



# FIELDREPORT

Northeast Region • Winter 2020



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# FIELD REPORT

Winter 2020

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## Meet Sergio Moncada, NPCA's New Northeast Staff Member

**S**ergio Moncada joined our Northeast team last summer as our new northeast program manager. Working primarily on programs related to Stonewall National Monument and the parks of New Jersey and upstate New York, Sergio enjoys the variety of his work. Recently, he took some time to answer our questions.

**What is your role at NPCA?** I am a program manager for NPCA's Northeast region, and I am mainly tasked with growing support for three national park units: the 70,000-acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area; the 73.4-mile-long Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River; and Stonewall National Monument, the first park unit dedicated to honoring the story of LGBTQ Americans.

**How did you become interested in national parks?** I've been an avid hiker for more than a decade. Prior to living in NYC, I lived in Washington, D.C., and while there I would often make the trip to Shenandoah National Park and hike many of the trails there. When I moved to NYC six years ago, I was thrilled to learn about and hike many of the trails in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

**Do you have a favorite national park?** The nearly 2,200-mile Appalachian National Scenic Trail holds a dear place in my heart; I've hiked portions of it in Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Virginia. I have indelible memories of hikes with friends and encounters with the wildlife that inhabits the forest.



**Since you enjoy hiking at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, can you share any highlights from your adventures there?** On a recent hike near the Delaware Water Gap, I was startled by an eastern rat snake that was crossing the hiking trail. The snake and I locked eyes and, as I backed away and the snake slithered off to the side, we kept our eyes locked. But that one moment stayed with me. I immediately felt the forest come alive and felt myself humbled to be simply one of the denizens of the forest at that moment.

**What project are you most excited to get involved with at NPCA?** I'm super excited to help NPCA with its work on Stonewall National Monument. Continuing to develop the Stonewall site and also identifying other future sites that highlight America's civil rights history is an honor. It's time to tell these stories.

**Above:** Sergio Moncada ©Timothy Leonard | NPCA **Below:** Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area ©Jon Bilous | Dreamstime



## JOIN NPCA TODAY!

Help protect our national parks for future generations!

Contact our membership department at [npca@npca.org](mailto:npca@npca.org) or join online at [npca.org/give/join](https://npca.org/give/join). To join NPCA by phone, call us at 1.800.NAT.PARK (1.800.628.7275) between 9AM-5PM (ET), Monday-Friday.





## Clearing the Air at Polluted National Parks

**O**ur national parks protect the stories that define and unite us as a nation. They are the landscapes our ancestors cherished and where battles were fought for freedom and justice. But today, nearly every single one of them faces serious threats to their air, land, water and wildlife from air pollution and the effects of climate change. While most air pollution doesn't originate in national parks, it can travel hundreds of miles from its source, thereby affecting all parks—even remote ones—and distant communities.

In “Polluted Parks: How America is Failing to Protect Our National Parks, People and Planet from Air Pollution,” a May 2019 report published by NPCA, we analyzed a variety of data sources, relying heavily on National Park Service information, to evaluate the damage to 417 national park sites from air pollution. We found that 96 percent are plagued by significant air pollution problems. The report also noted that 85 percent of national parks have air that is unhealthy to breathe at times, and nearly 90 percent of parks suffer from haze pollution.

At the heart of these alarming numbers and trends are the park visitors, families, children, recreation enthusiasts, business owners and communities who have firsthand experience dealing with the effects of air and climate pollution. “Polluted Parks” features some of these stories, revealing that pollution significantly harms both people and our parks.

... today, nearly every single one of [our national parks] faces serious threats to their air, land, water and wildlife from air pollution and the effects of climate change.

Air pollution hurts community health, disproportionately affects people of color and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, drives up healthcare costs, and makes it harder for kids to learn and play and for adults to work. For parks, visitation drops by at least 8 percent when air pollution is high, influencing local economies.

The report also analyzed scientific studies and found that climate change is a significant concern for 80 percent of our national parks, including places like Acadia, Olympic and Yellowstone National Parks. These parks are experiencing extreme trends in temperature or precipitation, or early onset of spring.

Fortunately for our beloved parks, there are clear and feasible solutions that would critically reduce air pollution and help communities make a just transition to clean energy. NPCA advocates for policies at all levels of government that benefit our air, parks and climate. We defend bedrock clean air and climate laws and litigate as necessary to protect them. We also work to hold polluters and government agencies (such as the Environmental Protection Agency) accountable by identifying the sources of park pollution and advancing policy, technical and legal solutions for mitigating harm.

And, we empower people and communities to speak up against harmful policies and practices that place polluter interests above the good of the public.



“Polluted Parks” showcases how NPCA is tackling air pollution and climate change and highlights actions taken by the National Park Service.

The report's final pages outline advocacy actions that we can each take to improve the conditions at our national parks. Together, we can help clear the air.

**Top:** View of the Bubbles and Jordan Pond in winter at Acadia National Park © J.K. Putnam | Alamy

## Celebrate NPCA's Second Century on a Park Trip with NPCA's Travel Program

**W**hat better way to celebrate the start of NPCA's second century than to take part in one of NPCA's educational travel program trips to over 50 national parks around the country? Experiencing the parks firsthand, seeing NPCA's impact up close, and falling in love with the parks all over again are just a few of the reasons to pack your bags and join us on one of our small-group adventures.

For more than 20 years, NPCA has partnered with a handful of tour operators—including Off the Beaten Path and UnCruise Adventures—that specialize in custom trips to protected places. From American Samoa to Acadia, your journey will take you to some of the most iconic and well-known parks across the country. Your trip package includes expert guides, comfortable accommodations, meals, and transportation within the destination. All you have to do is get there.

“By traveling with NPCA, you will gain a deeper understanding of the significance of protecting these special places for future generations,” says Jared Dial, NPCA's travel program manager. “On many trips, participants will hear from local NPCA partners and staff about ongoing projects and ways to advocate on behalf of our parks and public lands.”

“Fun, educational and inspiring, NPCA's travel program trips are a fantastic way to experience national parks. On our small-group trip to Acadia National Park last fall, I was truly impressed by how much we packed into every day—beautiful sights,



**Top Left and Right:** Enjoying some hiking and kayaking at Acadia and New Brunswick, Canada ©Timothy Leonard **Bottom Left and Right:** NPCA Tour groups at Olympic National Park in Washington and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming ©NPCA **Below:** Stonewall National Monument rangers and students ©Timothy Leonard | NPCA

delicious food, time getting to know our amazing company. I made friendships with other park lovers that still last to this day,” said Timothy Leonard, NPCA northeast staff member.

Check out our 2020 travel program destinations at [www.npca.org/trips](http://www.npca.org/trips), and read about some of our trips on the back page of this report. See you in the parks!

### NPCA @ Work

National Park Service rangers speak to students from local GSA clubs at Stonewall National Monument. NPCA facilitated visits to Stonewall for nearly 400 NYC public school students during the months of May and October. This June will mark the 50th anniversary of NYC's first Pride March; if you'd like to be involved in NPCA's Pride events, please let us know by emailing [northeast@npca.org](mailto:northeast@npca.org). To learn more about our work at Stonewall National Monument, please visit [www.npca.org/stonewall](http://www.npca.org/stonewall)







Ellis Island ©Peace Portal | Alamy



## Temptations and Fun at NPCA's Centennial Gala at Ellis Island

**N**PCA's centennial year in 2019 provided the perfect opportunity to celebrate our organization's incredible history. Our events highlighted one-hundred years of programs and victories, as well as the dedication of our staff, partners, supporters, and members on behalf of the national parks. In October, nearly 400 members of NPCA's extended family gathered at Ellis Island for our Centennial Gala. Recognizing the contributions of the Roosevelt and Quimby/St. Clair families and featuring a fantastic performance by The Temptations, the evening was a true celebration to honor and commemorate the amazing contributions from so many in support of our parks and public lands. Learn more about our centennial year and help support NPCA's next 100 years of advocacy at <https://www.npca.org/campaigns/a-century-of-impact>



Photos by Kevin J. McCormick Photography, Group Photos, Inc





# Travel with Us

Join us on one of our small-group educational adventures, where you'll hit the trails or explore via small-ship cruise. Land tours are limited to just 16 participants plus two naturalist guides and include meals, accommodations and on-trip transportation.



## Zion and Beyond

April–May 2020

September–October 2020

Travel under the regular tourist radar as we explore the less-traveled trails, vistas and cultural sites of three iconic Southwestern national park sites: Bryce Canyon National Park, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and Zion National Park.



## Seasons of Yosemite

April–June 2020

September–October 2020

The largest trees in the world and picture-perfect Yosemite Valley reign on this journey that transcends time and retraces the steps that inspired naturalist and philosopher, John Muir.



## Joshua Tree and Death Valley

March 2020 • November 2020

Explore the startling, surreal and sublime landscapes of Joshua Tree and Death Valley as you head deep into the heart of the Mojave Desert.

Learn more about the full lineup of NPCA trips at [npca.org/trips](http://npca.org/trips).

**Top Left:** Hiker overlooking Zion Canyon ©Tobinakehurst | Dreamstime **Middle:** Yosemite waterfall reflection in water ©Pettys | Dreamstime **Right:** Monzogranite rock formations in Joshua Tree National Park, CA. ©Claire White | Dreamstime **Save the Date** ©Ian Shive Photography **Bottom:** Landscape in Death Valley National Park, California ©Grzegorz Kielbasa | Dreamstime **Front Cover:** Dawn over the Atlantic Ocean in winter as seen from near Schooner Head on Maine's Acadia National Park. ©Jerry and Marcy Monkman | Eco Photography | Alamy

Join us for a special NPCA event.

Tuesday, April 7, 2020  
Reception at 6:15 pm / Program at 7pm

Featured Speaker: Ian Shive  
Award-Winning National Park  
Photographer and Filmmaker

The Explorers Club  
46 East 70th Street New  
York, NY 10021

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