



INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Preparing New Jersey Parks for the Future

Photo: Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

National parks are experiencing more record-setting floods, fires, droughts and disease each year. Irreplaceable objects of cultural significance are at risk of disappearing, and the natural world, which draws millions of visitors who contribute significantly to local economies, is changing.

Work has begun to help parks prepare for the impacts from climate change they cannot avoid. The Inflation Reduction Act is one important source of funding that helps parks plan for hotter temperatures and extreme storms. Currently 100% of the park service's IRA funds have been planned, scheduled and announced across 78 projects. However, nearly twice as many projects were proposed than could be funded with the park service's IRA funding.

These investments support parks and secure the natural heritage of these treasured landscapes for future park visitors. They leverage collaborative approaches through partnerships with youth, conservation organizations and Indigenous communities and work to foster community engagement while ensuring these resources exist for future generations.

Control Invasive Species in order to Prevent Catastrophic Forest Loss in Northeastern Parks

NJ NPS Sites: Morristown National Historical Park

Project Type: Restoration-Invasive Species

Investment: \$4.2M

The federally endangered long-eared bat species relies on Northeastern forests to provide critical food and habitat. However, Northeastern forests not only serve as home to endangered bats but as essential ecosystems that store carbon, prevent flooding, and improve the well-being of local communities. Inflation Reduction Act funding supports improving ecological health on 7,000 acres to promote forest ecosystem resilience. Extreme storm events, invasive shrubs, pests, and the impacts of climate change threaten these vital ecosystems. By removing invasive species and planting native seedlings that are adaptive to changing conditions, this project supports revitalizing resilient and healthy forests, creating landscapes that can better withstand the impacts of climate change, and creating healthy outdoor landscapes for plants, animals, and people to enjoy for generations.

Develop Collaborative Landscape Design for Appalachia

NJ NPS Sites: *Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area*

Project Type: *Resilience-Enhance Resiliency of NPS Ecosystems and Restoration-Restore Priority Imperiled Systems*

Investment: \$3.0M

Climate change poses a significant threat to the ecological health of the Appalachian Mountains, a critical region for biodiversity and species migration. To address these challenges, the National Park Service (NPS) has allocated \$3,000,000 from the Inflation Reduction Act to the Appalachia Keystone Initiative, a collaborative effort to preserve and restore the region's ecological integrity. The project will develop a detailed conservation plan focused on habitat restoration, reclaiming abandoned mine lands, and improving connectivity for species migration, particularly as they move northward in response to climate change. By addressing habitat degradation and supporting sustainable land use practices, this initiative will enhance climate resilience, improve water quality, and safeguard both human and environmental health in the Appalachian region.

Implement Landscape-Scale Restoration of Eastern Grasslands to Improve Ecosystem Health

NJ NPS Sites: *Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Gateway National Recreation Area*

Project Type: *Restoration-Restore Priority Imperiled Systems*

Investment: \$6M

With over 90% of U.S. grasslands converted into other land uses, grasslands are the most imperiled ecosystem in North America. Native grasslands support key wildlife species, including at-risk populations of grassland birds and pollinators. Additionally, native grasslands are crucial for climate change vulnerability as they are vital for maintaining soil conditions, water quality, and sequestering carbon. Through this project, funded by the Inflation Reduction Act, the National Park Service will restore up to 4,000 acres of agricultural fields and degraded lands across 37 parks in 15 states – three of which reside in New Jersey. Floyd Bennett Field, a part of the Gateway National Recreation area, received funding for a new grasslands management plan to redefine ecological targets specifically working to protect ground-nesting birds. Working in partnership with Austin Peay State University's Southeastern Grasslands Institute to prepare sites by removing invasive plants, develop custom seed mixes tailored to local conditions, and keep climate change in mind at each site.



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