

# 2023 Annual Conference

## *Telling the Stories of Our Parks, Forests, and Trails*

September 11-14, 2023  
Unicoi State Park & Lodge  
Helen, Georgia



## AGENDA

### Monday, September 11

Noon to 5 pm

Registration Table Open

7 to 9 pm

Evening Meet & Greet Reception; Cash Bar

## Tuesday, September 12

- 9 am **Welcome & Introductions**  
*Damon Kirkpatrick, CEO, Friends of Georgia State Parks & Historical Sites*
- 9:45 am **Opening Plenary: Forming Deep Connections Through Creativity & Storytelling**  
*Mike Brown, Founder, [Brainzooming](#)*
- 10:45 am **Break**
- 11 am **Concurrent Breakout 1: Florida's Greener Initiative**  
*Julia Gill Woodward, CEO, and Tammy Gustafson, Board President, Florida State Parks Foundation*
- Concurrent Breakout 2: Forming New & Unique Partnerships**  
*Marci Mowery, President, Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation*
- Damon Kirkpatrick, CEO, Friends of Georgia State Parks & Historical Sites*
- Noon **Lunch Topic: I Love My State Parks Week**  
*John Floberg, Executive Director, Washington State Parks Foundation*
- 1:15 pm **Concurrent Round Table 1: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software**  
*Moderator: Pam Metzger, PA Parks & Forests Foundation*
- Concurrent Round Table 2: Building Chapters & Friends Groups**  
*Moderator: Will Coté, Parks & Trails New York*
- 2:15 pm **State Parks within a National Network of Old-Growth Forests**  
*Dr. Sarah Adloo, Executive Director of the Old-Growth Forest Network*
- 3:30 pm **Time to Explore Unicoi State Park and/or Oktoberfest in Helen, GA!**  
**Dinner on your own**

## Wednesday, September 13

- 8:45 am **Welcome & Overview of the Day**
- 9 am **Overcoming Burnout Through Mindfulness and Yoga**  
*Charlene Hammersen, Owner, Yonah Yoga*
- 10:15 am **Break**
- 10:30 am **Panel Discussion: Ways to Get All Terrain Wheelchairs into Your State Park System**  
*Michelle O’Kelly, Fund Developer, Michigan Department of Natural Resources*  
*Seth Miller, Executive Director, Oregon Parks Forever*  
*Melanie Dunn, Manager, Aimee Copeland Foundation*
- Noon **Lunch & Track Chair Demo**
- 1:30 pm **COVID’s Lasting Impacts on State Park Visitation**  
*Chase Perren, graduate student, University of Georgia*
- 2:30 pm **Sharing Your Stories**  
*Mike Brown, Founder of Brainzooming*
- 3:30 pm **Break**
- 3:45 pm **Resource Sharing Time**  
*Discuss your challenges, opportunities, lessons learned, and best management practices with your fellow conferencegoers.*
- ~4:30 pm **Break**
- Tour of local historical site**
- Dinner and dancing at site**

## Thursday, September 14

- 8:45 am      **Welcome & Overview of the Day**
- 9 am          **Simplified Fundraising Planning for Small Nonprofits**  
*Chad Barger, CFRE, Owner, Productive Fundraising*
- 10 am        **Concurrent Roundtable 1: Recruiting & Retaining Board Members**  
*Moderator: Marci Mowery, PA Parks & Forests Foundation*
- Concurrent Roundtable 2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts**  
*Moderator: Tasha Ferris, PA Parks & Forests Foundation*
- 11 am        **Closing Session: Telling Your Stories Back Home**  
*Mike Brown, Founder of [Brainzooming](#)*
- 11:45 am     **Wrap-up & Goodbyes**  
**See you Next Year!**