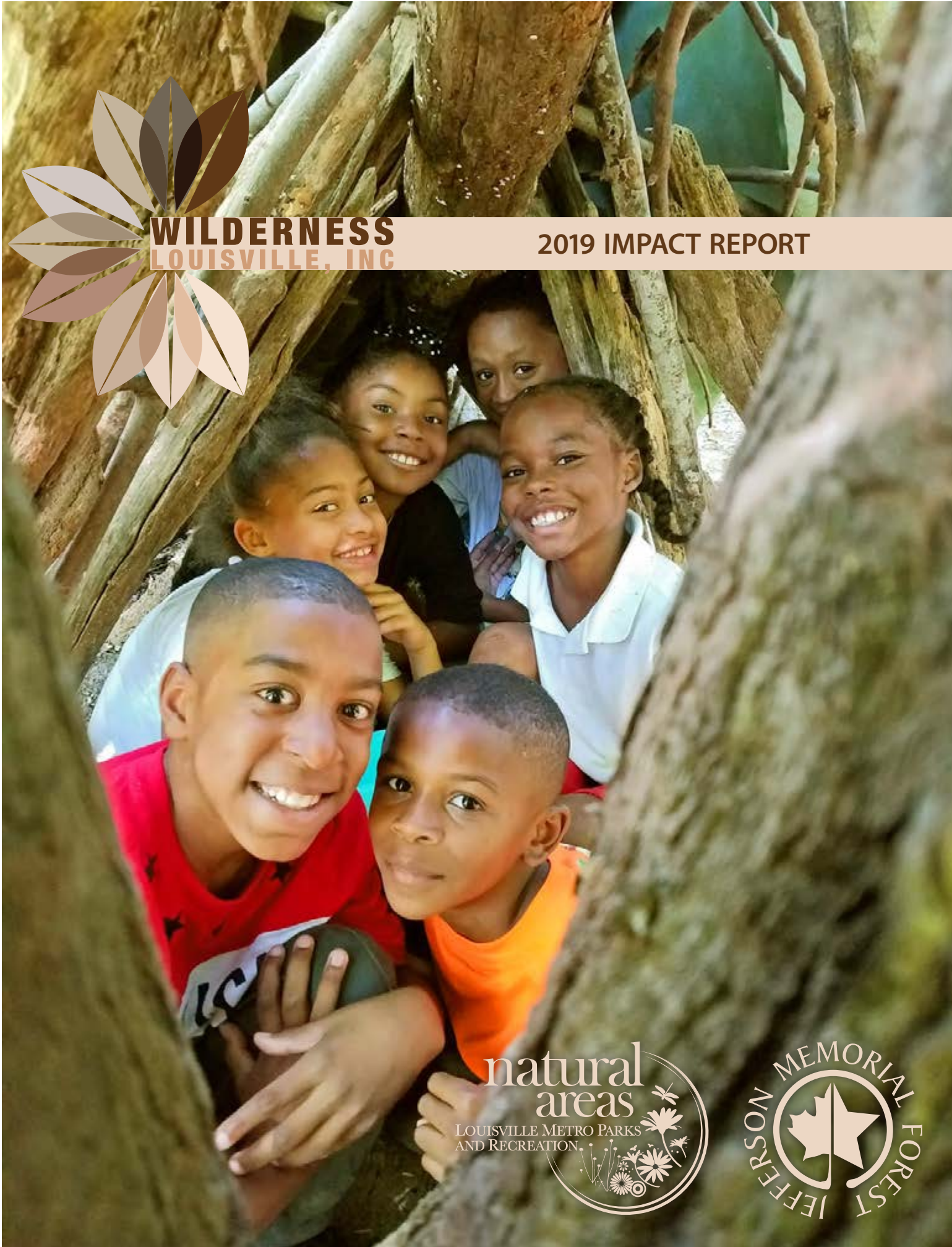




WILDERNESS
LOUISVILLE, INC

2019 IMPACT REPORT



Letter From the Director and Chair

Dear friends and supporters,

In 2013, Wilderness Louisville formed to be the non-profit champion for Louisville's natural areas. This important milestone occurred not a minute too soon? in the 65th year since the establishment of the Jefferson Memorial Forest and nine years after creation of Louisville Parks and Recreation's Natural Areas Division.

The threats facing Louisville's natural areas, such as habitat degradation, invasive and exotic species, pollution, development pressure and climate change are real and substantial. Yet just as substantial are the opportunities to conserve and protect local natural places as inclusive spaces where all Louisvillians - our children and families, our friends and neighbors, and our fellow citizens - are engaged to enjoy the benefits of time spent in nature.

This inaugural annual impact report is intended to document the growing partnership between Parks' Natural Areas and Wilderness Louisville to steward the nearly 7,200 acres of woodlands, riparian areas, and meadows. Further in the spirit of partnership we also want to give a special thanks to the many donors, staff, volunteers, Wilderness Louisville members, and partners who continue to contribute their time, energy, and resources to this shared endeavor.

We're excited for what the future holds, and we look forward to seeing you all at the Forest in 2020!

Andy Reynolds,
Chair, Wilderness Louisville

Bennett Knox,
Parks Administrator, Natural Areas
Executive Director, Wilderness Louisville



Board Members



Andy Reynolds
Chair

Public Sector Representative,
Waste Management



Vicki Welch
Vice-Chair

Retired,
Louisville Metro Council



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Treasurer

Director of Donor and Community
Relations, Kentucky Waterways Alliance



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Secretary

Chief Office of Strategic Initiatives,
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Member

Program Evaluator,
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Athletics Director,
Portland Christian School



JoAnn James
Member

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Social Worker



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Randal Strobo
Member

Attorney,
Strobo Barkley PLLC



Bennett Knox
Executive Director, Ex-Officio

Administrator,
Natural Areas



Dana Kasler
Ex-Officio

Director, Louisville
Parks and Recreation

*Thank you for being
a part of our community
and sharing your love for
Louisville's natural legacy.*

Major Activities

CHAMPIONING LOUISVILLE'S NATURAL AREAS

Wilderness Louisville exists to be the champion for Louisville's natural areas, from the nation's largest, municipally-owned urban forest, Jefferson Memorial Forest to the ones in your neighborhood. Jefferson Memorial Forest, aka, "The Forest" is the crown jewel of the Natural Areas Division and encompasses nearly 6,800 of the 7,200 acres managed by staff based at the Forest. In 2019, with support from Wilderness Louisville, a great deal was accomplished to advance the vision that everyone in Louisville has access to safe, natural spaces to explore and behold. Here are some of the highlights.



Board members and Natural Areas staff show off a new piece of trail equipment.

PUTTING YOUR DONATIONS TO WORK

Wilderness Louisville continues to advance the conservation mission of the Natural Areas Division. Currently staff are responsible for maintaining and improving over 47 miles of soft-surface trails. It might be of interest to know that decades ago when the first trails were built at the Forest, they were all scratched out by the hands of volunteers. Not until the Natural Areas Division was established was equipment purchased to make the job easier. One such piece of useful equipment, a mini-skid steer, served admirably for many years, but recently gave out. Fortunately, Wilderness Louisville stepped up to assist by providing funds in late 2019 for the purchase of a brand new Ditchwitch SK800. We look forward

to using this equipment to, among other projects, complete construction of a new trail at the Clifton Heights Greenway so that this natural area may be formally opened for public use.

CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIP

We strive to serve the community and work to build community partnerships that promote positive change. Restoring natural areas for safe enjoyment by the community takes time and many hands, but 2019 did witness some immediate improvements. For instance, Natural Areas staff and community volunteers repaired, rerouted, and built over 3 miles of trails to decrease the effects of erosion within natural areas including multiple locations at the Forest and at the Clifton Heights Greenway. Working together with partners, including SummerWorks, we also removed invasive species across 136 acres including woodlands at Chickasaw Park and the Forest Green Greenway. And with the help of Jim Beam Suntory and the Kentucky Waterways Alliance, we cleaned up flood damage at Kulmer Beach Reserve including removal of 300 tires!

Natural Areas staff have sustained involvement with certain community boards and steering committees that have complementary missions to advance conservation, social equity, and outdoor recreation-based tourism. Some examples include the Louisville/Jefferson County Environmental Trust, the Southwest Dream Team, the John Muir Legacy Trail committee, the Fairdale Business Association, the West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative's resident community council, and Middle Fork Beargrass Creek Working Group. These collaborations have benefited many of the activities described herein.



Kentucky Waterways Alliance, Jefferson Memorial Forest, and Jim Beam Suntory all partnered together to remove over 300 tires off Kulmer Beach!

Major Activities

ADVANCING CONNECTIVITY

The 2009 Jefferson Memorial Forest Master Plan remains the blueprint for improving “Louisville’s Community Forest”. Of the plan’s many recommendations, better connecting the Forest to the surrounding community remains key. This will be accomplished most directly through the planned routing of the Louisville Loop from the village of Fairdale; to the Forest’s Welcome Center and adjacent Tom Wallace Recreation



Area; and on to the currently completed Louisville Loop trailhead just south of Riverside: the Farnsley-Moremen Landing. Fairdale is the self-proclaimed “Gateway to Jefferson Memorial Forest” and 2019 witnessed key developments that bring us closer to the day when it will be possible to hike, bike, or stroll from Fairdale to the Forest. With support of Councilman Mark Fox and the Fairdale Business Association, construction commenced on Fairdale Village Green, a new gateway park in the heart of Fairdale, which will serve as an ultimate trailhead for the Louisville Loop connection between the Forest and Fairdale. Completion is expected in spring of 2020. In addition, design has advanced for Phase I of the David L. Armstrong Improvement Project to construct an accessible path through the Tom Wallace Recreation Area from the entrance to the lake so individuals of all abilities may enjoy its tranquility. Phase I includes various recreational amenity improvements such as improved picnic, shelter, and play facilities as well as lake access and parking improvements. Design and construction documentation will be completed in 2020 with additional fundraising required to initiate construction.

PROVIDING YOUTH WITH CRITICAL NATURAL CONNECTIONS

In 2019 across all the various youth programs we offer, nearly 5,000 youth were provided critical connections to nature. Jefferson Memorial Forest has long been a destination for local schools to take part in environmental education, recreation, and teambuilding field trips. What better way to learn about nature than by experiencing nature up close! The Forest also is one of the most popular summer camp venues with six weeklong day camps full of outdoor fun and learning including canoeing, hiking, archery, and plenty of hands-on environmental activities.



Creative nature play with the ECHO Mobile!



2019 Summer Camp

Major Activities

Moreover, for the past 12 years, we have been dedicated to expanding outdoor opportunities for youth in underserved areas. Our approach has involved a very intentional effort to go beyond the historic model of expecting youth and families to simply find us at the Forest. Rather we have focused on building partnerships that are creating opportunities for youth to explore nature in their neighborhoods. We are, of course, referring to the Louisville is Engaging Children Outdoors initiative (Louisville ECHO). This initiative has steadily grown since 2008, and with the support of Wilderness Louisville, across its various components (early childhood nature play, out-of-school time programming, school field trips, youth job training, and community events) 3,300 youth ages 3 to 21 were provide free outdoor experiences in 2019. Moreover, in 2019 we formally launched our free "ECHO Kids" membership program whereby caregivers in our priority neighborhoods are encouraged to sign up youth in their care. In this way caregivers may keep abreast of ECHO's year-round opportunities, including, for youth that are passionate about the nature, opportunities for summer employment. Together, Wilderness Louisville and Natural Areas staff are working diligently to realize the vision that every child has frequent, safe, and nearby opportunities to experience nature.

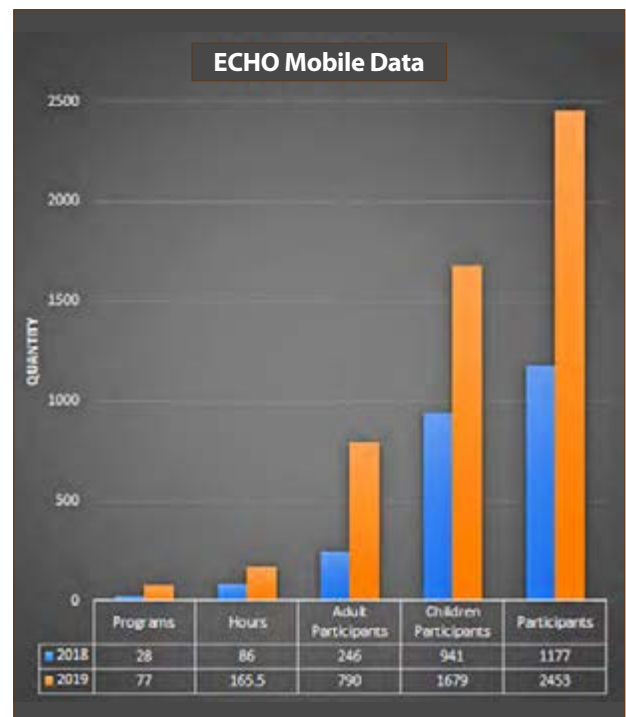


Community Outreach Coordinator JoCari Beattie sits in on a West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative Meeting

STRIVING FOR MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In late 2018, the Natural Areas Division received a \$195,000 grant from the National Recreation and Parks Association through their Great Urban Parks Campaign program. The purpose of this grant is to advance a key component of the West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative to create equitable access to nature in Louisville. Specifically, this funding, along with a \$105,000 donation of in-kind engineering support from the Louisville

Metropolitan Sewer District, supported an open and inclusive community engagement process to design and develop construction documentation for long-overdue restoration of the pond in Chickasaw Park and to develop a forest play area that will reactivate a long-neglected woodland in the park. In 2019, as of result of this community-informed engagement process involving community, our partners, stakeholders, and a council of neighborhood residents, we completed detailed conceptual designs for these improvements. Final design and construction drawings and the associated estimate of probable cost will be completed in 2020. Once funded and constructed these improvements will complement others such as the Shawnee bicycle pump track (completed in 2018), the Shawnee Boat Ramp (to be completed in 2020) and ultimately the proposed regional Shawnee Outdoor Learning Center. Together, these amenities will support an expansion of the Louisville ECHO program which is providing activities for youth from ages 3 to 21 to engage in nature. Wilderness Louisville, with your support, raised over \$102,000 since 2015 to support the Louisville ECHO program.



Local Impact

7,228 Acres of Forest and Natural Areas

336 Acres Under Active Management

464,000 Annual Visitors to Jefferson Memorial Forest

4,993 youth received outdoor experiential education

2,542 hours volunteered by 146 volunteers, valued at \$54,449.64

275 species of trees, shrubs, and ferns

419 registered ECHO Kids in priority Neighborhoods

ECHO KIDS BY ZIP CODE

115-146 CHILDREN	50-82 CHILDREN
83-114 CHILDREN	17-49 CHILDREN

47.9 miles of hiking, shared use mountain biking, and equestrian trails along with 1 bicycle pump track

12 outdoor recreation activities serving the South Points scenic area

2019 Financials

WILDERNESS LOUISVILLE

JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOREST AND NATURAL AREAS

NET ASSETS
BEGINNING OF THE YEAR:
\$41,291

REVENUES

GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS
\$98,714

EXPENDITURES

PROGRAM EXPENSES
\$79,878

FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING
\$43,235

MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL \$3,112

NET ASSETS
END OF THE YEAR:
\$13,798

GIFT SHOP, RENTALS, CAMPGROUNDS

\$65,973 / 3%

WILDERNESS LOUISVILLE
SUPPORT
\$79,878 / 4%

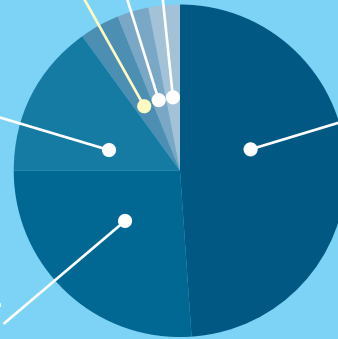
EXTERNAL GRANTS
TO METRO
\$297,000 / 15%

METRO CAPITAL
SUPPORT
\$541,500 / 26%

REVENUES

CAMPS, PROGRAMS, SPONSORSHIPS
\$60,790 / 3%

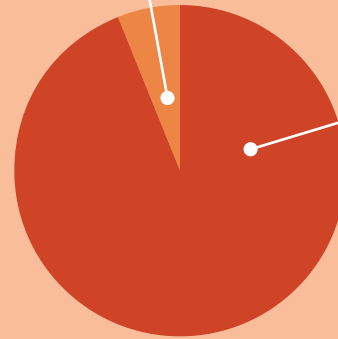
METRO
OPERATING
SUPPORT
\$1,000,536 / 49%



EXPENDITURES

ADMINISTRATIVE
6%

PROGRAMS
94%

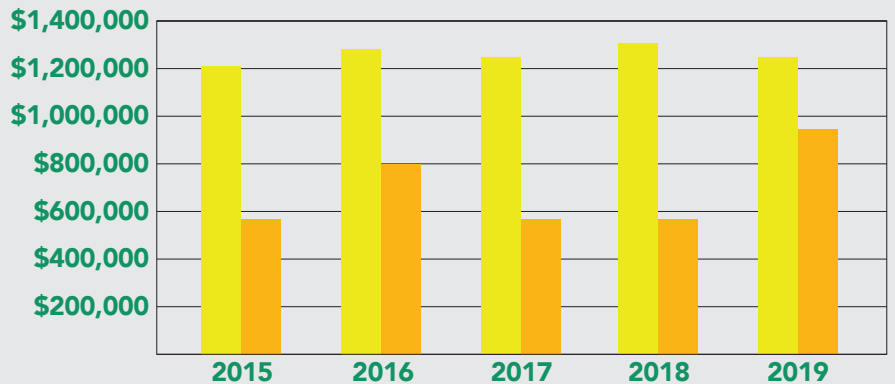


NOTE

JMF Operating Budget is the sum of metro allocated funding plus the total revenues generated by the park.

Capital and External Funding is the sum of non-operating metro allocated funds, grant awards and Wilderness Louisville Inc. contributions.

ANNUAL SUPPORT



JMF OPERATING BUDGET

CAPITAL AND EXTERNAL FUNDING

Wilderness Louisville Supporters

\$5,000 AND ABOVE

Norton Foundation
LG&E
Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Kentucky
Dawn Foods
Brown-Forman
Dow Chemical
Snowy Owl Foundation
Dan Caudill

\$500-\$4,999

Louisville Youth Philanthropy Council
Anonymous
Aetna Better Health of Kentucky
Kentuckiana Indiana Single Hikers and Walkers
John Tandy
Grace Wooding

\$100-\$499

Mary Lou Northern
Joe Koerner
Tape Industrial Sales
Thompson Armstrong
Dave Roelfs
Joy Roelfs
Bennett Knox
Chuck Haddaway
Joann James
Adrienne Jones
Alston Noronha
Bruce Shinbach
Patricia Tennen
Steve Thornberry

\$25-\$99

Stevon Edwards
Joanna Erny
Charlotte Caldwell
Milton Borntreger
Sammie Brian
Catherine Ford
Todd Goldbelewisrg
TJ Hofmann
Jessica Kane
Kenneth Karem
Barbara Knox
David L. Knox
Brittney Mccormick
Jennifer Nelson
Michael Raquinio
Bob Schindler
Leeni Shrestha
Vicki Welch
Geoff Wohl
Theresa Zawacki
Rick Benningfield
Lorin Bridges
Cathy Brown
Andrea Caldwell
Phillip Canada
Christine Deeble
Steve Elble
Theresa Figuerado
David Foster
Cindi Fowler
Matthew Gaeta
David Hale
Douglas Hensel
Rebecca Katz
Paul Kim

Bryan Lewis
Ben Lovell
Melissa Mastin
Jeffrey Noble
Michael Norman
Jennifer Odea
Lynn Rippy
Marsha Scobee
Bijaya Shrestha
Ellen Slucher
Michelle Spain
Randy Strobo
Kelly Sullivan

Jenny Johnston
Matt Welch
Jennifer Brian
Annette Dangerfield
Virginia Delaney
Michelle Knox
Amy Talbott
Daniel Weinstein
Kaitlyn Whiteside
Scott Williams
Brittany Timberlake
Lauren Wahl



Thank you for your generous contribution!

Become a champion for Louisville's natural areas by joining our membership program. We offer three membership levels: Enthusiast, Ranger, and Trailblazer. If you would like to become a member or simply make a donation, go to wildernesslouisville.org. All memberships are good for one full year from date of purchase. Thank you for supporting Wilderness Louisville!

Enthusiast Membership: \$25

A t-shirt or a hat
A bumper sticker
Our monthly e-newsletter
An invitation to our annual member appreciation event

Ranger Membership: \$50

A t-shirt and a hat
A bumper sticker
Our monthly e-newsletter
An invitation to our annual member appreciation event

Trailblazer Membership: \$100

An invitation to exclusive trailblazer member events
A t-shirt and a hat
A bumper sticker
Our monthly e-newsletter
An invitation to our annual member appreciation event

Wilderness Louisville

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