

COLUMBIA CROSSING RIVER TRAILS CENTER 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

700+

PARTICIPANTS
IN RELAUNCHED
PROGRAMS

21K

VISTATION
BOUNCED
BACK

26%

INCREASE IN
FACEBOOK POST
REACH

52

FACILITY
RENTALS



IN-PERSON SERVICES

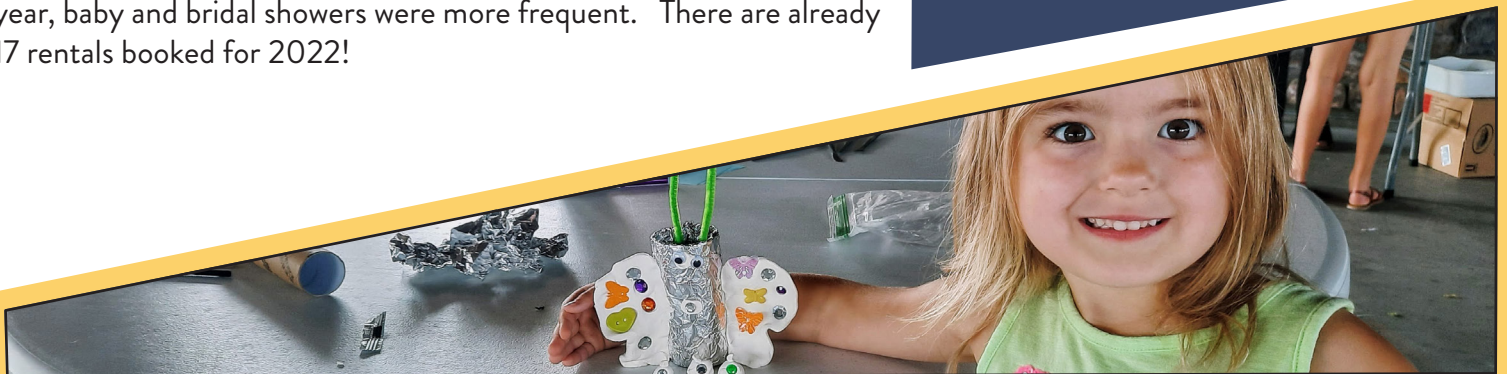
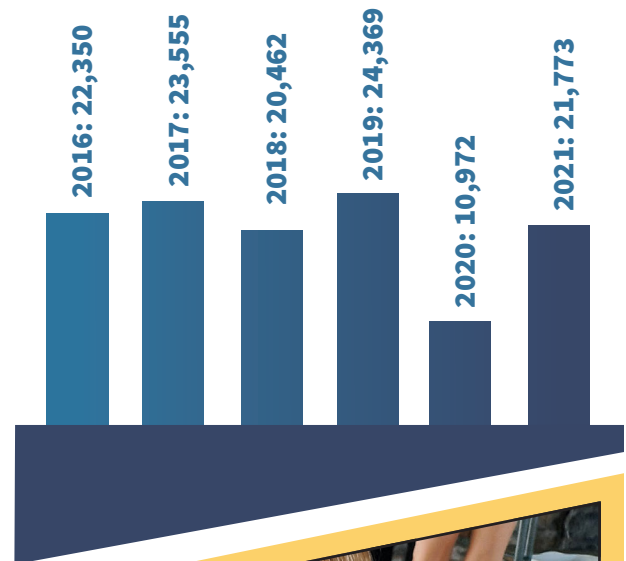
In 2021, we truly sought to return to normalcy. We started in a temporary shut down required for COVID-19 mitigation. Slowly, we welcomed back visitors, educational programs, and facility rentals; but, we did so with safety in mind. Our relaunch didn't come without challenges.

In 2020, we welcomed fewer than 11,000 visitors, but we finished 2021 at 21,773 visitors. This visitation is on par with pre-pandemic levels. However, SNHA staff were not able to welcome volunteers back at full capacity. Our small staff rose to the challenge and balanced programming with visitor services. Only in October 2021 did we offer limited volunteer opportunities to those that felt comfortable returning.

Columbia Crossing offers comfortable, beautiful outdoor space. The Riverview Deck has plenty of space for socially distanced gatherings. Although we had capacity restrictions, a total of 52 rentals generated \$19,268 in funding. Wedding packages remain popular. However, this year, baby and bridal showers were more frequent. There are already 17 rentals booked for 2022!

19K
GENERATED
FROM
RENTAL SPACE

21K
VISTATION
BOUNCED
BACK



PROGRAMS

700+

PARTICIPANTS
IN RELAUNCHED
PROGRAMS

PROGRAM OFFERED

9 EARLY CHILDHOOD

10 SCHOOL AGE

10 FAMILY/COMMUNITY

5 ADULT

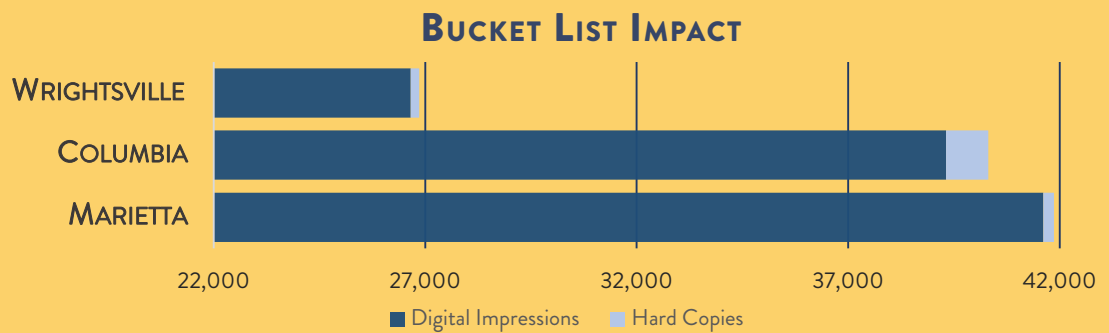
The Riverview Deck became the primary space for programs. In mid-April, we relaunched our preschool nature program: Tadpole Time. In June, SNHA launched River Ranger, a youth, outdoor explorer program.

Program Coordinator, Sophia Vayansky, joined the team in May 2021 with a tough task: offer educational experiences during a pandemic. She focused on our most popular programs and adapted them to be entirely outdoors. In the fall, we were able to offer our Ornament Making & Cabin Fever Craft Workshops indoors. All of our educational programming connected families to the river's natural and cultural heritage. Our favorite programs this year explored the legends of river monsters, the cicada swarm, and helped families make hiking sticks during Fourth Friday.

Wild river conditions and poor weather stunted our paddling tours. We did offer 4 tours from Columbia Crossing. The NPS funded these trips. They will be completed in summer 2022.

DIGITAL SERVICES

26%
INCREASE IN
FACEBOOK POST
REACH



In 2020, SNHA took our digital outreach to new levels by creating a litany of new amenities to access history and river information digitally. It was clear to us that many of these initiatives should continue after mitigation shutdowns ended. Here is a sampling of expanded and new digital initiatives from 2021:

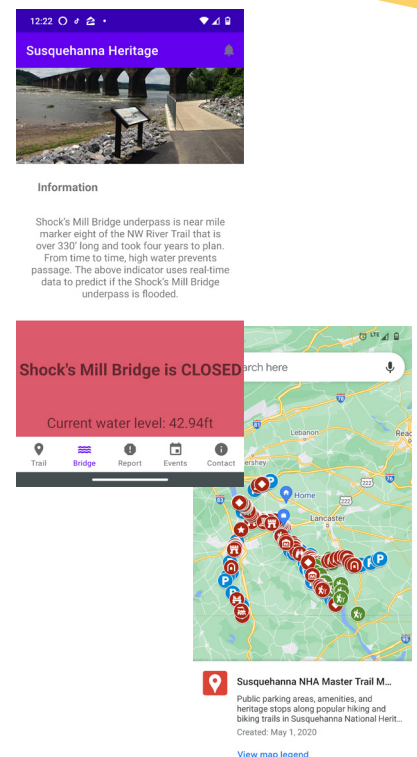
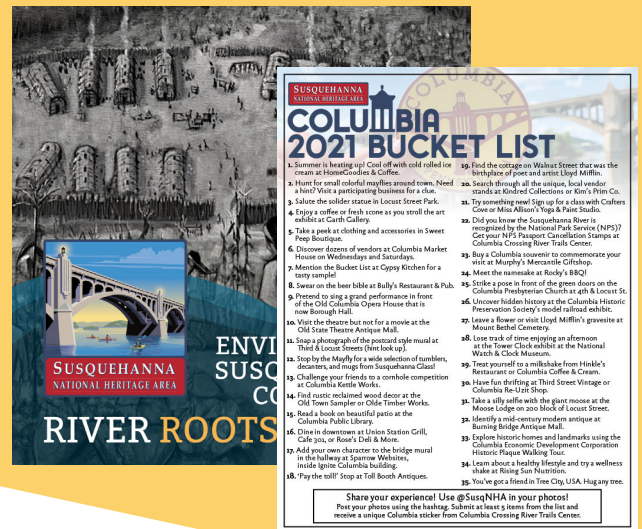
- River Town Bucket List
- Spotted Lanternfly Squishr Challenge
- River Roots Heritage Blog
- 'On this day in history' Posts
- Columbia River Park Self-Guided Walking Tour
- Weekly 'What Happening in the Heritage Area'



ANDROID APP

In 2020, SNHA started a Google Map that showcased all trail access and heritage site information for our river corridor. In early 2021, Franklin & Marshall College reached out to the community to offer development of a mobile application. Professor Ed Novak led the computer science course in which groups of students would develop fully-functional Android app prototypes for community partners. Susquehanna NHA applied to participate and was chosen as one of four projects. In a short three week time period, the students went beyond their assignment and launched the application on the Android platform.

First, the app connects users to trail information using the Google Map that Susquehanna NHA created. The app also allows Susquehanna NHA to send notifications about trail updates or construction. Users can also check to see if the James D. Warner Passageway under the Shock's Mill Bridge on the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail is flooded. The application has event and contact information for Susquehanna NHA to better connect our community to riverfront initiatives. Susquehanna NHA and local trail partners are particularly excited about one feature of the app which allows users to submit trail maintenance requests. Trail users can submit the trail name, mile marker, and photo of an issue. This interactive component will help trail managers keep our local trails clear and accessible.



NEW YEAR, OLD PLANS

In many ways, planning for the new year has involved looking back. In early 2020, Susquehanna NHA planned a number of initiatives that were all canceled due to the pandemic. Three major projects are returning to the river in 2022:

- A 5K Run & Paddle Race titled the Bridge Burners Challenge will draw regional visitors for Riverfest on the last weekend in June. SNHA is working with Columbia and regional partners to build a weekend of events across our three river towns.
- SUSQ Camp will once again hit the water this summer! Susquehanna NHA was awarded funding from the National Park Service and a local foundation to subsidize the week-long day camp. We hope to host twenty 12-15 year-olds for a week of outdoor recreation and environmental science.
- Exercise classes are always a great use of Columbia Crossing facilities. Many of our partner businesses were hit hard by the pandemic. SNHA has created an easy recreation partnership form to quickly and easily connect businesses to us.

In 2022, we have also slated a number of activities that connect our community and tourists to our important heritage stories.

- NPS Junior Ranger Workshops: SNHA staff have developed multiple hands on programs that fulfill National Park Service Junior Ranger requirements. Participants can earn badges for each workshop. SNHA also received a grant from NPS for fishing supplies and will be teaching youth fishing programs this summer.
- Columbia's Storied Places Exhibit: Our new exhibit features some of Columbia's most storied locations. From the riverfront industry to the opera house, we have pulled together great stories from the Columbia's first two centuries. This is also an interactive exhibit that allows visitors to add stories about any place in town. We invite you to come share your memories.
- Spring into the Park: A week long event is planned for March 22 - 26 to jump start outdoor recreation engagement. Free activities, kids workshops, and food trucks will fill Columbia River Park. SNHA hopes to build this to be an annual fundraiser that also brings our community closer together.



SUSQUEHANNA
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

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