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**Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park Launches “Crooked River Reads” and
“Cuyahoga Connections” Environmental Series**

PENINSULA, Ohio – The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park has launched two new series intended to connect both adults and youth with Northeast Ohio’s National Park: *Crooked River Reads*, a *Distinguished Author Series*, and *Cuyahoga Connections*, a monthly youth challenge.

Due to the pandemic, it has become more important than ever for individuals’ mental and physical health to find ways to connect with nature. As the weather continues to get colder and going outside becomes more difficult, the Conservancy hopes to provide alternative options for making those connections.

"We are really excited about what we have to offer our community in 2021. We are looking forward to learning together as we read and listen to our authors. We hope to build a community that can take what we learn from these books and authors and build on that knowledge to grow together," shares Katie Wright, Director of Programs and Education. "Through the pandemic we really missed working with youth and families to provide connections to Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP). We want our families and teachers to know that we are still here to help them and provide ways for everyone to enjoy the benefits of CVNP or any outdoor space near them."

Crooked River Reads: A Distinguished Author Series is the perfect way for adults to lose themselves in nature without actually taking a step outside. Five renowned authors from across the United States will cover topics including environmental justice, the impact nature has on humans, advocating for the environment and celebrating diversity in nature. The Conservancy will virtually host each author for book reviews, live Q&A sessions and in-depth discussions about the necessity of creating an inclusive space in the outdoors. Books will be available through the Conservancy’s online store and at Trail Mix Peninsula.

Tickets to each event are just \$10, \$8.50 for Conservancy Members. Dates and authors include:

- **January 26, 7 p.m.: Richard Louv, *Our Wild Calling: How Connecting with Animals Can Transform Our Lives – and Save Theirs; Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children***



From Nature-Deficit Disorder; Vitamin N: The Essential Guide to a Nature-Rich Life and The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age

- **March 22, 7 p.m.:** Winona LaDuke, *To Be a Water Protector: The Rise of the Wiindigoo Slayers*
- **May 13, 7 p.m.:** Dr. J. Drew Lanham, *The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature*
- **August 12, 7 p.m.:** J.R. Harris, *Way Out There: Adventures of a Wilderness Trekker*
- **October 6, 7 p.m.:** Angelou Ezeilo, *Engage, Connect, Protect: Empowering Diverse Youth as Environmental Leaders*

Tickets can be purchased online at forcvnp.org/crooked-river-reads

Not wanting to exclude younger readers and future nature advocates, the Conservancy created *Cuyahoga Connections* – a free online series that introduces young readers to various aspects of nature. Each month a new theme is introduced through recommended reading and a free, downloadable journal. After reflecting on the theme, kids are presented with a challenge, such as writing a poem or contributing to a virtual rock collection, and given the opportunity to win prizes.

“Cuyahoga Connections was created for all the parents that have suddenly found themselves at home with kids that might be looking for something new to do, as well as for educators that are now tasked with creating virtual content for their students,” shares Wright. “We try to find the perfect mix of educational and entertaining to inspire our future jr. park rangers!”

Themes to date include: Humans and Nature, Trees and Leaves, Geology and Rocks and the history of National Parks. Learn more, download your free journals and step up to the challenge by visiting forcvnp.org/Cuyahoga-connections.

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About the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park

The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park is the official friends group and philanthropic partner for Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP). With a mission to enrich people's lives and enhance our region by inspiring use, preservation and support of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Conservancy offers cultural and educational programming, co-manages the park's volunteer program, provides venues for weddings, meetings and special events, and operates park retail spaces.