

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 13, 2017**

**Registration Underway for Appalachian Ohio National Public Lands Day**

*Registration for host sites close on March 31st*

**THE PLAINS, OHIO** — Now it’s your turn to give back! The public is invited to join state and federal agencies, groups, and citizens across Appalachian Ohio in celebrating [National Public Lands Day](https://www.neefusa.org/public-lands-day) (NPLD) on Saturday, September 30, 2017.

In support of the national effort, Rural Action is actively recruiting host sites in eastern and southern Ohio. Our goal for each host site is to connect people to public lands in their community, inspire environmental stewardship, and encourage public lands for education, recreation, and general health.

By registering as a host site, you will be part of a regionally branded effort that is shaping up to be the inaugural Appalachian Ohio National Public Lands Day (AONPLD). Rural Action, Buckeye Trail Association, Wayne National Forest, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources are working together to organize the largest NPLD event in the state’s history.

Groups and organizations interested in participating can register through Rural Action at [ruralaction.org/aonpld](http://ruralaction.org/aonpld/). All efforts must take place with permission of the managing agency.

According to Shannon Stewart, who is helping to coordinate the event in Appalachian Ohio, many types of activities are possible on AONPLD.

“Participating groups can choose to host a service project, including a clean-up or trail maintenance, they may decide to do an educational activity such as an interpretive hike, or a fun activity like a canoe float. All activities help get people outside and connected to the land. We want people to come out and appreciate and value what is here for all of us.”

“The benefit of being part of this year’s public lands day is that for the first time agencies and nonprofit organizations are working together to organize a day of service, education, and fun across Appalachian Ohio, and by working together to market AONPLD across the region we anticipate greater participation and look forward to seeing positive results in local communities,” said Andrew Bashaw, executive director of Buckeye Trail Association.

**Registration for host sites closes March 31st.** The collaborative will then switch gears and help connect volunteers to sites they would like to join for AONPLD through September. Follow #AONPLD on social media for new developments.

**About National Public Lands Day**

Nationally, NPLD is the largest, single-day volunteer effort for public lands. In 2016, over 200,000 participants volunteered on 2,600 sites around the nation, generating the equivalent of $18 million in volunteer efforts for our public lands. The event, which is organized by National Environmental Education Foundation, is in its 24th year.

**About Rural Action**

Rural Action is a member-based community development organization. Their mission is to foster social, economic, and environmental justice in Appalachian Ohio. Learn more about Rural Action at [www.ruralaction.org](http://www.ruralaction.org/). You can also keep up with their work on Facebook, Twitter, Linked in, and Instagram.

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**CONTACT**

Shannon Stewart

shannon@ruralaction.org

740-767-4938

