

## NEWS RELEASE

### Lynn Fuhler to Present at Ohio River Basin Consortium Symposium

Winston-Salem, N.C. (September 18, 2022) — Lynn Fuhler and Amanda Killen have been selected to present at the annual Ohio River Basin Consortium for Research and Education Symposium on Friday, October 7, 2022.

The presentation, *Outdoor Recreation and Events Play a Vital Role in Rural Economic Development*, will highlight Southwest Virginia's Clinch River. This region of the Appalachian Mountains was once home to numerous coal companies. To stem the outbound migration of residents following mine closures, this area now relies on outdoor activities to revitalize gateway rivert owns while introducing visitors to remote areas with abundant natural resources. At the same time, events generate an enthusiastic response from residents.

“Towns and villages, Main Street programs, chambers of commerce and destination management organizations shouldn’t underestimate the importance of outdoor recreation and events to their communities,” said Fuhler. “These activities introduce tourists to places they otherwise would pass by and instead help drive the economy with food and beverage sales and overnight stays.”

The Ohio River Basin Consortium for Research and Education symposium covers various topics, including watersheds and economic development, the current status and threats to the Ohio River, aquatic life and biological issues, fracking and fracking-related water issues, flooding and dam regulation, surface and groundwater quality, sediment transport, hydropower and renewal energy, water quality issues in the Great Lake regions, cross-current matters of environment and hydrology and climate change impact on water resources, among others.

#### Credentials:

Raised in Southern Illinois, Lynn Fuhler has always enjoyed the outdoors. While camping and hiking in the national forest near the Ohio River or sailing on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Carlyle Lake, she saw the positive impact of outdoor recreation on rural economies. Having spent time in Southwest Virginia, Lynn observed the role outdoor recreation and events have played in helping transition and diversify rural towns that once relied on a single industry to survive. Lynn is the author of two books on festivals and event management, available online and at major bookstores. A storyteller by nature, Lynn speaks regularly at conferences on tourism, marketing and festivals and events. Fuhler holds a travel and tourism degree from St. Louis University’s Parks College. She is also the president of Flying Compass, a website development and tourism marketing company.

Passionate about small-town revitalization, Amanda Killen served as Tazewell, Virginia’s marketing and community development director, working diligently among many projects for the town to become a Main Street program. Through her efforts, Tazewell Today met the stringent criteria and applied, earning the state’s distinguished Main Street designation and adding Main Street executive director to her list of titles. With an innate sense, Amanda breathed life into this sleepy Southwest Virginia town during her tenure. Through creative events and festivals held year-round, she drew visitors to shops and restaurants. She saw the expansion of investment in local businesses and the development of several new hotels. An encouraging sign was seeing several individuals and families relocate.

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Availability: Nationwide by arrangement and via telephone and Zoom

Contact: Lynn Fuhler at (336) 499-6372 or (727) 214-0726; [www.flyingcompass.com](http://www.flyingcompass.com) and [www.lynnfuhler.com](http://www.lynnfuhler.com).