



Many of the quotes and personal photographs that appear in this annual report were originally submitted to My Park Story, a website NPCA staff set up several years ago to collect stories of people's experiences in parks. The site now counts hundreds of personal stories of joy, grief, discovery and healing.

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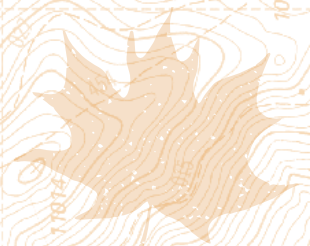
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LETTER FROM THE BOARD & CHAIR & PRESIDENT



FRAN ULMER (LEFT) AND THERESA PIERNO ON AN
NPCA TRAVEL TRIP IN DENALI

Our national parks are about stunning landscapes, well-worn trails and historic moments, but they are also about people.



Dear Friends,

This was an amazing year for our national parks. As Americans celebrated the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, the parks received unprecedented and well-deserved attention and support.

Our national parks are powerful places — places for exploration and learning, and places for healing. Jose Rodriguez, a retired combat veteran who struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder, told us his life got back on track after he volunteered on projects in Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks. And these benefits are lasting: “Even when I am not at a park, I feel a constant connection to them,” says Marc M. Orlow, one of our longtime supporters and donors.

For these reasons, and many others, parks deserve our protection.

And they need that protection now more than ever. This year we and our partners fought against threats to treasured places like Grand Canyon and Glacier National Parks. We helped create new parks that more fully tell the American story, like Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument and Stonewall National Monument.

Through community service and recreational and educational events, we continue to engage new and more diverse national park advocates. Our volunteers

and participants, many of whom had their first national park experience with us, are the people who will carry the park advocacy torch long after we’ve passed it on, just as we’ve carried the torch for those who came long before us.

It is up to us — each of us — to stand up and speak up for these places that mean so much to so many people. Together, let’s ensure that our parks have the resources they need and the protection they deserve to thrive well into the future.

As the centennial of the National Park Service winds down, it’s important to remember that the fight to preserve these special places goes on. National Parks Conservation Association and every one of you are needed now just as much as NPCA was needed at its founding nearly 100 years ago.

We hope we can continue to count on our supporters and attract many others to help us achieve our important mission. Our nation’s parks deserve nothing less.

A heartfelt thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Fran Ulmer
Board Chair

Theresa Pierno
President and CEO

INTRODUCTION

This was a year to celebrate national parks and the National Park Service's centennial. But it was also the time to make sure parks are positioned to thrive in their next 100 years. That is why we fought for increased park funding, including support for the Centennial Challenge, a program that encourages private donors to match federal grants. It's also why a little over a year ago we launched our Find Your Voice initiative to build the next generation of park advocates. Through dozens of centennial events, we reached 35,000 new park enthusiasts. Some planted seedlings that will create a forest of 100,000 trees in Big Thicket National Preserve, some removed trash

from our parks' waterways and others removed fences in the path of Yellowstone's pronghorn. Yet others discovered a park for the first time. Without the will and commitment of people who pushed for their creation and generations of others who worked to protect them, national parks simply wouldn't exist. NPCA celebrated major victories over the past year, from the creation of new parks that make for a more inclusive National Park System to new protections against pollution that will help restore parks' air and water. These victories, of course, don't belong to us alone. They belong to you and every person and organization that supported our work.



I support the parks because I want them to be there for future generations. – Elaine



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because we love experiencing nature as our ancestors did ... up close and personal.
– Vaughn

Celebrating the National Park Service Centennial

This year we helped the National Park Service celebrate its 100 years of existence the best way we know how. We challenged Congress to pass a bipartisan National Park Centennial Act to provide more funding for the parks. We called on the Obama administration to implement critical park protection measures, especially

those identified in our #ParksInPeril campaign, which identified nine parks facing imminent threats. And through our Find Your Voice initiative, we encouraged the American public to experience and learn about the issues facing the parks so that we can continue to build an effective advocacy movement.



Funding the Parks

Thanks to our efforts and bipartisan support in Congress, the Park Service received a 9 percent increase over last year's funding levels — a remarkable increase given the fact that many federal programs received no increase or suffered budgetary cuts. The increase includes better funding to deal with the growing infrastructure repairs backlog, bring more rangers to parks, offer improved park education and interpretation, and support increased volunteer capacity.



The funding also supports the Centennial Challenge, a matching grant program that this year led private park partners to more than double the federal investment to fund over 60 projects that improve parks and enhance visitors' experiences. "While much work remains to be done to restore funding for our national treasures, this victory helped prepare parks to greet visitors during their centennial year," said John Garder, NPCA's director of budget and appropriations.

There are many things to celebrate in this centennial year of the Park Service, but the parks' \$12 billion repair backlog is not one of them. In a report issued in December 2015, NPCA showed that Olympic National Park, for instance, receives only about 60 percent of the funds it needs to adequately serve visitors, maintain roads and trails and protect its natural resources. NPCA leads a diverse coalition of public interest, business and tourism groups that advocate for improved funding for national parks.

I support the parks because our national parks are truly amazing and inspirational places with endless opportunities for adventure! Thank you, thank you, NPS! – Sarah (and Sam)

About a year and a half ago, NPCA celebrated the approaching centennial of the National Park Service by launching its Find Your Voice initiative. The goal of the initiative, which complements the Park Service's own Find Your Park program, is to connect people, especially younger and more diverse demographics, with national parks and encourage them to be new park advocates. In 2016 we hosted more than 100 activities and events, reaching 35,000 new park enthusiasts and bringing many to national park sites so that they could experience why it is important to protect these places and learn how they could help.

Volunteers got their hands dirty at dozens of restoration projects, such as planting thousands of longleaf pine seedlings in Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas and hundreds of native plants in Chicago's Pullman National Monument. They picked up debris in places from the wetlands of the Chesapeake Bay watershed to the banks of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. They removed or modified 3.5 miles of fences to help pronghorn migrate within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Many participants had never been to a national park, 48 percent were millennials (ages 18 to 34) and 42 percent were people of color. "From the beginning, our goal was to work with groups that we had not reached effectively before, invite communities that may not have felt invited before and empower volunteer leaders to build a stronger, more diverse constituency for national parks," said Find Your Voice Director Ed Stierli.

The initiative is far from over as NPCA begins to look toward its own centennial in 2019. "We are inviting more and more people to this movement to protect the parks," Stierli said, "and it's our goal to engage them to advocate for parks so they thrive in perpetuity."



MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL RIVER AND RECREATION AREA



GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Empowering NEW PARK ADVOCATES

VICTORIES

NO MEGA MALL BY THE GRAND CANYON



I support the parks because they are cherished and preserved for families today and generations to come. – Bonnie

Most visitors who catch their first glimpse of the Grand Canyon are filled with awe. The immensity, the depth, the palette of colors and the forces that created it all are hard to convey with words — or even photographs. If the U.S. Forest Service had approved a 2014 proposal from a developer, the experience of visitors arriving at the park's southern entrance could have been dramatically altered: They could have been greeted by a sprawling complex of hotels, restaurants, shops and apartment buildings in the gateway town of Tusayan. Moreover, a development of that scale would have required huge quantities of water in a desert environment where it is scarce, and it would have profoundly affected the delicate hydrology of the springs that sustain life in the park. Thanks to the advocacy of

NPCA and its allies, including the Havasupai Tribe, this project was stopped. The Forest Service received nearly 90,000 comment letters and petitions totaling more than 100,000 signatures, with the vast majority opposing the project to widen roads that would have facilitated the development. “This is a great day for Grand Canyon National Park and those who love its stunning vistas, abundant wildlife and rich cultural heritage,” said Ted Zukoski, an attorney for Earthjustice. “The Forest Service was right to say yes to the public interest by protecting one of the most awe-inspiring places on Earth, and no to the bloated development plans that threatened the park.” The March 2016 decision marked the first victory in NPCA’s #ParksInPeril campaign.



**I support the parks because
they are America's crown jewels. — Don**

VICTORIES



EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK

We support the parks because we are part owners of our parks and as such, stewards of these majestic, wild and cultural spaces. – Jessica & Nick

RESTORING Park Waters



Water is the lifeblood of our national parks. That's why NPCA fights to remove dams, reduce pollution and protect threatened fish populations around the country. This year we achieved several victories and took significant steps that will benefit dozens of park sites and their ecosystems.

Letting the River of Grass Flow

Everglades National Park depends on the waters flowing slowly from Lake Okeechobee to sustain its diverse ecosystem, but the 1928 road that links Tampa and Miami — known as the Tamiami Trail — blocks the flow of water on its way to Florida Bay. To restore the vital water flow to crucial wildlife habitat and hundreds of species of birds, fish and other animals, conservation advocates have been fighting to elevate the road so that the water can pass under it. In 2013, the first mile of the bridging project was completed, and in April 2016, NPCA joined the Department of the Interior and the Park Service to kick off construction of the next 2.6-mile portion of the project, which is anticipated to be completed in 2020. “The completion of the 2.6-mile bridging project is essential in establishing the natural flow of water to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay,” said Pedro Ramos, superintendent of Dry Tortugas and Everglades National Parks.



BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK

Fighting for Biscayne

After 15 years of advocacy efforts by NPCA and others, in August 2015 the Park Service signed a plan paving the way for the creation of a marine reserve in Biscayne National Park in Florida. Although the reserve will cover only 6 percent of the park's waters, it is an important step to protect ailing coral reefs and help restore populations of species such as black grouper and mutton snapper after decades of overfishing. Unfortunately, Florida's congressional lawmakers subsequently introduced a series of bills challenging the reserve's existence and the Park Service's ability to manage fish resources across the system. Biscayne is one of the nine parks of our #ParksInPeril campaign, and NPCA has voiced strong opposition to these bills and will continue to fight for the protection of this fragile ecosystem.



CHESAPEAKE BAY

Cleaning up Chesapeake Rivers and Streams

The watershed of the Chesapeake Bay contains more than 50 national park units, including Shenandoah National Park and Gettysburg National Military Park. This year, NPCA and its allies celebrated a major victory thanks to the U.S. Supreme Court. In February 2016, the justices declined to hear a challenge from the American Farm Bureau Federation, which aimed to stop a significant cleanup plan. The decision in effect upholds the plan to substantially cut pollutants that flow into the region's streams and rivers from farms, parking lots, sewers and other sources by 2025.

VICTORIES

DESERT ★ UNITED ★



DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Size isn't everything, but the February designation of three national monuments — including one managed by the National Park Service — protecting about 1.8 million acres of California desert is momentous. The creation of Sand to Snow, Mojave Trails and Castle Mountains National Monuments is one of the largest designations of protected land in U.S. history, and the largest in the region since the legislation that established Joshua Tree National Park, Death Valley National Park and Mojave National Preserve more than two decades ago. Even though only Castle Mountains is a national park site (the other two are managed by other agencies), all three new national monuments will benefit the region's parks by connecting habitats,



DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP



JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

facilitating the migration of wildlife and allowing plant and animal species to move in response to climate change pressures.

“The visionary designation of three beautiful, important and diverse desert lands surrounding national parks in the California desert will forever protect and connect the greater landscape, for the benefit of all,” said renowned biologist Thomas E. Lovejoy.

The new monuments will not only protect sand dunes, desert oases, Joshua tree forests and desert grasslands but will also preserve the region’s historical

and cultural heritage, from Native American archaeological sites to World War II training centers and the longest undeveloped stretch of Route 66. Castle Mountains, which is enclosed on three sides by Mojave National Preserve, is a hotspot of botanical diversity that includes 28 species of native grasses, Joshua tree, pinyon pine and juniper forests. Desert bighorn sheep also have found a welcoming home there. David Lamfrom, who heads our California desert and wildlife programs, said new voices and communities “sprang to the challenge of fighting for these places” and helped push for the creation of the monuments.

VICTORIES

Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument

Every American woman can vote today thanks in part to the fight led by Alice Paul and a group of suffragists. Borrowing a page from the British suffragettes' book, they used audacious tactics to hold those in power accountable, picketing Woodrow Wilson's White House for months on end, suffering arrests, embarking on hunger strikes and enduring force-feeding. At long last their efforts — and those of other advocates — bore fruit: In 1919, Congress passed the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which gave women across the country the right to vote; the amendment was ratified the next year.



But Paul and her National Woman's Party didn't stop there. Operating from Alva Vanderbilt Belmont's home near the U.S. Capitol, they lobbied for decades to help pass legislation advancing gender equality. Recognizing the importance of this story, NPCA worked with lawmakers to secure funding for repairs to the home and to introduce legislation calling for the creation of a national monument. NPCA also called upon the Obama administration to designate Belmont and Paul's D.C. home as a national monument under the Antiquities Act. On April 12, the president did just that, creating the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, the park system's 411th site. "Women's history is America's history," said Page Harrington, executive director for the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum. "From the efforts of the early suffragists to those who continue to work for equal rights today, these important stories deserve to be told and shared with our nation."





Stonewall National Monument

Stonewall National Monument

In the early hours of June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. Patrons protested the raid, and soon residents and others joined them. The six-day uprising that took place in nearby Christopher Park and surrounding streets marks a seminal moment for the LGBT community's struggle for civil rights. The first anniversary of the protests was celebrated with the first gay pride marches in several U.S. cities, and within two years new gay rights groups emerged across the country and beyond. Until this year, no national

A MORE INCLUSIVE Story

park site was dedicated to telling LGBT history. NPCA worked with many partners to gain broad support at the local and national levels and collected thousands of signatures on a petition calling on President Obama to create a national park site at Stonewall. On June 24, he obliged, designating Stonewall National Monument, our nation's 412th park site. "There are places in America so powerful, they helped shape our nation's history and culture, and must never be forgotten," said Theresa Pierno, NPCA's president and CEO. "Stonewall, and the area surrounding this historic site, is one such place."

VICTORIES



KEEPING OIL DRILLING FROM HARMING



GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because the national parks are very important to protect spectacular, unspoiled nature, and provide incredible history, outside experiences and awesome vistas to all people and future generations. – Ann



GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because they are the treasures of America and we are responsible for keeping them for future generations to enjoy! – Kathy

PARKS

I support the parks because they are places of sanctuary, exploration, and an outdoor classroom where we can learn, grow and heal. Everyone comes away from their visit to a park a little richer. – Ranger Leigh



Oil and Gas Leases Canceled Near Glacier

Right next to Glacier National Park's eastern border is the 160,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine area, a wild-land named for the Badger Creek and the Two Medicine River that flow through it. This area in Montana is home to the traditional culture of the Blackfeet Nation as well as charismatic wildlife — grizzly bears, wolves, wolverines and tremendous herds of elk. Unfortunately, the region also is home to a handful of oil and gas leases dating back to the Reagan administration that, if acted upon, would cause irreparable damage to

Badger-Two Medicine's rich natural and cultural resources. Finally, after 30 years of persistent work by NPCA and its conservation and Blackfeet partners, the Department of the Interior chose in March 2016 to cancel a disputed lease in this region, resulting in a major victory in the #ParksInPeril campaign. "This fight has been about more than the Blackfeet," said Harry Barnes, chairman of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council. "All of Montana and our country win. This pristine area is so special to us and special to all who fight in this fight."

VICTORIES



CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because they are a part of me. – Liz



SMARTER PLANNING AROUND
ARCHES *AND*
CANYONLANDS

Disputing long-held oil and gas leases next to national parks is an arduous task. Whenever possible, it's better to prevent such leases from being awarded in the first place. That's why the finalization of the Moab Master Leasing Plan is a major victory for NPCA's #ParksInPeril campaign and for those who care for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks in Utah.

In December 2008, the outgoing Bush administration prepared to auction off oil and gas leases on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) parcels, including several on pristine land near Arches and Canyonlands. The resulting outcry from local businesses, recreationists and conservation groups led the Obama administration to implement a series of reforms on leases in sensitive areas. In 2010, the BLM launched Master Leasing Plans, which seek to balance energy development with the protection of national park values and outdoor recreation.

The Moab plan, for instance, closes 145,000 acres of BLM land adjacent to Arches and Canyonlands to mineral leasing and places strict restrictions on an additional 219,000 acres. NPCA provided input that led to significant park protections being included in the Moab plan and continues to advocate for these kinds of inclusive planning processes elsewhere.

"These parks and adjacent public lands are important economic drivers for Moab, bringing millions of dollars each year into the local economy," said David Nimkin, senior director of NPCA's Southwest Regional Office.

"The best result of collaboration happens when all parties are willing to listen, and the BLM should be commended for working with the Park Service, NPCA and other key stakeholders to craft the best management plan for these national park icons."



I support the parks because they really are America's Best Idea — setting aside the most beautiful places in the country for ALL people the world over.
— Daniel

VICTORIES

CLEARING THE AIR



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because they are areas that help preserve the natural beauty of the United States. – Grace

Clean air is critical to the health of national park visitors, vegetation and wildlife, but the air in parks — at times — can be worse than the air in major cities, as NPCA noted in its “Polluted Parks” report. Emissions from outdated coal-fired power plants and other sources not only impair air quality but reduce visibility in parks by about 50 miles on average, according to the report. The Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Regional Haze Rule mandates that 48 national parks, including crown jewels like Grand Canyon and Everglades, be free of man-made air pollution by 2064, but many parts of the country are decades behind schedule on their pollution-reduction efforts. The path to clean air in parks is long and difficult, but NPCA achieved two major victories this past year that will allow visitors to parks in Texas and Utah to breathe better and see farther.

Don't Mess with Texas Air

In January 2016, the EPA finalized a federal plan to reduce pollution in national parks and wilderness areas that will ensure 14 coal-fired power plant units install new pollution controls or upgrade their existing controls to reduce sulfur dioxide pollution. The federal plan replaces part of a state plan that did not require a single polluter to reduce emissions. The EPA's measures will help restore air quality throughout the region, said Stephanie Kodish, who leads NPCA's efforts to protect parks from air pollution. "It's unbelievably significant," she said. "If upheld by the courts, the victory in Texas will be critical for places like Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains."

Improving the Views in Utah

This past June, the EPA adopted a plan calling for a 76 percent reduction in nitrogen oxide pollution from four units across two coal plants in Utah. These plants are responsible for almost 40 percent of these types of emissions in the state's electric sector. The victory is especially significant, because "the fight for clean air in Utah is one of NPCA's longest and most challenging," Kodish said. Utah's parks, including Arches, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef and Zion, will see cleaner air as a result, but the effect could be felt beyond Utah's borders and benefit places as far south as the Grand Canyon in Arizona and as far east as the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and Mesa Verde in Colorado, provided the plan survives legal challenges.



ZION NATIONAL PARK



CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK

We support the parks because they are our nation's greatest treasures, capturing and maintaining wilderness areas for future generations.
— Bettye and Clifton

VICTORIES

GIVING YELLOWSTONE BISON

TO
**ROOM
ROAM**



ON THE WAY TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

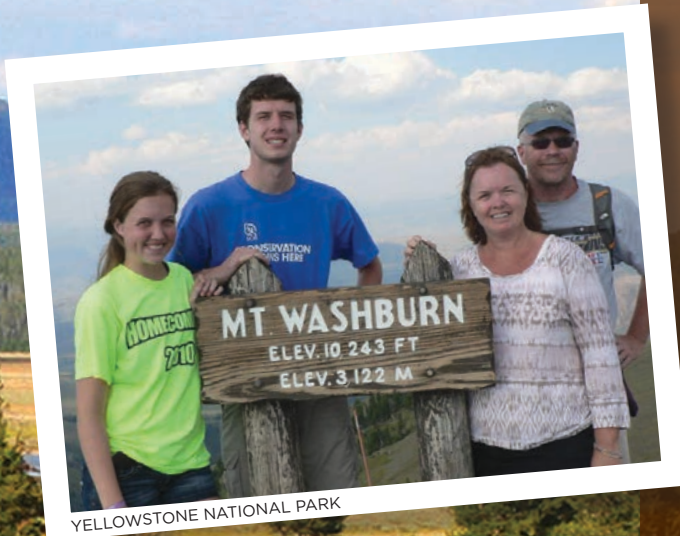
I support the parks because they preserve our nation's unique and beautiful natural places, for all citizens, and for visitors from all over the world, to enjoy. They uplift our souls. – Peggy



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

I support the parks because they are our treasure beyond price. – Frank

I support the parks because I want to preserve beautiful places and fond memories. – Karen



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Yellowstone is one of the largest national parks in the Lower 48, but the park's bison often must wander beyond park borders on public and private land at lower elevations to find the food they need to survive Yellowstone's long harsh winters. And our "first national mammal" has not always been well received, to say the least. "Up until the mid-90s, bison were not allowed outside the park at all, and if they crossed the line, they were shot," said Bart Melton, director of NPCA's Northern Rockies Regional Office. Still today, every winter hundreds of bison that venture outside Yellowstone in search of sustenance are rounded up before being shipped to slaughterhouses. NPCA has been calling for an end to the grisly ritual for more than 20 years. That's why the April announcement that bison would be allowed to roam year-round on 330,000 acres of land outside Yellowstone in Montana is "a really solid victory" in our #ParksInPeril campaign, Melton said. The decision championed by Montana's governor could lead to the creation of a conservation plan that decreases the slaughter of the animals, provides bison with more room to roam and treats them similarly to other animals that migrate beyond Yellowstone's borders. "The door is now open to make practical decisions backed by the latest science to ensure Yellowstone bison thrive, but there is much work left to be done," Melton said.

VICTORIES

ENDING
UNBEARABLE
HUNTING PRACTICES
IN ALASKA



I support the parks because it is incumbent upon each of us to visit, explore and preserve these national treasures for future generations. – Carlyne



KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE



GRIZZLY BEAR SOW AND CUB



GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

I support the parks because the creative spirit needs wilderness to thrive! – Michael

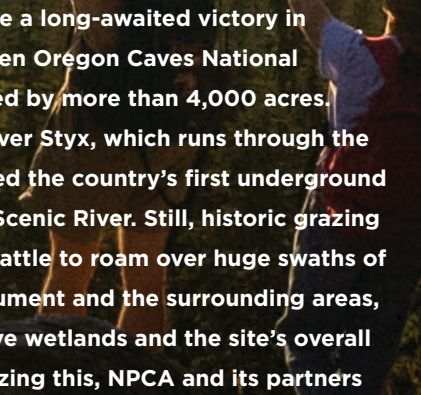
Baiting bears with bacon grease, donuts and dog food. Shooting bear cubs and wolf pups in their dens with the help of spotlights. The Park Service has always allowed legal and appropriate hunting and trapping in Alaska's national preserves as required when these sites were established, but it disagreed with the aforementioned hunting practices the state promoted in recent years in an effort to reduce the numbers of predators and increase the numbers of moose and caribou for hunters.

In October 2015, the Park Service finalized rules that ban predator control tactics that are fundamentally at odds with its core mission to protect a natural diversity of wildlife. The announcement followed NPCA's #UnBearable campaign, which generated thousands of letters opposing these practices. "We finally see the culmination of more than 10 years of work to protect these critical animals in some of America's wildest lands," said NPCA President and CEO Theresa Pierno. "I am grateful to NPCA's advocates who have helped make these measures a reality. Now it is up to us to protect these regulations in Congress and help implement them so we can protect the natural diversity of bears, wolves and coyotes in our national preserves in Alaska."

VICTORIES

CLEANER PASTURES

FOR Oregon CAVES



NPCA helped secure a long-awaited victory in December 2014 when Oregon Caves National Monument expanded by more than 4,000 acres. Additionally, the River Styx, which runs through the park, was designated the country's first underground National Wild and Scenic River. Still, historic grazing rights allowed for cattle to roam over huge swaths of the expanded monument and the surrounding areas, threatening sensitive wetlands and the site's overall water quality. Realizing this, NPCA and its partners secured the funding to buy out and permanently retire 31,000 acres of public land grazing allotments in February 2016. This will allow lakes, rivers and meadows to continue restoring themselves, which will improve the ecosystem and the visitor experience.



OREGON CAVES NATIONAL MONUMENT



Robin W. Winks Award
Aaron Perry-Zucker and Max Slavkin

Creative Action Network co-founders Max Slavkin and Aaron Perry-Zucker received NPCA's Robin W. Winks Award for helping to communicate the values of national parks to the American public. Inspired by a federal program created more than 75 years ago by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to put artists to work and encourage Americans to visit their country, Slavkin and Perry-Zucker launched their own "See America" project in 2014. Hundreds of artists from around the world have now created more than 1,000 designs featuring national parks and other U.S. destinations.



Stephen Tyng Mather Award
Kate Cannon

Kate Cannon, the Park Service's superintendent of southeast Utah national parks, understands that the effort to preserve the beauty and integrity of parks such as Arches and Canyonlands doesn't stop at park boundaries. That's why she supported the Moab Master Leasing Plan (see page 20), which limits oil and gas development around these parks, and called for compliance with EPA's Regional Haze Rule (see page 22), a federal program that aims at reducing pollution in and near national parks.



Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award
Barbara Takei

For nearly two decades, Barbara Takei has made it her mission to dispel the myth that Japanese Americans did not resist their incarceration by the U.S. government during World War II. She's worked tirelessly to preserve the Tule Lake camp — now part of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument — where those viewed as disloyal were imprisoned. Takei has fought to save historic structures, helped raise more than \$800,000 in grants and donations and advocated for increased federal funds for the site.

Awardees


Every year, the National Parks Conservation Association applauds several individuals or groups for their achievements as national park advocates and protectors. Though our organization's strength comes from the commitment of its nearly 1.2 million members and supporters, these awardees demonstrate the difference each person can make.

Donor Profile



Stewart Cushman

REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER



In 1997, shortly before heading to business school, Stewart Cushman spent a month traveling throughout the West with his future wife, Louisa, and some friends, visiting 12 national parks in the process. The group hiked, fly-fished and camped, but the trip also provided plenty of time for reflection on the trail, in the middle of a river or behind the wheel on remote country roads. It was during that trip that Cushman came to a realization.

“It really reminded me not only how special these places are,” he said, “but also that they need to be protected to stay healthy for all who visit and inhabit them.”

The day after he returned from his trip, Cushman looked for an organization working to protect national parks, found NPCA and sent his first donation. Over the years, Cushman became more intimately involved with NPCA. He learned about Stephen T. Mather, who, just a couple of years after becoming the National Park Service’s first director, co-founded the organization now known as NPCA. “He was wise enough to realize that the parks need a nongovernmental advocate,” Cushman said.

He also found that NPCA offered members and supporters an opportunity to act and make a difference. “No doubt that donations are critical to support the important work of the organization,” Cushman said. “However, actions small and large are encouraged and complement the great work done by the many talented NPCA professionals.”

Cushman increased his NPCA contributions to the Trustees for the Parks level and became more engaged by joining NPCA’s Pacific Regional Council. He has attended local NPCA events and regional meetings and has taken part in several lobbying trips to Washington, D.C. “While I found walking the halls of Congress exciting, discouraging, a challenge and an opportunity all at once, it proved to me that having a voice really matters,” he said.

Cushman’s earliest memory of a national park involves a bear visiting his campsite in Yosemite. As a child with his family and later as an adult, he visited and camped at countless parks including Yellowstone, his favorite. Now, he and Louisa regularly take their four children to national parks to breathe mountain air, gaze at desert landscapes or learn about the country’s history. Recently, the six of them took a trip to Utah’s national parks, hiking more than 40 miles in one week. Cushman said his children love seeing new places and challenging themselves physically. “But the special and lasting takeaway is to see the excitement through their eyes,” he said, “and to allow them to soak up so much information at their own pace and level of curiosity.”

“However, actions small and large are encouraged and complement the great work done by the many talented NPCA professionals.”

Donor Profile



David Eisner

REGIONAL COUNCIL AND
MATHER LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBER

**“I really believe in the
basic premise of NPCA as
an independent advocate
for the parks.”**



As a longtime NPCA supporter and recent addition to NPCA's Southeast Regional Council, David Eisner keeps up with all the latest threats to national parks, whether it's commercial encroachment or proposed uranium mining near one of the country's crown jewels. But two issues that affect him personally and that he cares about deeply are air quality and water quality in the parks.

An avid swimmer and canoeist, he remembers what it felt like to paddle decades ago on the polluted waters around Philadelphia. "It was very harsh on your skin," he said. "You took a long hot shower afterward." Clean water is crucial to the parks' ecosystems and visitors alike, and protecting the waters that flow through the parks often involves taking action outside the parks' boundaries. Eisner cited an industrial pig farm in Arkansas that's been a cause of alarm for NPCA. Waste from the farm is spread on nearby fields and eventually seeps into the Buffalo National River's watershed. "It's all interconnected," Eisner said. "You can't isolate a body of water."

Eisner's background as an anesthesiologist and the recently retired director of the University of Georgia's premedical studies program gives him a unique perspective. He understands how polluted air can harm people's health, so when the Environmental Protection Agency proposed amendments to the Regional Haze Rule, which protects the air in many national parks, he wrote an op-ed in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

"If the EPA strengthens this important tool and it withstands court challenges, it will result in cleaner, clearer air," he said of the rule. "And we'll all benefit, not just the parks."

The Scranton, Pennsylvania, native remembers going to Ellis Island on a school field trip and visiting Valley Forge and Gettysburg with his parents, but it wasn't until he was an adult that he explored some of the big landscape parks in the West. In 1980, he made a three-week loop through several sites, including Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce and Capitol Reef. He camped, hiked and marveled at the natural beauty of the park system. "That really hooked me," he said.

Many trips would follow, including a honeymoon spent in Glacier and Yellowstone. On one of those trips 30 years ago, a ranger mentioned the work of NPCA, and he's been a supporter ever since. "I really believe in the basic premise of NPCA as an independent advocate for the parks," he said.

After retiring, he decided to step up his involvement with the organization. As a regional council member, he's advocated for the expansion of Ocmulgee National Monument in Georgia and increased funding for the parks, and he has met the staff of several Southeast senators. Eisner also considers it his role to educate others about national park wonders and the need to protect them. He's just as likely to answer questions about the intricacies of the Regional Haze Rule as he is to recommend a national park to a former colleague or student. "I do spread the word," he said.



Travelodge Helps NPCA Get the Word Out

The first step toward working to protect national parks is to form a personal relationship with these remarkable places. Look up from the floor of Yosemite Valley or down from the rim of the Grand Canyon, and chances are you'll be hooked for life. Unfortunately, many young people don't get the chance to experience the wonders of national parks because they lack the means to travel there, they feel they don't belong in parks or they don't even know that parks exist nearby. NPCA understands those barriers and has made it one of its top priorities to reach new audiences, connecting them to parks and inspiring them to become involved in advocating for these special places. It is a daunting task, but NPCA received a major boost when Travelodge joined the effort in the spring of 2016. The hotel brand helped

by sponsoring our Find Your Voice events, from a bike ride to Gateway National Recreation Area to a celebration of Biscayne National Park's birthday, and by using social media — as well as materials in hotels and print advertising — to encourage travelers to visit national parks and learn more about our work.

"It's a very innovative partnership for NPCA," said Carrie Smith, NPCA's senior director of corporate partnerships, marketing and licensing. "It's almost solely based on social media support and messaging."

Travelodge caters to budget-conscious adventure seekers, and national parks are prime destinations for its customers — half of its properties are located within 40 miles of a national park site. When the company was looking to partner with a nonprofit organization



GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

with a focus on the outdoors, NPCA quickly rose to the top of the list, said Meghan Swatt, the director of brand marketing for Travelodge. She said NPCA's mission and its grassroots efforts to encourage people to visit parks and advocate for them really resonated with Travelodge.

In Travelodge, NPCA found a partner that knows how to target an elusive demographic: millennials. Travelers between the ages of 18 and 34 typically have less money than their older counterparts, are attracted to affordable lodging and are active on social media networks. Millennials are crucial to NPCA's efforts to broaden its base of supporters, and NPCA benefits from Travelodge's experience in reaching out to this age group, Smith said.

Each month, Sleepy Bear — Travelodge's mascot and "Ambassador of Adventure" — travels to a new national park site. NPCA provides park-specific information, including trivia and fun facts, and

Travelodge uses it to create Facebook posts. Featured parks have included Mount Rainier, Great Smoky Mountains and Fort Pulaski National Monument near Savannah. "We really tried to balance the well-known parks with some other parks that are less well known but also beautiful," Swatt said.

NPCA also facilitated a collaboration between Travelodge and the Creative Action Network, an artist collective whose See America campaign has led to the creation of hundreds of posters featuring national parks. NPCA receives a portion of the proceeds from each poster sale. Travelodge plans to exhibit See America posters in the lobby of its hotels, and it promotes the artworks through social media. "This partnership is fantastic for NPCA, Travelodge and Creative Action Network. We all benefit," Smith said. "It's kind of a triple win."

Travelodge caters to budget-conscious adventure seekers, and national parks are prime destinations for its customers — half of its properties are located within 40 miles of a national park site.



(Left to Right) James Philippi, brand marketing associate, Wyndham Hotel Group; Jacqueline Cruet, NPCA, program manager for the Sun Coast region; Sleepy Bear; Danielle Idone, associate manager, US Franchise Communications, Wyndham Hotel Group

Financial Report

Thanks to the generous support of its nearly 1.2 million members and supporters, NPCA is able to continue its important work to protect and enhance America's national parks.

During fiscal year 2016, NPCA saw a more than 4 percent increase in total revenue, highlighted by a rise in events revenue and significant growth in foundation grants.

NPCA is financially strong, with total net assets of more than \$37 million. As anticipated, we used a portion of our substantial reserves to help balance our budget for the fiscal year, as we focused our energy on maintaining the momentum of our national park centennial agenda.

Once again, our sincere thanks to all of you for your continued steadfast support, which is essential in sustaining NPCA's critical mission.

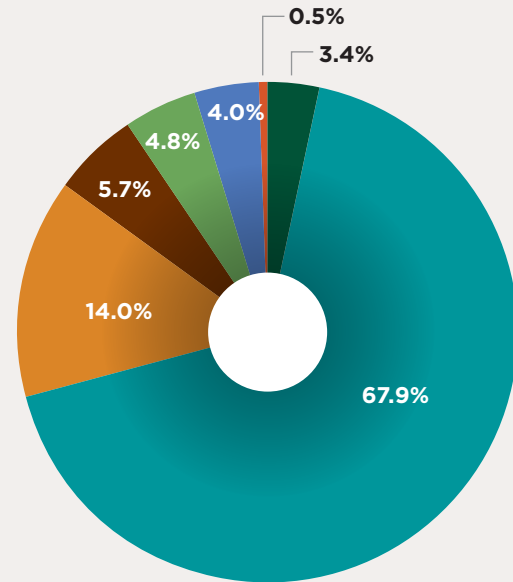
	(Audited)	(Audited)
REVENUE, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT	2016	2015
Membership Dues	1,177,968	1,085,178
Contributions	23,449,696	24,722,938
Grants and Contracts	4,823,485	2,685,949
Proceeds from Special Events	1,955,283	306,675
Marketing Income	1,668,306	1,718,134
Bequests	1,367,433	2,303,603
Other Income	186,407	178,190
Investment Return	-112,953	78,504
Total Revenue, Gains and Other Support	34,515,625	33,079,171
EXPENSES		
PROGRAM SERVICES		
Protect and Restore	12,712,383	11,555,816
Engage, Educate and Empower Americans	14,944,097	14,408,104
Strengthen and Enhance	2,580,319	2,565,260
Total Program Services	30,236,799	28,529,180
SUPPORTING SERVICES		
Management and General	2,881,942	2,781,125
Fundraising	4,809,980	4,505,030
Total Supporting Services	7,691,922	7,286,155
Total Expenses	37,928,721	35,815,335
Changes in Net Assets	-3,413,096	-2,736,164

	(Audited)	(Audited)
ASSETS	2016	2015
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,625,507	3,898,370
Short-Term Investments	1,744,677	3,190,017
Grants and Contributions Receivable, Net	2,766,498	2,096,495
Accounts Receivable	107,048	35,382
Inventory	315	0
Prepaid Expenses	228,023	179,538
Total Current Assets	7,472,068	9,399,802
OTHER ASSETS		
Deposits	25,127	26,224
Investments	34,293,501	35,701,490
Property and Equipment, Net	1,330,355	1,680,931
Grants and Contributions Receivable, Less Current Portion	2,179,706	1,881,491
Total Other Assets	37,828,689	39,290,136
Total Assets	45,300,757	48,689,938
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and Other Accrued Expenses	2,187,662	2,147,723
Deferred Revenue	681,012	563,937
Deferred Rent, Current Portion	294,147	263,832
Charitable Gift Annuities, Current Portion	323,264	305,314
Total Current Liabilities	3,486,085	3,280,806
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		
Deferred Rent, Less Current Portion	2,119,545	2,350,458
Charitable Gift Annuities, Less Current Portion	2,349,068	2,299,519
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	4,468,613	4,649,977
Total Liabilities	7,954,698	7,930,783
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	10,076,754	13,521,571
Temporarily Restricted	12,487,748	12,456,027
Permanently Restricted	14,781,557	14,781,557
Total Net Assets	37,346,059	40,759,155
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	45,300,757	48,689,938

Financial Report

REVENUE, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

Membership Dues	1,177,968
Contributions	23,449,696
Grants and Contracts	4,823,485
Proceeds from Special Events	1,955,283
Marketing Income	1,668,306
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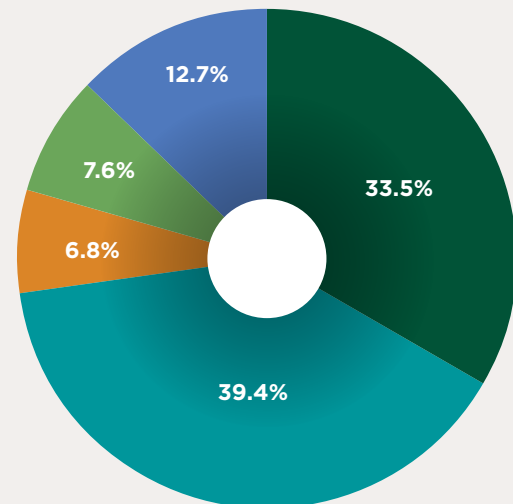
EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES

Protect & Restore	12,712,383
Engage, Educate and Empower Americans	14,944,097
Strengthen & Enhance	2,580,319
Total Program Services	30,236,799

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Management and General	2,881,942
Fundraising	4,809,980
Total Supporting Services	7,691,922
Total Expenses	37,928,721
Changes In Net Assets	-3,413,096



Endowments

Over the years, donors have sought to provide for the long-term fiscal stability of NPCA and its work protecting America's National Park System. Some endowed funds have been created with gifts in honor of, or in memory of, special individuals. Endowed funds may be restricted for specific programs or aspects of NPCA's conservation work. Such gifts are invested, and only a portion of the annual earnings is available for program expenses each year, as directed by the Board of Trustees.

NORMAN G. COHEN PARK EDUCATION ENDOWMENT

This fund, in honor of a former Board of Trustees chair, supports educational activities for Washington, D.C.-area youth to help them appreciate and understand the parks.

EDAR ENDOWMENT

Created by Armstrong Chinn, Jr., this is a permanent endowment fund to further NPCA's mission for the protection and enhancement of the national parks.

FRANK H. FILLEY AND FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

This fund provides unrestricted support for park protection programs.

GENERAL NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION ENDOWMENT FUND

This fund, initiated through the generosity of John and Jane Strandberg, provides perpetual support for NPCA's current programs and park protection initiatives.

GRETCHEN LONG ENDOWMENT

Members of the Board of Trustees established this fund to honor former Board of Trustees chair Gretchen Long for her outstanding voluntary leadership and service to NPCA.

STEPHEN T. MATHER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE ENDOWMENT FUND

Endowed by Booz Allen Hamilton, this fund provides yearly cash awards to employees of the National Park Service for exemplary service. The endowment is named for the first director of the National Park Service.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE ENDOWMENT

This fund was established to support NPCA's work in the Northeast region.

PARK PROTECTION ENDOWMENT

Funded by an anonymous donor, this endowment was established to enhance NPCA's long-term financial base and further the organization's goals of protecting and enhancing national parks.

KATHRYN B. SEHY MEMORIAL ENDOWED INTERNSHIP

This endowed internship was established in memory of Kathryn B. Sehy by her husband, Lawrence Sehy.

H. WILLIAM WALTER ENDOWED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

This fund was created to support an NPCA internship program for college and graduate students so they can gain experience at a park conservation organization and possibly pursue a career in the field.

YELLOWSTONE CONSERVATION FUND ENDOWMENT

This fund was created as a permanently restricted endowment for the purpose of supporting, broadly, NPCA's work to protect the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The NPCA Story



After Yellowstone and other national parks were created in the late 1800s, the U.S. federal government realized that these special places required an agency to oversee them — and thus

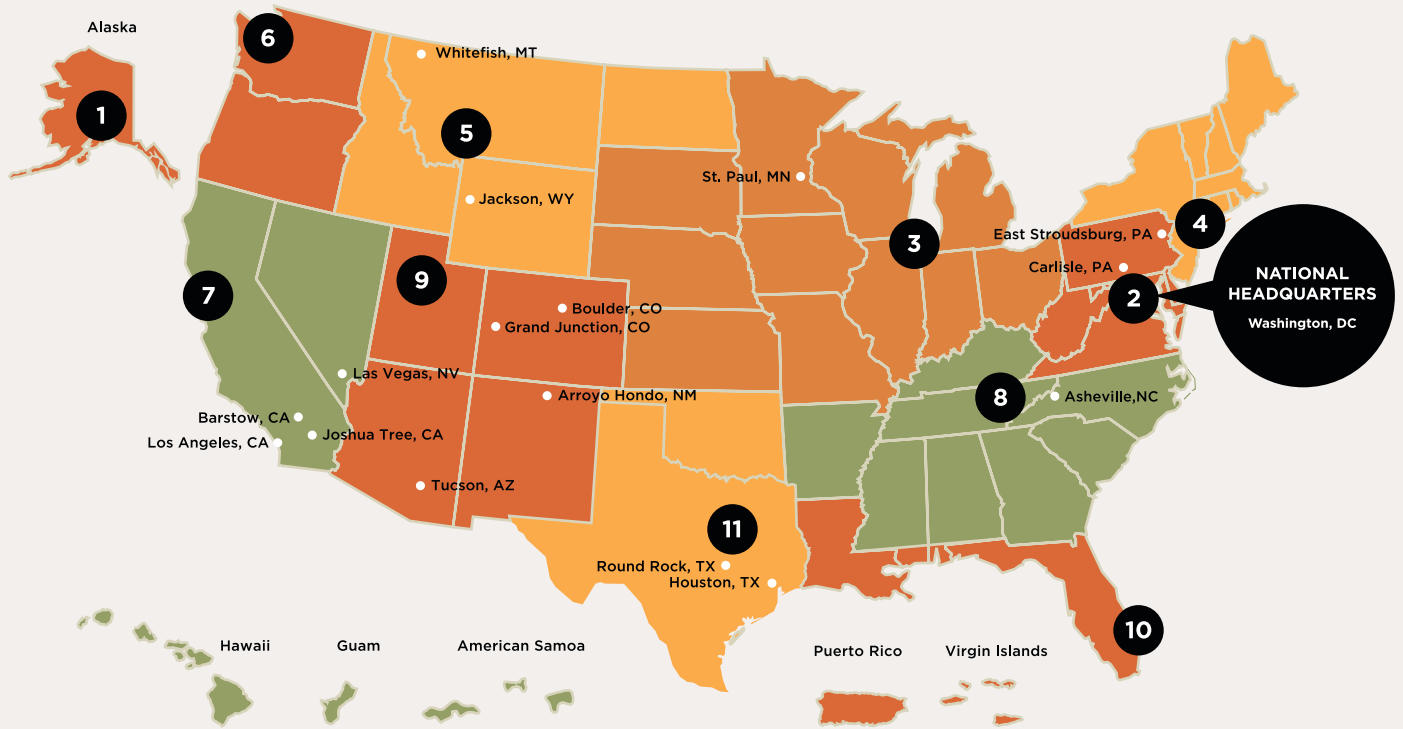
the National Park Service was established in 1916. But preserving the parks while facilitating the public's enjoyment of them was fraught with challenges and contradictions. So in 1919, Stephen Mather (the first director of the Park Service), journalist Robert Sterling Yard and other concerned park supporters formed an independent advocacy group. Their goal: to protect and enhance the parks for future generations.

The group began by producing newsletters for a few dozen members, but now, 97 years later, the National Parks Conservation Association employs 153 staff members working from the Washington, D.C., headquarters and 27 locations across the country. More than one million members and supporters have helped the organization amass important victories for our national parks, some of which are detailed in this

report. And NPCA's effectiveness and management have garnered nods from industry watch groups such as Guidestar, Charity Navigator, the Wise Giving Alliance and Great Nonprofits, which awarded NPCA top-rated status in 2016.

That's because NPCA holds fast to its core mission: protecting America's parks. From the halls of Congress to town halls across the country, NPCA works to educate decision-makers and opinion leaders about the most pressing issues facing national parks. Regional staff serve as our eyes and ears, detecting threats and forming strong, invaluable partnerships to address them. When necessary, we work through the courts to enforce legal safeguards that protect our national parks. We use traditional, online and social media to shine a light on park issues and build momentum on a national level. Just as Stephen Mather once watched over our parks to protect them from abuses, modern-day Mathers in today's NPCA stand guard over these sacred places to preserve them for generations to come.

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2

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3

Midwest
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4

Northeast
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5

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6

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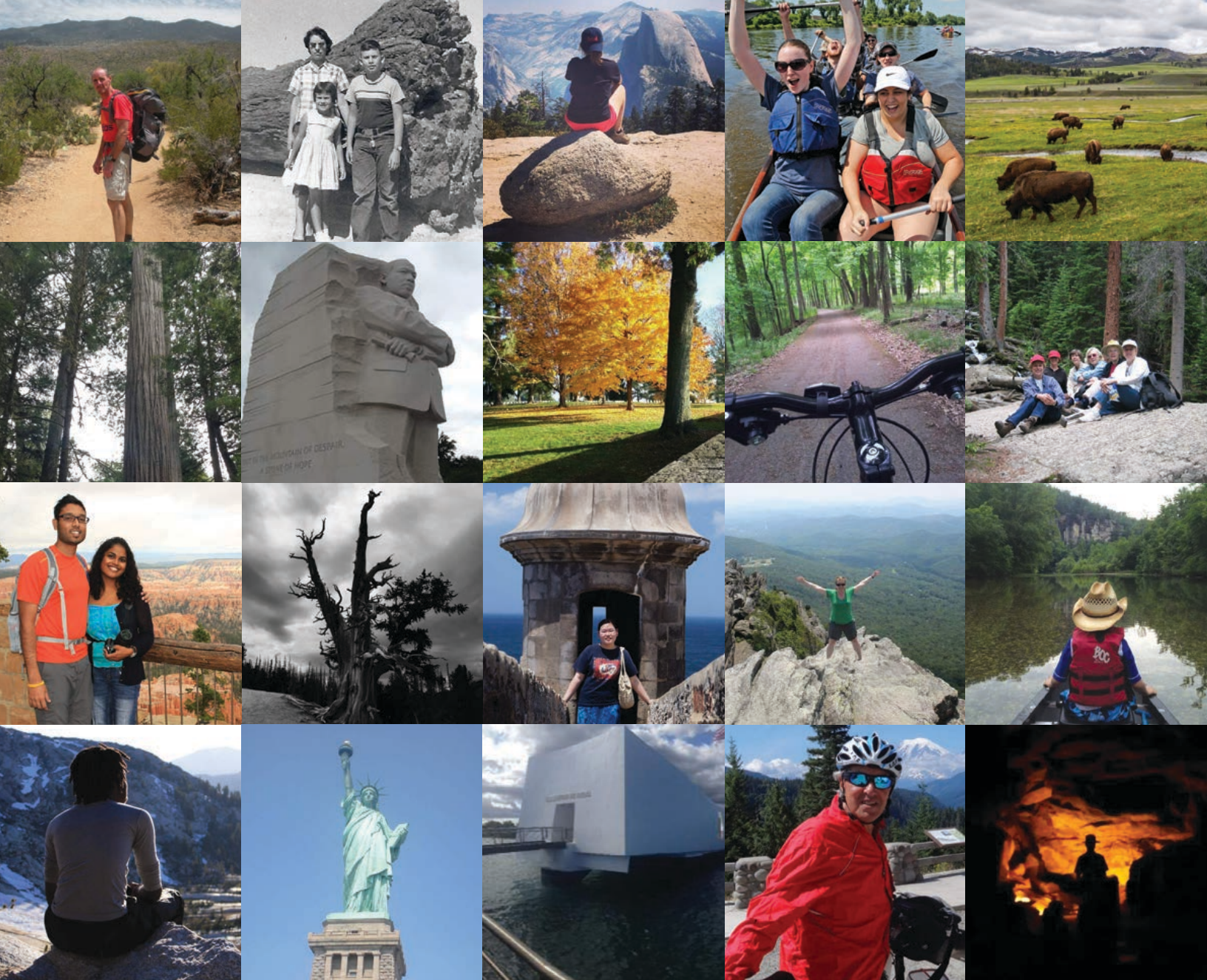
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