

2023 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



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

Rarely does a day go by when I am not eager to get outside whether it be rain, shine, snow, or heat. The great outdoors have helped me center, focus, and be calm – and is my special learning place. All my kids and grandkids know that I always say “Let’s go outside!”, regardless of the weather. I have even adopted the saying of one of my nieces: “There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad gear!”

Growing up in Kentucky, playing outdoors was what we did. Because there were no electronic devices to distract us, wading through creeks, catching bugs, and laying on the grass watching the stars as the day ended was a huge part of growing up.

My career as a financial advisor is primarily a desk job which has intensified my love and appreciation for nature and the outdoors – and my place for peace and calm. So when Grace Lee our executive director asked me to consider the National Park Trust Board, I said “yes” without hesitation.

Since 2020, my commitment as a board member has been as natural to me as breathing. The tremendous and positive work the National Park Trust does to preserve, protect, and share our nation’s parks with everyone is a serious game changer for kids and families. And it’s loads of fun too!

The parks that we have helped the National Park Service (NPS) expand in 2023 range from Fort Scott National Historical Park in Kansas to Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina (see pages 6 and 7) to Lyndon B Johnson National Historical Park in Texas. And there are many more national park units that we are working with in response to NPS’s requests for our real estate expertise and resources.

Our numerous national initiatives, including our Buddy Bison, College Ambassador, and Military Family Programs and Kids to Parks Day School Grants provided critical funding and park trip expertise to get tens of thousands of students to our public lands and waters (see pages 8-11).

It’s exciting for me personally to know that these students now understand the value of getting outdoors – and how important these places and spaces are to protect and preserve. We will be counting on their help as future park stewards!

It will come as no surprise that there is much more work to be done. Thank you for your support of National Park Trust. It is vital and crucial for our precious parks – and greatly appreciated by all of us on the board and staff.

With gratitude,



Katie S. Clark

“The tremendous and positive work the National Park Trust does to preserve, protect, and share our nation’s parks with everyone is a serious game changer for kids and families.”



Katie S. Clark, pictured here with Buddy Bison in Yosemite, joined the board in 2020 and serves as co-chair of the Development Committee.

She is Managing Director - Financial Advisor, Senior Portfolio Manager at RBC Wealth Management.

ACQUIRING THE MISSING PIECES OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS

For 40 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 and water 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 worked with NPS providing real estate expertise and resources to acquire numerous parcels of land and water to expand 55 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 today's visitors don't reflect the rich diversity of our communities.

We have responded to this challenge through our numerous youth and family initiatives, including our nationally recognized Buddy Bison School Program, which was first piloted in 2009. 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 supporters, we connected more than 83,000 individuals from under-served communities to our public lands and waters.

With your 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

We respond to the National Park Service when they need our expertise and support to protect iconic landscapes, pristine waters, and important historical sites. As a result, since 1983, more than 26,000 acres have been added to our national park units in 32 states, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Olympic National Park, WA – 6 acres preserved in 1990

PARK PRESERVATION SINCE 1983:

69

PROJECTS IMPACTING
55 NATIONAL
PARK UNITS

44

ICONIC
LANDSCAPES &
WILDLANDS

30

HISTORICAL &
CULTURAL SITES

40

PARKS WITH EXPANDED
PUBLIC ACCESS

Since 2009, our environmental education programs have evolved from a handful of Buddy Bison Schools in the Washington, D.C. area to a national portfolio of Youth and Family Programs in 44 states and U.S. territories.

We currently support 99 Buddy Bison elementary and middle schools, 12 colleges and universities, and hundreds of military families across the country.

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



OUR 2023 IMPACT FOR YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS:

83,253
PARTICIPANTS

514
SCHOOLS AND
NONPROFITS SUPPORTED

1,002
PARK TRIPS

\$713K+
GRANT MONEY
AWARDED



FORT SCOTT NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, KS

In March 2020, officials at Fort Scott (pictured above) requested our help to acquire privately held land located inside the park.

The 3/4-acre parcel and its existing building would address a pressing need at the park: currently, the park maintenance facility is located in a historic fort building. The urgency heightened following the sudden passing of the property owner.

“This acquisition project would not have been possible without the invaluable participation and negotiation expertise of the National Park Trust. Negotiating with an existing tenant and navigating lease terms that did not align with NPS regulations required skillful amendments, a task efficiently undertaken by the Park Trust.”

– Michael Bockman, Chief, NPS Land Resources Division, Interior Regions 3, 4, 5

Although we successfully completed the acquisition in July 2021, National Park Service was not able to purchase the parcel from us until December 2023. During that period, we managed the property, including a commercial tenant in the building.

Now, park maintenance operations and equipment can be relocated, making room for expanded historic exhibits.

CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE, NC

In May 2023, the National Park Service asked for our assistance to acquire two homes that were in imminent danger of falling into the ocean at Rodanthe, NC. The project was the first of its kind to address the impact of rising sea levels and significant beach erosion.

The expansive beach eroded over the years until the ocean's edge reached the structures. At least four other houses collapsed since 2022, creating a 15-mile debris field along the beach and in the ocean. The park provides critical habitat for nesting sea turtles and sea and shorebirds. A house collapse puts visitors and wildlife at risk.

With our quick response and expertise, the appraisal and purchase of the houses took about one-third of the typical time to complete. The buildings have now been safely removed, and the newly acquired property provides an additional beach access point for the public.

“Cape Hatteras National Seashore appreciates the National Park Trust’s support of this important resource protection and climate change adaptation project that helps to reduce the impacts of threatened oceanfront structures on natural beach areas and visitor safety. The Trust’s efforts are helping the Seashore evaluate new tools for management along rapidly eroding beach areas, where vulnerable development borders Seashore lands.”

– David E. Hallac, Superintendent of National Parks of Eastern North Carolina



**Scan this code
to learn more.**



YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

BUDDY BISON PROGRAM

When we first launched our Buddy Bison School Program in 2009, we could never have imagined how quickly it would grow due to numerous requests from Title I school teachers to get their students engaged with the outdoors.

One of the first schools that we welcomed in our inaugural year was **Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School** in Washington, D.C. Over the past 14 years, more than 3,600 Stokes students have explored their local parks in D.C. and Maryland as they hiked at the National Mall, Rock Creek Park, and Watkins Regional Park; paddled on the Anacostia River; rock-climbed at Carderock; and camped at Calvert Cliffs State Park.

Our Buddy Bison students: 1) use parks as outdoor classrooms for lessons in STEM, history, and social studies, 2) take advantage of the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation, and 3) learn about their role as our future stewards of parks and the environment.

"We are certain that engaging students in these activities contributed to the increase in our state standardized test scores in math and English language arts by at least 10%. It shows how a well-rounded approach to education, which includes experiential learning and exposure to different environments, can yield impressive results."

– Stokes Interim Executive Director Bobby Caballero



Carderock, MD
Photo Credit: Tami Heilemann



Bobby and students at Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS in Washington, D.C.



Watkins Regional Park, MD



This year we welcomed Symetra Financial as our newest Buddy Bison School sponsor.

When Symetra Financial decided to prioritize environmental sustainability as one of the core commitments of their corporate social responsibility initiative, they wanted to include support for inclusive programming that increases access and connectivity to the outdoors for under-served youth. They vetted 25 national organizations before selecting National Park Trust as their new three-year partner.

During the 2022-2023 school year, Symetra worked with us to welcome three Title I schools into our Buddy Bison Program. The inaugural year focused on schools in Connecticut, Iowa, and Washington state, where Symetra has a major employee presence, giving their team an opportunity to engage with the program as Buddy Bison volunteers.

“The Buddy Bison Program was a ‘slam dunk’ when it came to meeting our commitment to expose more kids from diverse backgrounds to the outdoors,”

– Tracy Wort, Director of Community Relations & Social Impact

Over the year, Symetra volunteers joined students in a variety of activities, from hiking the Tall Grass Trail in Iowa, to learning about dinosaurs and Native American history in Connecticut, to camping in Olympic National Park in Washington. “Involving our employees in making a difference in the communities we serve through volunteerism is a cornerstone of our culture,” said Wort. “Programs like our partnership with National Park Trust make them proud to work at Symetra.”



Scan this code to learn more about Symetra’s trip to Olympic National Park.



Students from MLK Elementary at Olympic National Park, WA



Clive Learning Academy student with Symetra volunteer Kim Darby at Jester Park in Granger, IA



Students from Eli Whitney Elementary exploring Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill, CT



MILITARY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We provide outdoor recreation programs for a broad range of military communities – including actively serving military and Gold Star Families, military family survivors, veterans, caregivers, and their families – to support their physical and mental well being.

Generous funding from the National Park Service, National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, U.S. Forest Service, and corporate and foundation sponsors supported our partnerships to engage more than 1,000 participants from 225 families in 28 experiences in nature.

The Emamis, an Air Force veteran family (pictured left), whose father suffered a traumatic brain injury and PTSD in Afghanistan, created cherished memories along with other military families while fishing and kayaking at Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary in Maryland (bottom left).

“When you come here and meet all these people and kids your age that know how you feel, you immediately feel like you’ve known them for your whole life.”

– Azara Emami, age 12



Scan this code to learn more.

COLLEGE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Our College Ambassador Program empowers student leaders across the country to introduce undergraduates to the benefits of the great outdoors. In our third year of this program, we expanded to 24 ambassadors representing 12 colleges and universities, including five Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Nearly 500 students participated in 27 outings where they paddled, hiked, fished, and completed stewardship projects. For most of the students, this was their first experience in nature.

Appalachian State University's ambassadors, who joined the program in 2023, engaged their fellow students (pictured right) in a service project along the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina to preserve the park's natural beauty and ecological balance.



Kids to Parks Day School Grant recipient Council High School at Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, ID

GRANTS PROGRAMS

Throughout 2023, we awarded 204 grants totaling more than \$713,000 to schools and non-profits connecting kids and families to outdoor spaces throughout the country.

These grants provided opportunities for more than 38,500 participants to spend over 285,000 hours exploring our nation's public lands and waters.

RECOGNIZING PARK CHAMPIONS



Congresswoman Diana DeGette with Board Chair Scott Stone

23RD BRUCE F. VENTO PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Congresswoman Diana DeGette (CO)

On Capitol Hill in June, we honored Congresswoman Diana DeGette, representing Colorado's 1st district, with the Bruce F. Vento Award for her life's work to protect our national parks, public lands, and the environment. Highlights of her 26-year career include her role as the lead sponsor of the Every Kid Outdoors Act in 2019 and her introduction of one of the largest land-protection packages Congress has ever considered: the Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act.

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

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Jimmy Chin with Executive Director Grace Lee

AMERICAN PARK EXPERIENCE AWARD

Jimmy Chin

In April, we honored Jimmy Chin with our American Park Experience Award at the Washington, D.C. opening of his 2023 film, *Wild Life*.

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

Chin, an Oscar-winning film director, National Geographic photographer, New York Times best-selling author, and professional mountain climber and skier, was recognized for his films and photography that have elevated important stories about national parks and conservation that inspire youth and adults of all ethnicities to explore and preserve these treasured places.



Raul Toscana with Buddy Bison

NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Raul Toscana

Each year, we recognize an educator who has made a significant impact on their students' understanding of the natural world and the importance of protecting these resources.

In May, Raul Toscana, a 4th-grade teacher at Gaithersburg Elementary, MD, one of our largest partner schools, was honored for his dedication as a lead Buddy Bison teacher for the past six years. During this time, he spearheaded student trips to Black Hill Nature Center (MD), Rock Creek Park (D.C.), National Colonial Farm (MD), and Watkins Nature Center (MD).

In addition, during COVID, he quickly pivoted to utilize our virtual programming to ensure that his students could continue to connect with rangers at parks across the country.

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Dale Crane, National Park Trust's First Board Chair

As we wrap up our 40th year celebration, we are grateful for the early leadership from our first board chair, Dale Crane. Dale's love of parks goes back to his childhood days in western Washington, where he fished with his father and explored rivers and old-growth forests.

Those experiences led Dale to a career in natural resource management, with his final role as chief of staff for the National Parks Subcommittee under the chairmanship of **Congressman Bruce F. Vento** (4th District, MN). In this role, he worked with the Park Trust on land conservation, and upon his retirement in 1994, he joined the board becoming our first chair in 1997.

During his tenure on the board from 1994 to 2007, we worked on 36 land projects. In recognition of our 40-year milestone, Dale and his wife Mariann expressed their interest in helping us inspire the next generation of park stewards.

As a result, the **Dale Crane Next Generation Fund** was created to provide sustained annual operational support for the National Park Trust Fellows who serve as special advisors to the board in education and land acquisition – with the Cranes providing a leadership gift for this endowed fund.



“My hope is this fund will be the first step in creating a sustainable income to support these outstanding leadership initiatives.”

– Dale Crane

As the fund grows, it can support additional programs that provide opportunities for our youth and young adults to develop skills in conservation, outdoor education, and nonprofit management, ensuring that our park stewards of tomorrow will have the leadership expertise and experience they need to preserve and protect our parks, public lands and waters.

For more information about how you can make a difference through a gift to the Next Generation Fund or other opportunities to support our programs, contact Director of Development Dolores McDonagh at dolores@parktrust.org or 301-279-7279 ext. 15.

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 a Title I school requests grant funding for a class trip or when the National Park Service reaches out for our assistance on a park project.

Include National Park Trust in your estate plans. Help us achieve our goal of adding new members to our Bison Legacy Society by including National Park Trust in your will or trust or 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.

For more information about how you can make a difference, visit parktrust.org/ways-to-support.

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.

Anonymous*
Jenny Adams Salmela
Katlin Adamski
Jeffrey and Tricia Allen
Cynthia Allen Lapp
Sigrid and William Anderson
Devin and Marissa Anderson
Evan Anderson
Andy and Pamela Andrews
Terri Armstrong
Satomi Hofmann
Alex Arrow
Aaron and Angela Bain
Karina Barker
Marion S. Bartlett*
Sarah Basta
Robert Bauer
Michele Baumberger
Rachel Beard
Kevin Beaumont
Christopher and Jennifer Bell
John Boman
Leslie Brown
Bill and Lynn Brownell
Melissa Buckingham-Adams
Taylor Burris
Frances and George Calapai
Anastacia Cesario

Rita Chaney
Katie S. Clark
Raymond Coffey
Isabel Cole
Carol and Jesse Couch
Erin Coughlin
Lauren Curtis
Brittany Dedic
Cheri Dighton
David Doneff
Ezra Downs
Lynne O. Elkins*
Christina and David Ericksen
Mary T. Farri
Devon Field
Johnny Gabriel
Maureen Gehlhausen
John Goynes
Jon Graham and Elizabeth Ulmer
Pam Grasso
MaryRose Grech
Trevor Grist
Rand Groh
Ann and Rod Gualtieri
Ernst Hall, Jr.
Susan Harrah
Bryan and Gillian Harvey

Mary Herberich*
Wayne and Weetie Hill
Michael Hoehn
Annie M. Holley
Megan Holmes
Walter Hunter
Zachary Hunter
Asyon Ingram
Jean Jamison
Senthil Jayaseelan
Dan Jenkins
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John and Anne Rollins
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Frank* and Lisa Ruggles
Kevin Ruiz
Benjamin Rykken
David Sacks
David Salmela
Andrew Sands
Christopher and Joelle Sanny
Barry and Elinor Schimel
Kathryn Schmedding*
Stephen Schuler
Avery Shaffer
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Pat Simons

Christina and Karl Simonsen
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Carol Vincent
Karen Walsh
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Jessica Wey
Laura Whitney
Alistair Williams
Alicia Winchell
Jessica and Jonathan Windham
Andrea Wood
Madison Wright
Roger and Marie Wright
You Wu
Lisa York

Founding Members in bold

** Deceased*



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

A bequest from Bison Legacy Society member John Kauffmann was used to help acquire a nearly 1,500-acre parcel of old-growth woodland to preserve the pristine viewshed along Maine's Bald Mountain Pond. The land was added to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in 2017.

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 eight 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 pleased to recognize the visionary supporters of our TFF including the Founding Members who made generous 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	

Other major donors to the Treasure Forever Fund

Evan M. Anderson	Estate of Dianne Komminsk
Gerald Antosh	Grace and Kenneth Lee
Samuel Brenner	Andrew R. and Janet F. Miller Foundation
Michael Carper and Billy Mulford	Donald and Olwen Pongrace
James and Deborah Carrier	Richard Ring
Katie S. Clark and Glenn Glasgow	John and Anne Rollins
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William and Ilene Hafker	Phil Selleck and Deb Nordeen
A. Ross Hill	Raymond and Barbara Sherbill
Michael and Angela Hoehn	Wolverine Foundation
Neal Kemkar and Ruchi Jain	Roger and Marie Wright



Lassen Volcanic National Park, CA – 1.4 acres preserved in 2019

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 habitat, 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/treasure-forever-fund or contact Dolores McDonagh at 301-279-7275 ext. 15 or dolores@parktrust.org.

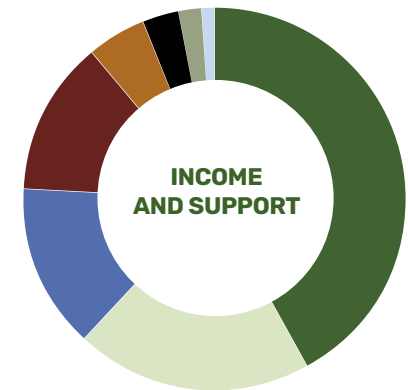
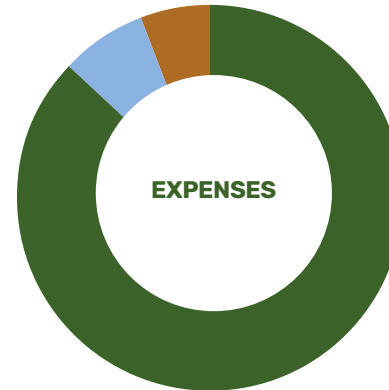
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In fiscal year 2023, our income and support allowed us to meet \$4,184,233 in total expenses. 86% 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!

FUNDING SOURCES	June 30, 2023
Grants and Contributions	\$4,234,125
Program Service Fee Revenue	105,165
In-kind Contributions	260,000
Product Sales and Other Income	45,096
Investment Income	119,435
TOTAL INCOME	4,763,821
Grants and Contributions Restricted for Future Years	(500,578)
Prior Years Grants and Contributions Released from Restriction	811,049
TOTAL INCOME FOR 2022-23 OPERATIONS	\$ 5,074,292

EXPENSES	
PROGRAM SERVICES:	
Youth and Family Programs	\$3,081,340
Lands and Parks Programs	269,967
Grant Management	248,204
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	3,599,511
SUPPORTING SERVICES:	
General and Administrative	289,001
Fundraising	295,721
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	584,722
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,184,233

NET ASSETS	
NET ASSETS:	
Without Donor Restrictions	
Undesignated	\$2,352,374
Board-Designated Property Held for Exempt Purposes	1,629,137
Board-Designated Park Preservation Fund	850,000
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	4,831,511
With Donor Restrictions	1,836,588
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$6,668,099



- 86% Program Services Expenses
- 7.1% Fundraising Expenses
- 6.9% General and Administrative Expenses
- 42% Government
- 20% Individuals
- 14% Foundations
- 13% Corporations
- 5% In-Kind Contributions
- 3% Investment Income
- 2% Program Services Revenue
- 1% Product Sales and Other income

Our complete audit and IRS 990 are available on our website.



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

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Our staff and board members enjoy a post-paddle gathering on the shores of the St. Croix River near a completed land acquisition project.



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TREASURE FOREVER

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Tel. 301-279-7275 / E-mail: npt@parktrust.org
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