



America's Great Waters



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore © Ashok Rodrigues/ISTOCKPHOTO

Restoring our National Parks by Restoring our Great Waters

Water gives life to our national parks, shaping land and sustaining life. From Acadia to the Grand Canyon, Everglades to Olympic, water is central to features, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, and visitor enjoyment.

Yet, outside the parks, the health of these waters is being jeopardized. Demands for water use from urban, energy, agricultural, and industrial development are putting a strain on waters that flow through national parks. Similarly, pollution from activities beyond park boundaries, such as mining practices, erosion from land uses, and sewage overflows, damages the quality of park waters. Parks, once viewed as isolated and remote, are increasingly becoming threatened by activities occurring in their watersheds.

The National Parks Conservation Association recognizes that the health of our national parks is directly linked to the health of the waters that surround and flow through them. As part of its landscape conservation strategic priority, NPCA actively works in the Chesapeake Bay, Colorado River, Everglades, Galveston Bay, Great Lakes, and New York/New Jersey Harbor and Hudson Estuary to conserve and restore these waterways for the benefit of current and future national parks.

To further restoration as a national priority, NPCA co-chairs the America's Great Waters Coalition, an alliance of organizations working to protect, preserve, and restore our Great Waters. The Coalition envisions a day when Americans embrace their Great Waters and ensure they are healthy, valued, and productive resources for future generations.



From the Great Lakes to the Colorado River, from Puget Sound to the Everglades, our Great Waters are the lifeblood of our nation, driving regional economies, enhancing our national parks, and shaping the daily lives of Americans. National parks are directly connected to Great Waters.

- Acadia National Park, Isle Royale National Park, Everglades National Park, the Statue of Liberty National Monument, and San Juan Island National Historic Park are surrounded by the following Great Waters, respectively – Gulf of Maine, the Great Lakes, the Everglades, New York/New Jersey Harbor, and Puget Sound.
- Shenandoah, Mount Rainier, Rocky Mountain, and Yosemite National Parks are home to rivers that flow into the following Great Waters, respectively – Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, Colorado River, and San Francisco Bay.

America's Great Waters are essential to our nation's growth and prosperity. The health of our Great Waters is directly linked to America's economic recovery and job creation.

- Restoring our coasts can create more than 30 jobs per \$1 million invested, which is more than twice as many jobs as the oil, gas, and road construction industries combined.
- Mather Economics found that every \$1 invested in Everglades restoration generates \$4 in benefits, such as water supply, real estate, tourism, and recreational opportunities.
- The Brookings Institution found that restoring the Great Lakes will bring the eight-state region at least \$2 in economic benefits for every \$1 of federal investment.

We must act now to prioritize restoration efforts for our Great Waters not only because of their economic, social, and environmental importance, but because they are national treasures that enrich our national parks and landscapes and should be preserved for generations to come.

For more information:

Visit npca.org/greatwaters
 Chad Lord, Water Program Director, clord@npca.org, 202-454-3385
 Sarah Barmeyer, Great Waters Program Manager, sbarmeyer@npca.org, 202-454-3311