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**December 14, 2018**

## **Wolf Administration Outlines Importance of Naloxone Availability in State Parks, Forests**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Today, in conjunction with Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine joined Bureau of State Parks officials in discussing the importance of naloxone availability in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

"State park officials often are the first responders if an emergency occurs at any of our parks or forests," said Dunn. "Naloxone is an invaluable tool in helping our state park and forest staff provide an important public service."

Naloxone is a medication that can reverse overdoses caused by opioid drugs and plays an important role in the rescue phase of the opioid crisis. Last year, Governor Wolf traveled to Gifford Pinchot State Park to announce DCNR would begin equipping more than 300 state park and state forest rangers, managers, and assistant managers with life-saving naloxone.

"Naloxone has one function: to reverse the effects of opioids on the brain and respiratory system and save someone's life," Dr. Levine said. "It is impossible to get someone in to treatment who is dead. Every Pennsylvanian can save a life by having naloxone on hand and using it if they come across someone who has overdosed."

There have been seven drug-related deaths on DCNR lands since 2015, and more than a dozen incidents where assistance was provided related to an overdose. After the medication was issued to DCNR employees, naloxone was administered at least seven times, according to Bureau of State Parks officials.

Since November 2014, more than 20,000 people have been revived with naloxone by police officers and EMS providers in Pennsylvania.

"This medication is invaluable in the war on the opioid crisis and DCNR is proud to aid in a fight that, hopefully, will lead to an individual's full recovery," Dunn said, "Our contribution goes beyond naloxone, however. Studies show access to nature improves one's health and well-being, and that outdoor activity can lessen substance abuse."

DCNR oversees 121 state parks with most having assigned managers and rangers, and 20 state forest districts encompassing more than 2.2 million acres. The Bureau of Forestry currently has 33 full-time and seasonal rangers policing those 2.2 million acres of state forestlands.

Since Governor Wolf first signed a heroin and opioid disaster declaration in January, 16 state agencies have continuously worked to fight the opioid epidemic and have made significant progress to help individuals and families dealing with this crisis. Accomplishments include waiving birth certificate fees for individuals seeking treatment; using federal Medicaid funding in treatment facilities to provide more than 12,000 individuals access to medically necessary

treatment; and providing career services to people impacted by the opioid epidemic and plan to return to work.

For more information on Pennsylvania's response to the opioid crisis visit [www.pa.gov/opioids](http://www.pa.gov/opioids) and <https://www.pa.gov/guides/opioid-epidemic/#StopOverdosesinPAWeek>.

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