

PA WILDS CONSERVATION SHOP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the PA Wilds Conservation Shop?

PA Wilds Conservation Shops are gift shops run by the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship (PA Wilds Center), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Our physical and online stores focus on locally-made and value-added products so that customers can take home a piece of the Pennsylvania Wilds while making a difference. These purchases have a ripple effect on our local economy while also supporting our nonprofit mission, which is to work with partners to grow the region's nature and heritage tourism industry as a way to create jobs, diversify local economies, inspire stewardship and improve quality of life.

How do I sell my products in the Shop?

Our products are purchased at wholesale cost from members of The Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania (formerly the PA Wild Artisan Trail - read more about our sourcing method here: pawilds.com/store/sourcing).

Step 1: Eligible producers can submit information via the online application to be considered as a vendor in the gift shop. Eligibility requirements are listed below.

Vendor Eligibility: Producers must sell their product line at wholesale pricing, offer Net 30 terms for payment of product and current members (in good standing) of The Wilds Cooperative.

Step 2: PA Wilds Center staff will invite selected vendors (via email) to submit a buyers' pack for further consideration.

Step 3: Once buyers' packs have been reviewed selected producers will be contacted and a buying meeting will be scheduled to place an initial order.

To read more about the process, eligibility and submit your information visit: pawildsartisans.com/Gift-Shops

Eligibility as a vendor in The PA Wilds Conservation Shops is just one benefit of being a member of The Wilds Cooperative. For more information about becoming a member visit: pawildsartisans.com/join-us

What's a Buyers' Pack?

A Buyers' Pack is a way to present your product, business and terms as a wholesale line to potential buyers.

For our purposes we ask that your buyers' pack be created in a digital format and include the following:

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What's a Buyers' Pack? (continued)

- A cover letter. Introducing your work and why you think it's a great fit for sale in the PA Wilds Conservation Shop at Kinzua Bridge State Park; include your contact information.
- A wholesale price list or line sheet.
- Terms and conditions. Do you have minimum orders or quantities? Where are your price breaks? How will you deliver your product to us? What are your cancellation, damages and returns policies?
- A catalog or look book which contains images of your work that can be produced and sold in quantities of 20 or more. If you have not produced the items yet you can include sketches or comparable design images.
- An easy-to-use order form.

We have compiled resources to help with creating a buyers' pack, visit the resources section at pawildsartisans.com/Gift-Shops for more information.

I submitted my name/products for review to be sold in the shop, why I haven't I heard anything back yet?

Good question! Short answer: We're sorry if we've been slow in communication and we're working on improving that.

Long Answer: In launching our first PA Wilds Conservation Shop, we had a lot to accomplish in a very short time period. We are continuously working to improve our communication strategies and develop procedures so that our processes and methods are as transparent as can be. This is just as important to us as it is to you so we appreciate your understanding and patience as we put these steps in place.

How often do you select product lines?

Currently we are selecting product as needed. By 2017 we will be looking to place seasonal orders forecasted on anticipated visitor numbers. Interested producers are encouraged to fill out this form and as we get in the position to order more product we will be in contact on an individual basis.

How do you select product lines?

Currently we assess customer requests, seasonal demands, price points, the shop's current inventory, our available selling space and how the inventory purchase fits into budget and grant restraints to curate a mix of products that reflect a visitor's experience at the Visitors Center and their time in the Pennsylvania Wilds. We look through the vendor submission list to see what products are available and being produced by current members that will fit the Shop's needs. We also track the requests of our customers for specific products that we aren't selling yet. If we see patterns or a consistent demand, we will post these requests to our network of artisans and producers in The Wilds Cooperative to see if the product requests can be filled. This process is a

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work in progress, so please look for updates via The Wilds Cooperative's weekly e-blast on our buying approach and other opportunities.

You didn't select my work - will you ever?

Possibly. No one likes a vague answer, but we don't want to make promises we can't keep. Purchasing for The Conservation Shops is a marathon - not a sprint. So we will be constantly looking back through submission requests and also putting out our own calls for requested products. We can't guarantee that all product submissions will be a fit. But we can promise to revisit submissions in a regular way, and believe demand for new product lines will continue to grow as we expand the PA Wilds Conservation Shop program in coming years. Artisans/producers should not take a non-purchase as an indication that their work is not good enough; if you're a professional-level artisan in The Wilds Cooperative - your product has already passed that test. Sometimes it just comes down to timing.

What's a 'professional-level' artisan?

Juried Artisans are the talented makers at the heart of the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania. The two categories of Juried Artisans are Basic Membership and Professional Artisan.

Basic Members are those who are admitted with a jury score between 100-300 - OR - those with a higher jury score who elect to enroll at this level. Professional Artisans are those who are admitted with a jury score above 301. The jury score is based on the criteria, including artistic merit, marketability and design, and material sourcing. You can read more about member benefits and decision criteria in our member guidelines here: pawildsartisans.com/join-us.

All artisans with paid membership for the 1516 will be able to view their jury score in their profile by the beginning of November 2016. They will renew for the 1617 member year at their appropriate member level. Artisans that were not current with membership dues for 1516 will be required to be re-juried into the program in Spring of 2017. Artisans can contact the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania support staff at artisans@pawildscenter.org to arrange a time to discuss their score and jury feedback.

If I visit the store and see ways I can tweak my product or packaging to make it a better fit, should I submit a new Buyers Pack?

Yes. And be sure to tell us the steps you've gone through and how you think your product fills a gap in our current inventory.

Do you sell products on consignment?

No, we purchase all of our inventory at wholesale prices on Net 30 terms.

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Why don't you sell framed art or large sculptures?

Space, audience and liability. Our first physical location is The PA Wilds Conservation Shop at Kinzua Bridge State Park. This is a 200 square foot gift shop, with not one full wall for hanging pieces. The space does not allow for large pieces. This is also not the venue for selling large one of a kind pieces. This is not a sales gallery or artisan center although we have many great venues of this type throughout the Pennsylvania Wilds, which can be found here:

pawildsartisans.com/Trail-Site-Directory. Instead this is a gift shop where a customer wants to take home a memento that is a reflection of their visit to the park and their trip in the Pennsylvania Wilds. Our e-commerce site is not equipped to place large pieces in storage until sold, nor can we assume the liability to ship large one-of-a-kind pieces.

What's your sourcing method?

Does it matter where the stuff you buy comes from? We think so. Which is why we've put a lot of thought into how we source products at our PA Wilds Conservation Shops.

One of our main product lines is [The Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania](#), a network of more than 100 local producers, artists and craftspeople from across the Pennsylvania Wilds region. These are people who live and work in rural PA, love what they do, and have proven through a jurying process that they are good at doing it. These pieces carry The Wilds Cooperative of PA hangtags as a signal to customers that they are taking home hand-made products.

We also carry various soft goods at our physical and online stores. These include PA Wilds-branded and state park-branded t-shirts, totes, hats and other apparel. These are sourced using industry and conservation resources such as One Green Planet's ["A Guide to Buying Sustainable, Fair-Trade and Cruelty-Free Clothing."](#) Once we find a responsible company with competitive prices where we can source the soft goods, we work with local companies in the Pennsylvania Wilds to place the order for 'blanks' and then these local companies are hired to give the products their value-added component, be that creating a design for a new line of t-shirts, stitching embroidered patches on fleece jackets, screen printing or some other service.

It's not a perfect system, but it is one that we've put thought into, that we feel lives up to our [Brand Principles](#), that is making a difference to small-scale producers and business owners in rural PA - and that we feel the consumer, in return, can feel good about.

Do you sell online?

Yes! We are developing an e-commerce site which can be found here: pawilds.com/store.