



## *America's National Parks*

THEY NEED YOU TO MAKE IT THROUGH

# the next 100 years



National Parks Conservation Association®  
Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

Who will  
save them?

*You will,*

through your campaign investment in NPCA.



Proposed uranium mine will start digging right about here.

Threat stopped by National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and its ardent supporters... for now.

“ The national parks spring from an idea as uniquely American as the Declaration of Independence and just as radical: that the most precious portions of the land should be preserved, not for royalty or the rich, but for everyone, for all time. ”

Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan  
*The National Parks: America's Best Idea*





**Slated for development: A 78-acre privately held parcel inside the serene and sacred Valley Forge National Historical Park.**

*Win-win solution reached after years of struggle, in which NPCA played a crucial advocacy role with Congress, the courts, and the Department of the Interior. The result: a land swap that preserves intact and undeveloped forever the entire Continental Army encampment. In exchange for giving up this "inholding," its owner, the proposed American Revolution Center museum, received a National Park Service site in Philadelphia, near the heavily visited Independence Hall.*

# NPCA needs your help now to deal with immediate threats to the U.S. National Parks.

*You are invited to join **Renewing Our Promise ... The Second Century Campaign for the National Parks.***

We ask you to join us in a campaign of epic scope and critical urgency ... a campaign to safeguard "America's Best Idea," our national parks, for another century.

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson made it official by creating the National Park Service (NPS) to preserve for public enjoyment a system of parks that included stunning natural wonders as well as historical and cultural treasures.

The last 100 years offered many challenges.

However, that first century of struggle saw nothing like the complex threats our national parks now face — and will continue to face in coming decades — as global climate change, our nation's growing population, encroaching development, and pressures for the exploitation of natural resources all take their toll.

### **Cause for Despair? Absolutely Not.**

NPCA was founded in 1919, just three years after the NPS. For more than 90 years, our organization has served as a citizen's group — a voice outside of the federal government, uninfluenced by political forces, that could ensure that these special places would be protected for the future.

Today, as America's leading independent advocate for our nation's nearly 400 parks and historic sites, NPCA has spent a decade researching what needs to be done to meet future challenges.

From that research, it is clear that our beloved national parks are at a crossroads. One road leads toward degradation and despair. The other road leads to restoration and hope.

That's where NPCA stands: on the road to restoration and hope. Building on our past successes, we've developed a strong plan that will defend our treasured parks against a full spectrum of threats ... and restore them to robust health.

We have the knowledge. We have the experience. And we have an unmatched record of persistence and success. But we need one more factor to ensure victory: **your participation.**

Please join us in this campaign.

Together we will make the second century for "America's Best Idea" even better than the first.



# We stand at a crossroads.

We can accept that the multiplying threats to America's almost 400 national park units are too many, too complex, or too large for anyone to deal with successfully.

Or NPCA, with your help in this campaign — and in collaboration with property owners; with local, state, and federal governments; with scientists; with other advocacy organizations; and of course with the National Park Service itself — can ensure that our innovative, determined, win-win solutions will create for the parks' nearly 300 million annual visitors the kind of memorable and deeply moving experiences they will have nowhere else on earth.

Threats we are currently dealing with include ...

## **A Century of Underfunding at Odds with the Parks' Immense Popularity**

National parks, the historian and writer Wallace Stegner once said, are "the best idea we've ever had." But they could also be called "America's Most Chronically Underfunded Idea."

We Americans love our national parks, as every poll shows. Despite their immense popularity and world renown, America's national parks receive no more than one-tenth of one percent of the federal budget.

This chronic underfunding has never been resolved. As the number of motoring Americans grew, the number of parks in the system grew, the population grew, and the number of environmental problems grew, but increases in the National Park System budget never kept pace.

The stress is showing in a lack of facilities, a lack of rangers, new security problems, and transportation headaches.

Decades of insufficient budgets threaten the future of the parks. They already suffer from an \$8.5-billion backlog of deferred maintenance projects including leaky roofs, aging exhibits, and dirty restrooms.

The year 2009 saw the biggest increase in visitation to U.S. national parks in 15 years: 285.4 million people visited, 10 million more than the year before. They came for recreation, education, inspiration, to experience awe and the embrace of nature, to absorb the perspectives of history and America's diverse culture.

Funding for ongoing management and infrastructure maintenance and repair, though, remains flat. This means, among other things, fewer park rangers to talk with children around the campfire.

## **Visitor Centers that Date to 1966**

Mission 66 was a federal program in the national parks intended to replace 1930s cramped, rugged facilities with expansive and modern structures. These new park buildings accommodated the baby boomers who rode in the family station wagon with their parents and in turn transported their children to the parks, substantially increasing visitation to America's national parks.

The Mission 66 program ran for a decade, from 1956 to 1966, and built more than 100 new architect-designed visitor centers (not to mention 884 new, much needed "comfort stations"). The Gateway Arch in St. Louis, designed by Eero Saarinen in 1949, had been left unfinished. Mission 66 funding completed it. The Blue Ridge Parkway was another treasure completed by Mission 66. But the program ended nearly 50 years ago. Park infrastructure has a lot of catching up to do.

**A growing problem: Mexican marijuana farms inside the parks. Drug traffickers from Mexico have found perfect land for growing quality pot, in remote corners of California's national parks. Yosemite's chief ranger calls it a "fast-moving threat."**

*In both 2009 and 2010, Yosemite rangers uncovered large marijuana farms inside the park's borders, complete with hose lines, fertilizers, trash, and armed workers who had entered the country illegally. Hikers who unwittingly wander into the concealed fields have sometimes found themselves running for their lives.*

*And it's not Yosemite's problem alone. Understaffed parks make relatively easy targets, while the illicit profits from trespassing are handsome. A July 2010 raid by law enforcement rangers inside Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks destroyed a marijuana plantation worth an estimated \$32.5 million.*



“The national parks are the crown jewels of this country, yet we are letting some of them tarnish. As a nation, we can do much better.”

Thomas C. Kiernan  
President, NPCA

### Inappropriate Commercial Exploitation of National Treasures

National parks are major economic engines in their communities, contributing more than \$4 locally for every dollar the federal government spends. But some types of nearby commercial development simply don't fit.

One million visitors come each year to walk the hallowed grounds of Gettysburg National Military Park, the site of the U.S. Civil War's bloodiest battle and a turning point of the war. The gaming industry would like a shot at those crowds.

NPCA defeated the first proposed slots casino, just down the road from the battlefield. Now there's a new casino proposal, the second in just four years.

### Bad Neighbors

Some of the Gulf Coast's finest, most visited national parks, including reserves and

beaches, woke up to a poisonous new neighbor on April 20, 2010, when BP's Deepwater Horizon drilling rig exploded, ultimately dumping more than 200 million gallons of crude oil into the ecosystem.

Expect more human-made calamities as the race for energy accelerates.

Since 2008, more than 30 coal-fired power plants have been built or begun in the United States, the largest expansion of that industry in two decades. Experts say this expansion is the equivalent of putting 22 million cars on the road — spewing carbon dioxide emissions, the leading culprit behind global warming. Polluted haze has slashed visibility in Great Smoky Mountains National Park to less than 3 miles during the summer months; in 1940, it was 93 miles.

America's national parks are “canaries in a coal mine” for the impact of climate change on natural environments — and they're struggling.



### Climate Change

What will Joshua Tree National Park be without Joshua trees? The trees live in the desert, but they need freezing temperatures to reproduce. They may not survive the seven-degree increase in temperature projected for the region in the next 50–60 years.

What will Glacier National Park be without glaciers? In the 1800s, the park had an estimated 150 active glaciers. Today there are only 25. Scientists studying them predict all the glaciers will be gone as early as 2030, if current weather patterns persist.

No one organization is going to “fix” climate change. But NPCA is a key player in the coalition of scientists, policymakers, and advocacy groups at work on strategies to help the parks adapt to these climate changes — before it's too late.



## Invasive Species Forcing Natives into Extinction

Species extinction is typically attributed to human activity.

But almost half the extinction of America's native species can be traced to foreign invaders — plants and animals from other lands that come in and take over.



For example, Burmese pythons, imported as pets and released into the wild in Florida, now compete to dominate the food chain in the Everglades. These aliens destabilize the long-established but delicately balanced native habitats.

Endangered birds and even alligators in the Everglades National Park are on a long and growing list of native American animals and plants now threatened with extinction due to invading life-forms from other lands.

In 1998, researchers estimated that 46 percent of the 1,259 plants and animals on the federal endangered species list were jeopardized in part by competing invaders.

A recent government survey found that more than half our National Parks already have “serious problems posed by invasive plant species.”

“Whether the future will generate new threats to America’s best idea is not in question. The only question is whether the future will provide a fresh supply of park champions as a counterbalance. Our children and our children’s children will need them.”

**Dayton Duncan**

“The Best Day.” *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*



*Thanks to the donor-supported work of the National Parks Conservation Association, "where the buffalo roam" is now, once again, more than just a song lyric.*

**Under NPCA leadership, with many partners and years of patient work, many of America's wild bison can once again leave Yellowstone to follow their traditional migratory routes — without the risk of being shot.**

# What is the National Parks Conservation Association?

Judge us by our works. Here are just a few.

## **Savoring Victory on the Flathead: 35 Years in the Making**

The Flathead River headwaters lie in the shadow of the Canadian Rockies and flow pristinely across the U.S. border, through the Crown of the Continent and Glacier National Park.

This majestic landscape boasts the highest density of carnivores in North America, countless niche habitats, spectacular scenery — and, beneath the surface, coal, gold, and gas deposits.

It's been a 35-year battle fending off the mining proposals that threaten these pristine rivers, the abundant wildlife, the aquifer, and the livelihoods of area ranchers and farmers.

NPCA has been a leader in the battle for the Flathead. Now we can declare a preliminary victory.

During the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia's premier and Montana's governor co-signed a cross-border Memorandum of Understanding prohibiting mining and drilling in the headwaters of the Flathead.

NPCA can claim many similar victories. But please note: these victories don't come easy. They take time. They require excellent science. And they do not happen without uncommon coalition-building skills and leadership — all NPCA strengths.

## **What is NPCA?**

- NPCA is an independent nonprofit advocacy group.
- NPCA is the only citizen-supported, science-based, nonpartisan group devoted to protecting the health and advancing the welfare of America's National Park System.
- We are 500,000 supporters strong, including members and online advocates.
- NPCA is creative, aggressive, and lean.
- NPCA works very well with others. We prefer collaboration to confrontation (although we will sue when we have to).
- We have a Washington office for our policy work. We have 23 regional and field offices, for putting boots on the ground and getting things done at the local and state levels.
- NPCA is not a government agency — although we collaborate closely and effectively on solutions with the National Park Service and other federal and state agencies.



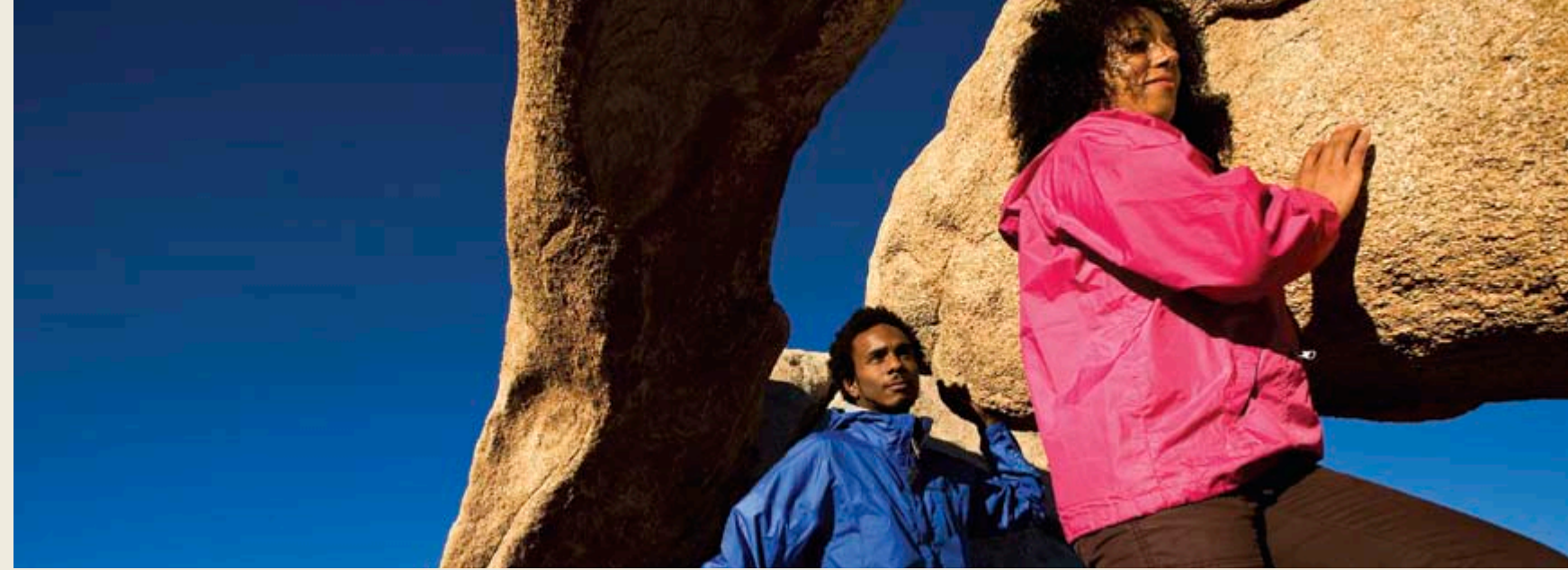
**Expanding from Washington Watchdog to Major Problem-solver in the Field**

From its founding in 1919, NPCA has acted as a watchdog and advocate, identifying problems. Our biggest presence was in Washington, where Congress and the White House set policies and budgets for the National Park Service.

“But we wanted to do more,” says Tom Kiernan, NPCA president. “We wanted to work with others to solve problems.”

In 2000, NPCA had just six field offices. Now we have 23 — and countless local partners, including land owners adjacent to the parks. We fight on principle when we have to, but we prefer to make progress by making partners and friends.

Thanks in part to NPCA’s robust expansion into the field, where much of the work gets done, hundreds of new park improvement projects are now underway. Among them: restoring coral reefs in Biscayne National Park and establishing fence-free migration routes for Yellowstone pronghorn herds.



**Establishing the Centers for Park Management and Park Research®**

A decade ago, NPCA recruited and dispatched a small army of MBAs from top schools to help more than 200 national parks across the country write their first-ever business plans.

That was the start. Today, NPCA’s Center for Park Management (CPM) works closely with the National Park Service to train its park managers in best practices and leadership. CPM brings an outstanding roster of experts to advise and help the parks overcome their challenges and take full advantage of their opportunities.

That’s management. On the research side, NPCA’s Center for Park Research conducted the first-ever comprehensive, independent analyses of the state of America’s national parks — as unique natural, historical, and cultural entities.

NPCA’s research and analysis continues. Our website includes more than 50 “State of the Parks” investigations of NPS units from Appomattox Court House National Historical Park (which scored “fair,” 68 out of 100, in 2008) to Zion National Park. These NPCA reports serve as an early warning, an inventory of damage, a report card on current health, and a survey of future prospects.

**Promoting Conservation and the Great Outdoors**

We are also involved in long-range planning from Washington. In 2008, we convened an independent National Parks Second Century Commission, led by former senators Howard H. Baker, Jr. and J. Bennett Johnston, Jr., to develop a 21st-Century vision for the national parks. Less than a year later, President Barack Obama signed a Presidential Memorandum in April 2010 establishing the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, to promote conservation and to reconnect Americans with the outdoors.

“He is a better citizen with a keener appreciation of the privilege of living here who has toured the national parks.”

Stephen T. Mather, First Director of the National Park Service and NPCA Founder

**Keeping National Park Policy True to its Founding Principles**

In August 2005, we faced what seemed like an insurmountable challenge: how to stop a proposed rewrite of the National Park Service’s Management Policies, the blueprint that provides day-to-day guidance for park managers. A few lawmakers and Administration leaders wanted to loosen the rules.

The founding language of our national parks emphasizes protecting the parks for future generations.

The proposed new policies went in the opposite direction, changing the emphasis to recreation.

The new policies proposed removing restraints on snowmobiles, jet skis, and other motorized invaders. Air, noise, and water pollution had already disfigured iconic, much-visited parks like Yellowstone, the Great Smoky Mountains, and the Cape Cod National Seashore. The proposed rules also made it much

harder for park managers to defend the wilderness against development.

NPCA organized a massive public opinion campaign to stop the rewrite. The campaign was remarkably successful. More than 50,000 public comments from across the country convinced the National Park Service not only to restore the original, pro-preservation policies but to actually strengthen them.





# Future projects funded by NPCA's Renewing Our Promise Campaign

## The Campaign

**Renewing Our Promise:**  
The Second Century Campaign  
for the National Parks

**Campaign Goal:** \$125 million  
**Deadline:** 2012

**“It is our turn to make our own gift outright to those who will come after us... I want to be as faithful to my grandchildren's generation as Old Faithful has been to ours.”**

Gerald R. Ford, 39<sup>th</sup> President of the United States and Former Park Ranger

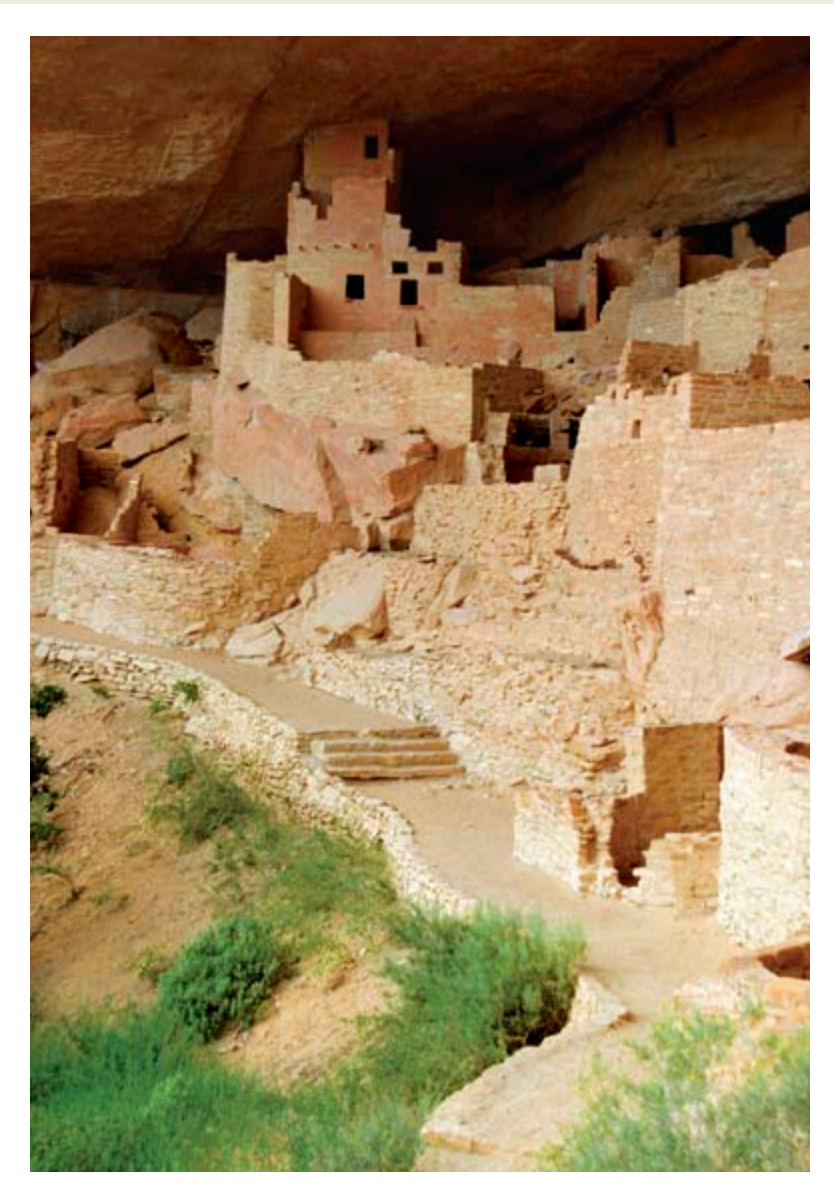
### Protect and Enhance Our Natural and Cultural Treasures

- Increase public awareness of critical issues affecting conservation in and around our national parks, including the idea that parks can serve as early warning systems of environmental problems that extend beyond park borders.
- Seek Congressional approval for at least six new parks or park boundary adjustments.
- Promote “landscape conservation cooperatives” that unite federal agencies, states, local governments, nonprofits, and private landowners in designing strategic regional conservation plans.
- Improve federal transportation policies to support safe wildlife-crossing facilities and incorporate consideration of existing wildlife corridors in federally supported highway projects.
- Conduct science-based research on the multiplying threats facing our park system and recommend solutions to protect natural resources and wildlife from external threats, fragmentation, and climate change.
- Reduce the impact of rising temperatures, water scarcity, disease, invasive species; and other threats to park lands, plants, and animals.



### Help the National Park Service Thrive

- Secure full funding for the National Park Service, which accounts for less than one-tenth of one percent of the federal budget yet generates more than \$4 in value to the public for every tax dollar invested by the government.
- Ensure offshore oil and gas revenues, deposited in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), are available for their intended purpose: buying open space from willing sellers and developing recreational places available for all citizens. Over the last decade, Congress has appropriated on average one-third the annual amount authorized for LWCF programs. Some years the appropriation has been less than 20 percent.
- Encourage the Administration to include private-public funding partnerships as a strategy to augment overall support.
- Help the National Park Service recruit and retain a more diverse and skilled work force, which would result in a more effective agency.
- Offer business expertise to park managers, helping today's superintendents handle a host of pressing problems and instilling business acumen in the next generation of national park leaders.



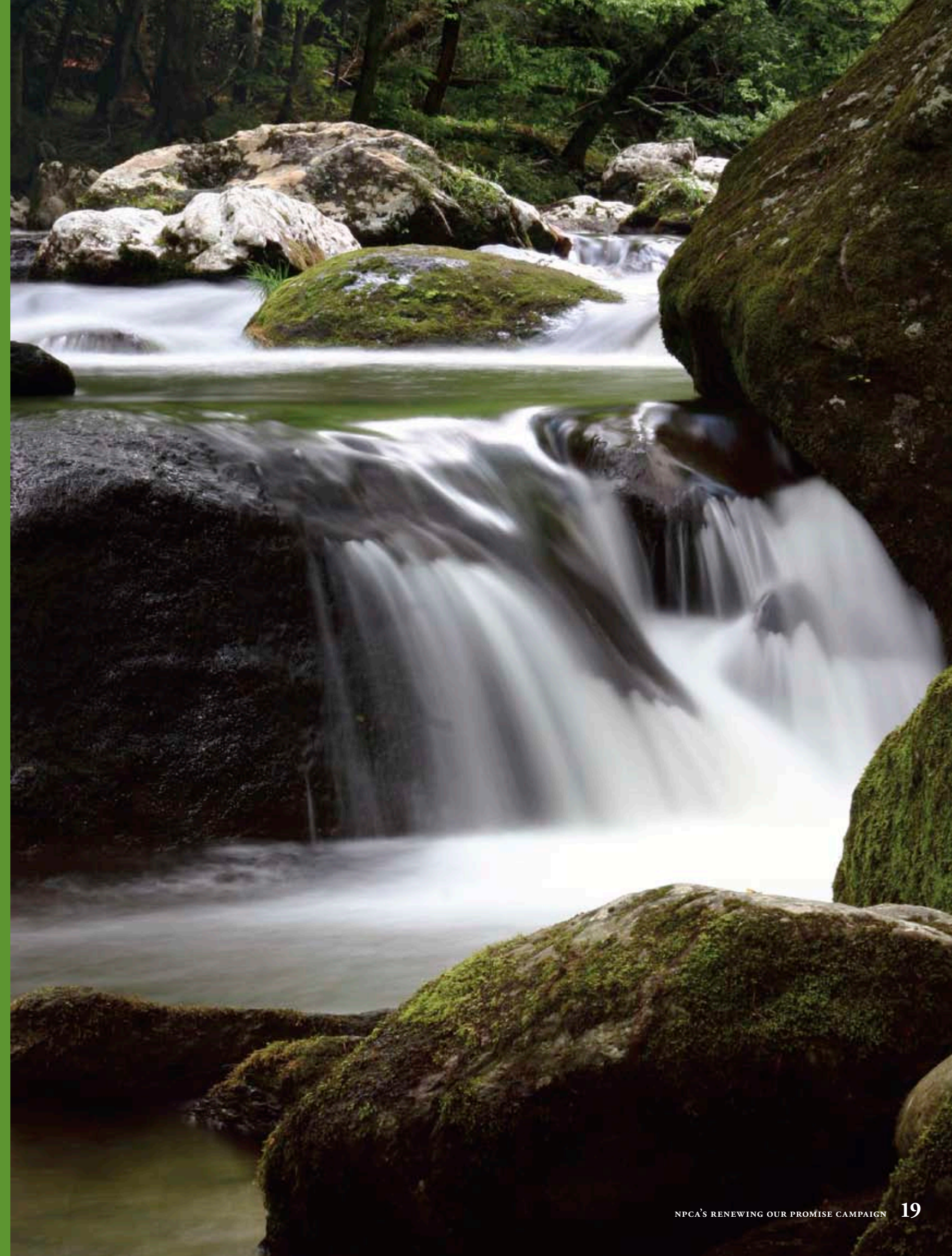
### Connect People and Parks

- Launch a cross-country campaign to create national momentum for the Centennial anniversary of the Park Service in 2016.
- Use social media and online presence for expanding NPCA's audience and building a national community of park supporters and stewards.
- Establish relationships and better cooperation among allies and partners on behalf of parks, recognizing their importance to the economy and quality of life, as well as their role in supporting other national priorities.

“ As the most seasoned, best equipped, and strongest voice for our parks, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is determined to renew the promise made nearly 100 years ago to protect the places where our country grew up, the landscapes and wildlife that have challenged explorers and inspired poets, and the battlefields where so many died in the noble effort to preserve the American ideals of freedom and democracy. It’s time to write the next chapter for our beloved National Park System, and NPCA stands ready — with your help — to lead the way. ”

**Thomas C. Kiernan**

*President, NPCA*



You can ensure  
that promise  
is kept.

Join NPCA's Renewing Our Promise Campaign.

*We Need You.*

RENEWING OUR  
**Promise**

The Second Century Campaign for the National Parks



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RENEWING OUR PROMISE CAMPAIGN

*Making sure that America's "Best Idea"  
remains a remarkable gift  
to the world into the next century,  
with your help.*



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Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

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