

Helping Preserve Our National Parks For Future Generations Is A Shared Responsibility

(NAPSA)—The U.S. National Park System, the greatest in the world, has given generations of Americans priceless gifts—recreation, education, conservation and appreciation of our heritage among them.

Millions visit this unparalleled collection of natural, historic and cultural resources every year. What many don't realize is that keeping them healthy is a shared responsibility.

This magnificent system includes natural, pristine landscapes like Yosemite and the Grand Canyon; prominent historical sites like Teddy Roosevelt's birthplace and places where the civil rights movement was forged; and now, the new memorials of the American story including Flight 93 Memorial. In all there are almost 400 national parks throughout the United States, spanning 84 million acres.

But if we want to ensure that our children and our children's children can experience all that the national parks offer, every American must pitch in.

More than 100 years ago, it was ordinary Americans who urged Congress to create the world's first national park by setting aside 2 million acres of Yellowstone for the "benefit and enjoyment of the people." During the last century, participation and support from everyday citizens has helped to protect and improve national park lands.

For four decades, the National Park Foundation—chartered by Congress as the only national charitable partner for national parks—has led the way in encouraging American citizens to support their parks. According to foundation president and CEO, Vin Cipolla, "Private philanthropy is an important part of our



America's national parks are sustained through the efforts of everyday citizens.

national park history and citizen contributions remain essential in sustaining the system and securing its future." If you want to do your part, he offers this advice:

Visit: Visit the parks, and when you do, bring your children and your grandchildren. One of the most important things we can do for the Parks is help the next generation of stewards take pride in this heritage

Volunteer: The national parks belong to all of us. From helping with trail restoration to water level management to assisting in the development of children's programs, the parks need your expertise and interest to keep these important programs strong and growing.

Give back: Validate your concern by donating your time, energy or money to sustain our parks. Every little bit matters. Support for the National Park Foundation ensures that this vast system will remain vital and relevant today and for the next century.

To learn more about how you can make a difference, visit www.nationalparks.org.