

## PARK FUNDING

# Please Support National Park Funding in FY16

National parks are economically important and popular; please help restore them for the National Park System Centennial in 2016.

Next year's 100th anniversary of the National Park System provides an exciting and historic opportunity to ensure our national parks have the resources they need to thrive in their second century and beyond. The centennial should catalyze a revitalized commitment to protect America's most special places, as we saw with a renewed investment on the System's 50th anniversary. The National Park Service is entrusted with these treasured sites, but it is Congress that is entrusted with making sure they will last.

The modest restoration of some park service operations funding in FY15 helped our national parks regain a little footing after cuts including the FY13 sequester that adversely affected parks and threatened the economies of gateway communities that depend on them. Budget cuts and declining funds over the last several years have led to crumbling facilities and insufficient rangers and other staff to serve visitors and maintain world-class resources.

The National Parks Conservation Association respectfully asks members of Congress to support the President's budget request for the National Park Service in the FY16 funding vehicle:

- Restore \$239 million to the park operations account for park rangers to focus on day-to-day maintenance, preservation of natural resources, and the education for more than a million elementary students, and for the park service to make investments in Civil Rights history;
- Restore \$113 million to the construction account, which would help address the deferred maintenance backlog by restoring deteriorating infrastructure such as lodges, visitor centers and park water systems;
- Provide a \$40 million increase for the Centennial Challenge—a public-private partnership model that leverages non-federal donations to support projects in parks across the country; and
- Support the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (S. 235/H.R. 167), which would fix the broken system of wildfire funding by funding the most disastrous wildfires through an emergency account like floods and other natural disasters.



### A RARE CENTENNIAL OPPORTUNITY

As the National Park System prepares for its 100th Anniversary in 2016, Congress has an extraordinary and exciting opportunity to invest in our national treasures and begin restoring the places that so deeply inspire American families, provide healthy recreational opportunities, support local economies and create jobs, and protect America's natural and cultural treasures.



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NPCA.ORG

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## Economic Importance

The government shutdown demonstrated the economic importance of national parks to gateway communities. These communities lost \$414 million in visitor spending alone during the 16-day shutdown. Investments in the park service budget support [robust economic activity](#):

- Every dollar invested in the National Park Service yields nearly ten dollars in economic activity;
- National parks support nearly \$27 billion in economic activity and nearly a quarter million private-sector jobs annually;
- National parks are a third of the 25 most popular travel destinations in the U.S. One out of every five international visitors goes to national parks; those who do stay longer, visit more places and are more likely to be repeat visitors here.

## Popular Support

Recent [bipartisan polling](#) NPCA commissioned showed that 9 in 10 voters—Independent, Democrat and Republican—do not want national park funding cut.

## A Small Investment

The investment in our parks is small and is declining as a portion of the federal budget. The entire budget for the National Park Service is a tiny 1/15th of one percent of the federal budget; in 1982, it was 1/8th. The average American family pays roughly as much in income taxes for our national parks each year as it would cost to buy a cup of coffee. National parks are not a significant contributor to the national debt, yet they can help spur the economy if they are in decent shape to greet visitors during the System's Centennial year.

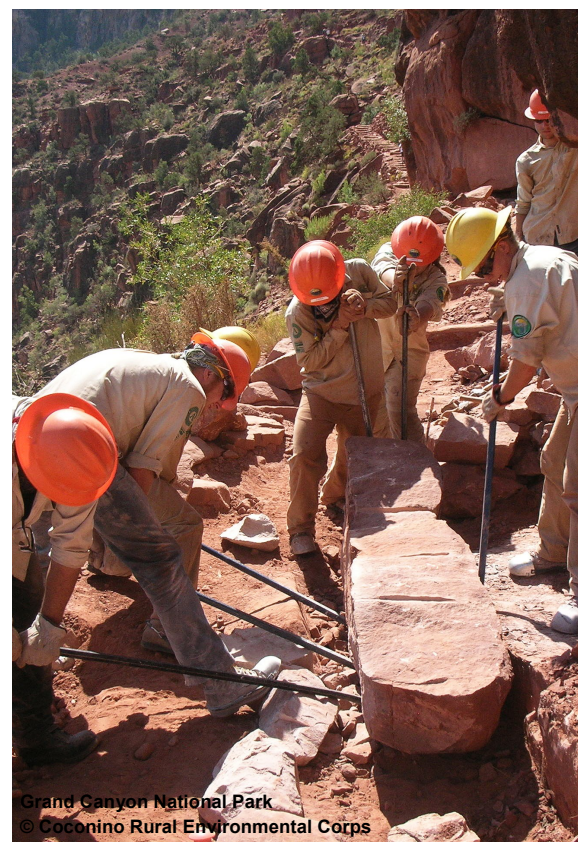
On behalf of its million members and supporters across the country, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) protects our national parks for future generations.

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“...Our businesses and livelihood, and that of our employees and their families, depend on keeping the national parks open and in good condition... Simply put, even more cuts to national park budgets would be penny wise and pound foolish. Our families and our communities and the nation's economy will suffer without much real fiscal benefit to the federal budget...”

*--Excerpt from a letter sent by nearly 300 local businesses to Congress and the president, February 28th 2013.*



Grand Canyon National Park  
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