

PARK FUNDING



Yosemite National Park, Tunnel View
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TUNNEL VIEW OVERLOOK PROJECT

As part of the last Centennial Initiative, the Tunnel View scenic overlook—from which some of the most iconic photographs are taken of Yosemite National Park—was completely rehabilitated. The renovation expanded handicap accessibility, improved traffic flow, corrected drainage deficiencies, restored the historic rockwork, and enhanced the educational exhibits. The \$3.3 million project was jointly paid for by The Yosemite Fund and the National Park Service. It is one of most popular overlooks in the park with an estimated 5,000-7,000 people visiting it per day during the busy tourist season.

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Centennial Challenge

Centennial of the National Park System Provides Opportunity for New Investment by Public-Private Partnerships

In August 2016, the National Park System will celebrate its 100th anniversary, an ideal opportunity for public and private organizations to invest in restoring and renewing America's treasures. National parks are loved by American and international visitors and are economic generators for the local communities that surround them. National parks not only maintain and protect our natural resources, but they also preserve America's rich history and cultural icons for current and future generations.

The Centennial is an opportunity for the Administration and Congress to leave a lasting legacy by ensuring the National Park System is adequately prepared to serve billions of domestic and international visitors for the next century and beyond.

The president's fiscal year 2016 budget demonstrates the Administration's commitment to the Centennial by proposing an investment in both discretionary and mandatory funding over the next three years. **By authorizing a long-term public-private matching program building on the last Centennial Initiative launched in 2006 and the initial reinvestment of \$10 million for the Centennial Challenge in fiscal year 2015, private entities and the public could more robustly invest in important centennial projects.**

History

In 2006, President George W. Bush and Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne launched the National Park System Centennial Initiative as a 10-year, \$3 billion effort to prepare national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, recreation, and enjoyment. The Initiative outlined five goals focusing on stewardship, environmental leadership, recreational experience, education, and professional excellence.

The Centennial Initiative included the Centennial Challenge, a matching program that invited individuals, foundations, businesses, and other private-sector organizations to contribute at least \$100 million annually, matched by \$100 million in federal funds, to support signature programs and projects in the national parks. While Centennial Challenge funding was requested by the President for many years, funding was only appropriated in fiscal years 2008 and 2010. Unfortunately, due to austere budget times, the Centennial Initiative was never fully realized. An \$10 million reinvestment by Congress in fiscal year 2015 has provided hope to restore the program in time for the Centennial.

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Sample Signature Projects from the Last Centennial Challenge

- ◇ *Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Ohio)*: The project improved outdoor recreation programs and residential camps targeted at the urban communities in surrounding Cleveland and Akron. Over 820 students per year benefited from the project.
- ◇ *Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (Alaska)*: The project removed constantly running diesel generators and replaced them with battery/propane hybrid generators to increase efficiency and decrease maintenance at the historic Kennecott Mines and Power Plant.
- ◇ *Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming and Montana)*: This project furthered the goals of the ‘No Child Left Inside’ initiative by providing day programs, regional outreach programs, Junior Ranger programs, community and park-based workshops, and summer camps for K-12 students.

Fiscal Year 2016 Centennial Challenge

The fiscal year 2015 omnibus spending bill provided \$10 million for the Challenge to be matched by at least another \$10 million in private donations for signature centennial projects. This initial investment will be instrumental in garnering partner support to prepare park sites across the country for the Centennial.

President Obama’s fiscal year 2016 budget proposes increasing the initial investment by \$40 million through appropriations as well as providing \$100 million over three years in mandatory funding, similar to what was proposed by President Bush. Dedicated federal dollars matched with private funding could leverage millions of additional dollars for the Park System for the Centennial and for several years after. The mandatory funding request is subject to authorizing legislation.

Funding Stream	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
Appropriations	\$10 million	\$50 million	TBD	TBD
Mandatory	\$0 million	\$100 million	\$100 million	\$100 million

The Centennial Challenge funding would help prepare the parks for the next generation of service and invest in construction, maintenance, and education projects.

We call on Congress to authorize the Centennial Challenge and support appropriated funds to enhance our national parks for the next 100 years.

For more information: visit npca.org/secondcenturyaction

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“A vital goal for this country would be to prepare the parks, to guard the parks, to conserve the parks, and to make the parks relevant to the American people in honor of the 100th anniversary.”

President George W. Bush

February 7, 2007



Old Faithful Geyser, Yellowstone National Park
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