

Friends of Norris Dam State Park

P.O. Box 484 • Norris, TN 37828 • (865) 426-7461 • friends@norrisdamstatepark.net

The desire of the Friends of Norris Dam State Park (FNDSP) Board is to keep our members informed about our activities and other items through periodic newsletters. This is the first such newsletter in quite some time. We had some changes in duties and other adjustments but have now settled in. Those of you who are new members, we welcome you to the group. FNDSP is 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that was established to assist Norris Dam State Park (NDSP). The purposes of FNDSP as stated in the bylaws are:

- a) To foster conservation and education efforts in support of Norris Dam State Park.
- b) To assist Norris Dam State Park in its effort to better preserve and protect its existing land resources, including but not limited to the many natural, cultural and scenic features within or in proximity there to.
- c) To assist Norris Dam State Park in providing quality recreational and interpretive experiences.

The FNDSP board meets every other month beginning in January, and the November meeting is an annual meeting of the membership. Members are also welcome to attend all board meetings. The board is allowed to vote via email on issues that come up between scheduled meetings.

This year's annual meeting will be on Wednesday November 20th at 6:00 in the Appalachian Room at Norris Dam State Park. All members and the public are invited to attend. The program details will be announced soon.

What's Been Happening With The Friends?

Over the last year FNDSP has assisted the park in annual events. In October 2023 and 2024 we sold t-shirts, bandanas and cookbooks at the Pickin' in the Park event. This is an annual affair that has live music from local bands, food trucks, local craft vendors, baked goods, and other sweet treats. Visitors to the free program are shuttled up to the venue on a 'hayride' from the parking area next to the Norris Dam Visitors Center.

In December Friends volunteers made free hot cocoa and apple cider for attendees at the Christmas in the Park program at the Lenoir Museum.

We also donate money for the Junior Ranger Program each summer. This program is for children ages 6-14 and introduces them to nature and the outdoors with the intent of fostering a lifelong love of fun and adventure in our state parks and other areas.



New Park Trail Map & Trail Descriptions

Over the last several years the park has built several new trails, some of which have replaced older trails. The new trails are single track while the older, retired trails were old woods roads, which had eroded over the years. The northern segment of Lakeside Loop Trail was replaced by the Homestead Trail and the south segment was replaced by the Pawpaw Trail. The center segment, which ran with Lakeview Trail was also replaced. So, Lakeside Loop Trail is no more.

A new Trail map (see below) is available online (https://tnstate-parks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/park-maps/Norris_Dam_web.png). The new trails will be described in this and future newsletters.

Featured Trail: Homestead Trail

This multiuse trail (hiking, biking, and horseback riding) trail replaced the north segment of Lakeside Loop. It begins off an old road (formerly Lakeside Loop) just off Hi Point Trail before the metal gate. It starts near the top of a knob and is fairly flat for a short distance on property that was owned by Condy Jones when TVA bought the property in 1933. The upland hardwood forest is mature and dominated by large black oak, white oak, hickory, northern red oak, yellow poplar, chestnut oak, and scattered red maple and shortleaf pine. This forest will change in the future and be comprised of the current understory of red maple, beech, sourwood, blackgum, and other shade tolerant species. Oaks cannot compete in the shade so that component will be minimal.

The trail descends somewhat steeply on switchbacks through the nice forest. As the slope becomes less steep you can notice that the large trees grade into a forest of smaller trees, primarily red maple, hickory, beech, sassafras, yellow poplar, and dogwood. This transition is where there was an agricultural field at the time that TVA purchased the property. It was owned by Henry Jones (I don't know the relation to Condy), and he probably grazed livestock on this area.

The trail continues to flatten out and you will see an old field gully that runs adjacent to the trail. This is common on these old fields, many of which were heavily grazed or cultivated to the point where soil productivity was low. Farmers led a hard life trying to subsist without fertilizer and mechanized equipment on these poor hillside farms. You will see a piece of an old, galvanized culvert that was discarded. Also notice the old down pine trees on some of the area. These were likely killed by the southern pine beetle. When the leaves are on you will see pockets of small pawpaw trees along the trail. The composition of trees varies from site productivity with scattered groups of larger yellow poplar and hickory.

As the hollow widens the topography becomes flatter and this area was probably in row crops or garden at one time. The hollow then narrows somewhat before the Homestead Trail meets Lakeview Trail.



Norris Dam State Park

Fall Programs

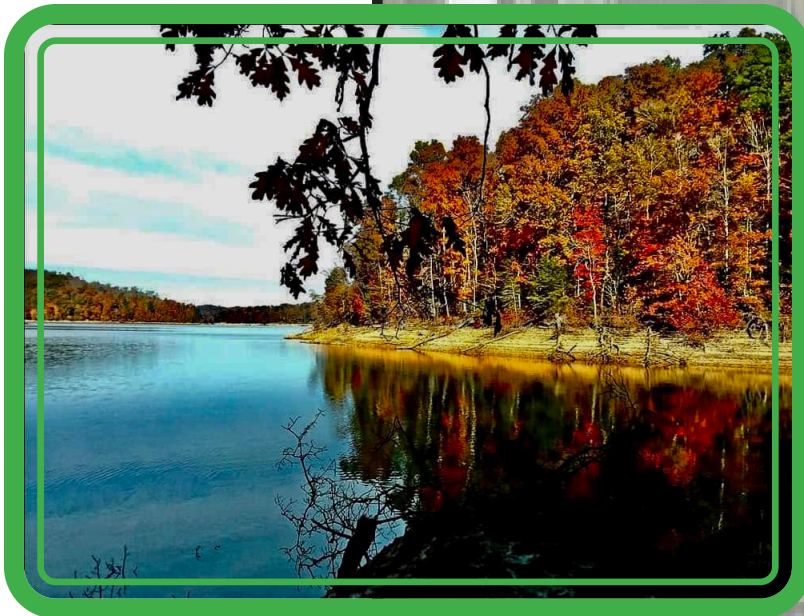
The Fall Color Boat Cruises are scheduled and filling up fast! You can register online or call the park office to reserve your spot. Cost is \$18 per adult and \$12 per child (6 and under).

A Women's Fall Backpacking Workshop is scheduled for the weekend of October 19th-20th. Cost is \$65 if you have your own gear and \$80 if you need to rent it from the park. Dinner and breakfast are provided for this overnight excursion. Ranger Frerichs will show everyone the basics of backpacking and camping along with leave no trace principles. Big thanks to the NDSP Friend's Group for purchasing our backpacking gear to make this program accessible to all! Registration deadline is October 15th.

Ranger Frerichs will be presenting "Bewitched Hills: The Lore of Appalachian Superstitions" on October 29th at 6:00pm at the Park Office. This program is free to attend, but please register to ensure enough seating is available!

All programming information and registration can be found on our website, <https://tn-stateparks.com/parks/events/norris-dam/#/?park=norris-dam>

Christmas in the Park will take place this December 14th from 5-8pm at the Lenoir Museum. There will be a silent pie auction, crafts, music, and more. The Friends will be assisting again with hot cocoa and apple cider.



Meet The Rangers

We will introduce one of the parks rangers in each newsletter so you will know who is managing your park.

Park Ranger Holly Frerichs got her start as a volunteer intern at Cumberland Mountain State Park in Crossville in the fall of 2015. She came back to Cumberland Mountain as a Seasonal Interpretive Ranger the following summer and graduated from East Tennessee State University that fall with a degree in Parks and Recreation Management. After another season at Cumberland Mountain, Holly became the Lead Seasonal Naturalist at Fall Creek Falls State Park in Pikeville. She worked there about six months before being hired as a full-time Park Ranger in August of 2018 at Rock Island State Park, near McMinnville. Here she oversaw programming and interpretation and gained a lot of experience in law enforcement and emergency medical response.

In May of 2021, she transferred to Norris Dam for a change of scenery and to get closer to her hometown of Tellico Plains. At Norris Dam, Ranger Frerichs has taken on the roll of overseeing Safety and Security, the Lenoir Museum, and planning Junior Ranger Camp along with other big events.

In May of 2023, she graduated from Tennessee Tech with a Master's Degree in Public Safety. Her professional project was A Study of Lost Person Behavior and its Importance to Search and Rescue. She is passionate about search and rescue and has found a place where she can be an asset to Tennessee State Parks in this area, both in assisting with searches and training local agencies. She is a member of TSP's Backcountry Rescue Team and Wildland Fire Team. She also currently serves as an East TN Representative for the Tennessee Park Rangers Association, which is a non-profit group who strives to improve working conditions and benefits for State Park Rangers and their families.

Ranger Frerichs is passionate about Appalachian Culture and Folklore, and frequently offers programs on this topic. These presentations fill up fast, so keep an eye out for them!

