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NPS Announces Centennial Challenge Projects

Cost Share Partnerships Grow \$15 Million Appropriation to Nearly \$48 Million

WASHINGTON – This week, the National Park Service (NPS) announced nearly \$48 million of Centennial Challenge projects to help parks across the country improve visitor services and support outreach to new audiences. The projects, many of which tackle deferred maintenance, come as the NPS kicks off its second century of service. Congress provided \$15 million for the projects which will be matched by almost \$33 million from more than 90 park partners.

“As the National Park Service enters its centennial year in 2016, Congress and generous partners across the country are making exceptional investments to improve park facilities, enhance their accessibility, and help more visitors – especially young people – discover our nation’s inspiring places and stories,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis.

There are 69 projects located at 63 parks in 38 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The project list includes new visitor center exhibits at Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (Minn.); accessible trails at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (Calif.) and Glacier National Park (Mont.); and fire suppression systems at Glen Echo Park (Md.) and the Blue Ridge Parkway (N.C. and Va.).

The list includes significant deferred maintenance projects. The project at Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California will resurface the Crissy Field Promenade and includes interpretive signage and seating at a site that attracts more than 1.2 million visitors each year. The project at Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park in Maryland will rehabilitate the Conococheague Aqueduct.

In addition, more than \$4 million, including federal and partner funding, will support the [Every Kid in a Park](#) program, more than half of which will go to transporting about 250,000 kids to parks. Project funds will provide increased opportunities for children, especially 4th graders, to experience national parks this year.

As an example, Valles Caldera National Preserve in New Mexico, one of the newest units in the National Park System, will build on its successful program to engage young people in monitoring forest restoration, expanding it to neighboring Bandelier National Monument. The program strengthens the ancestral connections of local Pueblo Indian youth to the parks’

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landscapes by engaging them in the resource preservation and restoration efforts occurring on the land they consider sacred, and giving them the field and academic experience needed to excel as next generation stewards. It also supports the park's innovative My Trail Program, engaging area 4th graders in the development of new trail signs.

The 2016 Centennial Challenge program builds on the successes of 2015, when Congress appropriated \$10 million which the NPS leveraged with more than \$12 million in partner funds to support more than 100 projects.

Jarvis said, "The continued success of this public/private partnership demonstrates the need for Congress to take action on the Administration's proposal of the [National Park Service Centennial Act](#), which includes the Centennial Challenge, and would further the National Park Service mission to protect, preserve and share the Nation's most iconic sites with all Americans."

For a complete list of centennial challenge projects and partners please visit <http://www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/nps-centennial-challenge-projects.htm>

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About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 409 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Visit us at www.nps.gov, on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice, Twitter www.twitter.com/natlparkservice, and YouTube www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice.