

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Recreation

AWARDS PROGRAM GUIDELINES



October 2014

AWARDS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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1.0 DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Throughout its nearly 100-year history, the North Carolina State Parks System has benefited from a cadre of competent, dedicated, and innovative employees. Recognition for a job well done significantly reinforces an employee's satisfaction, morale, and the enjoyment of being a "contributing member of the team." It also encourages other employees to strive to excel.

We show our appreciation to the employees that provide the outstanding service often associated with our Division. I can think of no higher honor than being recognized for outstanding character or service by one's peers.

The Division's Awards Program has been established to recognize this competence, dedication, and innovation; and to instill the sense of involvement. However, each of you must participate through the nomination process, and some to the extent of serving as a member of the Awards Committee, to provide appropriate recognition of all deserving employees. By working together, we can make this program truly meaningful to division staff and supporters.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This guideline sets forth Division policy and standards for organization, administration and implementation of the Division's awards program. It also addresses the need for a Departmental Awards Subcommittee for the Division of Parks and Recreation. It is the responsibility of this subcommittee to review nominations for Departmental awards. The following procedures and enclosed reference material supersedes all previous directives, procedures and memoranda relating to the subject and shall remain in effect until further notice.

All Division employees may use this program as a method for recognizing superior service to the Division. Management is urged to use this policy in recognizing and awarding contributions made by staff. Failure to utilize this program as a management tool may cause us to diminish positive morale and to lose valuable and dedicated Division employees.

3.0 PROGRAM GOALS

- 3.1 Recognition: To recognize Division employees' contributions through superior performance, personal or professional accomplishments, initiation of new programs that benefits the Division, completion of outstanding work that other employees will see exemplifies Division needs, courageous handling of emergency situations, outstanding park safety programs, and performance substantially beyond expectations on a specific assignment.
- 3.2 Develop Recipient Standards: To recognize the superior level of performance and dedication that will act as a standard for employees to work toward.

- 3.3 Teamwork: To develop a sense of teamwork within the Division by asking all employees to be aware of all sections' contributions toward a quality Division program.
- 3.4 Maintain Employee Morale: To develop and maintain high employee morale through recognition of dedicated performance which benefits the entire Division. This program will provide additional recognition other than financial reward.

4.0 PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Director: Establishes the Division Awards Committee and appoints members. Through the Division Awards Committee, develops program policy and standards, reviews recommendations and selects recipients for awards.
- 4.2 Division Awards Committee: It shall be the purpose of the Division Awards Committee to solicit nominations for awards, review nominations, and recommend recipients to the Director. The Committee shall also develop awards guidelines and act as the Department Awards Subcommittee for the Division.
- 4.3 Awards Committee Chairperson: The chairperson will organize the committee; assign specific duties to individual members or subcommittees, call meetings and coordinate publicity efforts along with the Division PIO. The awards chairperson should also report directly to the Director all actions taken by the committee.

5.0 DIVISION AWARDS COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Composition: The Awards Committee shall be composed of seven members. New members will be appointed by the Director in January of each year. Members will reflect the employment proportion of sections within the Division; namely, one member from each of the following: south district, east district, west district, north district, Raleigh office. The PIO and Executive Assistant to the Director will serve in an Ex-officio capacity. A quorum of the Committee shall be four.
- 5.2 Terms of Office: Terms of membership for each committee person will be five years. Rotation to new appointees occurs at the rate of one member per year beginning with the north district and subsequently occurring in the south district, east district, west district, and the Raleigh office. The chairperson will be elected by the committee annually to give equal opportunity for all to serve in that capacity.
- 5.3 Functions: Functions of the Awards Committee shall be to develop guidelines for the Division awards program, to establish award categories, to review and approve or deny program award criteria, to develop the nomination process, to solicit nominations, to develop recommendations to the Director for the recipients and to act as the Department Awards Subcommittee. In the role as Department Awards subcommittee, members shall solicit and review nominations for

the Department awards and submit prioritized recommendations to the Director for review and transmittal.

- 5.4 Meeting Schedule: The Committee shall meet quarterly, with provision for special called meetings as needed.

6.0 AWARDS CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

- 6.1 Thomas C. Ellis Award: This award shall be presented to a person within the Division who has exhibited the exceptional spirit of dedication to public service, conservation and professionalism represented by the career of Thomas C. Ellis, and whose accomplishments have significantly advanced the mission of the Division in terms of conservation, recreation and education; have developed and broadened the constituency of and public support for the state parks system and its programs; and, have represented a high degree of innovation and creativity and professionalism.
- 6.2 Special Achievement Award: This type of recognition is appropriate when an employee or group of employees perform(s) substantially beyond expectations on a specific assignment of a non-recurring nature, This may involve performance of assigned duties with special effort or innovation that resulted in significant economies or other highly desirable benefits, creative efforts that made important contributions to the Divisions programs, or exemplary or courageous handling of an emergency situation related to official employment. This award can be presented in the areas of Maintenance, Administration, Natural Resource, Sustainability, Interpretation and Education.
- 6.3 Locke Craig Award: This award may be granted by the Division Director to a person or organization not directly affiliated with the Division that has exhibited the exceptional spirit of dedication to public service and the commitment to conservation represented by the accomplishments of North Carolina Governor Locke Craig, and whose efforts have developed and broadened the constituency of and public support for the state parks system and its programs; have fostered public appreciation of and connection with the state's natural resources; and, have represented a high degree of innovation and creativity.
- 6.4 Heroism Award: This award goes to employees or volunteers who perform an act of heroism. Heroism is defined as saving or assisting in saving life, or the attempting thereof, or the saving of significant property associated with the Division's activities or facilities at risk to their own life and outside of the skill level of training provided.
- 6.5 Division Commendation: (awarded to employees or group of employees: is defined as the saving or assisting in the saving of life; or the attempt thereof, or saving of significant property associated with Division activities of facilities within the skill level of training provided.
- 6.6 Park Safety Recognition: This award will be given annually to individual parks where there have been no preventable lost time accidents reported involving Division staff. The Safety

Committee will submit their nominations to the Awards Committee. Recognition will be made to qualifying parks through presentation of a framed certificate.

6.7 Other Awards: (not administered by Awards Committee)

6.7.1 Park of the Year: This award is to be presented annually at the Superintendent's Conference, to one park, selected from among its peers, that best exemplifies the Division's mission throughout the previous fiscal year. Each park is to submit an annual report of no greater than five pages to its District Superintendent (DISU). In each district, that park scoring highest in reference to categories described by the Division Awards Committee becomes that district's nominee for the award. Annual reports of the four park "finalists" will then be the basis for award judging by a panel determined by the Division Awards Committee.

6.7.2 Program and Park Awards: These awards are presented by individual programs or park units within the Division of Parks and Recreation and recognize an employee's or group of employees' achievements pertaining to the duties and responsibilities of the presenting program or unit. These awards should be directly tied to the group or individual's performance.

A Division program is a group within the Division of Parks and Recreation that has distinct and specific duties and responsibilities. Examples of Division programs include but are not limited to: Maintenance, Administrative, Natural Resources, Interpretation, and Law Enforcement. These awards are to be presented only to DPR employees. To be objective and fair in these awards, criteria should be developed for each award. The criteria should be kept on file to provide consistency in presenting such awards in subsequent years.

Frequency of the awards should also be determined and referenced in the criteria for each award. These criteria should be submitted to the awards committee for oversight but not for recipient selection.

It should be clear in the text used in any type of certificate or plaque that these awards are from the park or program level. These awards should be presented in internal park or program ceremonies among peers.

6.7.3 Annual Service Awards: This award recognizes an employee's years of service to the state in five year increments.

6.7.4 Volunteer Awards: Refer to the Division's Volunteer Program Guidelines.

6.8 Awards Number and Frequency: There is no limit to the number and frequency of these types of awards provided the special act or service warrants recognition.

7.0 NOMINATING PROCEDURE

- 7.1 Eligibility: An employee (seasonal, temporary, permanent, and part-time) or park or program or section within the Division and contributors outside the Division are eligible for established awards based on the criteria listed.
- 7.2 Who May Nominate: All Division employees may nominate anyone they feel may qualify for such an award.
- 7.3 When to Nominate: Award nominations should be submitted to the Awards Committee **as soon as a contribution has been made**.
- 7.4 How to Nominate: Nominations for Division awards should be made through the Division's Awards Database.

8.0 SELECTION

- 8.1 Review Frequency: The awards committee will review nominations quarterly. Committee members nominated for an award will not participate in committee discussion or action on the nominations.
- 8.2 Recommendation and Selection: Selection shall be made by majority vote of those present. The committee shall send its recommendations to the Division Director for approval. Division Director will notify the Awards Committee of approval, denial or need for additional information within 30 days of submission or the award will be considered approved and will be presented at the next ceremony for award presentation.
- 8.3 Notification of Nominator: Person making nominations should be notified within 60 days as to the status of the nomination. This notification should be transmitted by the Chairman of the Awards Committee as "awarded", "denied" or "additional information needed". In the event that the honor is "awarded", the Chairman should also communicate this status to the recipient's supervisor and District Superintendent or Program Head.

9.0 AWARDS PRESENTATION PROCESS

- 9.1 Responsibility for Distinguished Service and Special Achievement Awards: The Division Director or his designee will present the Distinguished Service and Special Achievement Awards preferably in a public ceremony within the quarter in which selection is made.
- 9.2 Responsibility for Annual Service Awards: Annual Service Awards should be presented by the employee's immediate supervisor. In the case of field personnel, service awards will be presented by the individual park superintendent and district superintendent. Every attempt should be made to present these awards in a public ceremony, division function or training that involves the recipients' coworkers and peers.

- 9.3 Responsibility for Park Safety Recognition: This recognition will be given annually to the selected individual parks in a public ceremony by the Division Safety Officer and/or district superintendent.
- 9.4 Responsibility for Publicity of all Awards: The Awards Committee chairperson shall provide information to the Public Information Officer who shall be responsible for contacting the award recipient's area newspaper to encourage articles recognizing the recipient and their accomplishments.
- 9.5 Ceremony Scheduling: Two events during the operations calendar year will include scheduled awards presentations. Awards may be presented during the spring commissioning of rangers. A fall ceremony will be held during the Superintendents Conference. In the event that either of these is cancelled, the awards will be presented at the next most feasible and appropriate public event.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

Person and title or park being nominated: _____

Type of Award Nomination:

_____ Thomas C. Ellis Award

This award shall be presented to a person within the Division who has exhibited the exceptional spirit of dedication to public service, conservation and professionalism represented by the career of Thomas C. Ellis, and whose accomplishments have significantly advanced the mission of the Division in conservation, recreation and education; developed and broadened the constituency of and public support for the state parks system and its programs; and, have represented a high degree of innovation, creativity and professionalism.

_____ Special Achievement Award

This award provides recognition for an employee or group of employees who perform substantially beyond expectations on a specific assignment of nonrecurring nature; may involve duties with special effort in innovation resulting in significant economies; creative efforts that contribute to Division programs'; exemplary or courageous handling of an emergency related to official employment. This award can be presented in the areas of Maintenance, Administration, Natural Resource, Sustainability, Interpretation and Education.

_____ Locke Craig Award

This award may be granted by the Division Director to a person or organization not directly affiliated with the Division that has exhibited the exceptional spirit of dedication to public service and the commitment to conservation represented by the accomplishments of North Carolina Governor Locke Craig, and whose efforts have developed and broadened the constituency of and public support for the state parks system and its programs; have fostered public appreciation of and connection with the state's natural resources; and, have represented a high degree of innovation and creativity.

_____ Heroism Award

This honor shall be awarded to employees or volunteers and is defined as the saving or assisting in the saving of life; or the attempt thereof, or saving of significant property associated with Division activities or facilities at risk to the individual's own life and outside the skill, knowledge and abilities expected or trained for by the Division as specified in the employees work plan or job description.

_____ Division Commendation

This designation shall be awarded to employees or group of employees and is defined as the saving or assisting in the saving of life; or the attempt thereof, or saving of significant property associated with Division activities of facilities within the skill level of training provided.

Please include with this nomination form a description of why this person or group is being nominated. Include things like who, what, when, where and how concerning the event or action for which the person is being nominated. Attach this information separately to this nomination form.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PARK OF THE YEAR CRITERIA

The mission of the state parks system is: *to conserve and protect representative examples of the natural beauty, ecological features and recreational resources of statewide significance; to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment; and to provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural heritage.*

Scoring Categories:

- 1) *“Conserve and protect representative examples of the natural beauty, ecological features and recreational resources of statewide significance”*
Examples: Acres burned by prescription; number of new species added to Natural Resource Inventory Database; response to natural disasters; active invasive management; creation and continuation of species monitoring programs.
- 2) *“Provide outdoor recreational opportunities”*
Examples: Establishment of new trails or improvement of existing trails and other public access areas; completion of capital improvement projects on schedule; development of low-impact construction designs; successful implementation of Central Reservations System.
- 3) *“In a safe and healthy environment”*
Examples: Prompt completion of detailed and accurate law enforcement reports; active community policing; innovative repair and reuse of materials; stewardship regarding fuel consumption, recycling programs and other sustainable initiatives.
- 4) *“Provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural heritage”*
Examples: Creation of new, unique programs, events and displays; increased participation in interpretive/education programs annually; increased volunteer hours and diversity of projects completed by volunteers.

Each park is to submit an annual report to its District Superintendent (maximum 5 pages) detailing its progress in all categories above. Annual reports will be posted on the FIND for all staff to view by September 15. DISU's will nominate the highest ranking park within their district (based on its score.) Park finalists from each district will be judged by a panel determined by the Division Awards Committee. The Committee will choose one category to be given greater weight for consideration each year.

The Park of the Year will have a special designation on the Division's website and newsletter, which highlights the park's achievements. Similar notice will be provided to local media and DENR by the Public Information Officer.

The state park awarded “Park of the Year” is encouraged to display a circulating award in its visitor center, noting its achievement, for a one-year period.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PARK OF THE YEAR SCORING SUMMARY

State Park: _____ FY: _____ Total Score: _____

1 - Satisfactory 2 - Above Satisfactory 3 - Excellent 4 - Exceptional 5 – Outstanding

BUDGET	1	2	3	4	5
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- Expenditures at or below budget
- New sources of revenue
- Increased diversity of concessions
- Accurate accounting

CUSTOMER SERVICE	1	2	3	4	5
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- CRS implementation
- % Visitation increase
- Safety improvements

LAW ENFORCEMENT/EMERGENCY RESPONSE	1	2	3	4	5
------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

- Decrease in report errors
- Provide innovative training
- Community policing
- Current CITE records
- Minimize demerits from equipment inventory

MAINTENANCE	1	2	3	4	5
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- Major projects on schedule
- Reuse/Repair
- Work orders completed
- Using PPE

PROGRAMMING	1	2	3	4	5
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- Programs/Participation
- New displays and programs
- Up-dating EELE
- % Programs address annual interpretive theme

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
➤ Connect visitors					
➤ Acres burned					
➤ Species in NRID					
➤ React to disasters					
➤ Interpretive displays					
➤ Monitoring programs					
VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS	1	2	3	4	5
➤ Hours completed					
➤ Diversity of services					
➤ CSWs accommodated					
SUSTAINABILITY	1	2	3	4	5
➤ Improved recycling					
➤ Reuse of materials					
➤ Labeling and education for the public					
➤ Decrease in fuel consumption					
➤ Incorporate new energy saving methods					
ADMINISTRATION	1	2	3	4	5
➤ Timesheet punctuality					
➤ Proficient documentation for seasonals					
➤ Address payroll issues					
➤ Facilities' safety audit reporting					
➤ Attendance at safety meetings					
➤ OSHA form 300 report					
➤ Reduction of work-days missed by injury					
➤ Abates safety deficiencies					