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Friends



of Devil's Lake  
State Park

# Advocate

Volume 22 Number 1

Winter 2018

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## Winter at Devils Lake... Enjoy the Sounds of Silence

Winter brings new opportunities to get to know Devils Lake State Park in new and special ways! Visit the park during this time of year and you'll be rewarded with unique experiences. Since there are fewer people around in January and February, the many natural aspects of the park can be more fully enjoyed.

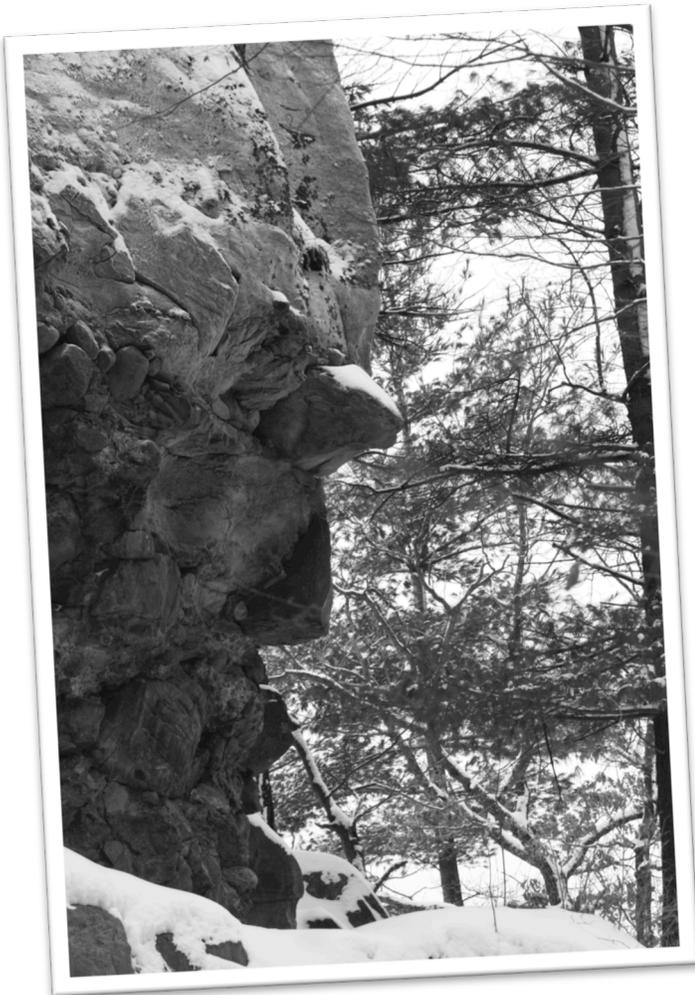
First, a word about safety: Winter presents added slip and fall risks everywhere. Try to enjoy the park with at least one other person so someone can help you or call for help if necessary. If you choose to enjoy the park alone, make smart choices about activities as to where and when. Make sure you are dressed warmly (including hats and gloves) and have proper footwear for the conditions you may encounter. Lastly, limiting or postponing an activity should always be considered.

Take a hike along the Tumbled Rocks Trail along the west shoreline and you'll see rocks and boulders in a whole new light. The snow provides contrast that heightens their features that are not obvious in the summer. Blowing snow creates interesting shapes and forms around the boulders, abstract art in nature. Taking short side ventures onto the ice will give you new perspectives of the bluffs above.

Snowshoeing along the East Bluff Woods Trail or the Steinke Basin Loop Trail will give you a great winter workout. Along the way, stop and listen... you'll hear crows sounding across the woods, blue jays scolding everyone they see, and chickadees planting tunes in your head. Toward dusk, the owls will keep you entertained as they hoot to each other. Footprints in the snow hint at the

type of critters in the area, so keep a sharp eye out for them. With the leaves off the trees, looking around will reveal fascinating rocks and trees that were previously hidden from view.

Ice on the lake allows ice fishermen to enjoy their sport in one of the most scenic locations in the world. If the lake is not snow covered, various forms and shapes can be seen in the frozen ice, providing more abstract art in nature. The ice also sounds off every once in a while with primal and primitive reverberations, sounds that hardy visitors have heard throughout history.





## # Ice Age Trail Alliance and Wisconsin Climbers Association Pitch In

Over the last year several partner organizations have pitched in to help maintain the Park.

The Wisconsin Climbers Association has been involved in pulling garlic mustard, removing graffiti from hard-to-reach rock faces, erosion control, and trail maintenance. They are often joined by the Chicago Mountaineering Club when they are out working – typically they put in a morning of work, then go off in the afternoon to enjoy the Park!

In August these organizations partnered with the national Access Fund (another climbers' organization) to manage erosion in one of the most visited climbing areas: underneath the Leaning Tower along the CCC/East Bluff Trail. The Access Fund puts three conservation teams in the field each year to work on projects like this. They really loved working at Devil's Lake and have asked to come back again in 2018.

Finally, in October the American Alpine Club came to Devil's Lake for a Craggin' Classic climbing weekend, and sent teams of climbers to help the Ice Age Trail Alliance and Park staff reroute and improve the Balanced Rock Trail. (This work will continue in 2018.) Climbers hauled gravel and asphalt, and moved large rocks, under the guidance of the IATA and DNR staff, in order to open up a major choke point in the trail just below Balanced Rock.

With your support through donations to the Friends, we look forward to continuing our partnership with all these organizations.

When snow is lacking it is the perfect time to hike the East Bluff Trail and the West Bluff Trail. Again, leaves off the trees allow you to discover many remarkable rocks and trees you would have otherwise missed. Countless springs seep out of the rock walls, creating beautiful and elaborate icefalls that morph and grow during the winter season... even more abstract natural art. Views of Devils Doorway are dramatically bolder with Devils Lake frozen white in the background, making the climb up to the Doorway very worthwhile.

Happy Trails,

Dave Barger  
Board President, Friends of Devil's Lake (FODL)

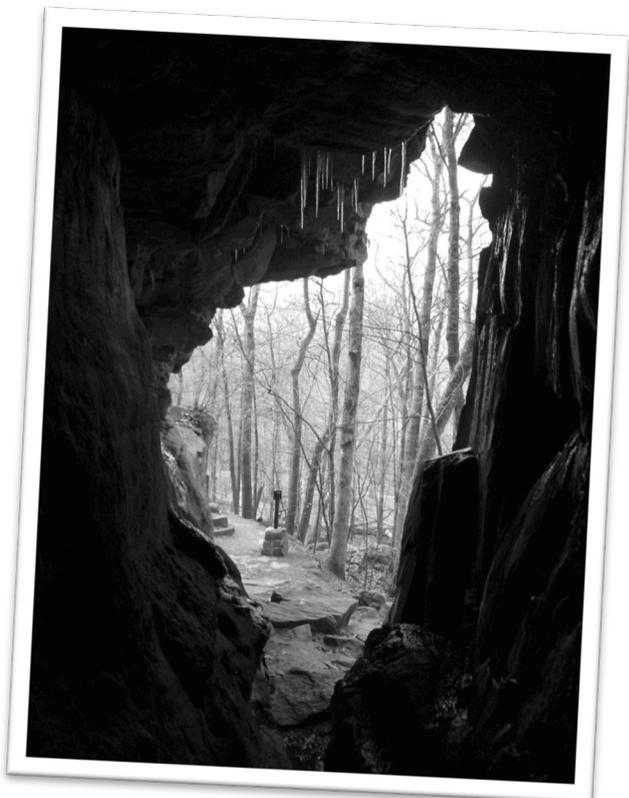


Photo courtesy of Access Fund

*Working on erosion control*



Photo courtesy of Access Fund

2017 Erosion Control Project

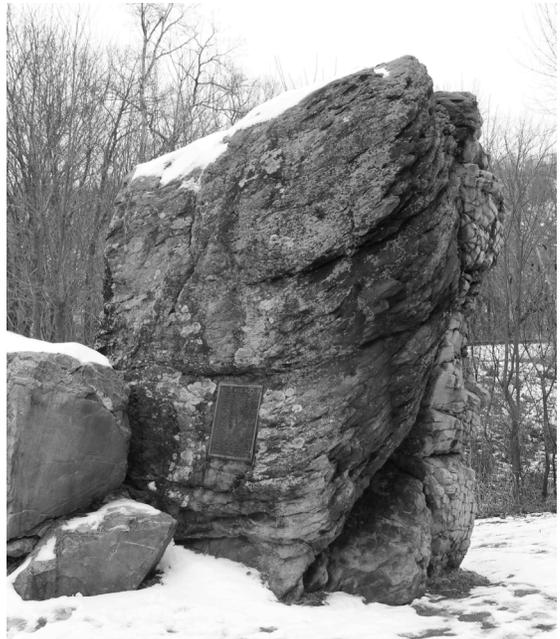
The cost of the trip will be \$30 payable to “Friends of Devil’s Lake.” Proceeds offset the cost of field trip transportation as well as support Devil’s Lake State Park’s greatest needs.

Please send your payment with your NAME, PHONE #, and EMAIL ADDRESS to P.O. Box 209, Baraboo, WI 53913 by Tuesday, May 1. The trip is limited to 30 FODL members, so be sure to sign up early. We hope you can join us!

## FODL Baraboo Area Geology Members’ Only Field Trip – Saturday, May 19

The Friends of Devil’s Lake State Park are sponsoring our first (and hopefully repeated) *Members’ Only* Baraboo Area Geology Field Trip from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 19, 2018. Join us as we travel to local geological gems such as Point of Rocks, Ableman’s Gorge, Van Hise Rock, and up the East Bluff Trail to Elephant Rock and Cave.

The trip will start at 8:00 a.m. near the Devil’s Lake North Shore Rock Elm Shelter. We will begin with a brief geologic history of the Baraboo area presented by a local licensed professional geologist. The group will then travel via bus to our guided stops before coming back to Devil’s Lake for lunch a little after noon. (Lunch is not provided, but members can bring their own or purchase one at the Concessions. Note that members always receive a 10% discount on concessions!) After lunch, we will hike up the East Bluff Trail to witness additional clues to Baraboo’s geologic past. We plan to go rain or shine.



# Upcoming Events

## FEBRUARY

### Candlelight Snowshoe Hike

*Saturday, February 10 | 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

Join the Friends of Devil's Lake at this annual event on February 10. Snow or no snow—we can still hike without snow! Snowshoes of all sizes, hot chocolate, and s'mores will be available while supplies last! Hope to see you then!

## MARCH

### Over, Under, and Through the Woods

*Saturday, March 3 | 10:30 a.m. to Noon*

Over rocks, under branches, and through the mud we go on an adventure! We'll use some high and low-tech gear to help us discover what's in the woods and record what we see. Meet at the Nature Center.

### Nature Trivia Walk

*Saturday, March 10 | 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.*

Drop in anytime between 10:00 and 2:30 to test your nature knowledge! Stop first at the Nature Center to pick up your clue card, then head down an easy trail and look for the trivia signs along the way. There will be prizes too. It's a great activity for families to get out and enjoy an early spring day. Meet at the Nature Center.

### Get Your Bike Ready for Spring

*Saturday, March 17 | 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*

Join the bike specialists from Wildside Adventure Sports to find out what you need to do to get your bike ready for the season. Bring your bike for some hands-on experience with their professional bike mechanics. They'll cover basic bike maintenance, how to fix a flat, how to keep your breaks and gears lubed, and much more. Meet at the Nature Center's parking lot.

## APRIL

### Spring Story/Walk

*Saturday, April 7 | 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

Calling all nature-loving young readers to drop in between 10:00 and 3:00 for Story/Walk! Our Story/Walk turns reading into an adventure. Hikers can read a nature-themed story while they walk the trails! Designed for beginning readers, the stories will appeal to all ages. Meet at the Nature Center.

### Family Wild Day Out

*Saturday, April 14 | 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*

Switch off your phones and bring your children to spend the day in the forest to discover and explore a whole new wild world. All ages welcome! Bring outdoor clothes suitable for all weather, a packed lunch, and lots of enthusiasm! We'll provide everything else. Participants will play nature-based games, create woodland crafts, light fires, cook over a fire, make dens and shelters, and most importantly: have fun! Join us for a great family day out full of fun, imagination, play, and adventure. Meet at the Nature Center.

### Frog Safari

*Saturday, April 21 | 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.*

If you are a frog fanatic, you will want to join us for this nocturnal trip to the park's kettle ponds. We'll listen for spring peepers, wood frogs, and chorus frogs. We'll also explore what other night sounds we can hear as we hike the Johnson Moraine Trail. Bring your flashlight as we'll be hiking right around dusk. Meet at the Steinke Basin parking lot.

### Trails Work Day

*Saturday, April 28 | 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.*

Volunteer and help work on the trails at Devil's Lake. We'll work on blocking off "non-official" trails on East Bluff Trail. All tools will be provided, but you may want to bring a pair of work gloves and water along too. Stay for the whole time or come when you can to help. Meet at the Nature Center.

## MAY

### Lawn Chair Bird Watching – Birds and Bagels

*Saturday, May 5 | 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.*

All you need is a comfortable lawn chair, a pair of binoculars, and a thermos of your favorite coffee for this morning bird watch. We'll "park" our lawn chairs near the parking lot in Steinke Basin and watch for meadow larks, sandhill cranes, red-winged black birds, and much more as we indulge ourselves with a morning of birding. This year the Friends group will be supplying bagels for us to enjoy while we watch the birds. Meet at the Steinke Basin parking lot.



### **Frog Safari**

*Saturday, May 5 | 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.*

If you are a frog fanatic, you will want to join us for this nocturnal trip to the park's kettle ponds. We'll listen for spring peepers, wood frogs, and chorus frogs. We'll also explore what other night sounds we can hear as we hike the Johnson Moraine Trail. Bring your flashlight as we'll be hiking right around dusk. Meet at the Steinke Basin parking lot.

### **Lawn Chair Bird Watching – Birds and Brats**

*Saturday, May 12 | 6:30 p.m. to Dusk*

All you need is a comfortable lawn chair and a pair of binoculars for this bird watch. We'll "park" our lawn chairs near the parking lot in Steinke Basin and watch for meadow larks, sandhill cranes, red-winged black birds, and much. The Friends group will also be grilling out for us so we can enjoy a brat or two while we watch the birds. Meet at the Steinke Basin parking lot.

### **Frog Safari**

*Saturday, May 19 | 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.*

If you are a frog fanatic, you will want to join us for this nocturnal trip to the park's kettle ponds. We'll listen for spring peepers, wood frogs, and chorus frogs. We'll also explore what other night sounds we can hear as we hike the Johnson Moraine Trail. Bring your flashlight as we'll be hiking right around dusk. Meet at the Steinke Basin parking lot.

### **Guided Kayak Tour**

*Friday, May 25 | 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

Go on an adventure at Devil's Lake by kayak! Guides will take you on a two-hour tour of the lake exploring lake geology and wildlife. Space is limited so you'll need to preregister. If you need to rent a kayak, please let us know when you register. The rental fee is \$25 for a single kayak, and \$45 for a double. Meet at the Chateau (North Shore Concessions). To register, please contact the Nature Center at (608) 356-8301 ext. 140.

### **Find a Trail**

*Saturday, May 26 | 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.*

Wondering what trail to hike or what to see in the park? Join the Nature Center staff every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning (Memorial Day through Labor Day) for some great ideas. Meet at the Nature Center.



### **Exploration Station – Bees**

*Saturday, May 26 | 10:00 a.m. to Noon*

When we think of bees, we think of honey, but did you know there are 500 species of bees found in Wisconsin?! Drop in between 10:00 and noon for some fun bee activities and to check out our new bee chalet! Activities will be happening outside the Nature Center.

### **Animal Feeding Day**

*Saturday, May 26 | Starting at 11:00 a.m.*

Watch the animals in the Nature Center have lunch! Watch the box turtles munch on some salad. See the water snake slurp down a fish. Look at the treefrogs as they tackle a cricket or two. Meet at the Nature Center.

### **Drop-in Discovery Station – Rocks!**

*Saturday, May 26 | 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.*

You will "dig" these activities as you delve into rocks! Drop in between 1:00 and 3:00 for activities at the North Shore Beach by the Chateau.

### **Guided Kayak Tour**

*Saturday, May 26 | 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

Go on an adventure at Devil's Lake by kayak! Guides will take you on a two-hour tour of the lake exploring lake geology and wildlife. Space is limited so you'll need to preregister. If you need to rent a kayak, please let us know when you register. The rental fee is \$25 for a single kayak, and \$45 for a double. Meet at the Chateau (North Shore Concessions). To register, please contact the Nature Center at (608) 356-8301 ext. 140.

### **Exploration Station – Night Sky**

*Sunday, May 27 | 10:00 a.m. to Noon*

Enjoy the night sky during the day! Drop in and learn about the constellations, make a moon calendar, and much more! Activities will happen outside the Nature Center.

### **Drop-in Discovery Station – Bears**

*Sunday, May 27 | 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.*

Drop in and find out more about the misunderstood black bear. Activities will happen at the North Shore Beach by the Chateau.

### **Walk on the Wild Side**

*Monday, May 28 | 11:00 a.m. to Noon*

Come explore and learn more about the wild side of nature! Join us for this family-friendly walk where we'll spend some time having fun exploring nature. Meet at the Nature Center.

# Volunteer Vacation – A New Opportunity for YOU at Devil’s Lake

We all enjoy Devil’s Lake State Park for its natural beauty, unique geology, and many recreational opportunities. It takes a lot of effort, however, to maintain the Park. Park staff accomplish a lot, but there is always more that needs to be done than resources allow. That’s where YOU can help by participating in a “volunteer vacation” at Devil’s Lake in June 2018 (sponsored by the Friends of Devil’s Lake).

A volunteer vacation involves about 12 volunteers joining DLSP staff to work together for almost a week on specific projects to improve the park. The volunteers, with FODL group leaders, will camp together during the week at a DLSP group campsite. The week starts out with the volunteers meeting on Sunday night, then work days Monday through Friday, and the volunteers departing Saturday morning. All meals are provided at no extra cost for the entire week (from Sunday night through Saturday morning).

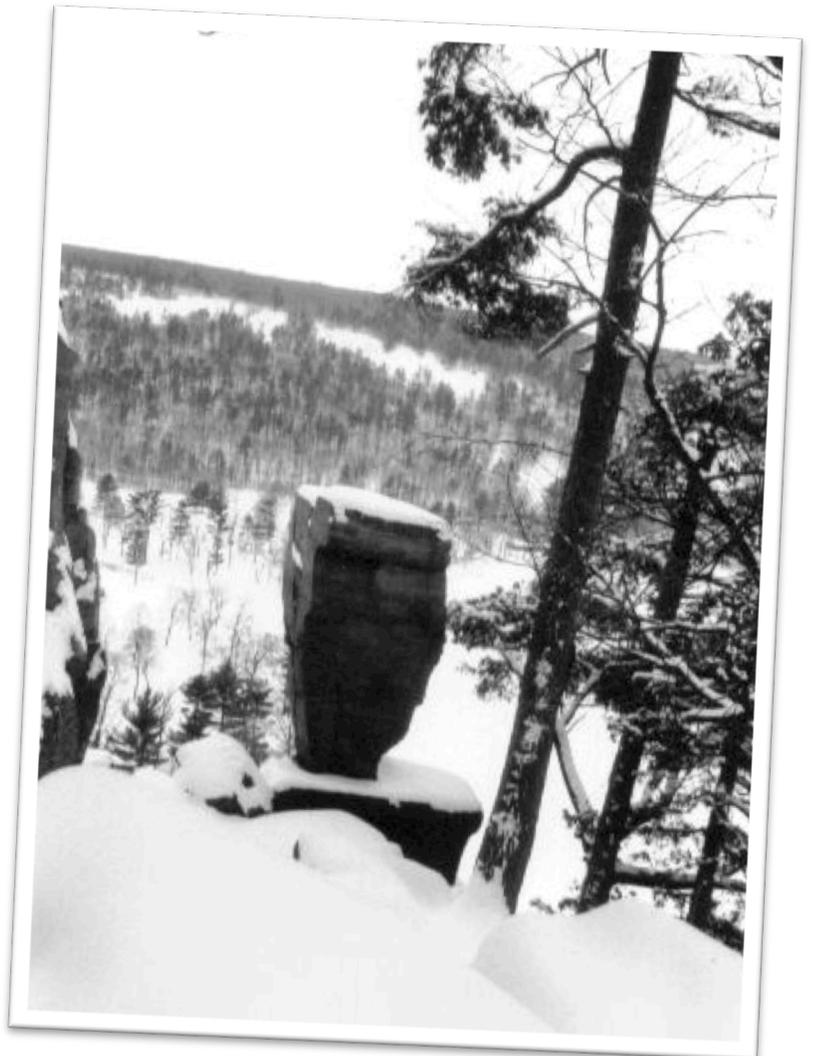
Each workday timeline includes breakfast at the group site, packing a lunch, hiking to the work site, working on the project, breaking for lunch, hiking back to the campsite, and making/having dinner at the campsite. Snack breaks and water breaks are taken often during the workday. It’s not all work though... with so many recreational opportunities at DLSP, time off will be taken during the week for a day or a couple half-days (depending on the weather and the group’s preference) so you can have *fun* as part of your volunteer vacation too!

You will be able to sign up via the FODL website ([www.friendsofdevilslake.org](http://www.friendsofdevilslake.org)) on a first come first served basis, with a waitlist if more than 12 people volunteer. Information about you will need to be provided so we can communicate with you prior to the volunteer vacation. The cost is \$50 per person for the week, or \$25 per person for the week if you, or a member of your household, are a member of FODL. Details about the work projects will be provided on the website.

Volunteers will need to provide their own tents, sleeping bags/pads, eating utensils, and drinking cups/bottles. The work will involve the outdoors so volunteers will need to wear suitable work boots and clothing. Raingear is also recommended to contend with any inclement weather. FODL will provide cookware, cook stoves, utensils, and equipment/supplies for cleaning dishes. Gloves, safety glasses, and tools will be provided for the work.

FODL will provide group leaders for the volunteers. Meals will be planned and provided by the FODL group leaders. Volunteers will be expected to assist with meal preparation and cleanup after meals. FODL group leaders are responsible for organizing and communicating with the volunteers.

Participating in a volunteer vacation will certainly help maintain the park. It will also allow you to experience the Park in a way that few others can—with folks that share your deep interest in the Park. Warning: The friendships and experiences you gain in one short week will last a lifetime!



# Changes at the Park

I hope this newsletter finds you happy and healthy as 2018 begins. My first order of business is to offer thanks to all those Friends, visitors, volunteers, the Concession, and employees who made 2017 a success. We had another very busy year at the park with an estimated visitation of 2.8 million. This, again, surpasses the record year we had in 2016. It would not be possible to fulfill our mission of providing a quality recreational experience without the help of all these great people. To this I say *thank you!*

Starting in 2018 you may notice several changes as you visit the Park. Depending upon when you last visited and when you plan to visit this year, the first thing you may notice is the expanded lanes on both North and South Shore. Working in conjunction with the Town of Baraboo, Department staff, and contractors we widened and expanded both entrance areas and have added an automated self-registration station on South Shore. The expanded lanes significantly shortened the wait for visitors entering the Park on busy days. The automated self-registration system on South Shore will allow visitors to purchase both daily and annual park stickers using a credit card. The receipt that is issued is good for a daily pass, or if an annual pass is purchased it can be turned in at any state park within 30 days for the sticker. We will continue to investigate and institute changes that help us provide better service to our visitors. We hope to have everything completed before the big rush of visitors come to the Park.

Another change that started on January 1, 2018 is that all law enforcement in Wisconsin state parks will be done by the Bureau of Law Enforcement and the conservation wardens that work under them. Through this realignment, the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management transferred 23 park ranger permanent positions (three from Devil's Lake) and limited term employee and supply monies to the Bureau of Law Enforcement so they could accomplish this important duty. This means that all park rangers, park managers, and park superintendents will no longer have law enforcement as a part of their job responsibilities. Previously there had been four different entities within the DNR who did law enforcement and now it has all been consolidated. The realignment also has the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management staff

taking on additional recreational responsibilities at other DNR-managed lands such as wildlife and fisheries areas, boat landings, and state natural areas. Habitat and land management will now be handled by our local wildlife managers, and prescribed burning will be done by forestry personnel. All of these changes will allow department staff to better focus on their core job responsibilities.

The Park was also very fortunate to have four new park rangers start at the Park on January 8, 2018. All four individuals are greatly welcomed and bring unique experiences, skills, and talents. In each of the next four newsletters we will introduce you to them.

As I close my comments in this edition, I reflect on how blessed we are to live, work, and recreate at Devil's Lake State Park. Take some time this year to come out to the Park and enjoy all that it has to offer. As evidenced by the changes I've briefly mentioned, change is inevitable and constant, but through all the efforts of all those individuals and organizations past and present, we will hopefully appreciate the wonders of the Park. I'll see you all at the Park!

Steve Schmelzer  
DLSP Superintendent

## Introducing New Employee Aaron Loenhorst



Aaron

My name is Aaron. I grew up in the mountains of Southern California where I often went hiking, camping, canoeing, fishing, biking, bird watching, or whatever activity that got me outside. My wife and I both attended Montreat College in North Carolina where we received our degrees in Outdoor Education. With a passion for connecting people to nature, I worked as a naturalist and park ranger for a few seasons in that state. Looking to be closer to our family, we moved to Oxford, Wisconsin this past August. As a Wisconsin park ranger, I am excited to grow my appreciation and knowledge of the rich Wisconsin landscape and to continue to share the wonder of nature for many years to come.

