

CENTENNIAL YEAR OF CELEBRATION AND OPPORTUNITY

PROTECTING OUR
PARKS

CREATING *AH-HA!*
MOMENTS

RESTORING OUR
PARKS

OUR RESPONSIBILITY
TO PRESERVE HISTORY
AND CULTURE

WAYS YOU CAN CELEBRATE THE NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL:

- **Find Your Voice** at a national park near you. To celebrate the Centennial, NPCA's Find Your Voice initiative will be hosting events in and near national parks across the country, from community service projects to advocacy trainings. Visit FindYourVoice.camp to find an activity near you.
- Grab your popcorn and treat yourself to a (3-D!) movie: **National Parks Adventure**. Enjoy bird's-eye views of more than 30 national parks from the comfort of your IMAX theater seat. The film is currently playing in select theaters nationwide. Visit nationalparksadventure.com for dates and locations.
- Jump on your bike or take a hike with **Climate Ride!** 2016 represents NPCA's fifth year in partnership with Climate Ride, and to celebrate the parks' centennial, the group has planned several special events across the country. Get involved by pledging your support to a rider or a hiker or, better yet, sign up for one of the excursions yourself at www.climateride.org/npc.
- Tune in to the Emmy Award-winning television series **Rock the Park**. Hosted by our friends Jack Steward and Colton Smith, every episode features a new adventure in some of the most awe-inspiring places on earth — our national parks! The series airs weekend mornings, on *Litton's Weekend Adventure*. Check your local ABC Network listings for air times near you.
- **Travel with NPCA** and check off a few more national parks from your list! Join one of NPCA's small group tours in partnership with Off the Beaten Path offering you over 80 departures in 2016. For more information and the entire 2016 trip schedule, please visit www.npc.org/travel.



NPCA

President & CEO Theresa Pierno at Yellowstone National Park

CENTENNIAL YEAR OF CELEBRATION AND OPPORTUNITY

by Theresa Pierno

I was so fortunate to ring in the new year in Yellowstone National Park, watching Old Faithful erupt beneath a moonless night sky. It was a truly memorable way to kick off this, the centennial year of our national parks.

It was 100 years ago that the National Park Service was founded and, with it, the National Park System we know today — a system that includes more than 400 sites representing many of our country's most beautiful landscapes and most important cultural and historic sites. And let's not forget 100 years of dedicated national park staff, rangers and advocates, all of whom play a critical role in the success of our parks.

The centennial is cause for celebration. It is also a time for us to look at what opportunities lie ahead as our national parks are in the national spotlight.

One of our biggest priorities at National Parks Conservation Association this year is encouraging people to be both national park visitors and national park advocates. Through our *Find Your Voice* initiative (findyourvoice.camp), we are inviting people to join us in parks across the country, whether it's to plant trees in Big Thicket

National Preserve in Texas or clean up and beautify Pullman National Monument in Chicago. **We have more than 100 activities slated, and we'd love to have you join us at one of them.**

We also encourage you to make this the year you bring a young person to a national park for the first time. Visiting our parks can be a powerful experience and can lead to someone becoming a future voice for America's favorite places.

Chloe, a young volunteer from San Antonio, Texas, shared with us that joining NPCA at a recent event "helped her see the world in a whole new light and take ownership" of our public lands. She looked forward to inviting her friends to join her at a future volunteer event and "see why we protect these places."

It's so inspiring to hear stories like this one. Indeed, if people like Chloe are the future of our national parks, they will be in good hands.

We must remain vigilant. In this centennial year, we invite you to speak up alongside us as we continue to fight to ensure our parks are a national priority. National parks are

not a democratic issue or a republican issue. They are an American issue that is deserving of bipartisan solutions to address some of their biggest challenges.

Thanks to our advocacy work with elected officials on both sides of the aisle, our national parks received a significant funding increase this year — which will be vital in helping to meet their staffing and repair needs. But we must do more to ensure their long-term financial stability.

The National Park Service needs nearly \$12 billion to repair roads, bridges, trails, and visitor centers in parks across the country. The annual cost for maintaining our parks is nearly twice as much as what they receive from Congress. The National Park Service's construction account is just half as much as it was a decade ago. All of this is happening at a time when our parks saw record visitation in 2015.

Many of our country's most iconic national parks are at a crossroads. Decisions made now about development just outside their borders could forever change these incredible places. The Obama Administration just gave the green light to a poorly sited development that would harm Mojave National Preserve and important desert wildlife. And if they don't take action to ensure parks are protected we could also see huge power lines threatening the historic landscape at Colonial National Historic Park.

Mojave National Preserve



NPCA

We ask that you continue to join us and stand up for our national parks as we enter this very critical year. After all, it's because of advocates just like you that we have places like the Grand Canyon, Mojave and Yellowstone.

Thank you for all that you do for both National Parks Conservation Association and for our parks. Here is to a year of celebrations and opportunities!

NPCA Find Your Voice program at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

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— PRESIDENT & CEO,
THERESA PIERNO



BIG WIN FOR THE CALIFORNIA DESERT

In February President Barack Obama created three long-awaited new national monuments in the California desert. These sites — the Castle Mountains, Mojave Trails, and Sand to Snow National Monuments — will preserve a staggering 1.8 million acres of fragile and spectacular lands.

Here are three reasons to celebrate these new monuments:

1. **This designation is the single most significant action to preserve the California desert in more than 20 years.** These monuments are the biggest conservation achievement in this part of the country since 1994, when the California Desert Protection Act established Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Parks and Mojave National Preserve.
2. **The new monuments, combined with existing national park lands in the region, now form one of the largest desert conservation reserves in the world.** These three monuments represent previously unprotected spaces between existing national park lands, connecting critical ecosystems and wildlife habitat.
3. **These are some of the most beautiful and culturally significant lands in the California desert.** The new monuments will preserve some of the finest Joshua tree, pinion pine, and juniper forests in the region and include the most botanically diverse mountains in the contiguous United States.

Learn more about Castle Mountains National Monument at nps.org.

Note: Castle Mountains National Monument will be managed by the National Park Service. Mojave Trails National Monument will be managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and Sand to Snow National Monument will be managed jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service.



David Lamfrom

Burrowing owls found in Castle Mountains National Monument and Mojave Trails National Monument

Cover Photo: *Find Your Voice* restoration event along the Rat Root River near Voyageurs National Park, MN.

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PROTECTING OUR PARKS

Even as National Parks Conservation Association staff celebrates the National Park Service turning 100 this year, we remain focused on protecting national parks from coast to coast so they can continue to be enjoyed for another 100 years and beyond.

Park protection has been at the heart of NPCA's mission from the start. This aspect of our work is more important than ever today. Accordingly, our Parks In Peril campaign is focused on nine national parks facing the most serious threats. Here are updates on two of those imperiled parks.

Mojave National Preserve: At 1.6 million acres, the Preserve is the third largest national park unit in the lower 48 states. This remarkable and wild land is home to the world's largest Joshua tree forest, 32 extinct volcanoes, and one of the tallest sand dunes in north America. With a diversity of elevations and habitats, the Preserve is also rich in wildlife including being an important sanctuary for the threatened desert tortoise, desert bighorn sheep, mountain lion, kit fox, and the Golden Eagle.

And yet, the Obama administration recently approved a 2,000-acre solar project less than one mile from the preserve. The sprawling project, if built, would disrupt bighorn sheep migration corridors and destroy crucial habitat for myriad species. Moreover, the project's groundwater pumping could put local water quality and quantity at risk.

Although NPCA applauds clean energy projects in appropriate areas, we do not believe America's renewable energy future should come at the cost of national parks. As an organization that has played a leadership role in renewable energy planning, we understand that better locations exist for this project. Accordingly, NPCA will continue to oppose the project and fight to protect the resources that make Mojave National

Preserve one of the nation's most stunning natural wonders.

Colonial National Historical Park: Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America, was established along the James River in southeastern Virginia in 1607. The river and its landscape connect Colonial National Historical Park, the Captain John Smith Trail, and other historic sites that tell our shared American story.

Those sites are now in danger of being permanently blighted. Dominion Virginia Power is lobbying for approval of a proposal to build 44 metal towers reaching as high as the Statue of Liberty. Seventeen brightly lit towers would be built in the James River itself.

Despite alternatives that would protect the James River and nearby national parks, the power company insists on building its supersized towers in the heart of this historic area.

NPCA has presented a science-based case for alternates to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is rallying grassroots opposition to sacrificing American history for corporate profits. In addition, NPCA members and activists continue pressing the Obama Administration to require an Environmental Impact Statement before Dominion's permit application is given further consideration.

Mojave National Preserve, Colonial National Historical Park, and other parks in peril are at a crossroads. Which path they take — toward full protection or further harm — depends on our combined actions during this centennial year. NPCA appreciates the support and involvement of *Trustees for the Parks* in this effort, and encourages everyone to come to the rescue of America's national parks.

Learn more about Parks in Peril and how you can help at www.nps.org/parksinperil.

CREATING AH-HA! MOMENTS

Eyes light up and smiles break out when someone has an “ah-ha” moment about national parks.

“Ah-ha, this beautiful place belongs to me.”
“Ah-ha, I have the ability to protect this park.” “Ah-ha, I never knew this park was here.” NPCA continues working to create those magical moments through a variety of unique initiatives.

Find Your Voice, which will mark its first anniversary during National Park Week (April 16-24), provides Americans with opportunities to connect with and speak up for parks in their communities. Thousands of people have jumped at the chance to take part in hands-on activities — such as building new trails, planting trees, and cleaning up waterways — and engage in NPCA parks advocacy campaigns. More than half of *Find Your Voice* participants have been first-time national parks visitors, and an encouraging 48% are millennials.

NPCA works in partnership with the National Park Service to develop new methods and best practices for making urban parks more relevant and welcoming to people who live near those parks. Workshops and training sessions in major metropolitan areas have equipped college

students and young professionals to make compelling cases for greater investments in urban parks to their elected officials and local business leaders.

In addition, the second two-year term of our **Next Generation Advisory Council** is getting underway to inspire more of today’s young people to become tomorrow’s national park stewards. This energetic, motivated group is bringing fresh perspectives and diverse voices to national park conservation as the National Park System — “America’s best idea” — begins its second century.

Taken together, these efforts demonstrate NPCA’s commitment to ensuring centennial celebrations are inclusive and that national parks will have strong advocates for their protection for generations to come.

Visit npca.org/events for upcoming *Find Your Voice* events in your area and other opportunities to experience your own “ah-ha” moments in your national parks.



Find Your Voice volunteers at work at El Pueblo De Los Angeles — a site that could one day be part of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Volunteers helped take down fencing to allow Pronghorn Antelope to reconnect to historic migration pathways at an NPCA *Find Your Voice* event near West Yellowstone.



STRENGTHEN NPCA AND SUPPORT THE NATIONAL PARKS

As the sole organization focused on protecting and strengthening the national parks, NPCA has depended on the commitment and strength of its loyal members for its achievements over the last 97 years.

MAKE A GIFT

Give today and support NPCA's most critical programs. Please contact Eric Olson at 202.454.3331, eolson@npca.org, or visit www.npca.org/trustees.

CONSIDER A PLANNED GIFT

With numerous ways to make and fund a planned gift, you can increase your current income, diversify your holdings, reduce your taxes, and avoid probate costs. Please contact Morgan Dodd, toll-free at 877.468.5775 or mdodd@npca.org.

TRAVEL WITH US

Check off a few more national parks from your list! Join one of NPCA's small group tours in partnership with Off the Beaten Path. Most tours are limited to 16 participants, with two guides. Please contact Ben Sander at 202.454.3305, bsander@npca.org, or visit www.npca.org/travel.

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RESTORING OUR PARKS

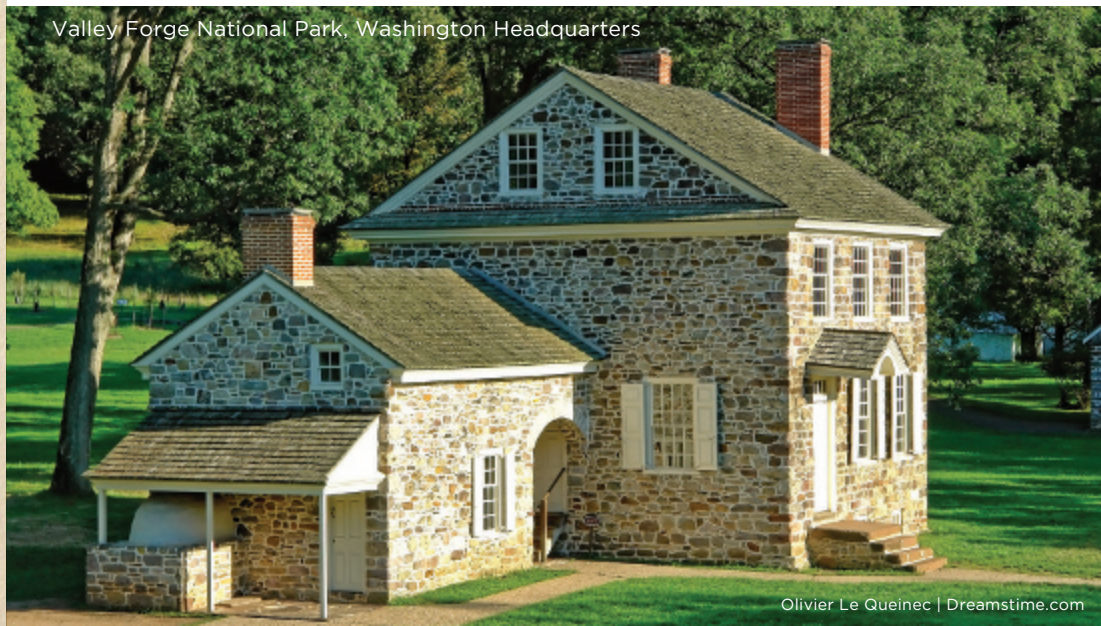
As our national parks age, so does their infrastructure. In fact, our parks need nearly \$12 billion to repair everything from overgrown trails to leaking pipes and sinking roads. Years of underfunding have also led to too few rangers to educate visitors and protect wildlife. While there have been recent funding increases, much more needs to be done.

“Our parks preserve and protect some of America’s most treasured natural, historic, and cultural sites. We must work together to ensure parks have the funding and resources they need to fulfill that mission. One of the most important ways Congress can support parks is to make sure next year’s National Park Service budget includes significant increases to tackle the repair needs, fill vacant ranger positions, and put parks on the best path toward another century of service,” says NPCA President & CEO Theresa Pierno.

At **Santa Fe National Historic Trail**, for example, the Old Santa Fe Trails Building requires major repairs to exterior walls damaged by water and pest intrusions. The Visitor Center at **Valley Forge National Historical Park** has a leaky roof and is not yet in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. At **Cape Cod National Seashore**, 12 structures containing hazardous building materials pose a danger to visitors.

None of these parks are beyond repair — at least not yet. But concerted and sustained efforts will be required to bring them back to their full glory for the enjoyment of visitors for generations to come. NPCA is proud to be a leading champion of national park restoration, and will keep the pressure on until the parks’ to-do list is complete.

Valley Forge National Park, Washington Headquarters



Olivier Le Queinec | Dreamstime.com

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PRESERVE HISTORY AND CULTURE

by Alan Spears

If the words *National Park System* conjure for you images of snow-capped peaks, raging rivers and dynamic megafauna, you're not alone. Despite the fact that two-thirds of our national parks were established to commemorate this nation's history and culture, the prevailing assumption remains that America's "real" national parks are those renowned great western, iconic landscapes. Yellowstone and Yosemite fit the national parks image; the Frederick Douglass home, not so much.

In truth, the National Park Service has a strong, Congressionally mandated role in preserving the nation's patrimony. Reorganization in the 1930s added scores of American Revolutionary War and Civil War battlefield sites to the National Park System. The National Register of Historic Places is managed by NPS as are the National Heritage Area program and the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program. Even those iconic landscape parks are chock full of cultural resources extending historic connections to 100 percent of our parks.

Currently, NPS manages more than 27,000 historic buildings, 3,500

historic statues and monuments and 123 million museum objects and archival documents. NPS also provides millions per year in grant money, tax incentives and technical assistance to a variety of federal agencies, tribal, state and local governments and private heritage preservation partners supporting both local and national preservation efforts. The National Park Service isn't dabbling in the history business, rather the agency is leading the effort to reconnect Americans to our shared past and, in so doing, provide some clues to a better way forward.

This summer the National Park Service will celebrate 100 years of preserving the places and stories that served as the very fabric of America. What better way to honor this important legacy than by planning a trip to one of our beloved historic sites? There you can visit with expert rangers and learn about our shared American story. Get started on your adventure today by visiting NPCA's website, npca.org, where you can find all 410 national park sites.

Alan Spears in Gettysburg National Park



The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in Washington DC, provides an inside look at Douglass as a family man, author, public figure, and orator.

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— NPCA CULTURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR
ALAN SPEARS





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Mesa Verde National Park