through high school. New flyers have been developed to promote the new Parks as Classrooms offerings in Tennessee and North Carolina. One of the goals of the Toyota grant has been to develop curriculum on the internet, and 34 curriculum units have been uploaded onto the newly revised teacher section of the park website. (Source- Toyota Progress Report Outline 09/15/2012)

## 2012 Needs List Disbursements

### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND SCIENCE

Complete three Historic Structures Reports at Elkmont- n/a  
 Lynn Camp brook trout restoration monitoring- \$21,918  
 Protect hemlocks from woolly adelgids- \$30,000  
 Control balsam woolly adelgids at Purchase/Mt LeConte- \$2,500  
 Support hog reduction during peak control season- \$34,300  
 Support operation of Appalachian Bear Rescue Center- \$10,000  
 Reduce backcountry bear problems thru food storage cable systems- \$4,000  
 Install elk exclosures to monitor elk impacts on vegetation- \$3,000  
 Support All Taxa Biodiversity inventory (DLIA)- \$31,565  
 Purchase quilt/textile preservation system- \$6,686  
 Support 23 Resource/Science SCA's and/or interns- \$75,539  
 Air Quality- \$250  
 Fisheries scholarships- \$4,000

**Total= \$223,758**

### RESOURCE EDUCATION

Support parkwide Parks as Classrooms programs and expansion in Blount County- \$116,935  
 Expand educational outreach (Toyota grant)- \$94,079  
 Empower science teachers (Alcoa grant)- \$13,325  
 Cherokee Archeology Field School- America's Best Idea grant from NPF- \$4,041  
 Robbinsville High School Teacher intern Park Stewards grant from NPF- \$7,193  
 Add seasonal air quality programs- \$4,231  
 Revamp interior design at Sugarlands Visitors Center- \$10,000  
 NC High School interns (Glaxo grant)- \$1,076  
 Parks as Classrooms Haywood County (NC) Science enhancements (CFWNC grant)- \$268

Parks as Classrooms (Warren Wilson College)- \$1,800  
Support for GSMNP Employee Scholarship Fund- \$3,000  
Contributions to the Tremont Endowment and Tremont grant support (Cornerstone)- \$17,000  
**Total= \$272,948**

## **FACILITY MANAGEMENT**

Provide visitor amenities at Townsend Wye- \$4,000  
Visitor amenities at Cherokee Orchard and Roaring Fork Trailheads- \$16,300  
Visitor amenities in Cataloochee Valley- \$16,201  
Provide maintenance/utilities at Appalachian Highlands Science Center- \$30,201  
Replace/repair roadside fencing along Cades Cove Loop Road- \$40,001  
Management of Appalachian Clubhouse and Spence Cabin- \$26,840  
Provide handicapped access to Mingus Mill- \$4,300  
Secure fireplace at Avent Cabin to exclude fires- \$1,800  
Replace structural logs /re-chink/repoint chimney at Baxter Cabin- \$22,800  
Repair/replace deteriorated windows at Elkmont cabins- \$13,300  
Replace roof of John Oliver Cabin- \$9,700  
Complete Trails Forever improvement project at Forney Ridge Trail- \$2,600  
Phase 1 Trails Forever rehabilitation on Chimney Tops Trail- \$121,002  
Replace four doors at Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center- \$8,400  
Spence Cabin Furnishings- \$3,394  
Repaint Cades Cove Methodist Church- \$13,500  
Repair Windows/treat logs at Little Greenbrier School with preservative- \$3,000  
National Trails Day proceeds for ongoing maintenance of Smokies Appalachian Trail- \$7,857  
Native plantings for Sugarlands Visitors Center flower beds- \$230  
Superintendent's Discretionary Fund- \$5,425  
**Total= \$350,851**

## **RESOURCE AND VISITOR PROTECTION**

VIP Recognition Awards Program- \$1,012  
Support Elk Bugle Corps- \$2,100  
Support Volunteer Roadside Assistance Program- \$6,900  
Support Appalachian Trail Ridgerunner Program- \$33,033  
Reduce poaching through ginseng marking- \$3,991  
Provide support for Cades Cove bicycle patrol- \$900  
Add two dedicated backcountry law enforcement seasonal rangers- \$28,035  
Conduct pilot adopt-a-cabin volunteer program- \$1,100  
Develop Artist in Residence Program- \$4,668  
Provide equestrian Leave No Trace Program- \$6,000  
Install composting privy at Mt. LeConte Shelter- \$8,000  
**Total= \$95,739**

Alcoa Grant-funded development of Icelandic national park  
NC dept.of motor vehicles "pass through acct." NC office

**Total 2012 Needs List Support- \$943,296**

**Project Payments Made in Calendar Year 2012 applied toward 2013 Park Needs List**

Hemlock wooly adelgid treatment program- \$20,000  
Support parkwide Parks as Classrooms program expansion- \$21,760  
Expand educational outreach (Toyota)- \$12,509  
Cherokee Archaeological Field School- \$4,552  
Robbinsville High School Teacher intern Park Stewards grant from NPF- \$2,276  
Trails Forever rehabilitation of Chimney Tops Trail- \$24,000  
Support Volunteer Roadside Assistance Program- \$1,500  
Develop Artist in Residence Program- \$3,000

**Total= \$89,597**

**Total Calendar Year 2012 Support from Friends of the Smokies- \$1,032,893**