



*Celebrating*



## Behind the Scenic Views

Over the past 50 years the District has grown to over 25,600 acres and 35 sites that offer the public ample opportunity to connect with nature. Behind the scenes there has been a dedicated team of employees who provide the care, attention to detail, diligent maintenance of trails, walkways, camping areas, restrooms and facilities, as well as all the little things we take for granted. It is the Operations and Public Safety Division, made up of site rangers, maintenance workers, facility maintenance workers, mechanics, custodians, landscape architects and police officers, who play an important role in ensuring these public lands are inviting, inspiring, safe and accessible to all visitors every time they enter a site.

Present day, the District offers its neighbors and guests access to a myriad of outdoor activities, and programs and classes hosted at District facilities. The Operations Department is charged with maintaining 103 miles of hiking trails, 45 miles of biking trails, 25 fishing areas, 6 campgrounds, 6 canoe launches, 45 miles of horse trails, 18 sites with picnic areas and shelters, as well as the grooming of cross country ski trails, snowmobile trails and overall snow removal. And let us not forget the other behind the scenes work that includes the maintenance of the District's infrastructure, facilities, roads, bridges, entrance gates, picnic shelters, electrical, plumbing, HVAC systems and equipment for all divisions, in a manner that provides for continued and long-term usability. This team of employees take ownership of their work, have knowledge in a variety of skills, tools and equipment, and must endure all sorts of weather.





Storm cleanup



Road snow removal



Trailheads & Picnic Shelters



Walkway snow removal



Install new amenities



Bridge Repair

While there is a lot involved in keeping the Conservation District running smoothly, the team takes extreme pride in their role in providing an invaluable service to the public.

When the outdoors were deemed essential for our well-being throughout the pandemic, casual visitation topped 2 million (double the attendance of a typical year) as visitors found solace in conservation district sites and trails. These local heroes help keep our outdoors open, never missing a beat or staying home. Trails were groomed, garbage cans emptied, toilet paper rolls filled, hand sanitizer offered, storm cleanups handled rapidly, grass mowed and picnic areas kept open and inviting. While summer months can be particularly busy, their number one priority is to keep the public enjoying their regular use of sites without interruption. Although not in their job description, often times it is the District's field staff that also serve as the District's ambassadors, being the most visible and first line of contact a visitor may have, and find themselves acting in a public relations and customer service role. They are extremely knowledgeable about their sites, the history of the area, the recreational amenities and ongoing restoration efforts occurring throughout the District. These team members are attracted to work at the Conservation District because they love the outdoors and making a difference in the lives of our residents.

We applaud the efforts of these employees both past and present – And...we couldn't be where we are today without you!