

2024 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Indiana Dunes National Park, IN - 4.81 acres preserved in 2020



OUR MISSION:

WE PRESERVE PARKS
TODAY AND CREATE PARK
STEWARDS FOR TOMORROW

OUR VISION:

EVERYONE EXPERIENCES
THE ENDLESS
POSSIBILITIES OF OUR
NATION'S PARKS



BOARD MEMBER PERSPECTIVE

When I retired from the National Park Service (NPS) in 2021, I had a list of things I wanted to explore after 30+ years as a nonprofit and governmental conservation and environmental protection lawyer. I also had a list of things I wasn't going to do: no legal work, no real estate work, no environmental advocacy, and absolutely no board of directors positions!

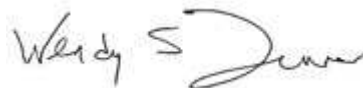
What I didn't realize was that you can explore new things without making a huge pivot, just by expanding how you look at things and choosing new people to partner with, while using the lessons and knowledge gained in your work life to chart new frontiers.

A little over two years ago, I joined National Park Trust as a volunteer Fellow, providing input and strategic thinking based on my 11 1/2 years advising on conservation real estate transactions with NPS's Washington Support office and, before that, at The Nature Conservancy.

As a Fellow, I discovered that the Park Trust has a very special partnership with the NPS – with the ability to move more quickly than most other NPS land conservation partners, and a rare willingness to buy and hold property for NPS as a “bridge” to protect threatened lands while the government moves through its own approval process. The Park Trust is also creative and inventive and – to adapt a line from one of my favorite high school television shows – has the willingness “to boldly go where no other conservation organization is

willing to go.” This Star Trek moment was vividly demonstrated by their recent partnership with Cape Hatteras National Seashore, when, alone among potential nonprofit partners contacted by NPS, the Park Trust stepped in to help NPS with appraisals that enabled NPS to acquire several houses in danger of falling into the ocean. Without this acquisition, the Cape Hatteras shoreline faced the likelihood of a 20-mile stretch of sewage and debris that would disrupt sensitive sea turtle nesting habitat and visitor safety.

This willingness to embrace creative strategies and provide help when and where it is most needed illustrates the unique flexibility and vision of the Park Trust's Land and Park Preservation Committee, and fabulous staff. Despite my pre-retirement ideas about the “wills and won'ts” in retirement, I was intrigued by the opportunity to do something significant as an NPS partner. So, when the Park Trust recently asked me to join the Board, I said, “I will!” I'm so proud to serve as a board member for this wonderfully imaginative and dedicated can-do organization that gets things done for the environment, for land conservation, and for NPS and its natural and cultural resources and visitors. Thank you, National Park Trust, for giving me a new mission – and the best group of people in the world to work with in carrying it out!



Wendy S. Dinner

“National Park Trust is creative and inventive and – to adapt a line from one of my favorite high school television shows – has the willingness ‘to boldly go where no other conservation organization is willing to go.’”

Photo credit: Carla Mattix



Wendy, pictured above with her husband, Phil, at Nambé Falls Recreation Area, NM, joined the board first as a Leadership Fellow in 2022, and was then elected to the Board of Trustees in 2024. She serves as the chair of the board's Land and Park Preservation Committee.

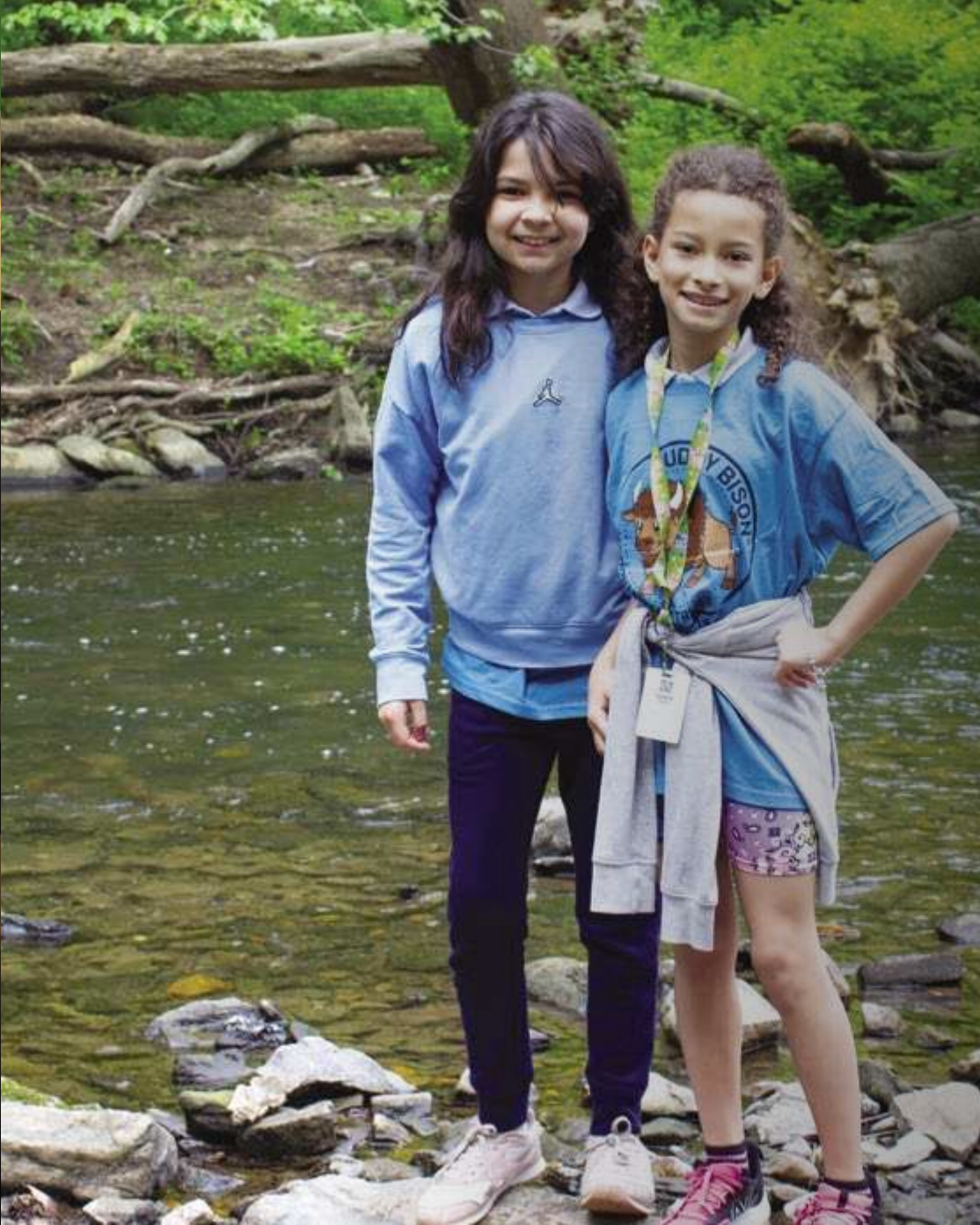
ABOUT NATIONAL PARK TRUST

ACQUIRING THE MISSING PIECES OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS

For more than 41 years, we have responded to the National Park Service's (NPS) critical need to protect and expand our national parks. These unique places preserve our country's history and culture, as well as our breathtaking landscapes, natural

resources, and ecosystems. However, many of these precious resources remain unprotected on privately owned land located within and adjacent to park boundaries. **They are the missing pieces of our National Park System.** Thanks to our supporters, since 1983,

we have responded to requests from NPS, providing real estate expertise and resources to help acquire numerous parcels of land and water to **expand 56 national park units.** The need for our help continues.



CULTIVATING NEW GENERATIONS OF PARK STEWARDS

Millions of people enjoy our nation's parks every year, but many families, especially those in under-resourced communities, face challenges visiting them.

We have addressed this challenge through our youth and family initiatives, including our nationally recognized Buddy Bison, Military Families, and College Ambassador Programs. The health of our parks will depend on generations of stewards who will not only enjoy them but also care for them.

Last year, thanks to our many partners and generous supporters, **we connected more than 100,000 individuals** from under-resourced communities in rural, suburban, and urban areas to our public lands and waters.

With your continued support, we can help even more students and families engage with the great outdoors.

We believe that our public parks, lands, and waters should be cared for, enjoyed by, and preserved by all for current and future generations.

OUR IMPACT

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, KS - park established, with 10,894 acres preserved in 1994

Thanks to our donors and partners, our programs continue to help the National Park Service when they call on us, seeking our expertise and support in preserving iconic landscapes, pristine waters, and important historical sites. As a result, since 1983, 56 national park units have been expanded in 31 states, Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

PARK PRESERVATION SINCE 1983:

72

PROJECTS COMPLETED
EXPANDING 56
NATIONAL PARK UNITS

47

ICONIC LANDSCAPES
& WILDLANDS
PROTECTED

31

HISTORICAL &
CULTURAL SITES
PROTECTED

43

PARKS EXPANDED
WITH GREATER PUBLIC
ACCESS

Since 2009, our environmental education programs evolved from a handful of Buddy Bison Schools in the Washington, D.C. area to a national portfolio of Youth and Family Programs that span 45 states and U.S. territories.

We currently support 99 Buddy Bison elementary and middle schools, 23 colleges and universities, and approximately 250 military families across the country.

We also award grants to hundreds of Title I schools in under-resourced communities, serving pre-K through 12th graders, and manage and administer outdoor engagement grants for several national partners, including the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Hydro Flask, and OXO.

OUR 2024 IMPACT FOR YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS:

102,204

PARTICIPANTS

485

SCHOOLS AND
NONPROFITS SUPPORTED

1,300

PARK TRIPS
FUNDED

\$745k+

GRANT MONEY AWARDED TO
SCHOOLS AND NON-PROFITS

PARK PROJECTS

YUCCA HOUSE NATIONAL MONUMENT, CO

In May, the NPS announced the significant expansion of the Yucca House National Monument in Montezuma Valley, CO – an important milestone in preserving the park’s cultural significance and archeological integrity. We played a key role in facilitating a complex, decade-long process that enabled generous local neighbors Bernard and Nancy Karwick to donate a 160-acre parcel to the park, resulting in a sixfold increase in the lands protected by the monument.

Home to the Ancestral Puebloan people between 1150 and 1300 A.D., the Yucca House Pueblo encompasses an ancient community of an estimated 600 rooms surrounding a life-giving spring that was used for drinking, making mud mortar, and irrigating crops. This expansion further strengthens the preservation of this site and allows opportunities to improve visitor access to the monument.



Scan this code
to learn more.

“Nancy and I are honored to contribute to the expansion of Yucca House National Monument, a place of cultural and historical significance... National Park Trust’s expertise and dedication in collaboration with the National Park Service to overcome the boundary challenges ensured that this important site is now protected for future generations.”

– Bernard Karwick

“This land acquisition protects important viewsheds, improves the recreational experience, and protects habitat in a popular section of the Appalachian Trail in Northern Virginia. We appreciate the assistance of the National Park Trust for its critical role and assistance to make this possible.”

– Ed Clark, Superintendent, Appalachian National Scenic Trail



Scan this code
to learn more.

APPALACHIAN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL – MORGAN’S MILL, VA

In July, we supported the National Park Service in acquiring a 128-acre parcel of land along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in Virginia. This collaborative effort marks a significant milestone in preserving the scenic beauty and ecological integrity of one of America’s most cherished hiking trails. This climate-resilient property faced immediate threats from potential development, but NPS was not able to meet the owner’s timetable for selling the land.

We executed a strategic plan that included negotiations with the property owners, followed by appraisal and environmental site assessments of the property. Using funds from our Treasure Forever Revolving Fund, we purchased the parcel in 2022, stewarding the property until the NPS could purchase the land from us 19 months later. Those dollars were returned to our revolving fund, where they are currently being used for ongoing national park projects.

YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

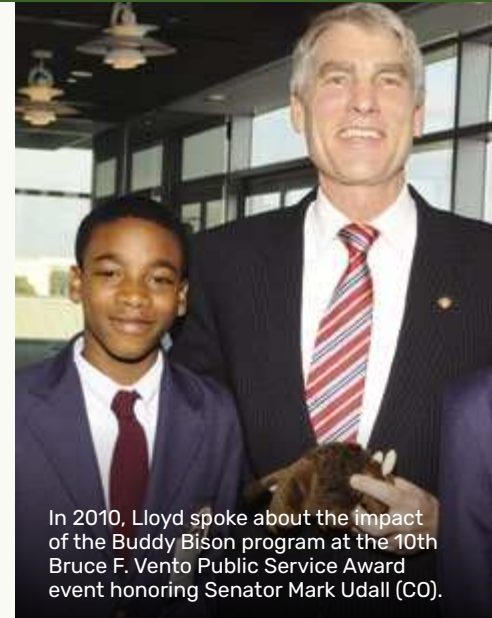
BUDDY BISON SCHOOL PROGRAM

How do you create park stewards? One student at a time! Lloyd Meeks' first outdoor adventure with us came as a 7th-grade student at St. Ignatius Loyola Academy in Baltimore, MD. His school was one of the first we welcomed into our Buddy Bison School Program in 2009. His experiences on our park trips nurtured his love of nature and sparked a passion for educating others, leading to a career in outdoor education.

“Without those first experiences... in the Buddy Bison Program, I would not have had so many doors opened for me to lead me to where I am now. Because of this, I now have a career in the environmental field.”

Today, Lloyd works in shark conservation and uses his marine animal expertise to expand students' knowledge of the environment and their role in protecting it. “Kids sometimes ask me, ‘How can I do what you do one day?’ I feel empowered to tell them that they sit where I once sat and that they can change the world.”

Thanks to generous donor support, in 2024, our Buddy Bison School Program supported 272 trips for 99 schools in 25 states and Washington D.C. These experiences impacted over 15,000 students, inspiring a new generation of park stewards.



In 2010, Lloyd spoke about the impact of the Buddy Bison program at the 10th Bruce F. Vento Public Service Award event honoring Senator Mark Udall (CO).



Lloyd worked with local leaders to advocate for the establishment of Warkwick Street Park in 2012. Lloyd is pictured here with Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at the park's rededication.



In 2024, Lloyd taught Hendly Elementary School students about sea urchins, sea stars, and other marine organisms through hands-on experiences.

COLLEGE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Our College Ambassador Program empowers student leaders across the country to introduce their peers to the benefits of the great outdoors. In our fourth year of this program, we expanded to 46 ambassadors representing 23 colleges and universities. During the 2023–2024 school year, more than 1,000 students participated in 49 outings where they paddled, hiked, fished, camped, biked, rock climbed, and completed stewardship projects including trail cleanups.

College Ambassadors, Lauren and Jesse, from Georgetown University, led a group of students on an unforgettable trip to Shenandoah National Park (pictured right). For some, it was their first time camping and a unique opportunity to hike scenic trails, connect with park rangers, and make new friends.



Georgetown University at Shenandoah National Park, VA



Kids to Parks Day Grant recipient Parkland Middle School at Hueco Tanks State Park & Historic Site, TX.

GRANTS PROGRAMS

Throughout 2024, we awarded 230 grants totaling \$749,000 to schools and non-profits connecting kids and families to outdoor spaces. These grants provided opportunities for more than 74,500 participants to explore our nation's public lands and waters.

We work with a variety of partners, including National Park Service, Hydro Flask, OXO, and Edison International to administer and support their grant programs, which allows us to engage tens of thousands of new park enthusiasts.



MILITARY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We are committed to creating robust outdoor experiences for a broad range of military communities – including actively serving personnel, Gold Star Families, survivors, veterans, caregivers, and their loved ones – to support their physical and mental health by connecting them with nature.

Thanks to generous support from the National Park Service, National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, USAA, and other corporate and foundation partners, our program reached nearly 900 individuals from 250 families through 29 outdoor events in 2024.

The Hescoxs, an Army National Guard veteran family from Fresno, CA whose father experienced a traumatic brain injury and PTSD after two Iraq deployments, joined other military families for a healing day of fishing off the coast of California at Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (top left).

“We don’t always take the time to decompress, to relax, to have fun together, and the fishing trip gave us that.”

– Rebekah Hescoc,
Army National Guard
military spouse



The Hescoc family



Scan this code to learn more.



USAA STEPS UP SO MILITARY FAMILIES CAN STEP OUT

This year we welcomed USAA as our newest Military Family Programs sponsor.

For more than 100 years, helping members of the military community and their families be more resilient has been at the core of USAA's purpose. In our first year with USAA, we worked together to provide young military families with outdoor experiences to improve their health and wellness, with a specific focus on mental health and wellbeing.

The generous support from USAA allowed us to fund six excursions, including a weekend canoeing, hiking, and camping trip at Big Bend National Park in Texas for families stationed at Fort Bliss, and an unforgettable afternoon for local Air Force and Space Force families at Red Rock Canyon in Colorado. Additional trips during the year included a ten-mile cycling trip exploring San Antonio's Historic Missions (TX), fishing at Flower Garden Banks Marine Sanctuary (TX), hiking at Rocky Mountain National Park (CO), and camping in Great Sand Dunes National Park (CO).

“The work of National Park Trust is so important to our communities, and provides enriching opportunities and builds life-long love for our natural environment. As advocates for mental health and wellbeing, we’re so happy that we’re able to help provide these outdoor experiences to our military members and their families.”

– Justin Schmitt, Assistant Vice President of Corporate Responsibility, USAA



Scan the QR Code to read about the Big Bend National Park trip experienced by military families.



Sand sledding in Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO



Rock climbing at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, NV



USAA volunteers assist military families at Big Bend National Park, TX

RECOGNIZING PARK CHAMPIONS



Senator Angus S. King, Jr. (left) with Board Chair Scott Stone

24TH BRUCE F. VENTO PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Senator Angus S. King, Jr. (I-ME)

In June, we honored Senator Angus King, Jr. of Maine, with the Bruce F. Vento Award for his life's work to protect our national parks and public lands. Highlights from his five decades of contributions in conservation include co-sponsorship of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act in 2019, which was pivotal in protecting public lands by securing permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Additionally, he championed the Restore Our Parks Act which became part of the Great American Outdoors Act and provides \$6.5 billion over five years to address the backlog of maintenance projects at our national park units.

The award honors the memory and legacy of Congressman Bruce F. Vento (MN, 4th District), a champion of our national parks and chair of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands from 1985 to 1994.

WE WELCOMED THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS TO THE PARK TRUST FAMILY

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USAA
San Antonio, TX



Wendy Dinner
National Park Service (Retired)
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Russell Goldstein
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Scottsdale, AZ

ADVISORY BOARD



AI Roker with Executive Director Grace Lee on the set of the TODAY show.

AMERICAN PARK EXPERIENCE AWARD

AI Roker

In May, we honored AI Roker with our American Park Experience Award live from Studio 1A on NBC's TODAY show in New York City.

This national award celebrates an individual or group that has made extraordinary efforts to enhance the awareness and appreciation of our nation's parks, public lands, and waters.

Roker, a 14-time Emmy Award-winning journalist for his work as a TODAY co-host, was recognized for his passion for and dedication to our parks, as demonstrated through his nearly three decades of impactful storytelling on TODAY. Roker's frequent spotlights on our national parks has inspired viewers of all ages and backgrounds to appreciate, explore, and protect our cherished treasures.



Jim Vail (center) with school administrator Glorianna Estela (left) and Executive Director Grace Lee at Lake Katherine, IL.

NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Jim Vail

Each year, we recognize an educator who has significantly impacted their students' understanding of the natural world and the importance of protecting these resources.

In April, Jim Vail, a 4th-grade teacher at Hammond Elementary, IL was honored for his dedication as a lead Buddy Bison teacher for the past nine years. During this time, he spearheaded student trips to Grove National Historic Landmark, Lake Katherine Nature Center, Indiana Dunes State Park, and Indiana Dunes National Park.

Vail has also embraced various educational initiatives, including virtual excursions with hands-on activities in the classroom. He consistently inspires his students to become enthusiastic stewards of the environment.

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With gratitude for your support, we are honored to recognize the following generous donors who supported our mission and programs with a gift of \$100 or more during our 2024 fiscal year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024). We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you find an error, please contact Dolores McDonagh at dolores@parktrust.org.

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TREASURE FOREVER FUND

Our Treasure Forever Fund (TFF), a revolving resource totaling more than \$1 million, supports our land conservation efforts. Established in 2019, the TFF allows us to respond to time-sensitive acquisition requests from the National Park Service since often they are not able to move quickly to meet the seller's timeline. The funds are returned to the TFF after NPS purchases the land from us.

Since its establishment, our TFF has enabled the successful acquisition of park lands valued at more than \$1.6 million, expanding five national park units including Lassen Volcanic National Park in California, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in Texas, and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in Virginia.

We are grateful to the 74 visionary supporters of our TFF, with special thanks to the leadership and generosity of our Founding Members who made commitments of \$100,000 or more to launch the fund in 2019:

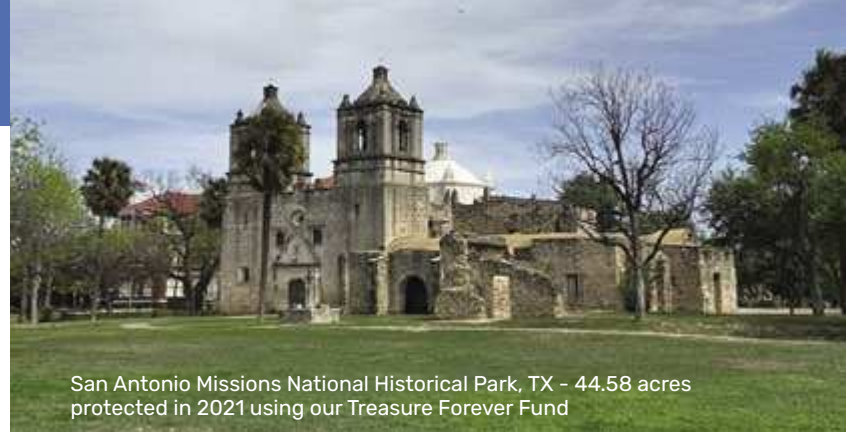
TREASURE FOREVER FUND FOUNDING MEMBERS

Bill and Lynn Brownell	Kevin and Kendra Seth
John Graham and Elizabeth Ulmer	Mark Stitzer
Rod and Ann Gualtieri	

Help grow our Treasure Forever Fund. Many of our land projects are cases of “buy and hold,” where we acquire land from private owners and steward the property until the National Park Service (NPS) can take ownership. This process can take a year or more, tying up our revolving funds that could be used for other projects. Can you help us expand the fund to \$1.5 million? This will allow us to say “yes!” more often when NPS asks for our help.

Your gift will have a significant impact on our ability to acquire the “missing pieces” of our national parks. You will be protecting important plant and wildlife habitats, preserving cultural and historical sites, and increasing public access to these special places.

For more information about making a gift to the Treasure Forever Fund, visit parktrust.org/treasureforever-fund



San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, TX - 44.58 acres protected in 2021 using our Treasure Forever Fund

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Donate to National Park Trust to protect our national parks today and create park stewards for tomorrow. Your gift allows us to be ready to respond when schools request grant funding for a class trip or when the National Park Service reaches out for our assistance on a land acquisition project.

Include National Park Trust in your estate plans. Join our Bison Legacy Society by including us in your will or trust and designating us as a beneficiary of your 401(k) plan or Donor Advised Fund. Learn more about planned gifts at parktrust.org/bison-legacy-society.

Make a gift of appreciated stocks or securities and you may realize tax benefits. Visit parktrust.org/gifts-of-stock to learn more.

Check out your company's matching gift program to possibly double (or triple) your impact.



Scan the QR code for more information about how you can make a difference.

National Park Trust is a nonprofit charitable organization 501(c)(3). **Tax ID #52-1691924**

BISON LEGACY SOCIETY

Many thanks to our members for including us in their estate plans; founding members of our Bison Legacy Society are in bold.

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Zachary Agnew
Jeffrey and Tricia Allen
Cindy Allen Lapp
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Devin and Marissa Anderson
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The Couchs hiking in Arches National Park UT



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**Scan to learn
more about how
you can make
park preservation
part of your
legacy.**

Carol and Jesse Couch, 52 Years of Park Love

Tuscon, AZ

Carol and Jesse Couch began their love affair with national parks as newlyweds. “Jesse had just left his service in the Navy, and I was still an undergraduate student,” shared Carol in a recent conversation. “We were just starting our lives together and didn’t have much money, but loved nature and history. So in those early days, we discovered parks, finding we could reach a lot on just a tank or two of gas, like Niagara Falls, Kitty Hawk, and Shenandoah National Park!” Over the years, the Couches expanded their geographic range to visit more parks, and today, the U.S. map hanging in their RV is filled with pins noting parks visited and the memories they made along the way.

When they began to think about estate planning, Carol and Jesse took stock of what means the most to them: preserving things now and inspiring young people to engage in preservation for the future. According to the Couches, the Park Trust’s mission to preserve parks today and create park stewards for tomorrow was a perfect fit for their legacy giving, and they enthusiastically joined our Bison Legacy Society in 2021.

“With every park we visit, we’re more convinced about the importance of preserving these special places, not just in our lives, but for the future.”

– Carol Couch

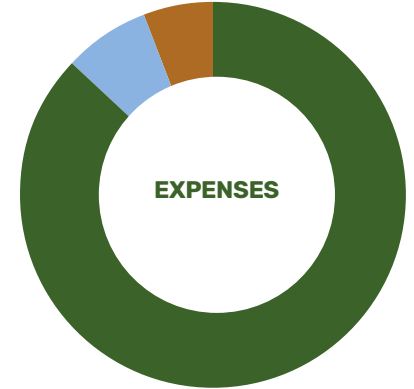
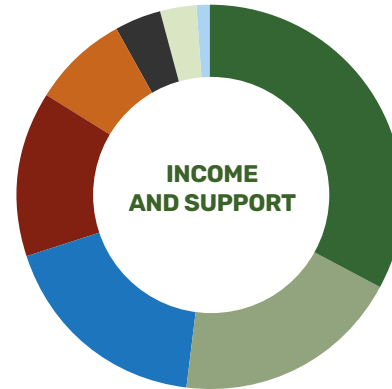
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In fiscal year 2024, our income and support allowed us to meet \$5,258,565 in total expenses. 84.6% of our resources were used for our Park Preservation and Youth and Family Programs. We earned a top ranking of "A" with Charity Watch, have met all 20 criteria of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance, and have earned four stars from Charity Navigator. We are also a Platinum-Level participant with GuideStar with a demonstrated commitment to transparency. **We are good stewards of our parks and your resources!**

INCOME AND SUPPORT	Fiscal Year 2024
Grants and Contributions	\$ 4,115,395
Program Service Fee Revenue	1,040,647
In-kind Contributions	212,248
Consignment and Other Sales Income, net	46,271
Other Income	11,056
Investment Income	198,220
TOTAL INCOME	5,623,837
Grants and Contributions Restricted for Future Years	(731,827)
Prior Years Grants and Contributions Released from Restriction	519,586
TOTAL INCOME FOR 2023-24 OPERATIONS	\$ 5,411,596

EXPENSES	
PROGRAM SERVICES:	
Youth and Family Programs	\$ 3,073,198
Lands and Parks Programs	1,266,557
Grants Management	106,677
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	4,446,432
SUPPORTING SERVICES:	
General and Administrative	316,731
Fundraising	495,402
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	812,133
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 5,258,565

NET ASSETS	June 30, 2024
NET ASSETS:	
Without Donor Restrictions	
Undesignated	\$ 2,550,076
Board-Designated Property Held for Exempt Purposes	1,560,620
Board-Designated Park Preservation Fund	873,846
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	4,984,542
With Donor Restrictions	2,048,829
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 7,033,371



- 33% Government
- 19% Individuals
- 18% Program Services Revenue
- 14% Foundations
- 8% Corporations
- 4% In-Kind Contributions
- 3% Investment Income
- 1% Consignment and Other Income
- 85% Program Services Expenses
- 9% Fundraising Expenses
- 6% General and Administrative Expenses



We meet all 20 standards of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance.

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Our staff and board members visited San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, TX, where the Park Trust recently completed a 44.58-acre land acquisition.

Scan the QR code or visit
parktrust.org/ways-to-support
to learn more about how you can
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