

Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA)

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Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) Hires Executive Director.

The Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) is pleased to announce that after an extensive search, Jessie Powers has been named as ORCA's first Executive Director. As the former Athens County Planner, Powers has been actively involved with ORCA and its premier project, the Baileys Trail System, since its inception. ORCA board member and Chauncey Mayor Amy Renner concurred, stating, "We believe Jessie's experience with grant management, planning, and the Southeast Ohio region are going to make her a huge asset to ORCA. Her contributions thus far to the Baileys Trail System and other outdoor recreation projects are going to make this a seamless transition and we are excited to see what the future holds."

As the ORCA Executive Director, among Powers' first tasks will be to provide leadership and advocacy in developing a comprehensive recreation program that highlights new product development and experience enhancement in SE Ohio. While establishing partnerships that capitalize on regional outdoor recreation assets, Powers will oversee the organizational management and operation of ORCA, advancing an outdoor recreation destination brand as well as a community activation strategy. Powers will also help to further the goals of significant community studies and task forces by analyzing projects and preparing them for production and implementation, in conjunction with ORCA board members, the ORCA advisory committee, and related groups. Additional key responsibilities will be to identify and nurture business development opportunities by providing financial support through private, corporate and philanthropic channels, and to manage the distribution of information on recreation opportunities to the community and other stakeholders.

"The critical need to diversify our local and regional economy has come into sharp focus in recent months, but these challenges open new possibilities and novel approaches to rural economic development," Powers said in a statement. "ORCA was established precisely to meet this moment. I'm looking forward to continuing the effort to revitalize our region sustainably, from the ground up."

Established in 2019, ORCA is a council of governments whose membership currently includes the City of Athens, the Village of Chauncey, the Village of Buchtel, the City of Nelsonville, Athens County, and York Township. ORCA's mission is to develop outdoor recreation opportunities across governmental boundaries that create sustainable and equitable economic development, inspiring communities throughout Appalachian Ohio. Jessie Powers begins her role as Executive Director September 8.

To learn more about ORCA's work through the Baileys Trail System, please visit: <https://baileystrailssystem.org/>, Instagram [@baileystrailssystem](https://www.instagram.com/baileystrailssystem), Facebook [@BaileysTrails](https://www.facebook.com/BaileysTrails), and Twitter [@baileys_trails](https://twitter.com/baileys_trails). To donate, visit <https://athensfoundation.org/giving/funds/trailfund/#>.