

Secretary's Message: November 2019

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Governor Larry Hogan declared 2019 the Year of the Veteran, a yearlong observance to raise awareness of the brave service and sacrifice our United States veterans and families have made for Maryland and our country. While our nation will celebrate on Veterans Day, the governor's declaration is an important reminder that we should appreciate our veterans every day. It also inspired us at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to reaffirm our commitment to Maryland's 380,000 veterans.

At DNR we directly benefit from the dedication of approximately 90 individuals that served our country and have chosen to continue their public service through full-time careers at our department. I was proud to host a special ceremony on Nov. 6 with Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary George Owings at our Annapolis headquarters to honor these distinguished individuals and all who have served.

DNR has long worked to provide our country's brave men and women of the armed services with opportunities to connect with friends, family, fellow service members, history, and nature.

We have [several programs and special rates](#) for military veterans, active duty service members, and prisoners of war.

A complimentary lifetime hunting license is available to Maryland residents certified as a former prisoner of war or a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran. Also, if you are a resident of Maryland on active duty with the armed forces and are on leave with official leave orders, you may fish without a fishing license in Maryland.

Any active duty military personnel, Maryland National Guard member, or veteran can enter any Maryland state park day-use area without paying the entry fee.

And we offer our program "Operation Campout," which provides camping equipment to be loaned out to military families and veterans free of charge.

We are also proud to partner with Warrior Canine Connection which helps recovering veterans reconnect with their families and communities by learning to train service dogs for their fellow veterans. I recently joined Governor Hogan and Steve McAdams, Director of the Governor's Office of Service and Volunteerism, in recognizing one of their volunteers, Wendy Notari, at the 36th Annual Governor's Service Awards Ceremony.

To our veterans – these events and programs represent our commitment to honor your contributions and preserve your stories — today, tomorrow, and in the future. They are inspired by your brave and relentless fight for our freedom and by your enduring service to our state and our country.

[Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio](#) is Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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