



FIELDREPORT

Northeast Region • Fall 2022

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FIELD REPORT

FALL 2022

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A New Visitor Center for Stonewall National Monument

This past June, NPCA celebrated the groundbreaking of a Visitor Center for Stonewall National Monument. When it opens in 2024, the space will host educational programs and exhibits as well as offices and shelter during inclement weather for park rangers. Visitor services will include a souvenir shop, restrooms, and a place to obtain the site's official national park stamp.

The Visitor Center will occupy the same space where the famous 1969 uprising took place, next door to the current Stonewall

Inn bar. In partnership with Pride Live (the organization spearheading the Visitor Center's establishment), NPCA will continue to advise NPS on programming and interpretation at the new Center.

In 2022, NPCA has brought, and continues to bring, several hundred visitors to Stonewall National Monument for youth tours, volunteer opportunities and other programs. To get involved, contact Timothy Leonard at tleonard@npca.org and visit www.stonewallvisitorcenter.org to learn more about this project.



Cover: Much-needed rain throughout the northeast made for colorful fall foliage and fast-flowing creeks, like this one at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. ©Songquan Deng | Alamy **Above:** The Stonewall Inn bar at Stonewall National Monument ©sep120 | Stockimo | Alamy



JOIN NPCA!

Become a member of National Parks Conservation Association and help protect and enhance your national parks. Follow the link to the right.

Left: New York's General Grant National Memorial, better known as Grant's Tomb ©Scott Jones | Dreamstime



Victory! The Inflation Reduction Act is a Win for National Parks



On August 16, President Joe Biden enacted a major piece of legislation—the **Inflation Reduction Act of 2022**—that allocates nearly \$1 billion to the National Park Service (NPS) to hire more staff and better adapt our parks’ natural, cultural and historic resources to a changing climate. NPCA and thousands of our members sent letters, made calls and traveled to Washington, DC, to urge elected officials to boost renewable energy and help make our parks more resilient to the effects of climate change. For national parks, the Inflation Reduction Act provides:

Above: Herring River at Cape Cod National Seashore ©Ken Wiedemann | Istock **Bottom Left:** Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) singing at Gateway National Recreation Area John Anderson | Dreamstime • **Middle:** Federal Hall National Memorial ©Sean Pavone | Dreamstime • **Right:** Sandy Hook Lighthouse, Gateway National Recreation Area ©James Tarabocchia | Dreamstime

- \$500 million to hire new park staff, including scientists, preservationists and other specialists with expertise in protecting park landscapes, structures, artifacts and other resources from a range of threats.
- \$250 million for conservation and habitat restoration projects on lands administered by the Park Service and Bureau of Land Management.
- \$250 million for the protection and resiliency of natural, cultural and historical resources administered by the Park Service and Bureau of Land Management, such as historic buildings and artifacts.
- \$200 million for Park Service deferred maintenance projects.
- \$250 million for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including \$125 million to support endangered species recovery efforts in areas around parks.
- \$2.6 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to restore and protect coastal communities and marine habitats, allowing communities near parks to prepare for extreme storms and other changing climate conditions.

THANK YOU

On behalf of NPCA's 1.6 million members and supporters across the country, we thank our elected officials whose support made this landmark legislation possible. If you're a park lover and want to get more involved in park advocacy efforts, follow the link to the right to receive updates on future advocacy actions from NPCA.



TWO YEARS LATER

The Great American Outdoors Act in the Northeast

In July 2020, NPCA celebrated a historic moment for our national parks with the passage of the **Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA)**, the largest investment made in our national parks and public lands in more than 50 years. This crucial funding—up to \$6.65 billion over five years—is fixing our national parks’ crumbling roads, decaying buildings, outdated water systems and many more repair needs. After decades of hard work by NPCA and thousands of park supporters who advocated for the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, these efforts are finally being realized.

“Our national parks continue to unite us, helping bridge political divides just like they did two years ago with the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act. We worked tirelessly with our congressional champions and many partners and communities across the country, to pass this law to make our prized public lands and waters a priority—and together, our perseverance paid off,” NPCA President and CEO Theresa Pierno stated at the time of the bill’s signing.

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Here are some of the ways the Great American Outdoors Act is making a difference in our northeast national parks.

Boston National Historical Park

The Dorchester Heights Monument, which opened in 1902 and commemorates the British evacuation of Boston on March 17, 1776 during the Revolutionary War, received funding to address the deteriorated conditions of its iconic 115-foot tower and the 5-acre Thomas Park that surrounds it. The renovations will allow for a safer, more easily accessible visitor experience to this site, a location that proved critical in our nation’s fight for independence.



Top Left: Cannon on the battlefield at Saratoga National Historical Park ©Andre Jenny | Alamy **Top Right:** Dorchester Heights in South Boston, MA ©Jon Bilous | Dreamstime **Below:** Aerial view of Ellis Island with the Statue of Liberty in the background ©lofoto | Dreamstime



Saratoga National Historical Park

In upstate New York, the well-known Saratoga Battlefield is undergoing major upgrades to its interpretive exhibits. Improved accessibility and updated signage along the Tour Road will accompany improvements to the park’s parking areas and pathways at all tour stops throughout the site. By replacing old exhibits, NPS will greatly enhance the educational value of the visitor experience.

Statue of Liberty National Monument

Standing tall in New York’s harbor, the Statue of Liberty received Great American Outdoors Act funding to repair the Statue’s structural base. This project will protect the

foundations of the Statue of Liberty and its pedestal from storm surges and rising tides and improve access by resurfacing the walkway to allow for better drainage, prevent future damage and provide safer conditions for visitors.

At nearby Ellis Island, the Great American Outdoors Act is allowing for a rehabilitation of exterior components of the Main Immigration Building, including exterior window finishes, replacing deteriorated clerestory windows, and replacing failing skylights, making the entire structure safer for its 2M+ annual visitors and more weather resistant.



UPDATE

Salmon Farm Threat to Acadia National Park

For the past two years, NPCA has been fighting a massive, proposed salmon farm on shores of Acadia National Park. But this past April, Maine's Department of Marine Resources terminated the lease applications of the developer, American Aquafarms, due to an insufficient source of Atlantic Salmon eggs. American Aquafarms filed an appeal in the State Superior Court opposing the state's decision to terminate their applications. Since then, the developers withdrew their appeal and instead, are focusing their efforts on reapplying with a new proposal. NPCA continues to work with Frenchman Bay United, Friends of Acadia and other local coalition partners to prevent industrial fish farming in Frenchman Bay to protect Acadia National Park for generations to come.

The farm would have used experimental technology never before permitted in the U.S. to raise 66 million pounds of salmon a

year, discharging more than 4 billion gallons of untreated wastewater into Frenchman Bay every day in the process. The proposed offshore farm would have been just 2,000 feet from Acadia, threatening the park's healthy waters, fragile coastal ecosystems, bountiful wildlife, and the visitor experience. NPCA staff launched a collaborative, cross-departmental effort to fight back, engaging staff with expertise on Capitol Hill, and water conservation and wildlife protection.

NPCA worked with on-the-ground organizers and local nonprofits and businesses in Maine to oppose the project, raise awareness of potential impacts to park resources and mobilize supporters to voice their concerns and put pressure on decisionmakers to stop the project. NPCA met with leasing, permitting and oversight agencies in Maine and at the federal level. We hosted public webinars, engaged new advocates and educated Members of Congress on the

irreparable harm a fish farm of this scale would do to Acadia National Park and the surrounding land and waters.

While the project is currently paused, we anticipate new applications will be filed for a similar industrial salmon farm in Frenchman Bay. Not long after the state terminated their lease applications, American Aquafarms purchased a \$3.6 million on-land facility intended to become a salmon hatchery and fish processing plant, symbolizing the fight is not over. NPCA remains committed and vigilant in our mission to protect Acadia National Park, its resources and surrounding communities now and in the future. **To learn more, follow this link:**



Top: View from North Bubble Trail, Acadia National Park
©John Bilous | Dreamstime

Bill Tracking in Congress

NPCA advocates for federal legislation that would benefit our country's national parks and the environment. Here are three northeast national park bills that we are advocating for, encouraging Congress to pass before the end of the 117th legislature.

Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument Access Act (S.4784)

This bipartisan legislation would authorize an expansion of the park's boundaries and provide better visitor access by connecting the park with the nearby town of Millinocket, ME and other major roadways. It aims to increase recreational access and help protect more forests, wildlife and waterways while giving the National Park Service permission to use buildings outside the National Monument boundary for administrative and visitor services. Thank you, U.S. Senators

Angus King and Susan Collins, for sponsoring this legislation.

New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act (H.R.4677)

This bill establishes the New York-New Jersey Watershed Restoration Program to coordinate restoration and protection of the NY-NJ Harbor and its watersheds—including the Hudson, Mohawk, Passaic, Raritan, Hackensack and Bronx rivers—by offering competitive matching grants and technical assistance to partners who carry out activities that are essential to the recovery of this region's water, wildlife, and communities. We offer our thanks to U.S. Rep. Paul Tonko (NY-20) for introducing this bill.

Acadia Workforce Housing Bill (S.4114)
A lack of affordable housing has contributed

to workforce shortages in Acadia National Park and surrounding towns, creating significant hardships for local businesses and National Park Service employees who need to live nearby. This bill removes hurdles and allows for an undeveloped parcel of land to be developed for affordable community workforce housing, including for permanent and seasonal staff at Acadia National Park. Thank you to our U.S. Senators from Maine, Angus King and Susan Collins, for also sponsoring this bill.

TAKE ACTION!

Call or write to your member of Congress and express your support for these three bills. Find your elected officials by visiting www.usa.gov/elected-officials.



Connecting Communities to Parks

This past October, NPCA continued its partnership with Latino Outdoors through the sponsorship of a day-long hike at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Joined by members of New Jersey's chapter of Outdoor Afro, we ultimately brought over 40 hikers along the Tumbling Waters trail that day. The outing proved to be a powerful experience for participants; being on the trail with their fellow Latino community members created an added significance to the event. Latino Outdoors is our primary collaborator in the northeast on efforts to more deeply engage Latino park visitors in national park advocacy.

Below: Participants from Latino Outdoors and Outdoor Afro enjoy a beautiful fall day at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Photos by Timothy Leonard | NPCA and Ellis Donohue | NPS

