

School of Environment and Natural Resources

Special Projects Intern at The Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Mya Garrison / Natural Resource Management

BACKGROUND

Agency:

- The Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Location:

- ODNR’s Fountain Square Campus in Columbus, Ohio

ODNR Mission Statement:

- “To ensure a balance between the wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all”



Interesting Facts:

- ODNR owns and manages more than 800,000 acres of land, including 75 state parks, 24 state forests, 140 state nature preserves, and 150 wildlife areas.
- The department has jurisdiction over more than 120,000 acres of inland waters; 7,000 miles of streams; 481 miles of Ohio River; and 2.25 million acres of Lake Erie.

How Did I Find This Opportunity?

- I found this internship through an announcement in the SENR Career Development Resources page in Carmen Canvas.

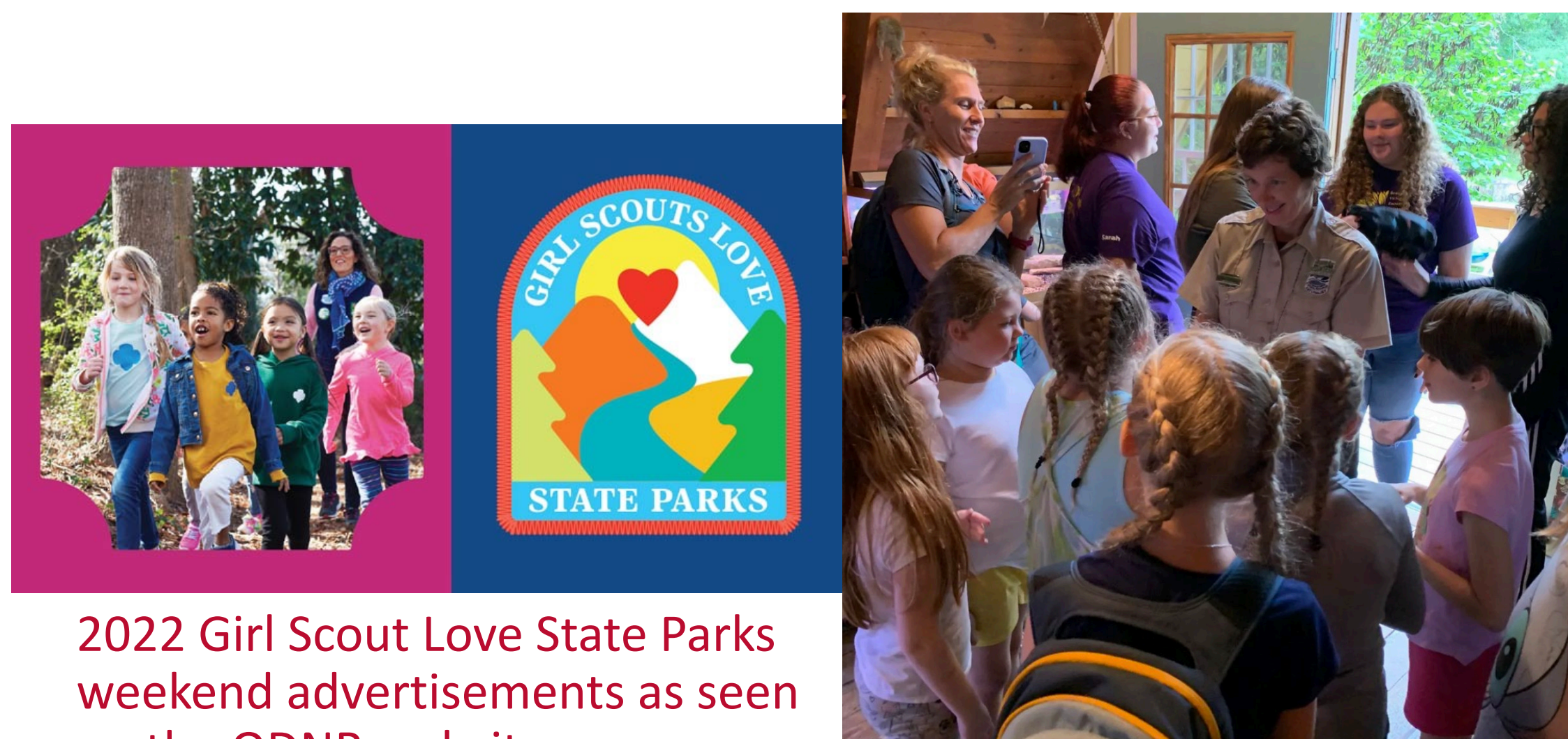


I was featured on posters and flyers displayed throughout the Natural Recourses Park during the 2022 Ohio State Fair! (My Picture is on the bottom right corner of the flyer)

FREQUENT JOB DUTIES

My Projects:

I administered and planned 35 programs across 9 of Ohio’s State Parks for the Girl Scouts Love State Parks 2022 event weekend allowing over 400 girls across the state to engage in fun outdoor exploration.



2022 Girl Scout Love State Parks weekend advertisements as seen on the ODNR website.

Girl Scouts discovering Ohio’s natural wonders with a naturalist at Shawnee State Park.

I educated children on the importance of literacy and having a connection with nature through my collaboration with park managers, naturalists, and other ODNR divisions on the Storybook Trail Program.



At the Storybook Trail opening for Adams Lake State Park, I engaged with families as we walked the new trail and read the story.

FREQUENT JOB DUTIES CONT.

While aiding a naturalist at Shawnee State Park, I used my classroom knowledge to educate families visiting the nature center on the importance of protecting our natural world with the help of the animals in the nature center.



I showed a Milk snake and Black Rat snake to families visiting the Shawnee State Park Nature Center.

I supervised the intake process and reviewed applications for The Conservation Teen Advisory Council (ConTAC). I provided unique opportunities for high school student-leaders from diverse backgrounds across Ohio to collaborate and contribute ideas that enhance ODNR’s youth outreach and program efforts.



Stream Quality testing in the Grand River with the new members of the Conservation Teen Advisory Council (ConTAC) along with Ohio’s Scenic Rivers Program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Girl Scouts of USA chose my Girl Scouts Love State Parks 2022 programs for Ohio to highlight to all state parks and Girls Scout councils across the country.
- I received my Assistant Kayaking Certification so I could help naturalists during kayaking programs.
- As a part of ODNR’s H2Ohio Program, I worked with 50+ third and fourth-grade children in an elementary school teaching them the importance of wetlands and wetland animals through fun activities.

REFLECTION/FUTURE CAREER

My experience as a Special Projects Intern with ODNR has allowed me to expand on my passion of providing environmental education that gives individuals the opportunity to form a relationship with nature. I am unsure what my future career looks like, but one of the most rewarding benefits I received from this internship is exposure to the diverse job opportunities existing in the environmental field.



I am showing a Black Rat snake to a group of children at Adams Lake State Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS/ADVICE

- Ask questions! My supervisor and all other staff members were extremely supportive and always made sure I had everything I needed to be successful.
- Have an appreciation for environmental education and how it builds relationships between people and nature.
- Explore your curiosity and remain openminded to all unique opportunities that present themselves.