



TRUSTEES FOR THE PARKS

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2018



Gary Kramer USFWS

**“SOMETHING
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**— Christine Goepfert,
NPCA Senior
Program Manager**

WOLVES ON THE COMEBACK TRAIL

This year might well have been the last one for the wolf population of Isle Royale National Park if not for a science-based intervention NPCA worked for years to put in place. Now the park's wolves — just two, down from a high of more than 50 — have a chance at bouncing back from near extinction on the island thanks to a new Park Service plan to introduce more wolves to the park.

There is, at long last, good reason to hope that the unmistakable howls of wolves will once again thrill visitors to Isle Royale in the years to come.

NPCA began sounding an alarm about the rapidly dwindling wolf numbers on the remote, rugged island park in Lake Superior back in 2012. We brought together scientists, park managers, wilderness advocates and

other concerned citizens to debate the possibilities. “We didn’t start with any pre-conceived notions but wanted to start a conversation about solutions,” NPCA Senior Program Manager Christine Goepfert says. “All we knew for sure was something had to be done or wolves would disappear from Isle Royale.”

Nature Out of Balance

Isle Royale National Park’s ecosystem became increasingly unbalanced as the wolf population declined and the number of moose skyrocketed because they were no longer preyed upon by wolves. A mere two wolves cannot keep the moose population in check, and now nearly 1,500 moose are rapidly consuming the park’s native vegetation.

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- SACRED LANDSCAPE SPARED
- ENDANGERED SPECIES LAST STAND?
- SPOILED PARKS REPORT



Daniel Hosie/iStock

ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

WHY SO FEW WOLVES?

A variety of factors have contributed to the number of gray wolves in Isle Royale National Park plummeting from more than 50 to just two, with climate change being the primary cause.

Isle Royale is located in Lake Superior approximately 15 miles from the mainland. Ice bridges that used to form for more than 50 days a year allowed wolves to migrate to and from the park. Over the last 20 years these bridges have been far less common and consistent. And this past year, solid ice bridges were only available for a total of seven days, effectively stranding the last two wolves on the island and preventing newcomers.



NPCA has long advocated to bring new wolves to Isle Royale National Park to protect the long-term survival of this iconic species.

2013

2015

2017

2018

NPCA brought together experts and community leaders to discuss the future of the wolves.

NPCA and members submitted hundreds of comments in favor of introducing wolves to the park.

NPCA continued to engage congressional offices and advocate for an introduction plan.

National Park Service released its final plan to introduce 20-30 wolves over a three-year period.

The complex, mutually beneficial relationship between wolves and moose is the subject of the world's longest-running predator-prey study. Now conducted by investigators from Michigan Technological University, the Isle Royale Wolf-Moose Project began in 1958.

Principle researcher Rolf Peterson has spent his entire professional career studying the two species' interactions in Isle Royale's isolated environment. Peterson's unmatched experience and expertise informs his conclusion on how to best restore balance to the Isle Royale ecosystem: "I've been on the record for

Because of the critical role wolves play at the park, NPCA supported an action plan that called for between 20 and 30 wolves with a wide genetic diversity to be introduced to the island over a period of three years. We were thrilled when the Park Service officially adopted that plan in June. And we stand ready to help make it a great species-recovery success starting as soon as September, when the first new wolves could be introduced to Isle Royale National Park.

NPCA's Christine Goepfert hailed the decision as, "proof that our Trustees for the Parks' advocacy makes a real difference for America's national parks. They stayed

good fit for the island. The ideal candidates are wolves from the Great Lakes region in areas with similar vegetation to Isle Royale and where they are accustomed to hunting moose.

The wolves will be captured using humane methods and carefully transported from the mainland via airplane, helicopter or boat. Each wolf will be radio collared so scientists can track their movements and progress forming packs in their new habitat.

Despite the challenge of safely capturing and transporting up to 30 wolves, NPCA remains confident that the National Park

John A. Vucetich



many years recommending new wolves be brought in. All the players have to be in place, and that includes top carnivores."

Time for Action

After considering input from NPCA members and a host of wildlife experts, the National Park Service developed four possible wolf management plans. Alternatives ranged from doing nothing while the last wolves disappeared, to introducing varying numbers of wolves to Isle Royale.

involved for more than six years by speaking up for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. We should all take pride in knowing that the right science-based choice was made."

Not Just Any Wolf Will Do

The National Park Service is working with the states of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, as well as Canada and several Native American Tribes, to ensure wolves captured and relocated to Isle Royale are a



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Service has done a lot of groundwork to ensure a sustainable future for Isle Royale wolves, moose, other wildlife and the entire park. We have put wolves on the comeback trail, and we won't quit until they are all the way back from the brink of extinction at this beautiful park.



John A. Vucetich

HISTORIC JAMESTOWN UPDATE

NPCA's fight to preserve historic Jamestown and other national park sites in southeastern Virginia suffered a setback in May. A federal district court denied NPCA's claims that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA) in issuing a CWA permit to Dominion Energy for construction of a massive power transmission line across the James River. Despite earlier acknowledging that NPCA "made a powerful argument on the merits" of its challenge to the Corps' permit process, the Court ultimately sided with the Corps and Dominion.

NPCA has appealed the decision. "We will continue to fight to protect one of our nation's most historic regions," NPCA President and CEO Theresa Pierno vows, "so that future generations can experience all this treasured place has to offer."

GORGEOUS SCENES LIKE THIS ALONG THE JAMES RIVER COULD SOON BE HISTORY.



JOMO333/iStock

President's Perspective

GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA IS ONE OF THE MANY COASTAL PARKS THREATENED BY PROPOSED OFFSHORE DRILLING — PAGE 6



Michael Falco

The reasons why we visit national parks are as varied and unique as the places themselves. We take in vast landscapes, like the lakes of Glacier National Park, seen nowhere else on earth. We learn about those who came before us, including one of North America's oldest cultures at Chaco Culture National Historical Park. And we visit national parks in hopes of seeing wildlife in their natural habitat.

When you see a wolf at dawn in Yellowstone's Lamar Valley, a black bear climbing a tree in the Great Smokies or a desert tortoise painting its lips green by feeding on flowers in Joshua Tree, you know you are witnessing something special. It's moments like these that can bring national parks alive. And this is why we must do everything we can to ensure national parks remain protected spaces for these animals.

This is why we, with the support of so many of you, fought to introduce more wolves to Isle Royale National Park, giving the population a chance to bounce back from near extinction on the island. Working with scientists, park managers, wilderness advocates and concerned citizens, it was clear this would be the best solution for the park, for the ecosystem and all who treasure it.

And this is why we continue to fight for wildlife that use national parks as safe havens. More than 500 species of plants and animals that are protected by the Endangered Species Act have habitat in our national parks. The Endangered Species Act works, and has saved more than 99 percent of species listed. NPCA's newly launched online tool provides a window into the endangered and threatened species that overlap with national parks across the country. The long-term protection of these animals and plants is vital to keeping our national parks thriving. And with dozens of legislative attacks on wildlife and wild lands, our resolve to defend them is stronger than ever.

Thank you for all you do to help protect our national parks — and all who call them home.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Theresa".

Theresa Pierno
President & CEO



Sacred Landscape Spared

The growing demand for oil and gas in northwestern New Mexico had the potential to impact the cultural and natural resources of Chaco Culture National Historical Park — including the quality of its world-renowned night skies. But as of March 2018, thanks to your support, Chaco has been spared of being marred by oil and gas leases that would have opened broad stretches of land surrounding the park to drilling and mining.

Heeding principled and vigorous opposition from NPCA Trustees for the Parks, area Tribal leaders and our other conservation partners, Secretary Zinke postponed an oil and gas lease sale planned for lands near Chaco Canyon. In an understatement of his own, Zinke acknowledged, “there have been some questions raised” regarding the proposed sale and promised to, “defer those leases until we do some cultural consultation.”

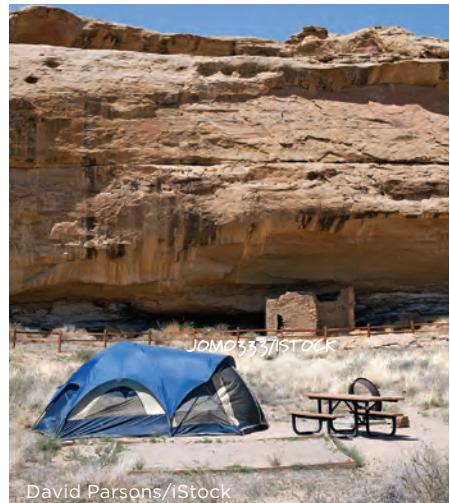
Filled with archaeological resources, sacred sites and a remarkable cultural history, Chaco was home to generations of Pueblo peoples. It is currently a place of religious activities for Pueblo tribes and the Navajo Nation. Accordingly, NPCA has long advocated for smart-from-the-start oil and

gas leasing in the Greater Chaco region in order to give local stakeholders a voice in how development occurs in the area.

NPCA New Mexico Program Manager and cultural anthropologist Ernie Atencio welcomed Zinke’s deferment of the leases as, “the right decision for Chaco Culture National Historical Park and the significant cultural resources it protects. We are pleased these sacred lands are not in imminent danger of becoming an island in a sea of energy development.”

Additional good news for land in and around Chaco Canyon — as well as all who want to leave the land well enough alone — followed Secretary Zinke’s announcement when US Senators Tom Udall (D-NM) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) introduced legislation to permanently withdraw the lands in question from further oil and gas development by the Bureau of Land Management. The Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act would ensure the protection of Chaco ruins and surrounding landscape against any future leasing or development of minerals owned by the federal government.

Establishing a permanent 10-mile buffer zone around Chaco Culture National



David Parsons/ISTOCK

Historical Park would prevent the need for NPCA to fight this conservation battle again and again if Secretary Zinke reverses course or as administrations change over the coming years.

Visit neca.org for updates on the status of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act and easy, effective ways to urge your elected representatives to support its passage.

TOP: CAMPING AT CHACO CANYON.
BELOW: TIME-LAPSE PHOTO OF
CASA RINCONADA.



STRENGTHEN NPCA AND SUPPORT THE NATIONAL PARKS

As a Trustee for the Parks, you are part of a special group of national park advocates that have stepped forward to make sure our parks are protected. With an annual gift of \$1,000 or more you can continue your membership in this dedicated community of park protectors.

As a valued Trustee for the Parks you will be invited to:

- Join NPCA program staff at events across the country, including our popular Speaker Series and specially planned park tours
- Participate in briefing calls with NPCA strategists on park-related policy and legislative issues

You will also receive:

- A subscription to *National Parks*, NPCA's award-winning magazine
- This quarterly Trustees for the Parks newsletter created especially for you
- Discounted ticket offers for select NPCA events
- Important and timely news about how we are putting your contribution to work for our parks
- Recognition in NPCA's annual report

WAYS TO GIVE:

- Send your gift using the envelope included in this issue.
- Give online at www.nPCA.org/tfpjoin.
- Stock gifts — Donate stock assets to help us preserve and protect the parks.
- Monthly installments — Make your gift in multiple payments by visiting www.nPCA.org/tfpmonthly.

For more information contact Erin Mezgar, Associate Director, Trustees for the Parks at 202.454.3370 or emezgar@nPCA.org.

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 Vonda Harrison, toll-free at 877.468.5775 or vharrison@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 select travel partners Off the Beaten Path for land-based journeys and UnCruise Adventures for boat-based journeys. Many tours are limited to 16 participants, with two guides. Please contact Jared Dial at 202.454.3305, travel@nPCA.org, or visit www.nPCA.org/travel.



ENDANGERED SPECIES LAST STAND?

Over 400 endangered animal and plant species still exist because they have refuge in national parks. How long that will remain true is an open question due to more than 75 bills and amendments in Congress that would weaken or wipe out key provisions of the Endangered Species Act.

NPCA is rallying opposition to that legislative assault through public education efforts that include compiling a list of the 10 national parks with the most endangered species. The complete list, along with actions you can take to ensure the survival of imperiled park flora and fauna, can be found at <https://esa.nPCA.org>.

ABOVE: EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK IS HOME TO FLORIDA PANTHERS, ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ENDANGERED MAMMALS. PHOTO BY LARRY W. RICHARDSON/USFWS

BETWEEN: GERANIUM ARBORETUM IS ONE OF FOUR GERANIUM SPECIES FOUND ONLY IN HAWAII'S HALEAKALA NATIONAL PARK. PHOTO BY FOREST & KIM STARR



ABOVE: ONLY 276 CALIFORNIA CONDORS ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THE WILD — INCLUDING IN GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK. PHOTO BY KOJIHIRANO/ISTOCK



SPOILED PARKS REPORT

People from across the country flock to America's coastal national parks during the summer months to relax on beautiful beaches, swim in crystal clear waters and view a wide array of marine wildlife. So it is an ideal time of year for public education efforts regarding threats to 68 national parks along coasts from Maine to Florida and California to Alaska.

That is why NPCA and our allies at the Natural Resources Defense Council kicked off the summer tourist season with the release of a special report, *Spoiled Parks: The Threat to our Coastal National Parks from Expanded Offshore Drilling*.

The report was in response to the administration's reckless proposal for leasing America's federal offshore waters for oil and gas drilling. This proposal is a radical departure from longstanding policy that would open every possible coast for drilling — including vast new areas in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and around Florida's and Alaska's coasts that haven't seen drilling in decades, if ever.

The administration's proposal was met with overwhelming bipartisan opposition. Tens of thousands of local businesses and hundreds of thousands of commercial fishing families who depend on clean coasts, 150 Members of the House of Representatives, 40 Senators and more than a dozen governors are among those who reject the administration's move to expand offshore drilling.

The proposal involves enormous risks. Offshore drilling could ruin fisheries, foul beaches, disrupt the migratory pathways of whales and dolphins, and exacerbate climate change, among other clear and present dangers.

Americans have repeatedly seen the kind of damage offshore drilling could cause to national parks.

- In 1969, a blowout of an offshore oil platform spilled 200,000 gallons of crude oil into California's Santa Barbara Channel, causing serious harm to Channel Islands National Park.
- In 1989, the Exxon Valdez tanker ran aground in Prince William Sound, spilling nearly 11 million gallons of oil and damaging national park sites including Kenai Fjords, Katmai and Aniakcha. Some of that oil remains on national park beaches to this day.
- The 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill leaked more than 171 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, impacting every major island in Gulf Islands National Seashore.

NPCA will fight against allowing something as dangerous, unpopular and damaging as offshore drilling to imperil America's coastal national parks. We have delivered



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copies of *Spoiled Parks* to Capitol Hill and generated important media coverage of it.

We also urge NPCA Trustees for the Parks, who helped make the report possible, to review it in total at n pca.org and share it with others who cherish national parks and might be inclined to prevent them from being spoiled.

 READ THE FULL REPORT AT:
[www.n pca.org/offshore](http://n pca.org/offshore)

The views expressed in this report are those of the National Parks Conservation Association and the Natural Resources Defense Council, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Park Service.

AMERICA'S COASTAL NATIONAL PARKS, FROM MAINE TO FLORIDA, CALIFORNIA TO ALASKA, COULD FACE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FROM THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSAL FOR OFFSHORE DRILLING.



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YOUR VOICE MATTERS



JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

TRUSTEES FOR THE PARKS SURVEY

I hope your summer activities are well underway and you have had a chance to visit one of our fantastic national parks.

As a Trustee for the Parks we value your opinion. That is why I'm asking you to reflect on your experience with National Parks Conservation Association and tell me a little bit about it. As a valued Trustee for the Parks, the information you share will help NPCA to become a more effective and responsive organization.

You can find the Trustees for the Parks survey at:
<https://parkb.it/tfp2018>

Thank you for taking the time to let us know how you feel and for your generous support of NPCA.

Sincerely,

Erin Mezgar
Associate Director, Trustees for the Parks



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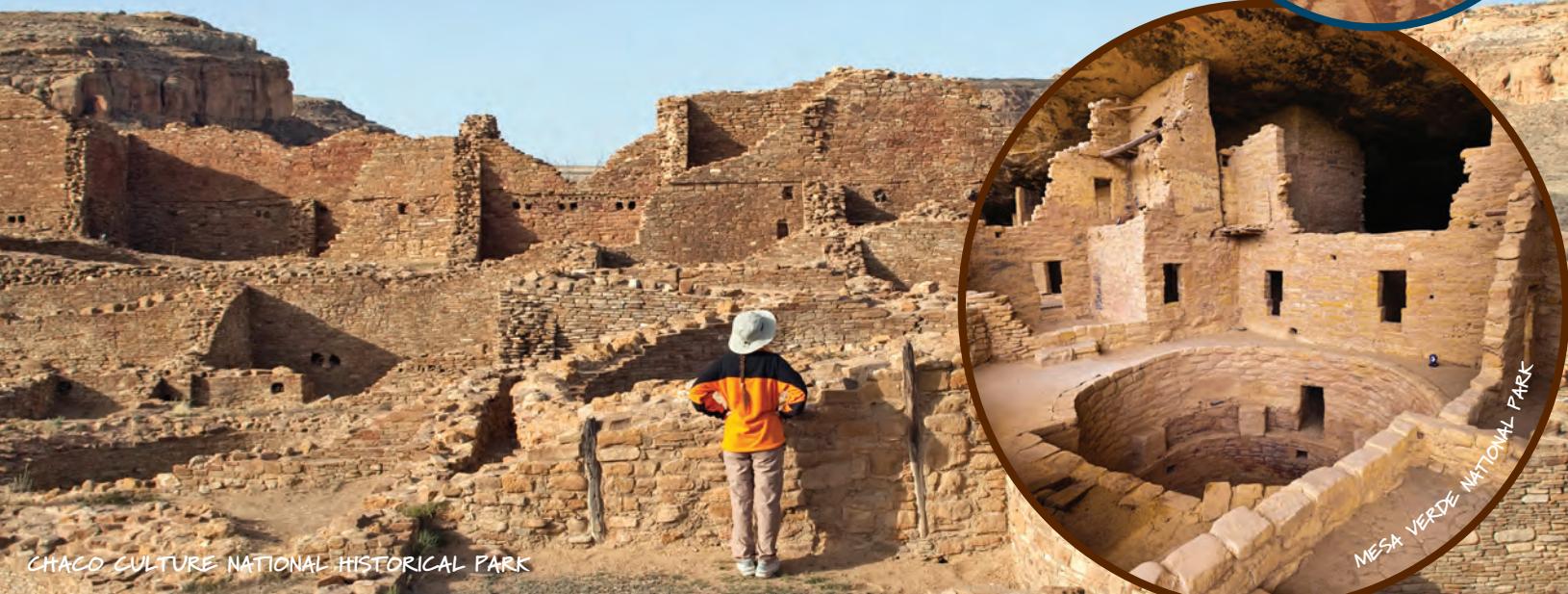
STEP BACK IN TIME, WAY BACK

Puebloan Mystery Tour Saturday October 13-Sunday October 21

This adventure, offered exclusively to NPCA Trustees for the Parks, will thrill and amaze you as you explore ancient civilizations' mysteries preserved within national parks of the Four Corners region of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah.

Your nine days of discovery will include hiking among ancient ruins, enjoying delicious campfire meals, and marveling at countless glittering stars against some of the world's darkest skies ... all in the company of expert guides, including our own New Mexico Director, Ernie Atencio.

Only a few spots remain. Contact Erin Mezgar at 202.454.3370 or emezgar@npca.org for details.



CHACO CULTURE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK