

APPALACHIAN
sustainable
DEVELOPMENT

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**Appalachian Sustainable Development to help launch the Forest Botanicals Storywalk Trail
at annual High Knob Outdoor Festival in Norton, Virginia**

DUFFIELD, Va. - On Sunday, August 18, Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD) and Virginia Tech will be a part of the City of Norton Virginia's annual High Knob Outdoor Festival, with the grand opening celebration of the Forest Botanicals Storywalk Trail at Flag Rock Recreation Area. The Storywalk Trail is a 2-mile (novice) loop that consists of 10 interpretive signs placed along the Twisted Forest and Lake Lake Show trails. Each sign details a different aspect of Appalachian forest herbs, celebrating their cultural, historical, medicinal, and economic importance to a diversity of people, stretching from pre-colonization to today.

The celebration will include two guided trail walks, plus forest farming demonstrations, ginseng seed giveaways, native plant sales, herbal arts and crafts, and more. Activities will be held at the Shelter Trailhead picnic shelters with guided trail walks offered at 2:30pm and 4:00pm. Shuttle service at 2:20pm and 3:50pm, respectively, will take people to and from the Norton Reservoir Trailhead parking area, where the Storywalk Trail begins and ends and overflow parking is located. To learn more, visit:

<https://www.asdevelop.org/event/opening-celebration-for-the-forest-botanicals-storywalk-trail>

The Storywalk Trail is part of the up-and-coming Forest Botanicals Region Living Monument, which seeks to highlight the cultural, historical, ecological, and economic significance of the region's abundant understory of native medicinal herbs and forest foods, like American Ginseng and Ramps. In addition to the Storywalk Trail, there will also be an online exhibit and a

sculpture, which will be installed in Spring 2025. This monument is being funded through a grant from Monuments Across Appalachian Virginia, which received its funding from the Mellon Foundation. To learn more about the Forest Botanicals Region Living Monument, visit <https://www.moremountainstories.org/forest-botanicals-region-living-monument>.

ASD's Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub is collaborating with Virginia Tech, forest botanical practitioners, community members, and the City of Norton, Virginia to create this living monument and sanctuary at High Knob. By honoring peoples' historical and present-day connections to native forest botanicals, this project aims to deepen connections to this important part of the cultural heritage in Appalachia.

About the High Knob Outdoor Festival

The High Knob Outdoor Festival highlights the variety of outdoor recreation opportunities in the High Knob Region and celebrates the organizations, businesses, and communities working to promote and grow these activities. The High Knob Region primarily includes communities in Wise, Scott, and Lee counties and the City of Norton. Downtown festival activities will include 20+ outdoor, artisan, and craft vendors, a free outdoor mini golf course, kids bounce houses, fly fishing demonstrations, a bouldering wall, and more. Festival sponsors include Virginia Tourism Corporation, Ballad Health, Pro-Art, the University of Virginia's College at Wise, and Old Dominion Power. To learn more, visit: <https://www.highknoboutdoorfest.com/>.

About Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD)

Growing a stronger Appalachia through agriculture. That's what drives ASD's commitment to build a thriving regional food and agriculture system that benefits every Appalachian. Since 1995, ASD has been working to provide hope and make a difference for the people who call the region home. What began as opportunities for struggling tobacco farmers to grow fruits and vegetables has become lasting solutions to regional challenges that impact workforce development, agriculture education, food access, economic development, health and resource conservation. To further expand that work, ASD is now developing a destination agriculture campus where innovation meets agriculture in Washington County, Virginia. To learn more about ASD, visit: <https://asdevelop.org>.

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