



## Planning for Bison at Badlands

**A**lthough 39 species of mammals call Badlands National Park home, you still have to be lucky to spot prairie dogs or catch sight of bighorn sheep. But thanks to a recent land acquisition, it will soon be possible to come across bison on a hike or a drive near the park's visitor center.

Before this acquisition of 22,553 acres were added, the magnificent Badlands topography prevented bison from freely moving to more popular parts of the park. It's a welcome change. But opening new range for bison presents a host of challenges and questions that the Park Service is now working through.

How large a herd can the land support? How will the Park Service manage that herd? Are there enough sources of water for bison, and if not, will bison trespass onto nearby private lands to find it? The North Unit at Badlands National Park is fenced to keep the current bison herd contained, and new fencing will have to be built around the expanded habitat. Much of the current fencing is in need of inspection and repair before any new construction should start.

In light of some recent encounters between park visitors and wildlife in other national parks, the Park Service

continued on page 4

## The Next Hundred Years FINDING NEW VOICES FOR OUR PARKS

**A**fter blowing out the candles to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our National Park Service on August 25th, NPCA is looking ahead to our own centennial in 2019. For almost a century, NPCA members and friends have been speaking up in support of our national parks, but to keep our parks protected we need to involve many more people in this important mission!

Last year, NPCA launched Find Your Voice to cultivate a cadre of new national park supporters. As a part of this initiative, NPCA is hosting a series of projects across the country that bring volunteers to national parks to build new trails, remove invasive species, plant trees and clean up waterways. Through these rewarding experiences, they are learning about the challenges facing our national parks and how to use their voices to protect these incredible places.

This year NPCA held three volunteer events in the Midwest region at urban and remote national parks:

**At Pullman National Monument,** NPCA organized over 150 volunteers to plant more than 500 native plants in community gardens, weed, paint the

Pullman Porter museum, and generally help the National Park Service get ready for the busy tourist season. This was the second year that students, neighborhood residents and NPCA members came out in support of the first national park in Chicago.



In Northern Minnesota, at **Voyageurs National Park**, volunteers planted trees along a river that flows into the park's complex system of waterways. These trees will help stabilize riverbanks, improve water quality and attract walleye to spawn in waters that connect to this beautiful park. The event was part of a four-year partnership with the Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club, whose members joined NPCA staff, a Conservation Corps youth crew and

continued on page 3

# FIELD REPORT

Fall 2016

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## Making Memories and Preserving Parks for the Next 100 Years

### VIEWPOINT

By Ellen Alberding

**C**elebrating the 100th birthday of the National Park Service is a fine occasion to reflect on the vast resource that America's public lands are for ourselves, our children and the generations to come.

My own early experiences with nature and the outdoors created a lifelong love. Childhood trips to national parks set me on a path I still follow, from biking along Chicago's lakefront to family hikes in many gorgeous national parks. This past summer, we hiked the Avalanche Peak Trail in Yellowstone.

One of my first park memories is visiting the Maine coast with my family at the age of 6 or so. I loved scrambling across the rocks, pulling up seaweed to hunt for crabs and kneeling to peer into tide pools teeming with marine life. Ironic that in this grand landscape what I remember most are those little creatures and plants swaying in the tide pools, a little universe of their own.

Ask your friends about their fondest park memories and you are likely to hear some stories like mine, of small things that loom large ... stories about picnics with family and friends, barbecues during a neighbor's birthday or riding bikes with their mom to visit the lake for a swim on a blistering summer day.

There are so many reasons to cherish our public lands, but one in particular motivates me: nourishing the imaginations and stirring the spirits of our children. We know that children who interact with the outdoors learn better, are healthier and have a better sense of the world around them. But we also know that children are more disconnected than ever from the natural world. For some, it is because they are immersed in technology. For others, lack of access and lack of resources often stand in the way.



**Above:** Ellen Alberding and husband, Kelly Welsh, hike the Avalanche Peak Trail in Yellowstone, August 2016.

That is why I am so excited about Every Kid in a Park, President Obama's offer of a free park pass, good on every federal land, for every fourth-grade child in America and their family. I hope these children and their families get glimpses of this great resource that is open to all and become part of the next generation of park stewards.

Our national parks are not just for the privileged few. They belong to all Americans. My hope is that they will be preserved, protected and made accessible for all. As Wallace Stegner said, they are truly "the best idea we ever had." Let's make sure all Americans share in the bounty.

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*Ellen Alberding is president of The Joyce Foundation, which helps fund NPCA's Great Lakes work, and board member of the National Park Foundation.*

I am so excited about Every Kid in a Park, President Obama's offer of a free park pass, good on every federal land, for every fourth-grade child in America and their family.

### TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

What do you like about this newsletter? What other topics or features would you like to see? Please contact us with your feedback at [midwest@npca.org](mailto:midwest@npca.org).



## The Next Hundred Years

continued from page 1

Congresswoman Betty McCollum to plant trees at several sites along the river.

At the **Mississippi National River and Recreation Area**, NPCA brought together youth from the YMCA and volunteers from two local business on a Mississippi River paddle. After canoeing a stretch of the river right in the heart of Minneapolis, volunteers

of all ages removed invasive plants in the national park. The adult volunteers capped the work with an evening at a local brewery within the park's boundaries to relax and hear about the importance of clean water in the making of local beers.

In the last 100 years, our National Park System has grown to include 413 of our country's most iconic natural and historic places. NPCA is there to ensure that these

places are protected for generations to come, but we can't do it without the support of our more than one million members and supporters. Whether it's through a local friends group or Find Your Voice, we hope you will volunteer to help protect your nearby national parks.

**Above:** Voyageurs National Park  
©Jeffrey Wiles

## "What it Means to Me"

NPCA's volunteers have unique perspectives about their role in protecting our national parks. Here's what a few of our Find Your Voice volunteers had to say:



### Pullman Find Your Voice

"The Pullman Porters weren't just people who worked on the trains, they were the grandfathers of the civil rights movement. These stories are important for the next generations to know ... to understand that their voice does count. They need to find their voice in this story."

—David Peterson  
National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum

"In order for these places to remain strong and vibrant we need the next generation of stewards and advocates to take over. Pullman is a place they can come to and get to know, as their first national park."

—Laura Milkert, The Field Museum and Pullman resident

### Voyageurs Find Your Voice

"If there are no trees, the soil could erode into the river, which can effect water quality. These trees are going to stay like this forever and in future generations, the kids will come and still see these trees."

—Dah Ne, Conservation Corps Minnesota youth crew

"There's more to life than playing video games ... The more we plant trees, the more we are making this earth better."

—Jayden, Conservation Corps Minnesota  
whose visit to Voyageurs was his first to a national park

**Above (Left):** Find Your Voice at Pullman National Monument ©NPCA  
**(Right):** Youth Crew at Find Your Voice, Voyageurs National Park  
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## Planning for Bison at Badlands

continued from page 1

will have to develop and launch a significant staff and visitor education program to raise awareness about the dangers that people pose to wildlife and vice versa.

Thanks to a recent land acquisition, it will soon be possible to come across bison on a hike or a drive near the park's visitor center.

But the benefits of having more room to roam for Badlands bison far outweigh the challenges. As the Park Service finalizes bison management plans in the park's North Unit, NPCA and our partners are working with the park to help ensure that when those first bison enter their new home they do so with the best possible chance for success.



**Right:** Bison bull in western South Dakota  
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