



What's in YOUR Water?

By Katherine McKinney

Turn on your faucet, fill up your glass, and take a look. Where does your drinking water come from? How clean is it? What protects its source?

In the greater Washington, D.C., area, our tap water comes from the Potomac River. Surprising? It shouldn't be. More than 117 million Americans—over one-third of the country's population—get our drinking water from rivers, lakes, and other “surface” waters.

These waters include the major rivers in our region (such as the Potomac, Shenandoah, and Delaware), as well as the many smaller streams and wetlands that feed them. “These headwater sources flow into our larger rivers and bays and have a direct bearing on their water quality,” says Pam Goddard, senior manager of NPCA's Chesapeake and Virginia programs. National park lands contribute to the health of these waters, but parks alone are not enough.

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Rx for Parks

Engaging the Next Generation in the Great Outdoors

By Ed Stierli

During a beautiful summer afternoon on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the normally quiet Constitution Gardens were awash with the sound of hundreds of excited students enjoying the last days of the school year by playing games and learning about national parks. While the students took turns at NPCA's “Leave No Trace” relay race, I asked them about their summer plans.

“I'm going to hang out with my friends,” was a popular answer, as was watching movies, playing video games, or going to the pool.

When I asked who would be visiting national parks, a few hands went up. Some kids had plans to go canoeing at Anacostia Park, picnicking at Rock Creek Park, or camping at Assateague Island National Seashore. For many students, teachers and families organize their outdoor experiences in national parks. What about the rest?

In this digital age, many children suffer from “nature deficit disorder,” a term coined by author Richard Louv. According to a recent study, while preschoolers in the United States spend about 12 hours a week outside, by the time these children turn 16, that figure has shrunk to seven. Spending little time in nature not only has been linked to a wide range of behavioral problems, such as

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), but it's also been tied to depression and obesity among children and teens.

These are troubling correlations, especially considering our heavy use of devices such as iPads, smart phones, and television. But an outdoor experience cannot be

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Top: The Delaware River flows for 330 miles, passing through farmland along the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River and mountain resort areas at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The river offers abundant recreational opportunities and provides drinking water for 15 million people. ©Joisey Showaa **Above:** Equipped with nets, students from Robert E. Lee Elementary School explore nearby Petersburg National Battlefield as part of an NPCA/NPS spring break camp. Photo courtesy of NPS.

FIELD REPORT

FALL-WINTER 2014-15

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Maryland, Pennsylvania,
Virginia, West Virginia

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Update from the Field

By Matt Elliott



During my nearly one year on staff, NPCA has opened a field office in Center City Philadelphia, advanced campaigns in parks where threats loom large, and forged new partnerships that elevate and expand our work.

I write this update from Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, one of the top ten most-visited parks in the nation. From the porch where I sit, the sky is filled with stars, and the only sound is the hum of insects in the woods nearby. Tomorrow, the new day will bring with it the bustle of local residents opening their shops and visitors gearing up to explore the park and its neighboring communities.

I wonder to myself: How will this special place look, feel, or sound in the future? Natural gas companies have begun eyeing the Delaware River Basin as the next potential gas boom area in Pennsylvania. I'm here with my NPCA colleagues to better understand what a drilling boom might mean to the region. Through meetings with area businesses, we hope to determine how NPCA can work most effectively with these communities to ensure a strong, vibrant economy that is compatible with the historic and natural character of the parks.

Over the past several months, I've traveled across Pennsylvania to weigh in on Governor Corbett's proposed regulations on natural gas drilling. A number of NPCA members joined me in attending hearings and

submitting public comments to the administration to let them know that the regulations don't go far enough to protect our state and national parks. To all of you who showed up or sent in comments, thank you! We will remain active and vocal on this matter until our parks receive appropriate consideration and protection.

On another front, NPCA is working with local country rock singer Doreen Taylor to encourage youth to get out and enjoy our parks. Doreen's new song, "Colors of the USA," reaches new and diverse audiences, inspires them to visit our national parks, and benefits NPCA. This July, on the steps of Independence Hall, NPCA recognized Doreen's work and named her an official ambassador for our parks.

In closing, I want to thank you for your support! I look forward to our work together to protect national parks in Pennsylvania and Delaware.



Left: Matt enjoys a beautiful summer day along the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. ©Matt Elliott/NPCA **Above:** Independence Hall serves as the backdrop to the Liberty Bell in historic Philadelphia, home to our Pennsylvania and Delaware field office. ©actionsports | Dreamstime.com

HAVE A PHOTO OR COMMENT TO SHARE? We welcome photos from members enjoying national parks, particularly those in the Mid-Atlantic region. We also appreciate feedback on our Field Report. Share your digital photos, comments, and ideas with us via email: kmckinney@npca.org

Defender of Battlefields, Edwin Fountain

This year our national parks commemorate the 200th anniversary of the end of the War of 1812, the 150th anniversary of many Civil War battles, and the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I. In light of these milestones, we spoke with Edwin L. Fountain of Arlington, Virginia. A member of our volunteer Regional Leadership Council, Edwin has a deep interest in protecting America's military history, and recently led the rehabilitation of the District of Columbia War Memorial on the National Mall.

Q: As a member of the U.S. World War I Commission, do you feel the National Park Service sufficiently tells the stories of this important chapter in American history?

A: Many of our parks have little-known World War I connections. For example, on a recent NPCA tour of Ft. McHenry, I learned that the fort essentially served as World War I's version of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center—a facility to treat and rehabilitate severely-injured soldiers. I'm pleased that the NPS has formed a task force in time for the War's centennial to explore how our parks can better tell stories like these.



Q: What's your most memorable experience in a national park?

A: A few years ago I was at Gettysburg at Little Round Top, where in 1863 Joshua Chamberlain led a bayonet charge that helped preserve the Union victory. As our group's leader recounted the battle's events, he asked if anyone had visited Chamberlain's gravesite. A woman who was not part of our group raised her hand. This woman and her family were as knowledgeable about the battle as the rest of us. These Americans, whose forebears immigrated to this country after the Civil War, visit Gettysburg every year because they understand that Gettysburg is part of the American soul. To me, that was a beautiful thing.

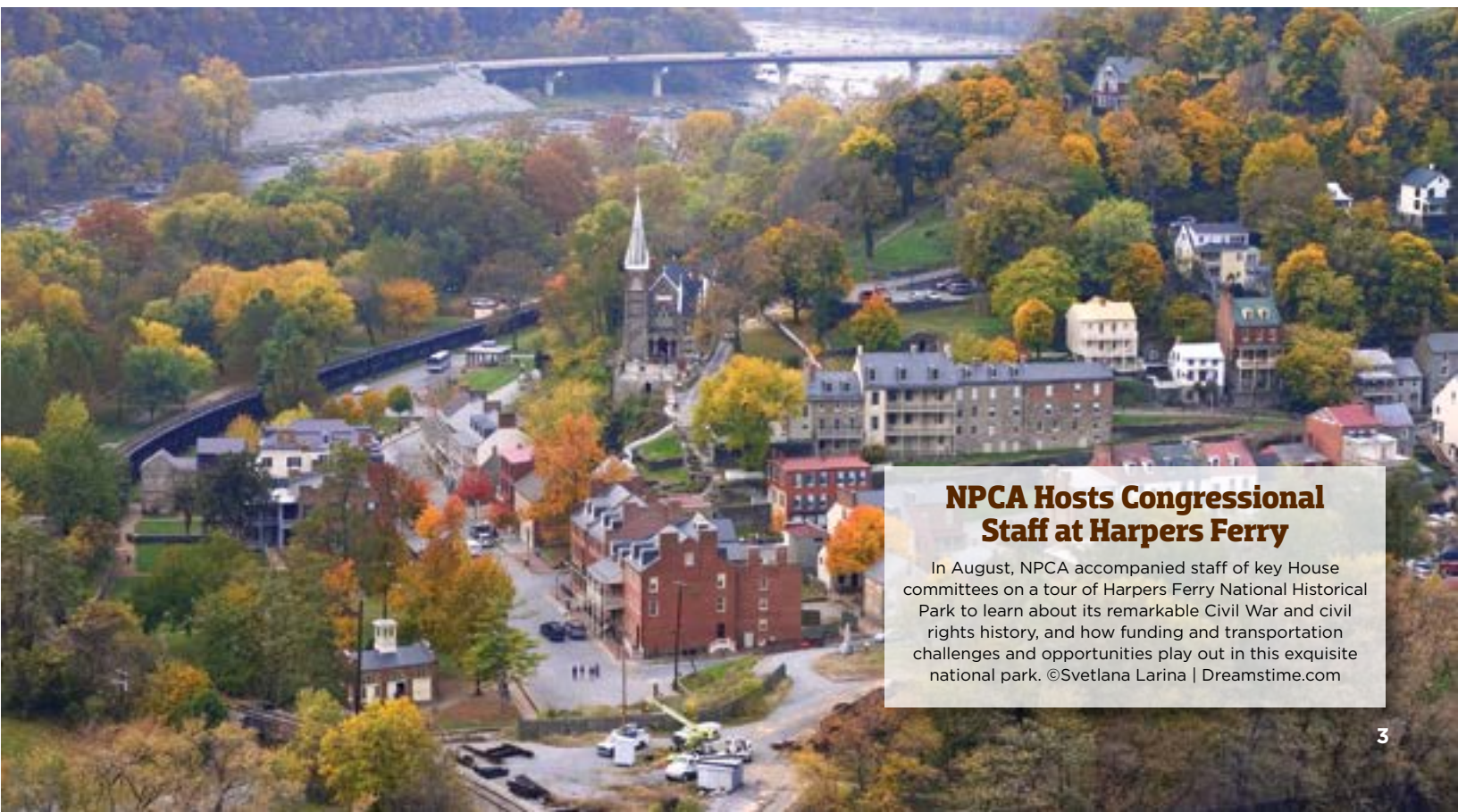
Q: You have a special passion for historic preservation within our national parks. Why have you invested so much of your time and talent in this pursuit?

A: My fascination with the past is just hard-wired in me. As the son of a Navy admiral, I have a particular interest in military history, which is the focus of many of our national parks.

While war brings out much of the worst in mankind, it also reveals much of what is noble and heroic, and therefore inspiring. It is where our fellow citizens put themselves in harm's way, on our behalf.

Because we are a secular nation, historic battlefields are our hallowed ground, our sacred spaces—not just because of the heroism and sacrifice that they witnessed, but because the causes and passions that drive nations and men to war reflect the most fundamental aspects of our national character, and because to stand in the places where those causes and passions played out in the moments of their highest drama is to touch directly our shared history, and to comprehend most fully our American heritage.

Above: Edwin takes a break from defending national parks in the Mid-Atlantic to enjoy the Grand Canyon. ©Edwin Fountain



NPCA Hosts Congressional Staff at Harpers Ferry

In August, NPCA accompanied staff of key House committees on a tour of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park to learn about its remarkable Civil War and civil rights history, and how funding and transportation challenges and opportunities play out in this exquisite national park. ©Svetlana Larina | Dreamstime.com

Rx for Parks

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downloaded from the App Store. Teaching the next generation to unplug and get outside should be a national imperative.

An ally in the push to get kids into parks is Dr. Robert Zarr, a Washington, D.C.-based pediatrician. National Public Radio recently featured Dr. Zarr for his novel approach to treating his patients—40 percent of whom are overweight or obese. Having mapped out national parks in the area, Dr. Zarr issues an “Rx for outdoor activities.” So far, he has written more than 600 such prescriptions in English and Spanish.

NPCA is on the front lines fighting nature deficit disorder in some of the communities surrounding our 401 national parks. To get more children into parks, we engage families and communities, educate them about parks in their backyards, and make parks more accessible.

Because three out of every five American kids live in urban areas, NPCA works to expand access to national parks in and

around cities, while building a diverse new base of park advocates. In the Mid-Atlantic region, NPCA’s National Parks in the Chesapeake program connects more than 5,000 young people with national parks each year via educational programs, recreational experiences, and restoration projects. Each participant leaves with the knowledge and resources to find, explore,

and get involved with national parks in their local community.

Nature deficit disorder isn’t something that can be fixed by any one initiative or group. We need more school systems and teachers to prioritize outdoor experiences. We need more physicians like Dr. Zarr. And, we need more families to encourage—and model – spending time in nature.

Your RX

Find a national park near you. Take your family and friends. Repeat frequently.



Left: Participants in the 2013 Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventure (sponsored by NPCA and others) learn about water safety from an NPS ranger prior to a paddling adventure on the Anacostia River in D.C. ©Annie Riker/NPCA **Right:** Students from Robert E. Lee Elementary School explore nearby Petersburg National Battlefield. Photo courtesy of NPS.

CREATURE FEATURE:

The Otter Among Us

By Katherine McKinney

Dusk falls along the Nanticoke River in Delaware. A kayaker glides along, heading for home. Fireflies blink like fairy lights along the shoreline. A soft, black nose rises to the water’s surface, followed by a sleek, brown head. Moments later, the otter darts back below the surface.

Agile and playful on land as in water, river otters (*Lontra canadensis*) frequent the rivers, lakes, and shores of our Mid-Atlantic region. Unlike other native species, however, otters haven’t always thrived in these waterways. Extensive trapping during the 1800s decimated populations in many areas. Thankfully, reintroduction programs in several states have led to the recovery of this charismatic creature throughout much of its historic range.



Found throughout much of our Mid-Atlantic region, the charismatic river otter relies on clean water to survive. © Jon Corcoran/Maryland Biodiversity Project

CAUTION: Bumpy Road Ahead



Learn more about national park transportation needs and funding at <http://parkb.it/1qsKrMt>. Ask Congressional candidates to increase national park transportation funding to at least \$365 million per year, and to support other programs to address NPS transportation needs.

Above: Spanning the Potomac River, the Memorial Bridge symbolizes national reconciliation following the U.S. Civil War, linking the Robert E. Lee Memorial with the Lincoln Memorial. Both a major commuter route and access for Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Bridge is one of the 42 structurally-deficient NPS bridges, with repairs estimated to cost up to \$244 million. ©kayglobal/BIGSTOCK

Today, this 11- to 30-pound member of the weasel family can be found sliding down mud banks and frolicking in waterways from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in Pennsylvania, and beyond.

Uniquely adapted for the life aquatic, otters have streamlined bodies with long torsos and flexible spines for torpedoing through the water or turning on a dime, powerful tails and webbed feet for propulsion, sleek coats to insulate and shed water, and a lung capacity that enables them to dive to depths of 60 feet or hold their breath for up to 8 minutes.

But don't let their cute faces or their playfulness fool you. Their sensitive whiskers, strong claws and sharp teeth make them formidable hunters.

The otter's position at the top of the food chain (eating fish, frogs, mollusks, rodents, and aquatic invertebrates) means they have few natural predators. It also means they are especially susceptible to water pollution. Pollutants in the water, such as

polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury, accumulate as they migrate up the food chain, increasing in concentration at each level, until ingested by the otter.

These pollutants may originate from discrete sources (such as a discharge pipe) or more general, non-point sources (such as storm water or agricultural run-off). The pollution may not even be local. It could come from miles—or even states—away.

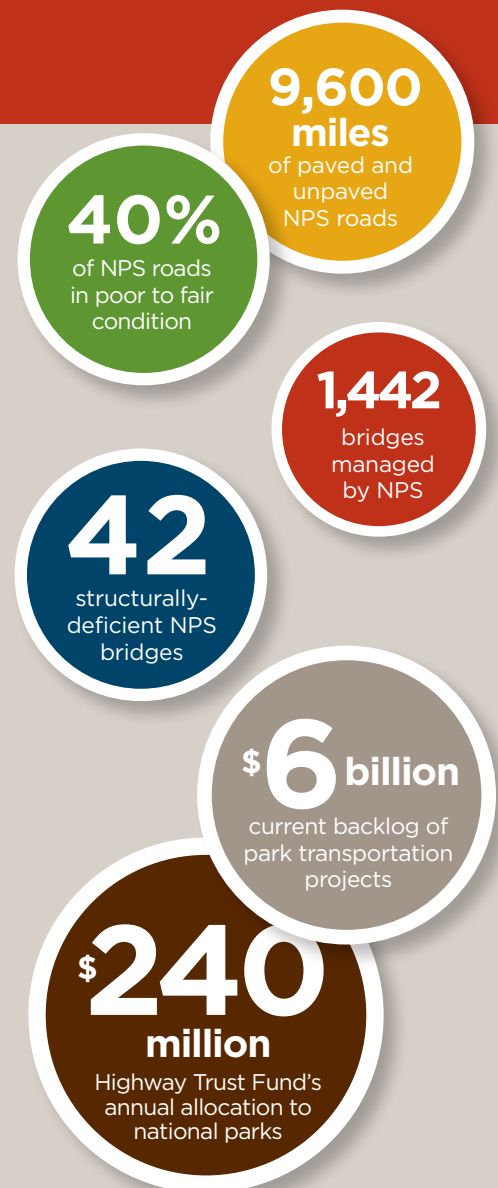
One of many species in our Mid-Atlantic region dependent on clean water and healthy ecosystems, the river otter is a prime candidate to benefit from the recently proposed Clean Water Protection Rule meant to clarify and enhance protection of the United States' connected waterways. (Read more about this rule on page 1.)

Unaware of comment periods and legislative actions, the otter will continue as it has for millennia, swimming, sliding, and scampering in those places where food and space are plentiful and the water is clean.

Prior to its August recess, Congress extended funding for federal transportation projects through May 31, 2015. Absent even this limited action, the federal fund that supports road repair and construction would have run out of money in August. To address our country's—and our national parks'—transportation infrastructure needs, however, a temporary fix falls far short. Congress must reauthorize and improve the nation's transportation programs to ensure safe access to our national parks.

To better understand why this funding is so critical for our parks, take a look at the startling facts below.

By the Numbers



What's in YOUR Water?

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The 1972 Clean Water Act established protections for our nation's waterways, including those within our national parks, and set a framework for federal, state, and local agencies to work together to achieve healthy, clean water.

Officials at these agencies work to meet the Act's clean water goals by limiting pollutants in waterways. They require cities and industrial sites to get permits before dumping anything in the water; they limit destruction of wetlands and streams; and they encourage pollution-prevention practices. Although progress has been made since the days of dirty rivers catching fire, many waterways—including the waters in over half of our national parks—remain polluted. What's more, Supreme Court decisions in 2001 and 2006 made it unclear which waters actually are protected under the Act.

Today, this ambiguity plagues the permitting process, delays decisions, and prevents some waterways (such as headwater streams and wetlands) from receiving proper protections. As a result, our valuable national park waters, riparian habitats, and drinking water supplies are vulnerable.

In April 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers proposed a Clean Water Protection Rule to clarify the current confusion. "The proposed rule would not extend protection to any bodies of water that the Clean Water Act did not historically protect," explains NPCA's Water Policy Director, Chad Lord. "Rather, following the intent of the Act, recent legal rulings, and the best available



The public comment period for this proposed rule is open until October 20, 2014. To read the rule, learn more, or submit a comment, please visit <http://parkb.it/1nurbOM>.

science on water systems, the proposed rule more clearly defines which waters, including park waters, will be protected from destruction or pollution."

The rule recognizes the connections among headwaters, river corridors, and wetlands, and places these linked waters under the authority of the Clean Water Act, thereby ensuring their continued protection.

With the improvements proposed by the new rule, and with concerted and continued effort, we may one day have clean water at all of our national parks.

Above: Protecting headwater streams, like this one in Shenandoah National Park, is essential to maintaining clean drinking water supplies and healthy aquatic habitats. © Orhon/BIGSTOCK

DID YOU KNOW?

Check out where some of the cities in our region get their drinking water.

SOURCES: Drinking water—The Nature Conservancy; Population data—U.S. Census Bureau.

CITY	POPULATION*	DRINKING WATER SOURCE
Arlington, VA	208,000	Potomac River
Charleston, WV	51,000	Elk River
Germantown, MD	86,000	Potomac River
Hampton, VA	137,000	Chickahominy River
Philadelphia, PA	1,553,000	Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers
Richmond, VA	214,000	James River
Washington, DC	646,000	Potomac River

*2013 estimates rounded to the nearest 1,000 (Arlington and Germantown are 2010 estimates).

Upcoming NPCA Events in the Mid-Atlantic

Contact Katherine McKinney (kmckinney@npca.org)
for more information on any of these events.

OCTOBER 2

See America Event at DOI: View a collection of See America artwork celebrating our national parks during an event at the Interior Museum sponsored by Creative Action Network and NPCA. **Washington, DC.**

OCTOBER 5

Fort Hunt Field Day: Volunteer with NPCA and Friends of Fort Hunt to protect and enhance this national asset along the Potomac River. **George Washington Memorial Parkway, Alexandria, VA.**

OCTOBER 25

Fort McHenry Field Day: Join NPCA and the National Aquarium for a day spent restoring the wetlands along Baltimore's Inner Harbor. **Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, MD.**

Below: These volunteers reach down and dig in for this National Public Lands Day at Greenbelt Park, MD. ©Todd Perry

For more information about events in your area sponsored by the National Park Service, go to www.nps.gov, click on "Find a Park," and search for the park by name or state. For an updated list of NPCA-sponsored events in the region, go to www.npca.org/midatlantic, click on "Events". For updated information about NPCA's advocacy campaigns, contact any of our offices (see page 2).

NOVEMBER 1

Reclaim the Cove: Take part in a cleanup of this family farm and adjacent park, or paddle the cove while collecting trash. **Oxon Cove Park, Washington, DC, and Oxon Hill Farm, Oxon Hill, MD.**

December 28-January 2, 2015

New Year's in Yosemite ParkScapes Travel: See Yosemite National Park in a whole new light on this active adventure in the snowy High Sierras. **Yosemite National Park, CA.** Learn more at www.npca.org/wonderland.

MARCH 25, 2015

Salute to the Parks Gala: This annual event celebrates America's national parks, calls attention to their needs, and honors individuals and organizations that advocate for the preservation of our national parks. **National Building Museum, Washington, DC.**

Thank You!

Many thanks to NPCA's friends in the Mid-Atlantic region who have provided financial support and pro-bono services for NPCA programs since our last Field Report, published in March:

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For more information, please contact Carole Southall at 646.324.8304.

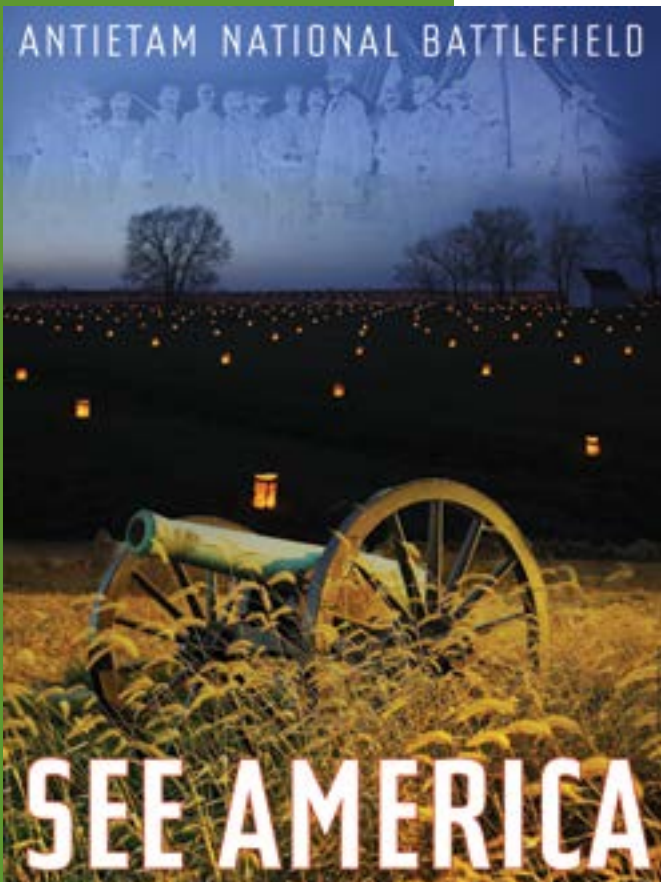
Our sincere appreciation goes to our **Mid-Atlantic Leadership Council**, chaired by Bob Rosenbaum. Council leaders provide invaluable leadership by advising, supporting, and advancing NPCA's mission, strategic priorities, and philanthropic efforts.





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Will You Help Protect Our National Parks?

Become a Trustee for the Parks with a donation of \$1,000 or more, and join a community of national park enthusiasts who not only sit in on NPCA's park protection discussions, but also obtain unique insights into the advocacy and political lobbying that occurs—locally and nationally—to defend our parks.

Our Trustees are invited to special opportunities throughout the year including receptions, brown-bag speaker presentations, park tours, and volunteer opportunities.

To learn more about the Trustees for the Parks program: visit www.npca.org/trustees or call the Director, Eric Olson, at 202.454.3331.

Left: This fall's Trustees for the Parks activities include a reception to highlight the *See America* exhibit at the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.
© Antietam National Battlefield by Chris Lozos for See America

