



**Pittsburgh
Parks
Conservancy**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PITTSBURGH PARKS CONSERVANCY CONTINUES TO URGE PHYSICAL
DISTANCING AS DATA SHOWS SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN PARK USAGE**

Park Usage Has Increased by 83% in Allegheny County

PITTSBURGH – APRIL XX, 2020 – The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (pittsburghpark.org) is reminding Pittsburghers to practice proper physical distancing and follow Governor Wolf’s universal masking request while using City parks. According to Google’s recent COVID-19 community mobility report, from February 16 to March 29, park usage has increased by 83% in Allegheny County. Across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, park usage has increased by 7%. Proper physical distancing is maintaining a minimum of six feet from others.

Pennsylvania’s stay-at-home mandate allows individuals to leave their residences to engage in essential outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking, or running with proper physical distancing. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) reports that state and local parks, state forests, and trails are seeing record numbers of visitors, with more anticipated as the weather turns warmer.

“The increase in park usage is not surprising to me,” says Jayne Miller president and chief executive officer, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. “Our parks offer everyone in our community an opportunity to connect with nature and free access to the stress relief that nature and physical activity can provide during this uncertain time. It’s up to us to keep each other safe and keep our park system open. We need to stick together by staying apart. It really is that simple.”

Miller added, “Nature extends beyond our parks. To help with physical distancing, it’s important to note that people can enjoy the benefits of nature outside of parks; in their backyards, working in their gardens, walking in a greenway or by a stream, or by strolling down a tree-lined street. There are multiple ways to benefit from what nature has to offer.”

City parks remain open and usable unless deemed otherwise by the City of Pittsburgh. The City of Pittsburgh has temporarily closed all City playgrounds, basketball courts, and overlooks. Group sports also are prohibited in City parks.

Park facilities and restrooms operated by the Parks Conservancy are closed until further notice. Facility closures include the Frick Environmental Center (2005 Beechwood Blvd.), Parks Conservancy South Side office (45 S. 23rd St.), Schenley Plaza maintenance building (4100 Forbes Ave.), Schenley Park Café and

Visitor Center (101 Panther Hollow Rd.), and the horticultural and forestry facility (1 English Lane).

In addition, the Parks Conservancy has postponed all programming and special events through May 10, 2020. The Conservancy is working to reschedule most postponed events.

For more information visit pittsburghparks.org.

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About Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's historic city parks. A non-profit organization, the Parks Conservancy works closely with the City of Pittsburgh under an official public-private partnership agreement to restore and improve the city's park system to its full potential. To date, the Parks Conservancy has raised more than \$130 million and completed 21 major park improvement projects. The Parks Conservancy works with thousands of volunteers, hosts hundreds of events, and provides programming for more than 7,500 children annually.