



A Conservation Success Along the Ocmulgee

In November, NPCA provided support to our Macon partners, the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative (ONPPI) and the Ocmulgee Land Trust (OLT), in securing a major piece of riverfront property for permanent conservation and eventual public use. With generous funding from the Peyton Anderson Foundation, the Ocmulgee



Land Trust was able to facilitate a deal to acquire nearly 700 acres of critical wildlife habitat between the Ocmulgee National Monument and the Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. According to

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Above: The property that will be protected has almost three miles of riverfront, mixed hardwood forests and wetlands rich in deer, ducks and turkey.
© Ken Krakow

An Open & Shut Case

When all 401 units of the National Park System shut down overnight last October as a result of the budget impasse in Washington, park lovers across the country immediately sprang into action. Photos of barricaded monuments, closed park roads, and fenced off hiking trails blanketed the media, becoming emblems of the government shutdown and the passion Americans feel for our national parks.

The shutdown was clearly devastating to national parks and local economies, but NPCA used the crisis as an opportunity to place parks at the forefront of media coverage. Over those three weeks, there were almost 600 stories in news outlets across the country, reaching 7 million people via print circulation and more than 700 million unique monthly visitors online. On Twitter, over 17 days, NPCA secured over 50 million potential impressions. Our #KeepParksOpen hashtag also resulted in thousands of Twitter users expressing their disappointment with Congress and with park closures. During the days preceding the shutdown and several days into the budget impasse, NPCA was quoted or mentioned in Washington Post articles every day, culminating in a supportive editorial in the paper on the Friday following the shutdown. Our messaging appeared in most major news outlets across the country, and we effectively utilized the American

public's disappointment to build real support for opening and funding our national parks for the long-term.

Although the federal government has reopened, and the Congress reached a budget deal for now, there is no guarantee that the congressional appropriations committees will provide the resources the parks require to put needed rangers back in our parks and begin to address the maintenance backlog. Over the last decade, the National Park Service construction budget has declined by nearly 70 percent in today's dollars. Continuous cuts have forced national park superintendents to delay the opening of parks or park roads; close visitor centers, picnic areas, and campgrounds; and decrease the number of rangers who protect and maintain parks. And with the closure of national parks during the government shutdown, local communities across the country lost more than half a billion dollars in revenue—affecting national parks and the people who depend on them in lasting and detrimental ways.

One study out of Western Carolina University revealed the economic impact on the region

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Top: Tioga Pass entrance to Yosemite National Park; closed due to the federal shutdown.
© Tandem/Matthew Kuhns

FIELD REPORT

Spring 2014

Southeast Regional Office

Advocating for National Parks in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina

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Since 1919, the nonpartisan National Parks Conservation Association has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. NPCA, its 800,000 members and supporters, and many partners work together to protect the park system and preserve our nation's natural, historical, and cultural heritage for our children and grandchildren.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR

In the last few years, we've heard a lot about an increasing disconnect between the younger generation and our public lands. Many factors are usually explored in these conversations, from demographics to digital preoccupation to the simple lack of opportunity to explore. The explosion of social media usually takes a lot of the blame for this disconnect.



as our National Park System celebrates its Centennial. Many are wondering whether today's America remembers, understands or connects to this promise of a century ago. There is work we must all do to enable and enrich these connections, but there are also signs that the intrinsic values inherent in our national park system are far from lost today. Perhaps they are the very

In 1916, long before Woody Guthrie sang "This Land is Your Land", Congress created the world's first national park system to conserve certain public lands and provide for their enjoyment "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations". In the midst of the Industrial Revolution, we declared that there were places in America, both natural and historic, that were so special that they needed to belong to everybody and they needed to last forever. Though the term had yet to be coined, this was our nation's first commitment to sustainability.

In 2016, less than two years from now, we have the opportunity to reaffirm that ideal

values that seem so absent from our current political discourse. Perhaps, as we approach the Centennial, we can rediscover them in the places we've preserved as the grand library of our natural and cultural heritage.

"...there are signs that the intrinsic values inherent in our national park system are far from lost today."

The obviously doctored photo below came to NPCA via our active social media network. Although digital, it looks like somebody got the memo.

Below: ©Aaron Bates Photography



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the Macon Telegraph, the purchase represents “the largest preservation deal in a pristine area of Bibb County’s river corridor since the creation of Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in 1989.”

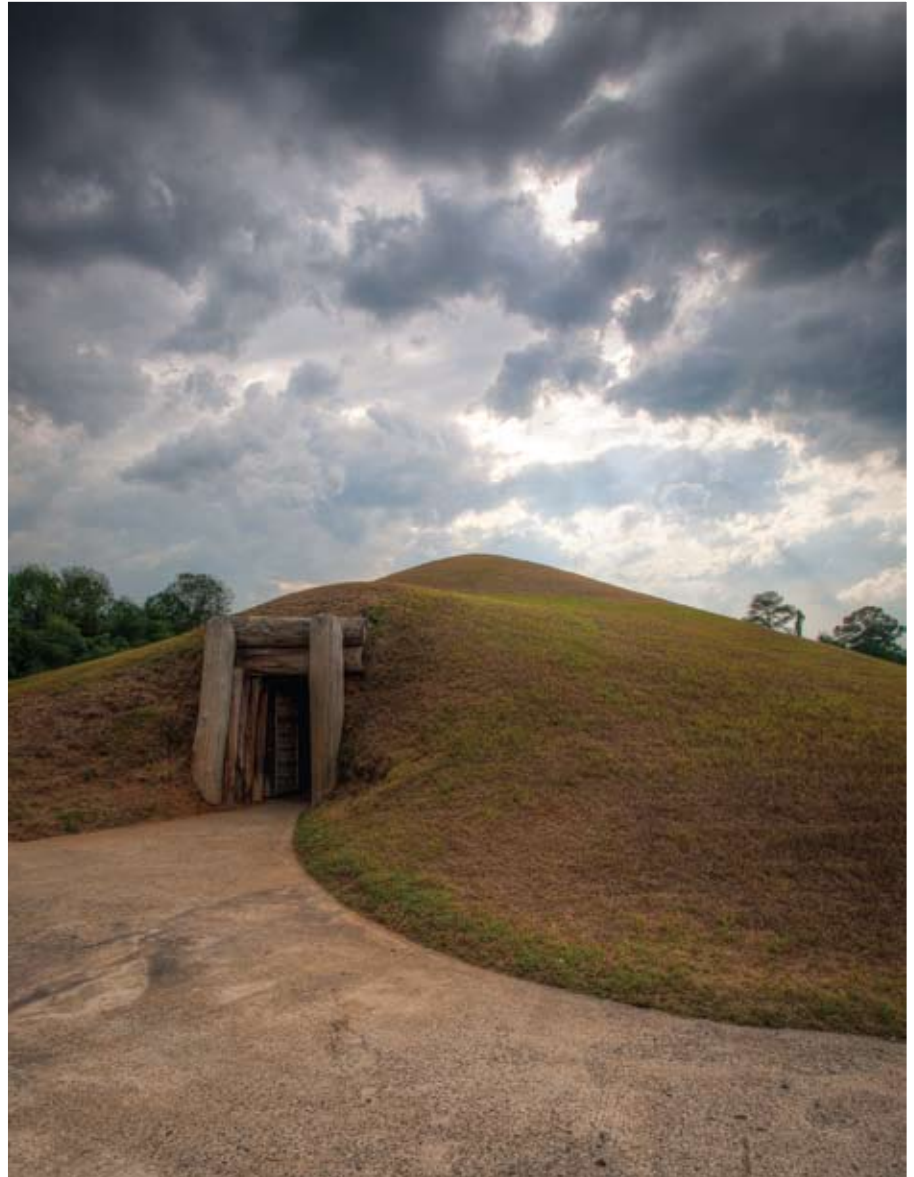
The achievement is also a significant milestone in the quest to establish an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve by connecting and consolidating several federal and state public lands along a 50-mile stretch of river between Macon and Hawkinsville. The preserved tract borders the important Brown’s Mount archaeological site and contains extensive forests, wetlands, and excellent migratory bird habitat. Talks are underway to make the tract part of the Bond Swamp Refuge and, thanks to NPCA’s work with local partners, future public uses for the site could include a new place for paddlers to launch their boats as part of the growing Ocmulgee River Water Trail, as well as opportunities for hiking, bird watching, hunting and fishing. In the longer term, protection of this property is a crucial step in the attempt to develop the Macon section of the river corridor as an urban national park and recreational wildland.

This recent conservation success is the first purchase by the Peyton Anderson Foundation and the first deal facilitated by the OLT in several years. The land trust is now looking at additional land protection opportunities that would contribute toward the vision of having a National Park & Preserve in Macon. And the next time there’s a chance to purchase sensitive land along the river

Right: This Earthlodge was a meeting and ceremonial center for the Mississippian Mound builders and its reconstructed exterior covers the original clay floor which has been carbon-dated to 1015 AD. Inside there are 50 seats, a fire pit and a bird-shaped effigy on which the “Chief’s Seat” sits. ©Mike Nalley Photography

corridor, we’ll be ready—NPCA and ONPPI have been actively facilitating a multi-agency discussion on the future management of the area, including the possibility of

establishing a grant and loan fund that would allow agencies and their partners to respond quickly to future emerging land-protection opportunities.



An Open & Shut Case

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surrounding Great Smoky Mountains National Park for just the first ten days of the government shutdown, October 1-10, 2013, comparing visitation for the same period in 2012. The magnitude of the loss to the local economies when nearly 370,000 visitors to the region didn’t come was immense:

- \$33.14 million in lost visitor spending,
- \$12.26 million in lost wages and paychecks,
- \$1.81 million in lost state taxes in both TN & NC, and
- \$12.02 million in lost local taxes for cities and counties in TN & NC.

While the budget deal in January helped reduce the damage that the broken budgeting process has been inflicting on our national parks, Congress needs to commit to a long-term investment in our national parks for their 2016 Centennial, to restore funding and protect these priceless treasures and the economies that depend on them. For more information about park funding needs, visit www.npca.org/parkfunding.

See America Campaign Is About Connecting and Reconnecting Americans to Our National Parks

By Theresa Pierno
NPCA Chief Operating Officer

More than 75 years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched a New Deal program called the Federal Art Project to help put the nation's artists to work. The program created thousands of poster designs, many of which showcased our great national parks, from Petrified Forest to Yellowstone, along with other treasured landscapes. The effort was a call for Americans and international tourists to literally get out and "See America" and connect with the best our country had to offer. The national park poster designs remain treasured historic pieces and grace the walls of many park enthusiasts today.

Earlier this year, NPCA began partnering with the Creative Action Network (CAN) to launch a campaign to re-imagine the historic *See America* posters for a digital age. As part of this 'crowd-sourced' campaign, anyone can contribute their own design to showcase our most precious American sites. CAN's campaigns are not contests but efforts to inspire artists to generate powerful imagery to create a groundswell of support around various causes. The posters are easy to share on



social media, will be displayed at gallery shows across the country and are available for purchase via the Creative Action Network site, with a portion of all proceeds going to the individual artists.

So, why now? What is the goal of this re-imagined *See America* campaign? At NPCA, we've made it a priority to connect new audiences to our national parks, especially as we prepare for the National Park Service centennial in 2016. As our national parks enter their second century, we acknowledge that one of the most significant threats facing them is irrelevancy to future generations. NPCA and our members continue to fight funding cuts, incompatible development, and other issues, but if young people don't connect with our national parks now, they won't work to protect them in the future. The first step toward caring deeply about America's national parks is without a doubt being inspired to visit them, including the special places in our own backyards.

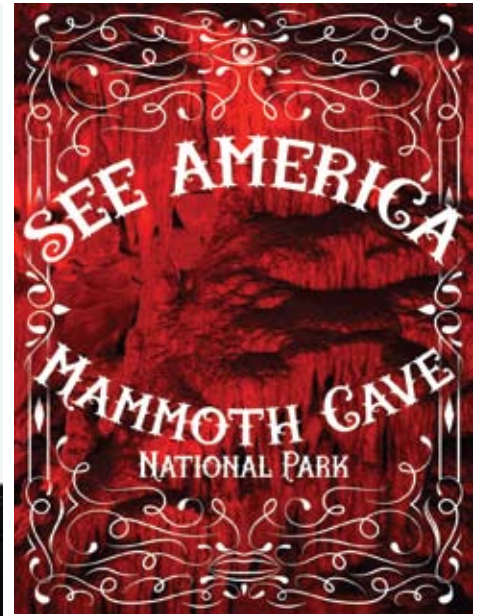
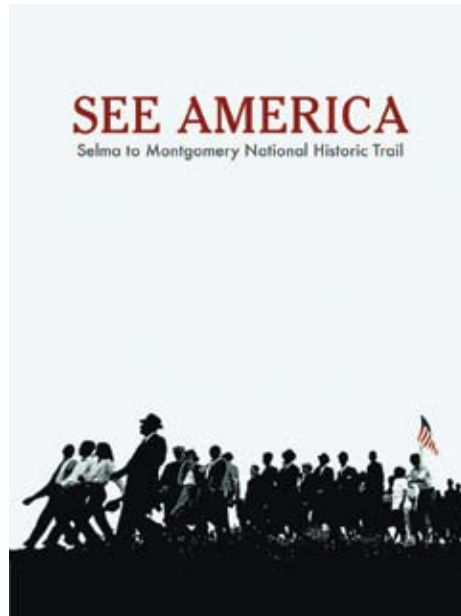
Throughout the parks' nearly 100-year history, artists and photographers have inspired millions of people to get outside and *See America*. Our new campaign looks to channel that same energy to make the parks about more than just budget cuts and political games. They are first and foremost the places that preserve who we are as Americans. Even if you have yet to visit a



national park or haven't been back to one in years, our hope is that these new creative posters will spark a lasting connection for you. We hope that you will find the next place to explore in our great country—whether a historic site or a vast natural landscape.

Reaching young people is essential to ensuring our national parks are protected for the future, and we must engage them to help us identify solutions to better connect them with our shared heritage. In the coming year, NPCA is creating a Future Leaders Council that will attract young people from across the country to get *their* ideas on how best to connect others to our national parks. We want to hear from both current park enthusiasts and those outside the parks family on what more our parks can offer and how we can foster a lasting connection. We can—and should—be doing more to help all Americans experience these great places.

See America offers a shining display of artistic talent and showcases a diversity of styles unseen in the original artwork. The internet and social media allow us to connect with people who might not have even heard of the original Federal Art Project, but who have a desire to inspire others to visit the places they hold dear. By submitting your own artwork or simply by sharing a poster on social media, you'll be helping to connect people to our national parks. Let's do our part to ensure our parks are relevant and protected for future generations.

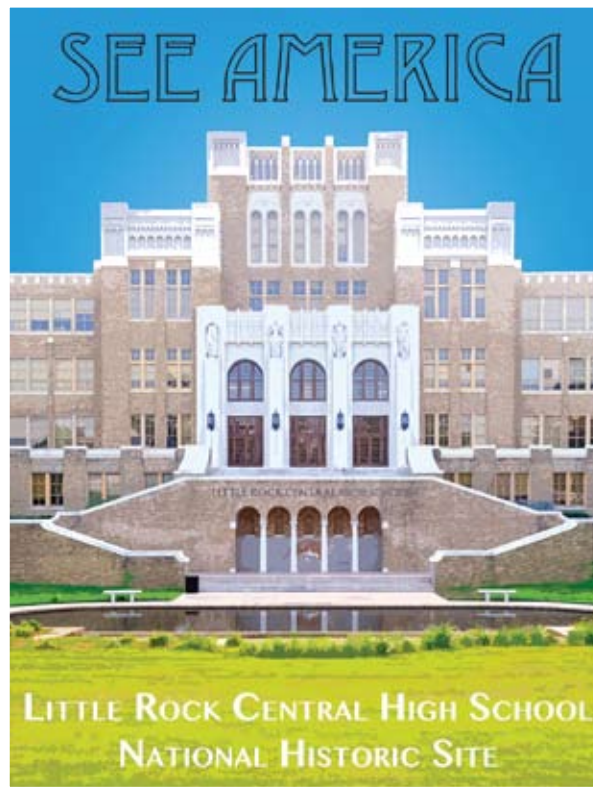


Please visit the Knoxville *See America* Exhibit

June 7th to July 5th, 2014 - Tomatohead at 12 Market Square, Downtown Knoxville
July 7th to August 3rd, 2014 - Tomatohead West at 7240 Kingston Pike, the Gallery

Directions, menus and operating hours can be found at www.thetomatohead.com.

To learn more about the campaign and view the new See America posters, visit seeamericaproject.com. To read about and see the historic WPA posters, visit rangerdoug.com and postersforthepeople.com.



Our Diminishing Green Space

In 1965 Congress passed a law designed to invest federal revenues from oil and gas leasing into a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to preserve America's natural areas, working lands, and historic and cultural heritage, as well as to increase access to recreational opportunities for all Americans. But today, when we need it most, LWCF is incapacitated.

This past summer, an important sliver of metro-Atlanta's diminishing green space might have been permanently protected, *but it wasn't*. It was one small tragedy for Atlanta's future and quality of life, but one that is reflected in similar events that occur daily across the southeast and the nation.

The fault does not lie with an uncaring landowner, or unscrupulous developer. Rather responsibility lies with Congress and a broken-down federal budget process.

This summer, conservationists made a valiant attempt to raise funds to protect a key private inholding at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, a Civil War battleground and Georgia's first designated Important Bird Area. An individual donor in California even offered to assist with a six-figure gift, but the effort failed and this important parcel will now be developed into subdivisions. A major reason for this defeat is that the National Park Service could not access LWCF funding, because Congress has starved the fund of promised resources.

Over the years, LWCF has protected land in every state as national parks, wildlife refuges, national forests, trails, wild and scenic rivers, state parks and historic sites. It has saved some of America's richest wildlife areas for hunting, fishing, and recreation. These conservation investments have been a boon to tourism and improved the quality of life for millions of Americans.

Every year, a small portion of offshore federal oil and gas leases, \$900 million, is supposed to flow into LWCF. At a time when American energy production is booming, the fund should be flush with

cash. But it isn't. In fact, the full funding promised by Congress has only been reached once since 1965. Instead, Congress has diverted as much as \$17 billion, or 85 percent, of the fund's dedicated revenue. This money has disappeared into the general treasury and been spent on projects unrelated to conservation and recreation.

proposed to zero out LWCF and divert the entire fund from its dedicated use.

LWCF isn't a hand-out—it's an **investment**. Outdoor recreation is big business. In Georgia alone, according to the Outdoor Industry Association, it generates \$23.3 billion in consumer spending, 231,000

jobs, \$7 billion in wages and salaries, and \$1.4 billion in state and local tax revenue annually. Near Atlanta, Kennesaw Mountain hosted nearly 2 million visitors in 2012 that spent more than \$104 million while in the area, significantly impacting the local economy while also being a popular recreation destination for residents.

For many reasons, we simply cannot afford to squander opportunities to fully preserve places like Kennesaw Mountain and other treasured landscapes across the

southeast. Please urge your Senators to work for passage of **S. 338** and urge your Congressional Representative to sponsor similar legislation in the House.

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510 • 202.224.3121

United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515 • 202.224.3121

Above: Local elementary students explore the earthworks at Kennesaw Mountain during a National Park Trust 'Kids to Parks' outing with a Civil War re-enactor who shared details about the life of a Civil War era soldier. ©National Park Trust



The southeast continues to grow. By 2040, metro-Atlanta's population could top 8.3 million, an addition of 3 million new people. How will our region look in 50 or 75 years? The effort to preserve diminishing green space requires local, state, and federal assistance. Part of the solution is for Congress to fully and permanently fund LWCF.

A bipartisan bill in the U.S. Senate, **S. 338**, would ensure the full and dedicated funding of LWCF. Southern Senators Richard Burr (R-NC), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Kay Hagan (D-NC), and Mark Pryor (D-AR) have co-sponsored this bill. Unfortunately, last year, the U.S. House of Representatives

FUN FACT

The National Park Trust (NPT) was originally a NPCA program, formed as a restricted, revolving fund to acquire land parcels for the National Parks at times when, due to funding or bureaucratic limitations (usually both), the National Park Service could not immediately and directly make the purchase of a parcel from a willing seller. The historic Kennecott Mine in Alaska and the Kansas ranch that became the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve are two parcels that were 'rescued' by the fund. The NPT became a fully independent organization in 1997 and continues to work on strategic land acquisition along with new programs like **Kids to Parks** and the **Buddy Bison** program.

Raise Your Voice to Save the Buffalo

Last summer we told you about the large, concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) that's threatening the Buffalo National River watershed. The threat remains and we need your help again.

The CAFO, C&H Farms, housing 6,500 pigs, has been permitted as the first industrial-scale hog facility in the Buffalo National River watershed. They are raising pigs for Cargill—the largest privately held company in the nation. While the piglets are trucked off site to be processed into bacon and pork products, the 450+ people living in the local community of Mount Judea are left with the waste that up to 6,500 hogs produce.

The National Park Service, which is charged with protecting the river, did not have an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of the location or the impacts on public and environmental health before the state granted the permit. Members of the community didn't get to weigh in either—even the folks living right next door.

The Buffalo National River belongs to the American people and must be protected

NPCA and a coalition of public interest groups recently sent a letter to the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) pointing out misrepresentations around the permitting of C&H Hog Farms. Because of these misrepresentations, the coalition is urging the state of Arkansas to fully reopen the permitting process for C&H. This would allow the public and local stakeholders to weigh in on whether this hog farm should ever have been permitted in the porous limestone terrain of the Buffalo River watershed in the first place.

NPCA calls on ADEQ to fully reopen public comments on the permit for C&H Hog Farm. To learn more about the impacts that this large-scale animal-feeding operation is having on landowners near the **Buffalo National River**, go to parkb.it/nohogwaste.

Below: Father & son 'fixin' to fish on the Buffalo River. ©Michael Dougherty Photography

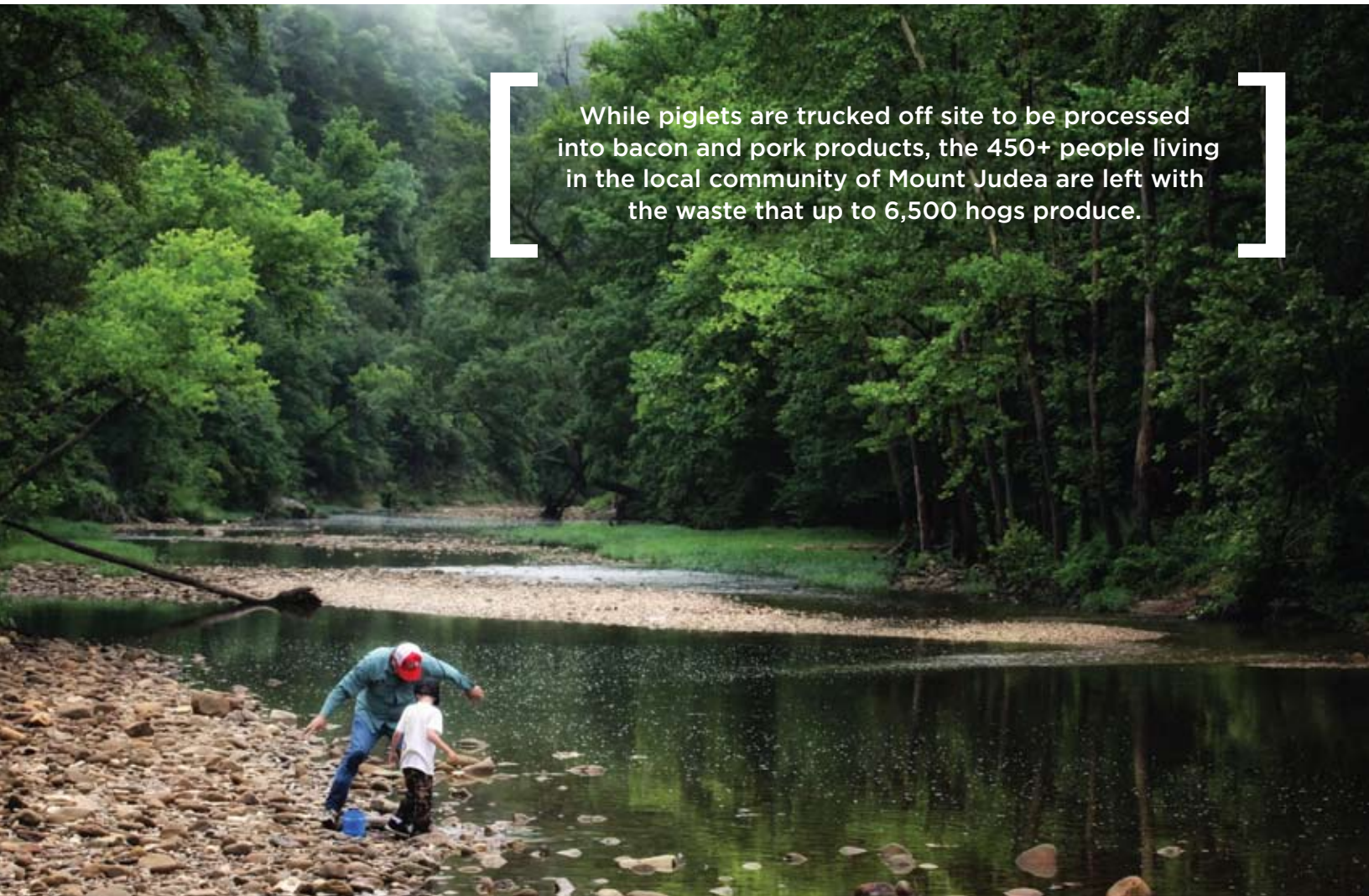
TAKE ACTION!

Please take a minute to express your concerns and ask ADEQ Director Theresa Marks to reopen C&H Farms' General Permit for public comment. The public should have input in this permit process!

Director Theresa Marks

Arkansas Department of
Environmental Quality
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317
501-682-0959
Email: marks@adeq.state.ar.us

Thank you for taking a moment to speak up for this irreplaceable national treasure.



While piglets are trucked off site to be processed into bacon and pork products, the 450+ people living in the local community of Mount Judea are left with the waste that up to 6,500 hogs produce.

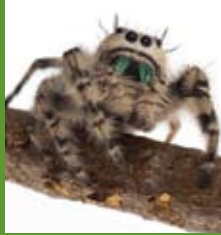


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The Canopy Jumper (*Phidippus otiosus*) is one of the largest species of jumping spiders in the Southeast. Often referred to as the "teddy bears" of the spider world because of their large round eyes and often colorfully adorned fuzzy bodies. Their fangs, or chelicerae, come in shades of metallic blues and greens that serve as a signal during mating. In addition to jumping spiders, the Smokies has over 500 species of spiders, more than 40 of which are new to science, discovered by Discover Life in America. ©www.claybolt.com



What will your LEGACY be?

Many NPCA members have been loyal and generous supporters of our work to protect the national parks over five, ten and even twenty years. After demonstrating this kind of consistent commitment to these extraordinary natural and cultural places, some supporters ask how they can help to ensure that NPCA's important park protection and advocacy programs will continue beyond their lifetimes. Some choose to include a provision in their will or estate plan.

Other members have found that there may be an easier way to make a meaningful investment in the future of our national parks by simply submitting the appropriate beneficiary form for a checking, savings or brokerage account. This is also an option with current life insurance policies or savings bonds. If you have an independent retirement account such as a 401k or 403b account, you can avoid subjecting your heirs to an

**MATHER
LEGACY
SOCIETY**



additional tax burden by designating a portion or all of the assets in the account as a gift to NPCA. By simply completing the appropriate beneficiary form, you can ensure that your personal legacy will include preserving the best of America's natural and historic treasures for the enjoyment of future generations.

For additional information on how you can achieve your philanthropic goals, please call Morgan Dodd, Director of

Gift Planning, toll-free at 1-877.468.5775 or visit our website at www.npca.planyourlegacy.org/. After informing NPCA of your confidential long-term plans, you will be recognized as a member of our Mather Legacy Society, a special group of people who share your vision for our beloved national parks. NPCA's Federal Tax Identification Number is 53-0225165.

Above: ©Monkey Business Images | Dreamstime.com

100% post-consumer waste

