



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Catoctin Mountain Park

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## Catoctin Mountain Park News Release

August 1, 2012  
For Immediate Release  
Debra Mills

### **Catoctin Mountain Park Celebrates National Park Service Founders Day with an Inaugural Interpretive Program at the Newly Acquired Lewis Property and Trails Activities**

The National Park Service marks another milestone on the road to its 2016 centennial on August 25, when the system turns 96 years old. Catoctin Mountain Park will celebrate the day with park visitors with a Pond Life Interpretive Program and through events showcasing hiking and the park trail system.

Superintendent Mel Poole is pleased to announce a Pond Life Interpretive Program as part of Founder's Day activities and the inaugural program at the newly acquired Lewis Property. The 18 acre tract became part of Catoctin Mountain Park on April 18, 2012 and includes the pond, the focal part of this program, open fields and wooded land connecting to what was Catoctin Mountain Park's eastern boundary. This gateway property will provide unique educational and recreational opportunities, including a real-time study of forest succession and a proposed trail connecting with the park's existing trail system. The August 25 Pond Study will begin at 2:00 p.m. at 317 West Main St., Thurmont, MD. Please enter through the gate and park in the defined grassy area just west of the house.

Trails can be an important part of healthy living. Hiking and trail maintenance provide opportunities to exercise, develop a healthy lifestyle and serve your community. There are no fees, no smelly locker rooms or waiting to use the equipment. Silence and solitude replace the constant noise in the "health" club, and provide the opportunity to refresh your mind while building your muscular strength. Trails can be experienced alone or in social groups.

New and returning park visitors are invited to experience park trails on a Ranger-led hike beginning at the Visitor Center at 10 am. Don't worry if you haven't hiked in years, the terrain is moderate overall. The hike will be paced within the abilities of everyone in the group. The hike will take visitors to Cunningham Falls, Hog Rock and Blue Ridge Summit in a 4.6 mile loop. An additional leader will take those desiring a shorter hike to the Falls and back for a total 2.8 mile walk. Everyone should be back to the Visitor Center shortly after noon.

Those desiring a more intense work-out or the rewards of community service are invited to join in a volunteer trail workday being held as part of the August 25 celebration. Volunteer crews keep trails clear, repair eroded areas and complete projects assuring the sustainability of the park trail system. Direction will be provided by Catoctin personnel and experienced volunteers. Enthusiasm and the desire to preserve park resources are the only requirements.

Please contact the Park Visitor Center staff at 301-663-9388 or by emailing [CATO\\_Volunteers@nps.gov](mailto:CATO_Volunteers@nps.gov), to register for the ranger-led hike or the trail workday. Registration is encouraged to assure proper leadership for the events. An additional trail workday may be scheduled if response exceeds crew capacity. The exact starting time and location of the trail workday will be determined by public response and will be provided before the workday.

Catoctin Mountain Park Founder's Day activities are part of the park's 2012 Active Trails program sponsored by a grant from the National Park Foundation. Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Mills at 301-663-9388 or [debbie\\_mills@nps.gov](mailto:debbie_mills@nps.gov) if you would like to learn more about this program striving to introduce individuals and groups to the importance of national parks and trails as part of healthy living. Don't despair if your group has other commitments for August 25. Organized groups of all ages are encouraged to schedule ranger-led hikes or trail maintenance workdays by special arrangement as part of a day or overnight experience at Catoctin Mountain Park.

Catoctin Mountain Park is one of nearly 400 units administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The park Visitor Center, located on State Route 77 three miles west of Thurmont, Maryland, is open daily from 10:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Correspondence should be addressed to: Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park, 6602 Foxville Road, Thurmont, MD 21788. Our website address is [www.nps.gov/cato](http://www.nps.gov/cato). General information can be obtained by calling the Visitor Center at (301) 663-9388.

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