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**ANNUAL  
REPORT** 15

→ *“It’s an absolute necessity that the country prioritize preserving and protecting the nation’s heritage, and that heritage is both natural landscapes and the stories of the country’s founding, trials and tribulations, and lessons learned.”*

**Michael Malaga, San Francisco, California**  
*NPCA National Council Member  
Pacific Regional Advisory Council Member*

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## LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT



**We often think of the early stewards of the parks here at National Parks Conservation Association. More than a century ago, they were the heroes who wondered how they could best conserve America's lands and legacy. They contemplated what could be—and then they made it happen.**

We are humbled that today's park stewards—our donors, members, corporate partners, political champions, and staff—have continued this proud tradition. As you will see in the pages of this report, we are working year-round to protect and preserve the country's greatest treasures, and together, we have made remarkable things happen.

This year, we launched Find Your Voice, a national initiative that encourages people of all ages and backgrounds to connect with their national parks—whether it's through clearing trails or learning to fish—and then take action to protect them. This illustrates a core tenet of our mission: connecting people to parks to ensure that these irreplaceable landscapes and cultural resources will always have people to speak up for them.

And the number of parks that need our support just got a little larger. In December, after many years of intensive work and persistence, we celebrated the passage of a historic package of legislation that resulted in the largest National Park System expansion in three decades. These additions allow the Park Service to tell a more complete story of America's history, from the Underground Railroad to the Industrial Revolution. Then in February, after three years of organizing, we hailed the designation of Chicago's first national park, a late 19th-century model industrial town that tells the stories of labor struggles and one of the first African-American unions.

Meanwhile, we are working hard on our next projects. In New York City, we are collaborating with local community members and elected officials to help create a Stonewall national park. The Stonewall Inn was a key location in the fight for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights, and a park for Stonewall would be the first site in the system focused on the stories of LGBT Americans. Across the country in Los Angeles, we secured thousands of comments supporting the proposed Rim of the Valley Corridor, which would triple the size of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The move would protect important wildlife corridors and help the Park Service reach out to urban and minority communities in one of the nation's largest cities.

As we approach the centennial of America's park system and look ahead to our own 100th birthday in just a few short years, today's park stewards—all of us who care about these extraordinary places—need to join together to envision what can be. And then we must make it happen.

A heartfelt thank you for your support, both past and future.

**Fran Ulmer, Board Chair**

**Theresa Pierno, President and CEO**



## INTRODUCTION

Ensuring a bright future for the national parks requires both swift action and decades-long persistence. This year, we responded quickly to stop an amendment introduced by Sen. Deb Fischer of Nebraska, which would have prevented new protections for public lands, grinding all manner of land-conservation efforts across the country to a standstill. This critical work in Washington, D.C., may not have earned headlines, but with the amendment's defeat, we helped protect key tools for conservationists. Across the country in Montana, four decades of work culminated with the passing of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, which safeguards 383,267 acres on the pristine western edge of Glacier National Park from mining and drilling leases. And back in the capital, we celebrated the largest national parks bill in more than 30 years, which created or expanded 16 park sites. Whether it takes days or decades, NPCA keeps working to inspire and connect people, expand parks, restore natural resources, and protect what really matters, from the towering sequoias of California to Underground Railroad sites in Maryland to the hidden coral cities beneath the surface of Florida's emerald seas.



In December, we celebrated a thrilling and historic victory when Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act, which included the largest expansion of the National Park System since 1978. The enormous package of bipartisan bills creates or expands 16 parks and green-lights eight formal resource studies, the first step in determining whether a site should become a park unit. NPCA staff had been lobbying intensely for many of these new parks and improvements for more than a decade. "It was just such a proud moment," says Kristen Brengel, senior director of legislative and government affairs. "It was overwhelming how much we were able to get done in one bill, and I think it's a real demonstration of how amazing and effective and strategic our staff and our partners are."

**Turn the page to learn about the new and expanded parks visitors will be able to enjoy as a result of this landmark legislation.**

# A MONUMENTAL VICTORY

## NEW PARK SITES



### **Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park: Rhode Island and Massachusetts**

In 1790, the nation's first water-powered cotton mill churned into action on the banks of New England's Blackstone River, establishing the bucolic area as a birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. At this new park, visitors will be able to see the old mills, canals, and picturesque colonial homes that jump-started the nation's industry.



### **Manhattan Project National Historical Park: New Mexico, Tennessee, and Washington**

In the 1940s, as part of a top-secret government program, workers in Los Alamos, New Mexico; Oak Ridge, Tennessee; and Hanford, Washington, raced to build the first atomic bombs. This series of new park system sites will tell the complex story of the science, people, and places that changed the world forever.



### **National World War I Memorial: Washington, D.C.**

After years of lobbying, a memorial will finally be erected in the nation's capital to honor the courage of the 4,734,991 Americans who served during the war to end all wars—and the 116,516 who died.



### **Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument: Nevada**

About 300,000 years ago, gargantuan mammoths, bison, wolves, camels, and saber-toothed cats made their homes in a lush wetland. Now, their remarkably preserved remains tell the story of survival, adaptation, evolution, and extinction in the sparse Nevada desert.



### **Valles Caldera National Preserve: New Mexico**

This sprawling volcanic crater in the remote, high-altitude Jemez Mountains of northern New Mexico is now blanketed in grassland and old-growth timber. Walk under piercing blue skies to see plentiful herds of elk, bears, and coyotes and geological formations laid bare.

## NEW PARK AND EXPANSION



### **Harriet Tubman National Historical Park and Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park: New York and Maryland**

A nurse, spy, and conductor on the Underground Railroad, Tubman freed scores of slaves in 19 rescue missions. The legislation will establish a historical park within the Harriet Tubman National Monument on Maryland's Eastern Shore and add sites in Auburn, New York, where Tubman settled after the Civil War.

The legislation also created Coltsville National Historical Park in Connecticut, and expanded Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Wisconsin, First State National Historical Park in Delaware and Pennsylvania, and Lower East Side Tenement Museum National Historic Site in New York. In addition, it calls for formal resource studies of the following sites: Buffalo Soldiers at several possible sites in California; Lower Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana; Mill Springs Battlefield, Kentucky; Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Prison Ship Martyrs' Monument, New York; Flushing Remonstrance, New York; West Hunter Street Baptist Church, Georgia; and New Philadelphia, Illinois.

## PARK EXPANSIONS



### **Gettysburg National Military Park: Pennsylvania**

In November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln was not even the featured orator when he delivered the Gettysburg Address—272 words that became one of the most famous speeches in U.S. history. Now the train depot, where he arrived and departed, will be part of the park that protects the Gettysburg battleground and cemetery.



### **Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve: Oregon**

This marble cave system, formed by rainwater from an ancient forest, harbors rare plants and animals in Oregon's Siskiyou Mountains. An additional 4,070 acres will help protect flora and fauna, safeguard water sources, and expand a trail system.



### **Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park: New Jersey**

Starting in 1791 in Paterson, the country's first planned industrial city, a collection of mills rose around the Great Falls of the Passaic River. These modest structures eventually housed industries that would change the very identity of the United States. The expanded park will tell the story of the diversity of Paterson as it continued to grow over the decades and will encompass one of only three Negro League ballparks still standing.



### **San Antonio Missions National Historical Park: Texas**

Renowned for its exquisite 16th-century mission churches and Spanish Colonial buildings, this park will expand to include more walking trails, additional exhibition spaces, and better access to historic farm fields and the original irrigation system, which still works today.



### **Vicksburg National Military Park: Mississippi**

More than 100,000 soldiers battled here, west of Jackson, Mississippi, over the spring and summer of 1863. New additions to the park will add core battlefield land that will enhance visitors' understanding of the Union siege, which lasted for more than 40 days.

245,000  
acres of  
new wilderness

30  
states  
benefited

9  
park  
expansions

7  
new  
parks

1  
territory  
benefited

## A LANDFILL IS SCRAPPED

The Eagle Mountain Landfill would have been the largest dump in the country, piling up more than 20,000 tons of trash six days a week from Los Angeles and other Southern California communities. It also might have been the most scenic dump in the country. A former mine, the site is surrounded on three sides by Joshua Tree National Park wilderness. A landfill here would have threatened sensitive species like the desert tortoise, golden eagle, and bighorn sheep. It also would have brought light and noise pollution to the area, added harmful compounds to the delicate desert ecosystem, and marred the landscape.

But after years of community organizing, political battles, and litigation—the landfill project was argued all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court—the Los Angeles County Sanitation District finally scrapped the idea. And in December, those 3,841 acres were returned from the development company to the Bureau of Land Management under court order. “After nearly 20 years of advocacy, we avoided this incredible impact to one of the most iconic parks in the country,” says David Lamfrom, director of the California Desert and Wildlife Programs. The next step? Return this land to Joshua Tree National Park to protect it once and for all.

18

number of years Stanford University’s Environmental Law Clinic worked with NPCA to stop the proposed Eagle Mountain Landfill

150 YEARS

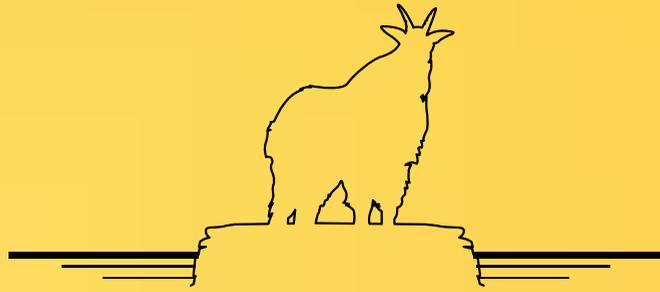
average estimated life span of a Joshua tree, the park’s remarkable namesake

300,000

number of individuals who voiced opposition to the landfill project over the years



JOSHUA TREE  
NATIONAL PARK

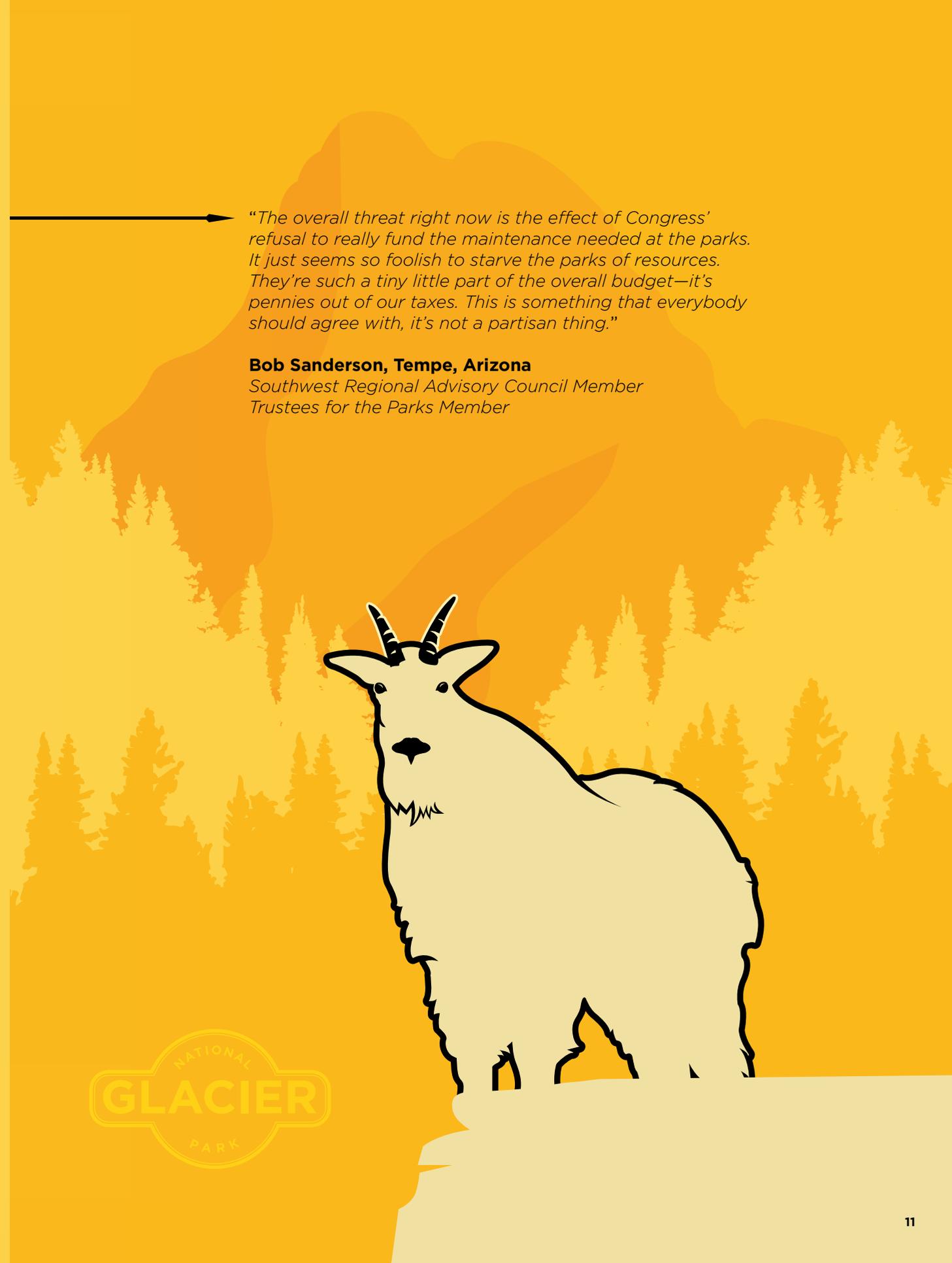


## SAVING THE CROWN OF THE CONTINENT

On the western boundary of Glacier National Park, the North Fork of the Flathead River winds 153 miles through lands so pristine they still harbor every species Europeans found when they first arrived. It's a refuge of icy summits, upland forest benches covered in ponderosa and larch, glacially carved fjords, and waters teeming with native trout. For nearly 40 years, conservation organizations, including NPCA, fought to preserve these peaks and streams, and the grizzly bears they support, from mining and oil companies. In December 2014, conservationists and legislators celebrated when President Obama signed the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, protecting

383,267 acres of this region—a swath bigger than Acadia, Arches, Bryce, Carlsbad Caverns, Great Sand Dunes, and Zion National Parks combined—from any future mining and drilling leases. “It was the first Montana conservation measure in more than three decades that had the support of our entire bipartisan congressional delegation,” says Michael Jamison, Glacier program manager. “It was incredibly satisfying for our entire community.” Between the bill and a 2011 ban on mining and drilling on the Canadian side of the border, about 800,000 acres of the transboundary Crown of the Continent ecosystem are now protected from industrialization.

**1,132** estimated number of vascular plant species in Glacier National Park



*“The overall threat right now is the effect of Congress’ refusal to really fund the maintenance needed at the parks. It just seems so foolish to starve the parks of resources. They’re such a tiny little part of the overall budget—it’s pennies out of our taxes. This is something that everybody should agree with, it’s not a partisan thing.”*

**Bob Sanderson, Tempe, Arizona**

*Southwest Regional Advisory Council Member  
Trustees for the Parks Member*



# THE POWER OF THE ANTIQUITIES ACT

Thanks to the Antiquities Act of 1906, American presidents have the power to establish new national monuments with the stroke of a pen. Many have used this law to create and protect beloved parks like Grand Canyon, Muir Woods, and the Statue of Liberty. This year, NPCA succeeded in stopping ill-conceived amendments to the act that would have undermined this valuable conservation tool, and President Obama used the law to establish parks in Chicago; Waco, Texas; and Hawaii, where a former internment camp near Honolulu became Honouliuli National Monument.

## CIVIC PRIDE IN CHICAGO

In 1893, the brand-new company town of Pullman, built on land that later became part of Chicago's south side, was hailed as a marvel of architecture and urban planning. Built by the 19th-century industrialist George M. Pullman, the town provided a higher standard of living than the squalid conditions for workers typical of the era. Pullman's epic history includes stories of labor struggles, industrial innovations, and the genesis of one of America's first African-American unions. Now, thanks to President Obama's proclamation, it is also Chicago's first national park site. "It's pretty magical," says Lynn McClure, Midwest regional director, who, with

community partners, advocated for the park for years. "You come off the highway and there's industrial development everywhere, then all of a sudden you step back in history." Today, the Administration Building with the iconic clock tower still looks out over the tidy and perfectly preserved red-brick buildings that surround Arcade Park. "Pullman is naturally going to attract visitors from a broad spectrum because of the stories it tells and because you can get there by public transportation," says McClure. "There's been an incredible sense of civic pride throughout Chicago that this is a special place."

## A MAMMOTH ACHIEVEMENT

In 1978, two men searching for snakes near the Bosque River in Waco, Texas, stumbled upon the remains of a huge Columbian mammoth. Since then, paleontologists have extracted the fossil remains of 24 Columbian mammoths, the largest known concentration of the species dying from the same event in North America. After six years of working with local partners in Texas to make the site a national monument, we celebrated success on July 10, when President Obama issued a proclamation to add it to the park system. "Waco Mammoth National Monument is a window to a world lost long ago," says Erika Pelletier, Texas program manager. "With this designation, visitors from across the country will be able to continue learning about the science and history of these amazing creatures."

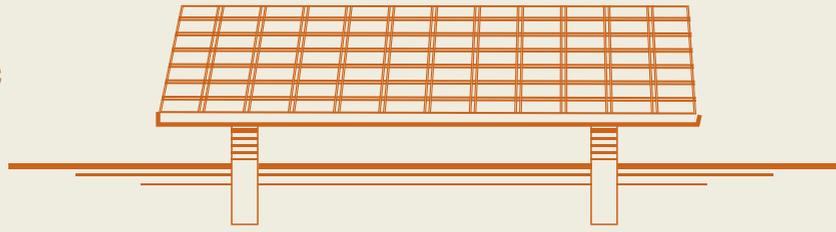
**11,000–22,000 POUNDS**

estimated weight range of a Columbian mammoth

**To date, President Obama has designated a total of 19 new monuments and more than 260 million acres of public land and water—more than any other American president.**



**WACO MAMMOTH**  
NATIONAL MONUMENT



## A TALE OF TWO SOLAR PROJECTS

NPCA strongly endorses plans to develop renewable energy—but we believe it’s critical and feasible to find solar-development sites that don’t threaten the landscapes and creatures we’re trying to protect. “Renewable energy is really a nascent technology, and siting it on public lands is brand new,” says Seth Shteir, manager of the California desert program. “Unfortunately, in that learning curve, there have been some really bad projects that have had very harmful environmental implications.” The good news is that two of these harmful solar projects were recently rejected. In a dramatic move, the city of Los Angeles dropped plans to buy electricity from a solar plant approved by the Bureau of Land Management, which would have been built within a mile

of Mojave National Preserve. The city’s decision dealt a significant, and likely fatal, blow to the Soda Mountain Solar Project, a proposal that would harm one of the most important desert bighorn sheep corridors in the Mojave. Another ill-advised plan, the Silurian Valley wind and solar project, would have sat smack in the middle of a key wildlife corridor between Death Valley National Park and Mojave National Preserve. The application for the project, which would have extended over 1,616 acres, was rejected by the Bureau of Land Management in November. “It was precedent setting,” says Shteir. “They were either going to uphold the rules or lower the bar in a way that would have been really harmful. They did the right thing.”

### 3.4 MILLION ACRES

size of Death Valley National Park, the largest national park in the Lower 48



## MISSION POSSIBLE IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

As of July, five Spanish colonial missions in San Antonio, four of them protected in a national historical park, have something in common with Stonehenge, the Great Wall of China, and the Great Barrier Reef: They were collectively named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Community members, elected officials, NPCA, and other organizations lobbied for more than ten years for the designation, which recognizes places of exceptional historical, ecological, and cultural significance.

“With four of the missions already protected as a national park, their new status as a World Heritage Site will further enhance the experience of visitors while vastly expanding the missions’ economic impact on the city of San Antonio,” says Suzanne Dixon, senior director of regional operations. Built by mission Indians in the early 1700s, these medieval churches house some 300 years of stories and are still used by parishioners today.

### \$105 MILLION

estimated additional economic activity the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation is expected to bring to San Antonio and Bexar counties by 2025



# NO MORE HOGWASH!

Every year, more than a million people visit the 135-mile Buffalo National River, one of the few remaining undammed rivers in the Lower 48. The Buffalo, America's first designated national river, is a refuge of wilderness with mineral-rich water, more than 360 caves, and giant towering bluffs patrolled by bald eagles. In 2013, two industrial swine production barns housing 6,500 animals were built on a major tributary to this national river with the ability to produce 1,780,000 gallons of waste-filled water each year. The water is stored in two small ponds, then sprayed onto hay fields. The waste can seep through the area's porous karst—a landscape that includes soluble rock, caves, and thousands of sinkholes and springs—and, ultimately, pollute the river. The good news? With the help of NPCA and its partners, national park advocates in Arkansas and across the country fought back. In December, a U.S. district judge found two federal agencies, the Small Business Administration and the Farm Service Agency, in violation of federal law for illegally guaranteeing \$3.6 million in loans to finance the construction of C&H Hog Farms without doing an adequate environmental assessment. Now, the agencies have one year to perform the study, and there is a five-year ban on any new medium or large Confined Animal Feeding Operations in the watershed. "This is a place where families come to swim, fish, and canoe, and it has to be managed to ensure public health," says Emily Jones, senior program manager for the Southeast Region. "We hope that in the future, these agencies will take a hard look downstream before enabling an industrial pork producer to locate near biologically sensitive national park waters."

**60** species of warmwater fish in the Buffalo National River



**BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER**

# CLEARER RULES, CLEANER WATERS

First, the bad news: More than half of our 408 national parks have waterways considered "impaired" under the Clean Water Act. For years, the rules guiding the act have been murky, leading to reams of unnecessary red tape and confusion. For the last four years, NPCA and its partner organizations have asked the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers for clarification of the original rule so that, together, we could better protect the water running through the national parks. At last, in June, President Obama released the Waters of the United States Rule, which clearly defines which waters the federal law covers. "Generally speaking, national parks are inseparable from the waters that are in, surround, and flow through them," says Chad Lord, NPCA's director of water policy. "This will give the EPA and Army Corps the ability to better protect the waters that flow into national parks and will provide clear streams, rivers, and lakes for visitors and nearby residents alike."

*"National Parks Conservation Association is phenomenal. They bring a lot of strategic thinking to the table. They've played a really important role in creating national parks over the years, so they know how it's done. They know some of the roadblocks, so we don't have to keep reinventing the wheel."*

**Lucas St. Clair, Portland, Maine**

*NPCA partner, leader of the campaign for a new national park that would encompass Maine's Katahdin Woods & Waters Recreation Area*

# BREATHING EASIER IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

Desert parks like Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon, Mesa Verde, and Zion are known for their blue skies and fresh air, but for years they've harbored a dirty secret. A series of massive coal-fired plants in the Four Corners region have sent so much pollution skyward that it has degraded the air in parks as far as 300 miles away. But more than a decade of work by NPCA and its partners is paying off, and unhealthy pollution is on the decline. This year, we celebrated two huge new clean air victories for the Southwest region, home to dozens of national parks. In June, NPCA announced a settlement requiring cleanup at the Four Corners Power Plant, along with \$6.7 million in health care funds for local Navajo

communities. Together with a 2013 plan that resulted in the closure of three of the facility's five aging boilers, the agreement will reduce emissions of hazardous and haze-causing pollutants by 80 percent before 2019. And in Arizona, the owners of the Cholla power plant, the nation's worst park polluter, proposed retiring all of their boilers by 2025. Meanwhile, NPCA is working to ensure that the plant's pollution is reduced between now and then. "Air pollution doesn't selectively impact the national parks, it affects everything," says Nathan Miller, engineering and science manager for NPCA's Clean Air Program. Not only will our national parks benefit from cleaner air, we will, too.



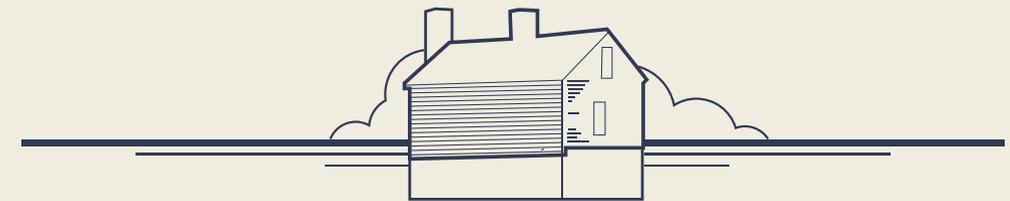
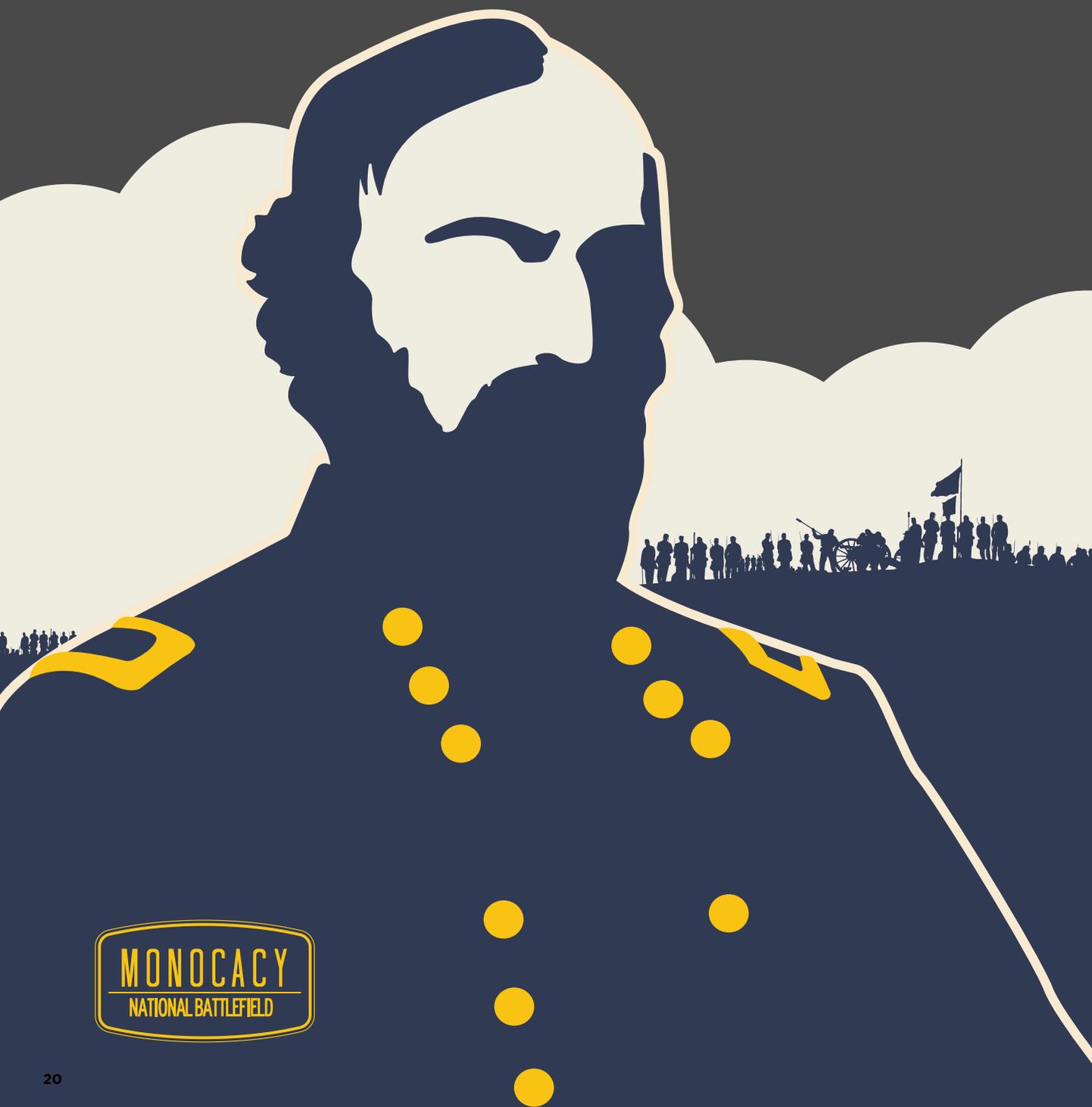
*"There are many wonderful parks here in the Southwest and there are a witches' brew of threats—subdivision development next to Saguaro National Park, the state legislature wanting to seize control of the parks, oil and gas development, and water diversions and shortages. National Parks Conservation Association has always had a strong presence in the Southwest, and they're doing great work."*

**Luther Propst, Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Tucson, Arizona**  
*Southwest Regional Advisory Council Member*



## In northern Colorado, we celebrated another victory in July

when Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association agreed to reduce emissions from one of its oldest and dirtiest coal-fired units at the Craig power plant, near Rocky Mountain National Park. For years, the plant has contributed to pollution that, on some days, reduced normal visibility by half in the park, which attracts more than three million visitors annually. The retrofitted pollution technology will start clearing the skies by 2021.



## A MODERN-DAY BATTLE

On July 9, 1864, in Monocacy, Maryland, Union forces desperately held off Confederate troops just long enough to allow reinforcements to arrive in nearby Washington, D.C. The Union fighters lost the battle but won the more critical fight in the capital two days later. Without Monocacy, some say, the Civil War may have turned out very differently. Now the site, a picturesque field dotted with historic homes, is protected as the Monocacy National Battlefield, but for nearly a decade, local county officials threatened to build a large trash-burning incinerator mere yards from the park's boundary.

The incinerator would have loomed over the battlefield, belching more than 229 tons of carbon monoxide, 73 tons of particulate matter, and 39 tons of sulfuric acid mist over the park each year. NPCA snapped into action, organizing local volunteers to speak out against the project and helping to generate 2,000 comments asking the Maryland Department of the Environment to deny environmental permits. NPCA staff also provided testimony to the Maryland General Assembly and the Frederick County Commission. Finally, on November 21, the county commissioners voted against the project.

**2,359** estimated total casualties at Monocacy, also known as the Battle That Saved Washington

# WATERY WONDERLANDS

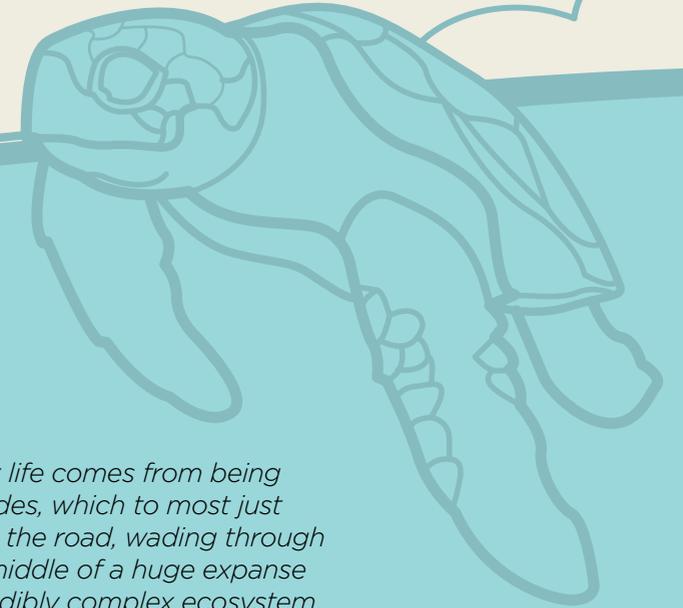
## GOOD NEWS FOR FISH, CORAL, AND SNORKELERS

Picture floating in saltwater above reefs dotted with multi-colored fish. Dolphins dart about in the distance, and sea turtles cruise by gracefully. This is Biscayne National Park, home to part of the third largest barrier reef in the world and some of the only living coral within the continental United States. It's a remarkable seascape, but it's also threatened by decades of overfishing, overuse, water pollution, and warming seas. For more than 15 years, NPCA galvanized local support, submitted comment letters, enlisted the help of renowned marine experts and anglers, and advocated for a marine reserve that would allow activities like swimming, snorkeling, and diving but not fishing. More than 20,000 NPCA supporters spoke out in favor of the reserve. This June, the Park Service finally announced the plan to create a 10,502-acre no-fishing marine reserve encompassing about a third of the park's reefs. The reserve would protect a fragile, one-of-a-kind underwater world and help fish species rebound, improving the overall experience of fishing, boating, diving, and snorkeling in one of Florida's most beloved parks. While some lawmakers are attempting to undo this good work, we remain vigilant and hopeful that this critical protection will soon be a reality.



## AFLOAT IN THE DESERT

Black volcanic cliffs, inviting sandy beaches, and secluded hot springs. These are just a few of the remarkable natural features that inspired the secretary of the Interior to establish the Black Canyon National Water Trail on a 30-mile stretch of the Colorado River below Hoover Dam in Lake Mead National Recreation Area, just outside of Las Vegas. NPCA staff, who advocated for the designation, are now working on the next project: publishing a river guidebook this fall for paddlers and motorized rafters. "More and more people are experiencing this unique river trail," says Lynn Davis, Las Vegas senior program manager. "Indeed, there is no other way to see Hoover Dam from its base, and it's one of the few places in the country where you can float through a spectacular desert near a major city."



*"A lot of inspiration for my work and for my life comes from being in national parks. It's places like the Everglades, which to most just looks like a swamp. But getting out beyond the road, wading through a freshwater river, and standing out in the middle of a huge expanse of water and grass, you realize it's this incredibly complex ecosystem. It's a lesson in life for me: The more you look at something and the more invested you are, the more greatness that can come from it."*

### **Lucas St. Clair, Portland, Maine**

*NPCA partner, leader of the campaign for a new national park that would encompass Maine's Katahdin Woods & Waters Recreation Area*



## HARNESSING THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Alaska Board of Game sets the rules for sport hunting in the state's national preserves, but over the past 20 years, the agency has increasingly allowed aggressive predator hunting—of animals such as bears and wolves—on Park Service lands to create larger herds of caribou and moose for hunters. This poses a challenge for the Park Service, whose policies conflict with such direct management of wildlife populations. To make matters worse, the Alaska Board of Game has ignored Park Service requests to change the rules or exempt its lands more than 60 times. But in September 2014, the Park Service proposed a bold set of regulations that would protect bears by barring hunters from employing methods such as snaring, trapping, and shooting sows with cubs in their dens while they hibernate. The new rules would also stop the practice of using food as bait or shining spotlights into their dens. NPCA staff immediately responded with an innovative

social-media campaign to support the move. “I was scratching my head, thinking, how do I get people's attention?” says Jim Stratton, the recently retired Alaska regional director. As part of the communications campaign, the team released a series of eye-catching political cartoons on Twitter with the hashtag **#UnBearable**—and helped drum up some 127,000 comment letters to the Park Service, the vast majority of which supported the new regulations. “People saw those cartoons and laughed,” says Stratton, but then they got angry at the cruelty of the Alaska Board of Game's current policies. “And that was the purpose of the campaign, to overwhelm the Park Service with support for what it's doing.” Staffers expect a final regulation package, which will better protect Alaska's iconic wildlife, to be released soon.

690,000

number of impressions the **#UnBearable** campaign inspired, between Twitter and Facebook

## MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR PARKS

- Thanks to NPCA's efforts with its congressional champions, the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act is extended for one year, allowing parks to keep the nearly \$200 million in fees they charge at entrance gates and to sell annual passes as they usually do. We continue to work with our partners to extend the law over the long term.
- NPCA successfully advocated for an additional \$39 million to operate the national parks in 2015, allowing for more rangers and more youth opportunities. This marked needed progress to reinvest in our national parks in advance of the National Park System's Centennial in 2016.
- We worked with Congress to invest \$10 million for the National Park Service Centennial Challenge program, which produced \$16 million in matching dollars for 100 projects throughout the country, from youth programs to restoring trails.
- The president's proposed budget for fiscal year 2016 would restore \$433 million to the National Park Service.

*“I used to have this economics debate with a coworker of mine. He was a passionate libertarian and thought that all property should be privately owned. I was of the counter view—that our most important places should be set aside, managed by the government, and accessible to everyone. We challenged each other, and he said, ‘Well if you believe that so passionately, then you should do something about it.’ So I looked around for an organization that supports those same principles, and that's how I got involved with NPCA almost 20 years ago.”*

**Michael Malaga, San Francisco, CA**

NPCA National Council Member

Pacific Regional Advisory Council Member

# AWARDEES

Every year, the National Parks Conservation Association applauds several individuals or groups for their achievements as national parks advocates and protectors. Though our organization's strength comes from the commitment of its more than one million members and supporters, these awardees demonstrate the difference every person makes.



**William Penn Mott Jr. Park Leadership Award: Senator Patty Murray**

Representing Washington State, which harbors national parks such as Mount Rainier and North Cascades, Patty Murray has been a champion of preserving natural and cultural treasures. As chair of the Senate Budget Committee, she helped to secure critical funds for national parks. Thanks to her efforts, many of the cuts the parks' budget suffered in fiscal year 2014 were restored in 2015—and funding actually increased.



**William Penn Mott Jr. Park Leadership Award: Representative Mike Simpson**

Hailing from Idaho's Second Congressional District, right in Yellowstone's backyard, Mike Simpson has always harbored a deep appreciation for the outdoors and national parks. As chair of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, he consistently championed critical funding for national parks despite difficult budgetary circumstances and intense competition for limited federal dollars. Simpson has also fiercely—and successfully—advocated to restore the Centennial Challenge program, which provides federal funds to match private donations for park projects.



**Robin W. Winks Award for Enhancing Public Understanding of the National Parks: Douglas Brinkley**

A historian, author, and professor at Rice University, Douglas Brinkley has turned a spotlight on conservation issues through his work as a history commentator and his books, including *The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom* and *Wilderness Warrior*, which chronicles Theodore Roosevelt's crusade on behalf of national parks. Next year, in time for the Park Service centennial, Brinkley will publish *Rightful Heritage: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Land of America*, an environmental history of the 1930s and 1940s.



**Stephen Mather Award: Dan Wenk**

When Dan Wenk arrived to serve as superintendent of Yellowstone National Park in 2011, few imagined that the fight over snowmobile use in the park would ever be peaceably resolved. But Wenk tirelessly oversaw the development of an appropriate environmental impact statement and skillfully negotiated with politicians, conservationists, and snowmobilers to find a resolution that has set Yellowstone on the path to cleaner air and quieter winters.



**Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award: Pullman Coalition**

Many of the members of the eight community organizations devoted to protecting Pullman, America's first model industrial town, in Chicago, have fought to preserve the area since the mid-1960s. And over the last three years, they've served as tireless partners in the successful effort to establish Pullman as a national monument (see page 12), securing support from more than 150 businesses and organizations and more than 13,000 individuals. Because of their spirit and open arms, Chicago got its first national park site this year.

# OLYMPIC

National Park



## DONOR STORIES



## JOAN AND MARK STROBEL

### MATHER LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

On a perfectly clear summer evening in Olympic National Park, Joan and Mark Strobel sat quietly on the sandy beach near Scott's Creek, gazing over the Pacific Ocean. Hues of orange and pink lit the sky. A sinuous crescent moon rose into the darkening blue dome. The Strobels watched in silence as Venus blinked out over the horizon and the light faded over giant rocky sea stacks offshore. Years later, the memory of that vista still inspires them.

"Nothing is quite like a national park," says Mark. "By design, they have preserved the best landscapes in the country, and few protected areas are managed with such care and reverence."

Mark, a research scientist at 3M, and Joan, a retired chemical engineer, first discovered and fell in love with national parks while in graduate school in Boulder, Colorado. They frequently ventured to Rocky Mountain National Park to wander through conifer forests and climb up granite peaks. In the 30 years since, the couple has hiked in Yellowstone on their honeymoon; visited parks in Alaska ten times; and backpacked in over a dozen national parks, from Grand Canyon, Zion, and Arches to Hawaii Volcanoes and Theodore Roosevelt in North Dakota. They've walked near grizzlies in Alaska, locked eyes with a wolf in Yellowstone,

and witnessed the awe-inspiring devastation of flash floods in Canyonlands.

Along the way, the Strobels, who live in St. Paul, Minnesota, have continuously supported NPCA. They became members after happening across the magazine, and over the decades, they have given annual gifts, including stock, and donated their time and energy, too. They have written letters to legislators, commented on management plans, and advised NPCA on issues and strategies as participants on the Midwest Council.

More recently, the Strobels have enthusiastically supported NPCA's efforts to connect with young people and people from diverse backgrounds. "Growing these connections will help future park advocacy—and provide people with the kinds of special memories that I have," says Joan, "from watching a bear sow teach her cub to clam with a simple swish of her paw to the 360-degree view of volcanoes on top of Mount Gordon in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve."

Caring for national parks is a critically important job that doesn't end, and NPCA understands that, Joan says. "That is why I originally got involved," she says, "and why I am still involved."

**NPCA established the Mather Legacy Society to recognize and honor those individuals who have expressed their support for our national parks by making a gift to NPCA in their estate plans. For additional information, please call Morgan Dodd, senior director of gift planning, at 877.468.5775.**

# TALKING TRASH

**Yosemite, Grand Teton, and Denali National Parks are beloved for their soaring peaks, pristine rivers, and spectacular wildlife. But all that love can hurt. In 2013, park visitors and operations generated some 16.6 million pounds of trash in this trio of parks. In the entire park system, the estimate was more than 100 million pounds. Enter Subaru of America, the first car manufacturer in this country to develop a zero-landfill automotive assembly plant, which means that every speck of trash from the factory is composted, reused, or recycled.**

In a groundbreaking partnership, Subaru, the National Park Service, park concessionaires, and NPCA's Center for Park Management and Corporate Partnerships Program launched a pilot program in June focused on bringing Subaru's zero-landfill best practices to these three iconic parks. The goal, ultimately, is to significantly reduce landfill waste from all national parks.

"We quickly identified NPCA as the best possible option for making connections inside the parks and with gateway communities," says Alan Bethke, vice president of marketing for Subaru. "We have found this organization to be a great collaborative and creative partner, which is exactly what this sort of project needs."

As part of the program, park staff traveled to Indiana this winter to see the zero-waste practices in action at Subaru's plant there. Following that visit, sustainability experts from Subaru and NPCA visited each pilot park to assess its current practices and discuss innovative waste management initiatives. Now NPCA is conducting baseline waste audits and reviewing visitor waste behaviors. Finally, with staff from Subaru, we will develop a custom waste-reduction strategy for

each park, which other Park Service sites can learn from and adopt. This might include improving recycling and composting facilities, expanding public-education campaigns about the impact of trash, and providing more drinking water stations where visitors can fill reusable water bottles.

"There can't be a one-size-fits-all approach in these pilot parks or any other. The types of trash, distances from recycling facilities, and other factors mean we have to tailor zero-landfill strategies to get the job done," says Hayley Mortimer, vice president of the Center for Park Management, who led the waste-stream analysis for each pilot park.

The initiative was a natural fit for Subaru, known for its longstanding environmental ethic. Over the years, the company has shared its sustainability expertise with hundreds of organizations and businesses, from Coca Cola to Boeing. The Indiana manufacturing plant currently uses an array of waste-reduction strategies, such as separating food scraps for composting and sending the dust produced from weld slag to a recycling facility where copper and other metals are reclaimed. Since 2000, the Indiana plant has reduced waste per vehicle manufactured by 55 percent. It currently produces the Subaru Legacy and Outback, and next year it will begin production of the Impreza model.

"I visited Denali shortly after college," says Bethke. "It was an eye-opening, unforgettable experience. That was more than 20 years ago. I find it very meaningful to now have an opportunity through our work at Subaru to help make sure someone else can have that same sort of experience 20, 50, or 100 years from now."



**SUBARU.**

*Confidence in Motion*



# PROTECTING PARK SITES ALONG THE DELAWARE RIVER

Not far from some of the most densely populated areas in the country, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River are surprisingly peaceful enclaves of forested mountains, waterfalls, rhododendron-cloaked ravines, and streams filled with wriggling trout. They're beautiful, but the sites also serve an important function. These largely rural parts of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania help protect the health of the Delaware River, the longest undammed river east of the Mississippi and the source of drinking water for more than 15 million people, including half the residents of New York City and all Philadelphia residents.

"The Delaware River and its tributaries are, for the most part, still in pretty good shape," says Andrew Johnson, program director for the Watershed Protection Program at the William Penn Foundation. As a result, the Delaware River Basin receives far less federal funding than other areas, such as the Chesapeake watershed. But the 13,500-square-mile watershed of the Delaware River faces many threats, including habitat loss from land development, agricultural pollution, and stormwater runoff. "One of our biggest concerns is the loss and fragmentation of forests due to development and energy-related activities, including the construction of pipelines and transmission lines," Johnson says.

The William Penn Foundation, a philanthropic organization dedicated to protecting the environment, improving education for low-income children, and

fostering creative communities in the Philadelphia area, provides meaningful support to projects that protect water quality in the Delaware River watershed, from stream restoration to water-quality monitoring. Last year, the foundation awarded NPCA a grant to research how the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area affects the local economy. The resulting report showed the profound financial value of the park—some three million out-of-town visitors spend \$120 million visiting the park every year.

This past summer, the William Penn Foundation approved a two-year grant for a geotourism project focused on the middle and upper Delaware River region. National Geographic, local partners, and NPCA will work together to promote and sustain the unique ecology, culture, and history of the region. In spring 2016, project leaders plan to release a Web-based Mapguide and mobile app about the area for travelers.

"The Delaware Water Gap is heavily used, but very few people understand that it's a national park and that forests along the middle and upper Delaware River protect essential sources of clean water," says Johnson. "We're interested in supporting the work NPCA is doing to help local partners and others do an even more effective job of making officials and the public aware of the parks' significance—and the ways they are threatened." The goal? That greater awareness will inspire new advocates and help protect the area for decades to come.

# ENDOWMENTS

Over the years, donors have sought to provide for the long-term fiscal stability of the National Parks Conservation Association 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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

DELAWARE WATER GAP  
NATIONAL RECREATION AREA





# FINANCIAL REPORT

It was an exciting year for NPCA and its supporters as Congress authorized the largest expansion of the National Park System since 1978. Thanks to the financial contributions of more than one million members and supporters, NPCA has been able to continue the strategic advocacy and programmatic work that has led to important park victories such as the remarkable parks legislation Congress passed in December.

Fiscal year 2015 saw contributions, grants, and member dues increase by a combined \$2.7 million over the prior year; total revenue for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015, was \$33.08 million. Although we always endeavor to balance our budget, it's not unusual for us to operate at a deficit from time to time to be able to fulfill our obligations under multi-year grants and to complete our most critical work. This was the case for FY15, when we operated at a deficit of \$2.7. Investment returns, though not as robust as in recent years, remained positive, and our strong investment positions continue to provide a solid foundation for the future.

Through your unwavering support, NPCA remains financially strong and will be able to continue the crucial work of protecting and restoring America's national parks for future generations.

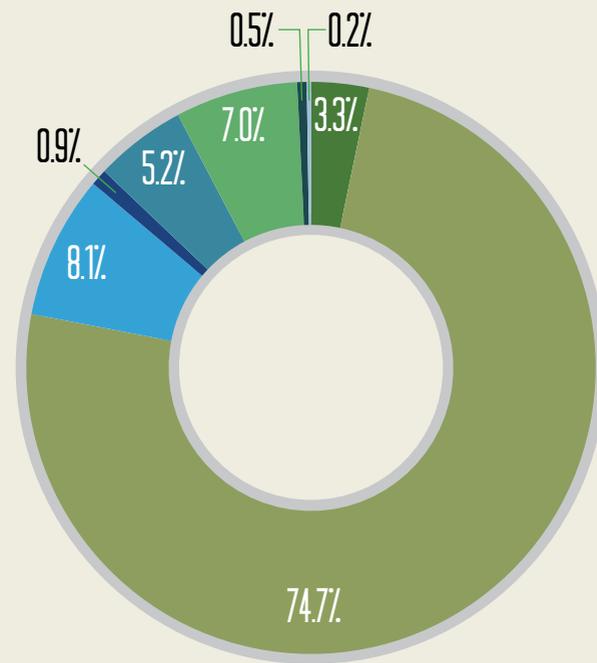


	(Audited) 2015	(Audited) 2014
<b>REVENUE, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>		
Membership Dues	1,085,178	1,095,423
Contributions	24,722,938	22,553,563
Grants and Contracts	2,685,949	2,105,000
Proceeds from Special Events	306,675	1,498,050
Marketing Income	1,718,134	1,225,646
Bequests	2,303,603	1,333,959
Other Income	178,190	137,447
Investment Return	78,504	4,922,210
<b>Total Revenue, Gains and Other Support</b>	<b>33,079,171</b>	<b>34,871,298</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES</b>		
Protect & Restore	11,555,816	12,600,037
Engage, Educate and Empower Americans	14,408,104	13,314,655
Strengthen & Enhance	2,565,260	2,318,572
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>28,529,180</b>	<b>28,233,264</b>
<b>SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>		
Management and General	2,781,125	2,162,188
Fundraising	4,505,030	4,670,143
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>7,286,155</b>	<b>6,832,331</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>35,815,335</b>	<b>35,065,595</b>
<b>Changes in Net Assets</b>	<b>-2,736,164</b>	<b>-194,297</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3,898,370	4,708,217
Short-term Investments	3,190,017	3,162,483
Grants and Contributions Receivable, Net	2,096,495	2,899,734
Accounts Receivable	35,382	57,943
Prepaid Expenses	179,538	377,757
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>9,399,802</b>	<b>11,206,134</b>
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>		
Deposits	26,224	23,096
Investments	35,701,490	36,256,681
Property and Equipment, Net	1,680,931	2,040,687
Grants and Contributions Receivable, Less Current Portion	1,881,491	2,282,125
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>39,290,136</b>	<b>40,602,589</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>48,689,938</b>	<b>51,808,723</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable and Other Accrued Expenses	2,147,723	2,703,593
Deferred Revenue	563,937	567,860
Deferred Rent, Current Portion	263,832	263,832
Charitable Gift Annuities, Current Portion	305,314	266,962
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>3,280,806</b>	<b>3,802,247</b>
<b>NONCURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Deferred Rent, Less Current Portion	2,350,458	2,547,985
Charitable Gift Annuities, Less Current Portion	2,299,519	1,963,172
<b>Total Noncurrent Liabilities</b>	<b>4,649,977</b>	<b>4,511,157</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>7,930,783</b>	<b>8,313,404</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	13,521,571	15,726,888
Temporarily Restricted	12,456,027	12,989,374
Permanently Restricted	14,781,557	14,779,057
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>40,759,155</b>	<b>43,495,319</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>48,689,938</b>	<b>51,808,723</b>

# FINANCIAL REPORT 2015

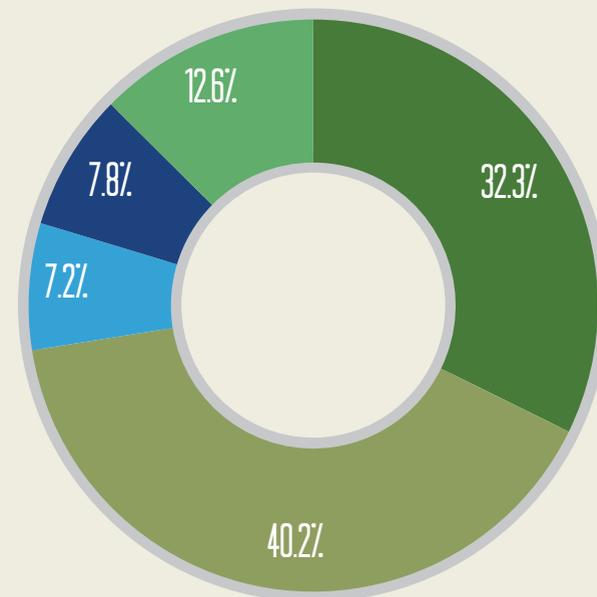
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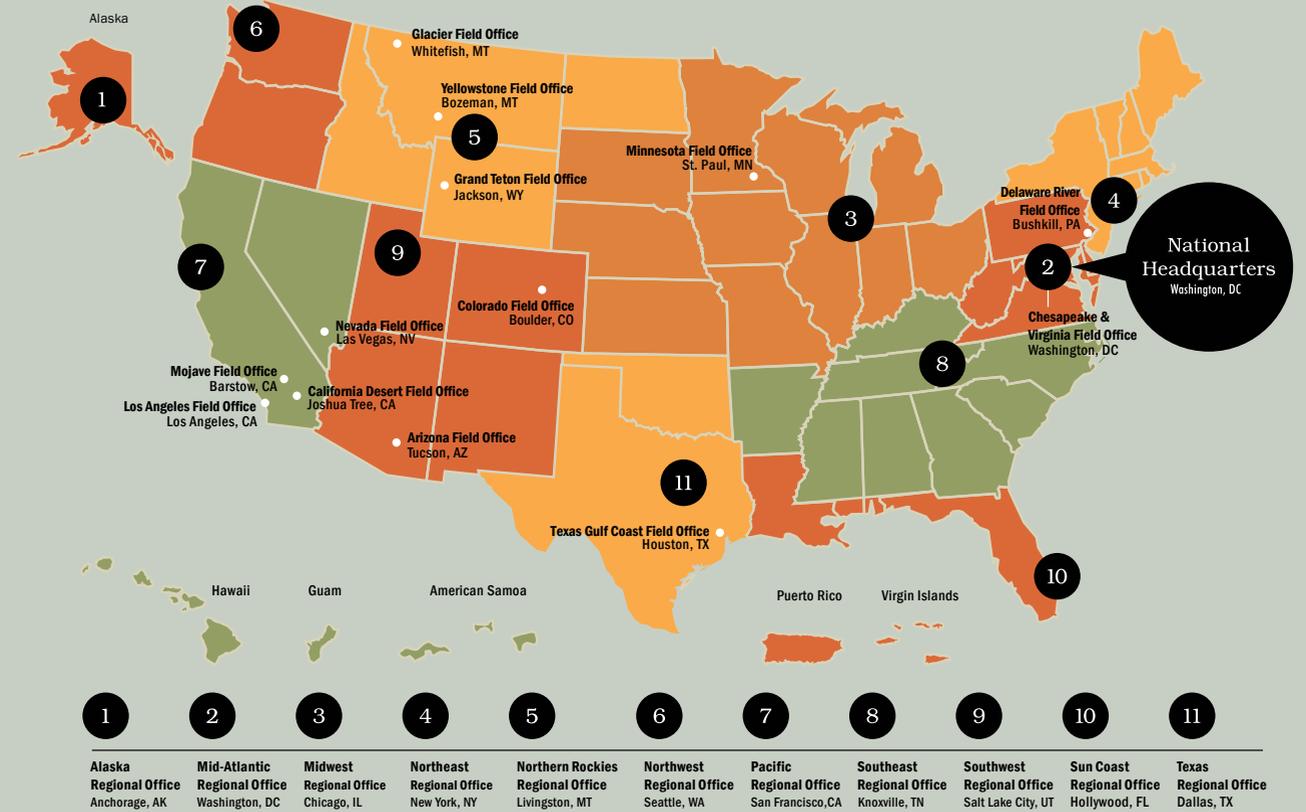


## EXPENSES

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Changes In Net Assets	-2,736,164



# THE NPCA STORY



**SEQUOIA**  
NATIONAL PARK



After Yellowstone and other national parks were created in the late 1800s, the 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 the parks and preserve their long-term health for future generations.

The group began by producing newsletters for a few dozen members, but now, 96 years later, the National Parks Conservation Association employs 150 staff members working from the Washington, D.C., headquarters and 24 regional and field offices 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 with top-rated status in 2015.

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 (see field office map above) 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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 Theodore Roosevelt IV, *Brooklyn, NY*  
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 Margaret S. Hart, *Lake Forest, IL*  
 Marne Hayes, *Big Sky, MT*  
 Michael O. Holm, *Columbia Falls, MT*  
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 Gretchen Long, *Wilson, WY*  
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 Sandy Schultz Hessler, *Jackson, WY*  
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