



*Partnership in Parks*  
 Friends of National Parks and Protected Areas  
 Network Seminar in Koli National Park, Finland 16.-17.11.2015

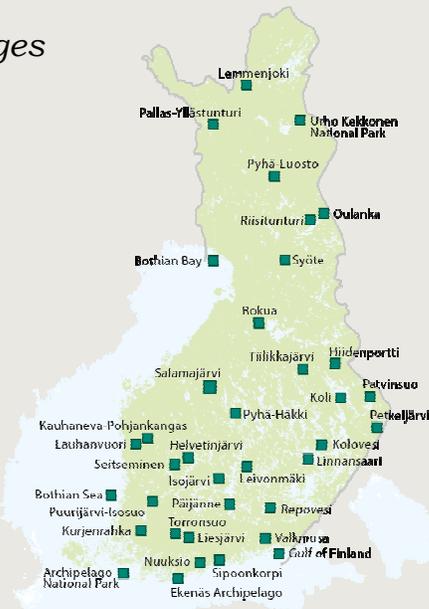
Parks & Wildlife Finland  
 Senior Advisor, volunteer management officer Eveliina Nygren

METSÄHALLITUS

1

## *Parks & Wildlife Finland manages our most pristine nature*

- We manage all state-owned areas reserved for nature conservation and hiking, totalling 3.9 million hectares (39,000 sq km):
- 39 national parks
- 19 strict nature reserves
- 5 national hiking areas
- 12 wilderness areas in Lapland
- almost 500 other protected areas and Finland's state-owned waters (32,000 sq km).



*Nature is our national treasure and its value is relative to the value of biodiversity*

**WE PROTECT NATIONAL HERITAGE**



METSÄHALLITUS

*Sustainable nature tourism - everybody wins*

**NATURE TOURISM CREATES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**



METSÄHALLITUS

*We love to work for nature and for nature enthusiasts!*

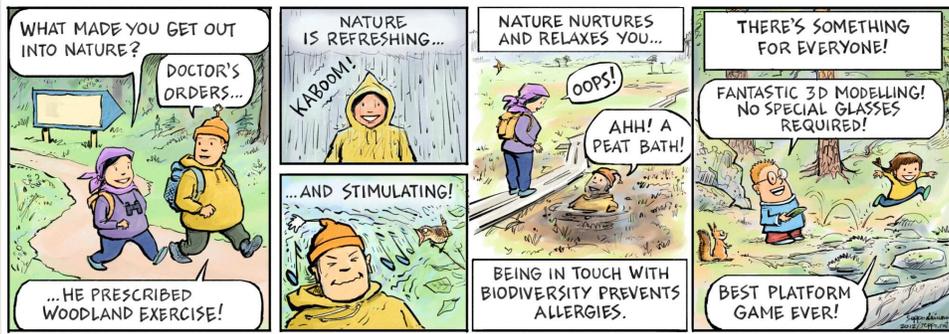
### SAVING THE WORLD



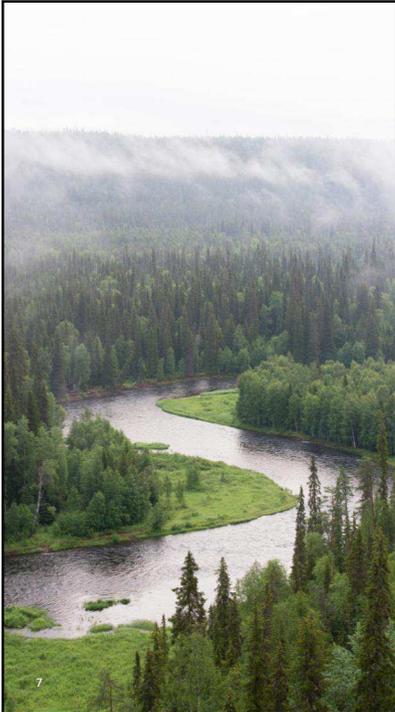
METSÄHALLITUS

*"Healthy Parks, Healthy People"*

### NATURE THERAPY



METSÄHALLITUS



7

*"Healthy Parks, Healthy People"*  
*Biodiversity, the basis of all health*

Well-being of the nature environment

Well-being of people

METSÄHALLITUS



*Health benefits of nature*

- Research evidence shows that contact with nature\*
  - prevents diseases
  - helps to recover from stress and diseases
  - promotes positive attitudes towards life
  - increases productivity
- Nature promotes human health by people\*
  - seeing and observing nature
  - being in or near nature
  - active doing, participating and learning in nature

\* Lin, N. Building a network theory of social capital. In N. Lin, K. Cook, & R.S. Burt.  
\* Aslund, C., Starrin, B., & Nilsson, K. (2010).

METSÄHALLITUS

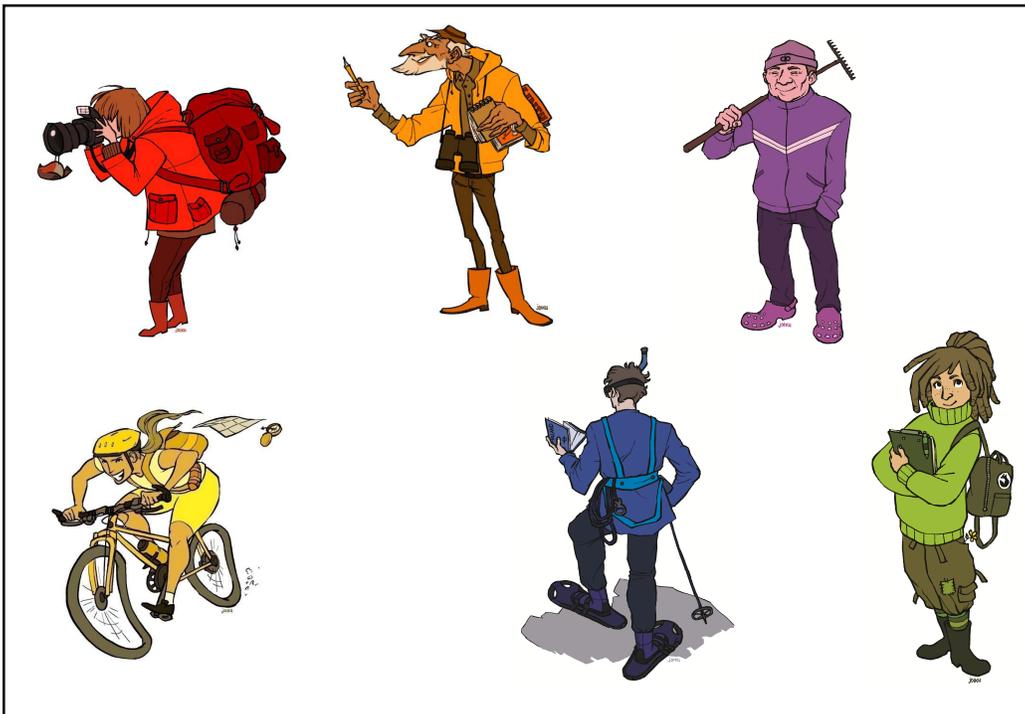


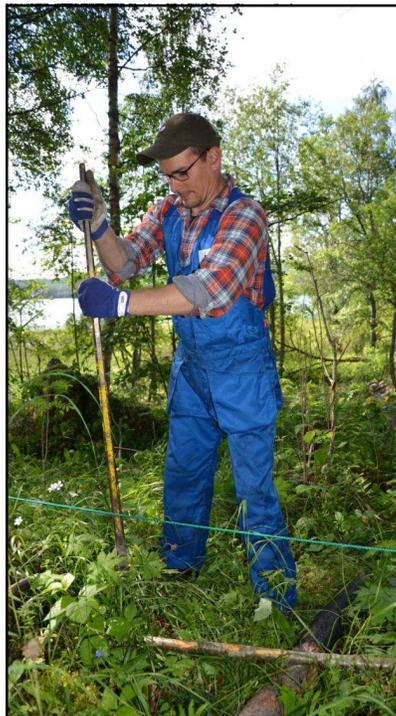
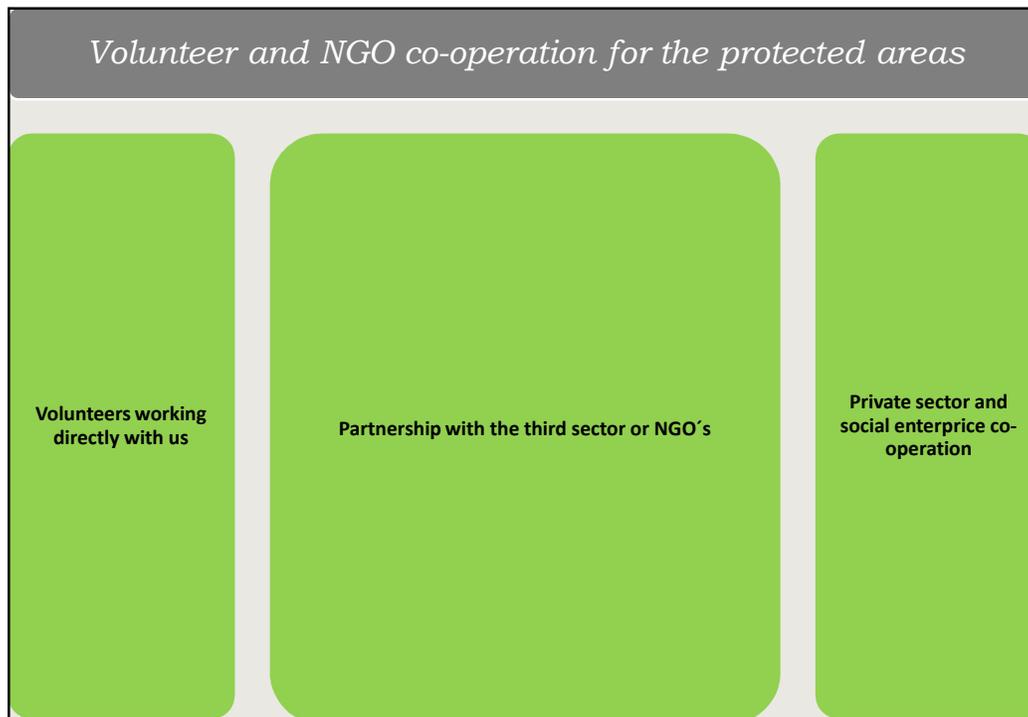
## *Health benefits of participating*

- Volunteering, active doing and participating creates social capital.
- Social capital is the expected collective benefit derived from cooperation between individuals and groups.
- Research shows that the presence of social capital through social networks and communities has a protective quality on health.
- Social capital affects health risk behavior in the sense that individuals who are embedded in a network or community rich in support, social trust, information, and norms, have resources that help achieve health goals.\*
- A lack of social capital can impair health and also negative social capital can detract from health.\*

\* Lin, N. Building a network theory of social capital. In N. Lin, K. Cook, & R.S. Burt.  
\* Aslund, C., Starrin, B., & Nilsson, K. (2010).

 METSÄHALLITUS





*Cooperation with the third sector for the protected areas in Finland*

- Parks & Wildlife Finland has managed volunteer work and cooperated with local associations for the nature for decades.
- Parks & Wildlife Finland strategy 2012-2020 gives a strong statement about the importance of volunteers and associations.
- Volunteer management in Finnish protected areas project 2012-2014 started the ongoing development.
- Hundrets of local associations and over 40 national NGOs cooperate with us to bring people closer to nature or to protect it.
- Early over 2500 volunteers.
- Metsähallitus full time staff members involved as coordinators, planners, contact persons and managers.

Lähde: Nylund & Yeung, 2005. Pessi, 2012.

 METSÄHALLITUS



## *Friends of the national park offering inspiring experiences and developing ownership*

- We strongly believe that parks need friends.
- National development work since 2012, when the principles for the Friends of the national park organisations were made.
- Cooperation towards a more structured model:
  - A declaration/contract about the friendship,
  - Named local contact person from Parks & Wildlife Finland,
  - Early planning of the cooperation locally,
  - more communication.
- Support for national cooperation of the friends as a form of an early meeting together with the 6 associations.

 METSÄHALLITUS



## *Future dreams for friendship*

- Get people more involved thru friendship and help establish new friend groups– the government is not always the most interesting partner.
- Support the current friend groups enough – without losing their freedom.
- Build a Finnish “brand” for the friends of the national parks - communicating the role and activities of the friends.
- How to recognise the change volunteerism – short term one-time stop over youngs and active long term seniors.

14- © 2013 Eraluvat

 METSÄHALLITUS



*Finnish local level development ideas produced from the participants of the seminar*

- Develop Junior Ranger movement locally
- Youth+Senior together work for nature
- Have clear responsible coordinators
- Local activities and the self-helping-power to future network
- To involve private sector
- Adopt sites locally
- Ask the big NGOs for special parks help-own park ngos
- Provide facilities and food
- Provide a place for the NGOs
- Find out to activate different groups not just nature people
- Inform and get contacts to local hunting clubs –cooperation with them
- Use of new media – fb and so on
- Parks & Wildlife staff more actively involved (but not the wrong way)
- New ways to reward the most active and innovative ones
- Make a communication project to active people to join friends of the national parks

## *Finnish national level development ideas produced from participants of the seminar*

- More publicity to associations (together) – helps find volunteers
- Have a clear website
- Make it easy them to join in
- Sharing best practice from Leivonmäki
- Increase awareness that such organizations exists
- Ease of accessibility to associations (actual logistics, practical approach)
- Show them the difference they can make.
- Some co-operatin with the association of nature conservation of Finland could be done
- Working together
- Mutual strategy government-friends
- Seed moneys from government to friends
- Strengthen the position of friends vs other actors
- A nationwide Junior Ranger for parks involvement
- To make some competition between existing and potential friends, for example, competition of the best event in the national park
- Involve all finnish parks to develop park friends
- Don't get in to attach the honor of volunteer war to the beast of official administration
- Communication between the Finnish associations
- To involve private sector (national companies)
- Foundation for the friends of the parks project (no local NGOs)



Kuva: Merja Aakko.

*Thank you for your attention! Questions?*

*Senior Advisor, volunteer management officer  
Eveliina Nygren, [eveliina.nygren@metsa.fi](mailto:eveliina.nygren@metsa.fi)  
[www.nationalparks.fi/volunteerwork](http://www.nationalparks.fi/volunteerwork)*