



Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Massachusetts

Partnerships: An Enhanced Connection

Philanthropy and partnerships are cherished traditions of the National Park Service.

Public support for America's national parks is a tradition as old as the parks themselves. Even before the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, citizens were stepping forward to protect special places that exemplify America's national heritage. Today, the National Park Service has thousands of partnerships ranging from relationships with local organizations, to joint research projects with universities, to nationwide support through the National Park Foundation.

Inspired by the nation's environment, history and culture, many of our partners seek ways of sharing responsibility for the national parks.

The benefits of working in partnerships often extend into the future, because people who participate as partners, donors, and volunteers connect strongly with the parks and commit themselves to long-term stewardship.

Partnerships have become a way to make a difference both within and beyond park boundaries. Public generosity makes possible a range of programs, services, and facilities far beyond what the government could achieve without such help. Some parks and programs operate extensively through partnerships.

Five Ways You Can Get Involved In Your National Parks

There are many ways to help.

Experience Your America™

Visit a park, learn about our nation's natural and cultural heritage, and enjoy!

Visit www.nps.gov/findapark

Become a VIP

Volunteer your time and expertise to a park by joining the Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) Program.

Visit www.nps.gov/volunteer

Make a Donation

Provide donations to support the parks. The National Park Foundation is the congressionally chartered national charitable partner of the National Park Service.

Visit www.nationalparks.org

Do Your Part for Your Favorite Park(s)

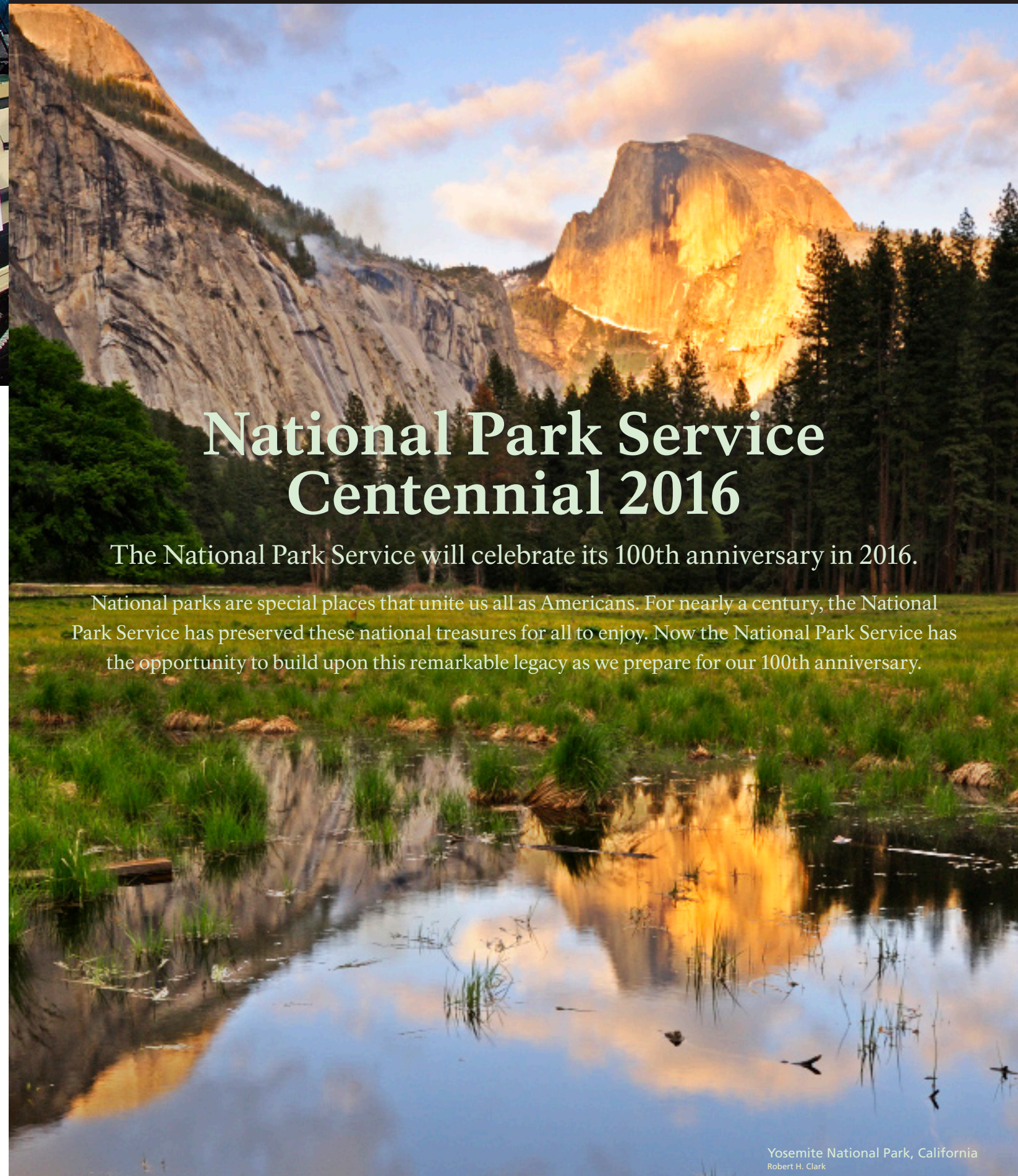
Learn how to assist your favorite park(s). Visit the park's webpage and click on "SUPPORT YOUR PARK."

For example, Big Bend National Park:
www.nps.gov/bibe/supportyourpark

Learn more about the NPS Centennial

Follow and support the NPS Centennial Initiative.

Visit www.nps.gov/2016



National Park Service Centennial 2016

The National Park Service will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2016.

National parks are special places that unite us all as Americans. For nearly a century, the National Park Service has preserved these national treasures for all to enjoy. Now the National Park Service has the opportunity to build upon this remarkable legacy as we prepare for our 100th anniversary.

The National Park Service . . .

Centennial 2016. It's more than a celebration. It's an investment in the future.

From now until the centennial in 2016, the National Park Service (NPS) will expand programs and complete projects at parks across the country to save America's special places and prepare them for a second century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

We will accomplish this work using additional operational funding from Congress and by matching federal dollars with private donations. Read on to learn about the National Park Service, the type of programs and projects we will focus on, and how you can join us in this historic effort.



Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho

The Honorable James Bryce, former British Ambassador to the United States, said that national parks "are the best idea America ever had."

While the first national park, Yellowstone, was established in 1872, the National Park Service was not created until 1916. When the agency began, there were 37 parks. Today, the system has grown to 391 parks that preserve natural and cultural sites across the country.

People from around the world visit national parks to experience America's story, marvel at the natural wonders, and discover history. Famous places like Yosemite, the Statue of Liberty, and Gettysburg are treasures, but so too are the hundreds of lesser known gems. The NPS proudly serves as stewards of America's special places to benefit people today and tomorrow.

But we do much more. We help America's communities identify and restore historic buildings. We help partners design and manage long distance hiking trails and protect their rivers and streams. We study the life cycle of plants and animals. We award grants to improve state and local parks. We encourage and support physical fitness. We even help turn outdated military posts and old government buildings into newly productive community assets.

Our Future. The Challenges of a Second Century.

As the world continues to change and grow, new trends will shape our society and make demands on park resources. The National Park Service recognizes the challenges ahead:

Changing Demographics We live in a constantly changing world with a growing and diverse population. The NPS will invite and welcome new populations of visitors in the coming century.

Changing Planet Changing climate, weather patterns, sea level, wildlife communities, and regional landscapes will require science-based adaptive strategies to preserve our nation's natural heritage.

Population Migration As urban and suburban development increases, national parks will become increasingly important for providing open space and a place to escape from urbanization.

Re-connecting Children to the Outdoors As the connection with nature is diminishing for younger generations, national parks must seek to re-engage our children and get them excited about the values and experiences afforded in the outdoors.

A Wired America Technology is an ever increasing part of our daily lives. New forms of technology can be incorporated into education programs and recreational opportunities in the parks. Modern media can be the bridge to connect parks with a new generation of visitors.

Did you know? The NPS has:

275 million visitors per year

172,000 volunteers

84 million acres of land

81,000 education programs

68,561 archeological sites

A Vision for the Future

The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service provides the agency an unprecedented opportunity to increase public awareness of national parks and ensure their preservation for future generations. As we move into our second century, the National Park Service will focus on five centennial goals:

Stewardship

Lead America and the world in preserving and restoring treasured resources.

- Rehabilitate nationally significant historic buildings.
- Restore native habitat by controlling invasive species and reintroducing native plant and animal species.
- Complete inventories for priority cultural resources.
- Improve the natural resources in parks by measuring the vital signs of ecosystems.

Environmental Leadership

Demonstrate environmental leadership to the nation by showcasing sustainable practices and inspiring an environmental conscience.

- Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness.
- Increase use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.
- Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.
- Ensure that new park facilities achieve at least the silver rating equivalent of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental and Design (LEED) standards.

Recreational Experience

Ensure that national parks are superior recreational destinations, where visitors have fun, explore nature and history, find inspiration, and improve health and wellness.

- Increase visitation to lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people discover parks.
- Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails, including trails accessible to those with special needs.
- Increase the number of visitors who attend park ranger-facilitated educational programs.

Education

Foster exceptional learning opportunities that connect people with parks.

- Increase visitor satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks.
- Enroll an additional two million youth in the Junior Ranger Program.
- Increase the number of web visits to www.nps.gov by using advanced interactive features that attract young people.
- Expand cooperation with educators to develop curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Professional Excellence

Demonstrate professional excellence worthy of the treasures entrusted to its care.

- Meet diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.
- Attain the highest employee satisfaction rating of all federal agencies.
- Establish a structured professional development curriculum to provide park managers with superior leadership skills and the best business practices.



Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio