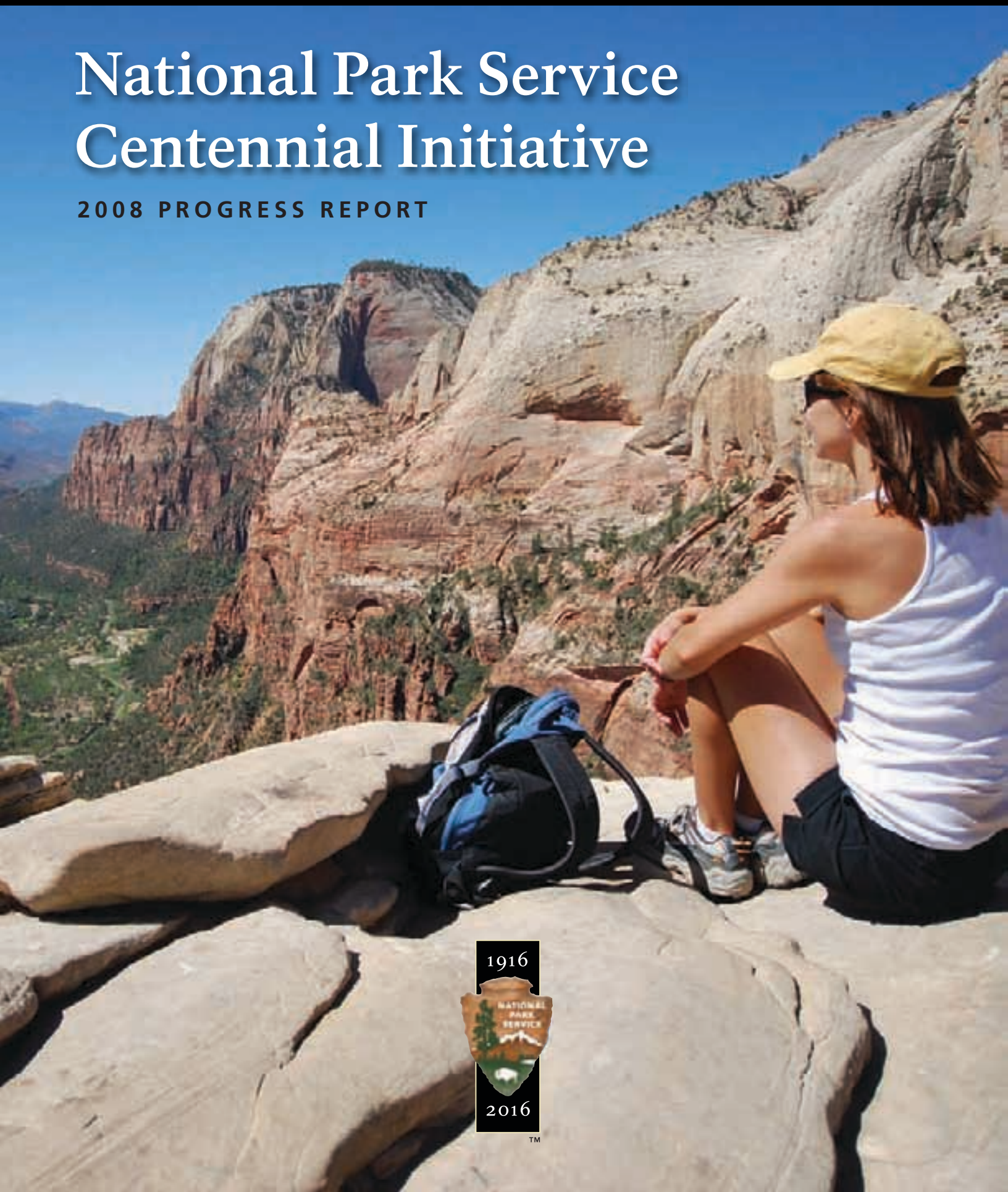
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service Centennial Initiative

2008 PROGRESS REPORT



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Cover:
Hiker enjoys Angels Landing at Zion National Park (Utah).

The park, founded before the National Park Service, will celebrate its centennial in 2009.

Photo NPS/Tom Haraden.

National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
www.nps.gov

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

National Park Service Centennial Initiative
2008 Progress Report

Mrs. Laura Bush, honorary chair of the National Park Foundation, with National Park Service Director Mary A. Bomar and Junior Rangers at Grand Teton National Park (Wyo.).

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FROM SECRETARY **DIRK KEMPTHORNE**

Secretary Kempthorne speaks at the rededication of the Tunnel View Overlook after a major rehabilitation in Yosemite National Park (Calif.) in partnership with The Yosemite Fund.

As we look toward the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, the American people have expressed a desire to see national parks continue to thrive and excel into their second century.

Through the leadership of President George W. Bush and the broad support of Congress, record funding was provided in 2008 to maintain and improve the operations of all 391 national parks. This funding was part of the President's Centennial Initiative, a multi-year effort to infuse the parks with up to $3 billion in preparation for the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016.

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne

To accomplish this, we must commit to continue our work with the President, Congress, and the American people to take the bold and necessary steps to ensure a dedicated source of funding leading up to 2016. This funding will help to revitalize the parks so they can continue to be the best examples of our natural and cultural heritage and the pride of all Americans.

National parks preserve the essence of what it means to be an American. They are places that contain the symbols of our nation's freedom like the Liberty Bell, important historic sites that recall bravery and human sacrifice such as Saratoga and Gettysburg, and places that honor great leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. A truly American concept, the national parks provide access to the nation's majestic landscapes such as the Grand Canyon and icons like Old Faithful Geyser at Yellowstone National Park—the world's first national park.

National parks tell the stories and experiences of our collective heritage. We must resolve to find new ways to make them meaningful to everyone . . . especially the audiences of tomorrow. One of our greatest challenges in this electronic age is to find new ways to introduce an increasingly diverse public to the parks—and the parks to our citizens. The National Park Service needs to be ready to meet this challenge as its centennial approaches.

National parks have always inspired those who visit. They offer the context within which we can engage our visitors in compelling ways that encourage civic responsibility and connect our nation's past with our present. The Centennial Initiative offers the opportunity to prepare national parks for their next 100 years. Through upgraded facilities and better programs designed to reach out to all Americans, we can increase the public's appreciation for the opportunities and the value of national parks. The Centennial Initiative will create future stewards of these national treasures—a cadre of patriotic Americans to stand with the National Park Service as it prepares for a second century of service.

Sincerely,

DIRK KEMPTHORNE
Secretary of the Interior

FROM DIRECTOR **MARY A. BOMAR**

Photo DOI/Tami Heilemann

In our May 2007 report to President George W. Bush, **The Future of America's National Parks,** *we outlined five broad goals to re-engage Americans with their national parks, increase the capacity of the National Park System, and prepare the next generation of park leaders.*

From sea to shining sea, we made incredible progress in meeting our goals—and fulfilling our pledge to the President and our fellow citizens. Did we deliver on those promises to prepare our parks for our 100th anniversary in 2016? Even a quick glance at this report will tell you that we did.

Director Mary A. Bomar

Director Bomar celebrates the ribbon-cutting marking the completion of the first restoration phase for the Old State House at Boston National Historical Park (Mass.), a Centennial Challenge project with The Bostonian Society.

Left to right: The Bostonian Society Executive Director Brian LeMay, City of Boston Chief of Environmental and Energy Services James W. Hunt III, Secretary Kempthorne, Superintendent Terry Savage, and Director Bomar.

Fiscal year 2008 saw the biggest boost ever in operational funding for national parks with funds appropriated by Congress. That meant improved trails, better facilities, and new ranger-led programs—the result of hiring 3,000 additional seasonal employees.

We did not stop there. With partner donations, we turned $24.6 million appropriated by Congress into more than $52 million, funding projects and programs in 75 parks across this great nation. These funds supported the rehabilitation of historic buildings, restoration of Civil War battlefields, and implemented energy-efficient, sustainable technologies to reduce our carbon footprint. But there is more to do.

We must do all we can to protect the special places in this nation—a mission set forth in the law that established the National Park Service 92 years ago: "… to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

I always say that national parks are special places that unite us all as Americans. With the continued help of the men and women of the National Park Service, Congress, and our partners, we will mark our centennial with vibrant national parks providing another century of preservation and enjoyment to the American people.

Thank you for your support.

Mary A. Bomar

MARY A. BOMAR
National Park Service Director

Country music star Trace Adkins (left) helped Director Bomar unveil new battlefield markers at Vicksburg National Military Park (Miss.), a Centennial Challenge partnership with Friends of the Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign.

President George W. Bush launched the Centennial Initiative on the eve of the National Park Service's 90th anniversary in 2006.

He proposed a 10-year effort to prepare national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment in time for the Service's 100th anniversary in 2016.

The initiative comprises two funding components—the Centennial Challenge and Operational Enhancements—and five broad goals: Stewardship, Environmental Leadership, Recreational Experience, Education, and Professional Excellence.

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

The Centennial Challenge

A challenge to all Americans to help prepare the parks for 2016 and beyond by contributing $100 million annually for 10 years to be matched by legislated federal funding—a potential $2 billion investment in national parks.

In 2008, Congress appropriated $24.6 million in Challenge seed money, and partners across the country doubled the federal investment in park projects and programs to more than $52 million.

Operational Enhancements

A proposal for a $100 million increase in park operating funds annually for 10 years—a potential $1 billion investment to keep national parks running smoothly, improve maintenance, and provide exceptional visitor services.

In 2008, Congress appropriated a $100 million increase for national park operations, which contributed to the National Park Service's largest operating budget in history.

President Bush and Secretary Kempthorne announce the Centennial Initiative at Shenandoah National Park (Va.).

Congressman Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (at podium), and Congressman Nick J. Rahall II (D-W.Va.), Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee, joined seven of their House and Senate colleagues, Secretary Kempthorne, and Director Bomar to show support for the Centennial Challenge at the announcement event on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, April 24, 2008.

It was the vision, determination, and generosity of earlier Americans that created the first national parks—a gift to all people and a great conservation legacy for the world. Today, as in 1916 when the Service was founded, countless partners, volunteers, and those who care about the environment, recreation, history, the arts, and culture support this mission.

In contemplating its 100th anniversary, the National Park Service asked citizens to share their hopes and concerns about the future of their national parks. Their ideas shaped the five goals of the Centennial Initiative.

Led by Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne and National Park Service Director Mary A. Bomar, the first investments—the Centennial Challenge and the operational enhancement funding—became reality in fiscal year 2008.

This report highlights accomplishments across the country made possible by the Centennial Initiative. Throughout its pages are examples of the importance of everyone—Congress, partners, volunteers, and the employees of the National Park Service—working together. These accomplishments demonstrate how partnerships benefit the National Park Service's work and emphasize the importance of adequate and consistent appropriated funding to the care and maintenance of not only America's most treasured places, but also to the health and well-being of the American people.

As the Service prepares for a celebration in 2016, it will invite everyone to discover and enjoy our country's national parks and to join in caring for these extraordinary places. This year was just the beginning—the National Park Service and national parks will be ready to meet the challenges and opportunities of a second century.

Stewardship

A volunteer plants white mountain heather as part of a meadow revegetation effort at Mount Rainier National Park (Wash.).

The National Park Service leads America and the world in preserving and restoring treasured resources.

Caring for America's Treasures

Our nation's parks, like family heirlooms, are cherished and safeguarded by one generation for the next.

Their stories are our collective heritage.

Through the Centennial Initiative, the National Park Service expanded its conservation work with the help of—and on behalf of—all Americans. Visitors enjoyed superior public service, noted improvements in park maintenance, and experienced healthier ecosystems and authentic historical buildings and landscapes.

BY 2016, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL:

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition. ●

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species. ■

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition. ◆

Improve natural resources in parks as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge. ▲

Complete cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources. ❖

"The National Park Service's vision to provide opportunities for everyone to help prepare for the next century has clearly sparked people's imaginations and enthusiasm.

The Centennial Challenge has energized national park philanthropy."

Curt Buchholtz, President,
National Park Friends Alliance

EXAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Hampton National Historic Site (Md.) and its historic Georgian mansion received a much needed face lift. Centennial Challenge funds allowed the park to install new fiber optic lighting, restore marbling and faux grain finishes to walls and molding, replace window shade coverings, and conserve collection objects such as statuary and furniture. The restored rooms expand the depth and richness of the interpretive and educational programs offered to the public. ● ◆

Community members on the Island of Maui teamed up with park staff from **Haleakalā National Park (Hawaii)** to tackle the spread of invasive plants and improve watershed management. The team planted rare silversword plants and engaged students in watershed restoration activities through the Hoike o Haleakalā curriculum project. ■

A comprehensive direction and orientation sign plan was developed for the **National Mall & Memorial Parks (D.C.)**. Signs have long been identified as a problem for the millions of visitors to Washington, D.C., but the new plan will improve wayfinding for pedestrians and motor vehicles, provide regulatory and operational information, increase educational opportunities, and direct buses to appropriate parking areas. ◆

Thirty-eight volunteer scientists, taxonomists, and interns contributed over 1,400 hours to the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) project at **Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area (Mass.).** This intertidal "BioBlitz" was held over several days with volunteers processing over 5,000 specimens and identifying more than 500 invertebrate species. The program provided outreach educational services to teachers and students through creative media and teaching materials as well as site visits to the islands for personal discovery of the world around them. Six research projects related to the ATBI were presented at the 2008 Boston Harbor Islands Science Symposium. ▲

Students identify species at a temporary outdoor laboratory during a BioBlitz at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (Calif.). The project is a partnership with National Geographic Society.

Visitors to the National Mall & Memorial Parks (D.C.) will more easily find their way thanks to new signs.

The project is a Centennial Challenge partnership with the Trust for the National Mall.

Future Junior Rangers learn about *Miconia calvescens,* the most devastating invasive plant in the Pacific islands.

On this field trip they simulate the control work of NPS and partner Maui Invasive Species Committee field crews that protect Haleakala National Park (Hawaii) from being overrun by this super weed. They learn about the weed's biology in the classroom while coloring these leaf cutouts, and on the field trip, in a modified game of hide-and-seek, they learn about the control techniques used to protect the park.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Centennial Challenge:

Number of projects: **47**
Total Investment: **$25.4 million**
Partner Contribution: **$13.7 million**

Preserved 11 historic buildings by working with park partners

Organized "BioBlitz" All-Taxa Biodiversity Inventory data collection programs in nine parks

11 projects restored natural landscapes by removing invasive or reintroducing native species

Operational Enhancements:

Restored 60 historic structures to good condition

Increased by 22 percent the number of acres of disturbed land restored to good condition

Removed or controlled 972 acres of invasive plants, a 13-percent increase over 2007 levels

Protected 2,900 archeological sites

Made 117 improvements to museum collection storage, security, or display facilities

Environmental Leadership

The Boott Cotton Mills Museum in Lowell National Historical Park (Mass.) installed an 11.2-kilowatt photovoltaic system, funded in part by the Centennial Challenge and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative.

The National Park Service demonstrates environmental leadership to the nation.

Setting the Green Standard

Healthy, abundant lives rely on fresh air, clean water, rich soil, and a shared commitment to conserving these resources.

In the face of global climate change, the National Park Service is using and showcasing green technologies not only to protect the delicate balance of wilderness ecosystems, but also to help people breathe easier.

The Centennial Challenge is ensuring healthier parks, healthier people, and a healthier planet.

BY 2016, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL:

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives. ●

Increase use of alternative energy and fuels at every park. ■

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality. ◆

Serve as a model for energy efficiency by ensuring that every new park facility achieves at least a silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating. ▲

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP:

At Bandelier National Monument (N.M.), the park staff and Friends of Bandelier are working to reduce the park's carbon footprint so visitors for generations to come can experience the area much as its first inhabitants did.

EXAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A high-elevation weather monitoring station was installed in **North Cascades National Park (Wash.)** to document the impacts of climate change on glacial activity, alpine plants, and animals. ●

The Boott Cotton Mills Museum in **Lowell National Historical Park (Mass.)** went green with the installation of a photovoltaic system to provide electrical power to classrooms and exhibit spaces. ● ■ ◆

The Kennecott National Historic Landmark District at **Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (Alaska)** switched to clean-burning, energy-efficient power by installing a hybrid battery-propane power generator. ● ■ ◆

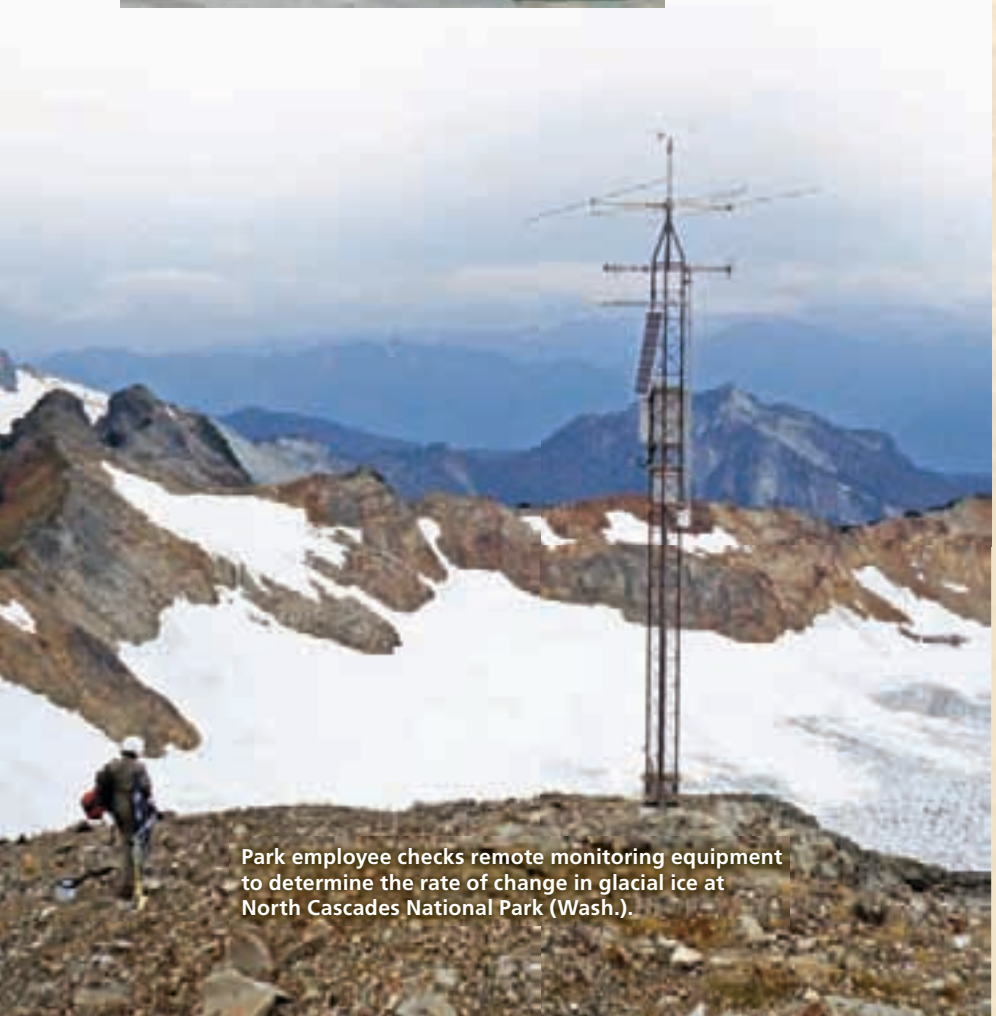
Mount Rainier National Park (Wash.) will save money and energy by installing solar panels on a maintenance building. When the system produces more energy than the building requires, it will feed electricity to the grid. ● ■ ◆

"The future of our national parks depends on sharing ideas and collaborating with the business, academic, and nonprofit sectors to ensure that our environment is protected for the generations."

Brian O'Neill, Superintendent,
Golden Gate National Recreation Area (Calif.)

Mount Rainier National Park (Wash.) is using solar power successfully at this White River park facility.

Through the Centennial Challenge, the park is expanding its solar power use to another ranger and maintenance building with support from Washington's National Park Fund.



Park employee checks remote monitoring equipment to determine the rate of change in glacial ice at North Cascades National Park (Wash.).

HIGHLIGHTS:

Centennial Challenge:

Number of projects:	**4**
Total Investment:	**$505,000**
Partner Contribution:	**$252,500**

Scientists at **Glacier National Park (Mont.)** tracked the ecological health of the region and compared the movement patterns of large carnivores with human use patterns as part of the "Crown of the Continent" ecosystem management partnership

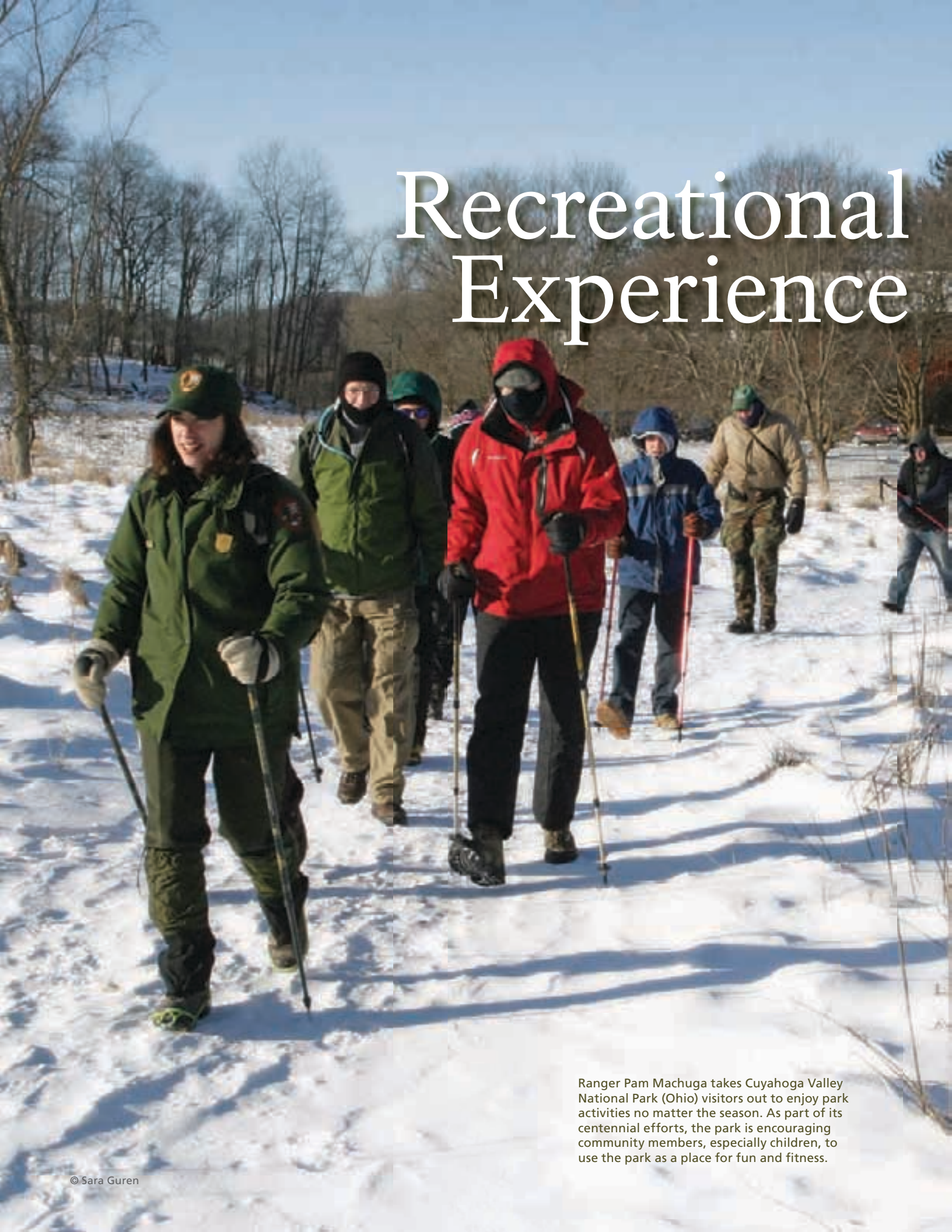
Bandelier National Monument (N.M.) developed and implemented a "Climate Friendly Park" sustainability plan to reduce its carbon footprint

Operational Enhancements:

Restored or protected 14 additional surface and groundwater systems, a 16-percent increase over targeted goals

Remediated 16 additional contaminated sites, a 57-percent increase over targeted goals

Recreational Experience



Ranger Pam Machuga takes Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Ohio) visitors out to enjoy park activities no matter the season. As part of its centennial efforts, the park is encouraging community members, especially children, to use the park as a place for fun and fitness.

© Sara Guren

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

Enjoying Nature and Culture

Many Americans feel that family time is hard to plan, but most people live within a day's drive of a national park.

The National Park Service—with partners and communities—invites Americans to make lifetime memories in their national parks. Our centennial efforts are building trails, engaging kids in the outdoors, and promoting healthy activity to improve people's lives.

And couldn't we all use a little more fun?

BY 2016, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL:

Increase annual volunteer hours. ●

Increase visitation in lesser known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people discover the breadth of parks and experiences. ■

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to parks, including making trails accessible to those with disabilities. ◆

Increase the number of people attending ranger-facilitated programs. ▲

RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Volunteer at Rocky Mountain National Park (Colo.) works on a trail project funded by the Centennial Challenge with the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

Park staff at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site (Colo.) work on a hiking loop that will include wayside exhibits to teach visitors about the area's history, in partnership with Colorado Preservation, Inc.

EXAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Ohio) launched "Get Up, Get Out & Go!," a series of outdoor recreation programs focusing on communities under-represented in park visitation. Thousands of children participated in various programs that use the natural park setting, recreational activities, and technology to link the experiences back to the students' communities. ● ■

Parks in the **Pacific West Region** reported a 47-percent increase in the number of visitors contacted by or participating in outreach programs. ■ ▲

San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (Texas) began construction on a trail that connects Mission San Jose to the San Antonio River along the historic acequia system. The trail provides pedestrian and bicycle access to the Mission Trails System. ◆

American Indian children trekked through **Badlands National Park (S.D.)** in a semester-long physical education program. They charted their teams' progress, recorded their adventures, and learned about the significance of the park as a traditionally sacred place. ▲

"I went backpacking on South Manitou Island [Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (Mich.)] with my Mom, little sister, and little brother this summer. We had so much fun!

It thundered and we had lots of lightning at night, which scared my little brother a lot. We saw huge millipedes and tiny little frogs on the trails."

JoshQ,
WebRanger (Internet extension of the Junior Ranger program)

These visitors, enjoying a great day of canoeing, prove that Lewis and Clark National Historical Park (Ore.) offers more than just interesting history.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Centennial Challenge:

Number of projects:	**14**
Total Investment:	**$13.6 million**
Partner Investment:	**$6.8 million**

Built seven new hiking trails at parks like **Rock Creek Park (D.C.), Valley Forge National Historical Park (Pa.),** and **San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (Texas)**

Constructed two new outdoor interpretive facilities including an amphitheater at **Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument (Idaho)**

Developed and presented 20 new programs for children, with special efforts to reach those in underserved communities, near **Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Nev., Ariz.), Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (Calif.), Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Ohio),** and **Everglades National Park (Fla.)**

Operational Enhancements:

Recruited 176,072 volunteers who contributed over 4.4 million hours of service

Additional summer trail crew staff made significant improvements to trail maintenance and repair

Education

Everglades National Park (Fla.) Ranger Greg Litten teaches South Florida students about periphyton algae's importance in the ecosystem during a Creating Future Park Stewards through Education program. The program is a partnership with the South Florida National Parks Trust and the Everglades Association.

The National Park Service fosters exceptional learning opportunities that connect people to parks.

Learning in America's Greatest Classrooms

Enroll in lifelong, hands-on learning in America's greatest university without walls.

This is where real places and real people bring the lessons of our nation to life for students of all ages.

Whether by using new technology to bring parks into classrooms or through environmental education programs where dirty hands and soggy sneakers change lives, the Centennial Initiative is taking exciting, authentic education to more children, schools, parents, and teachers across the country.

BY 2016, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL:

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit. ●

Enroll an additional two million children as Junior Rangers. ■

Increase number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people. ◆

EDUCATION:

EXAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Annual park visitor surveys recorded a visitor satisfaction rating of 97 percent, the highest score in over a decade. ●

Increased by 22 percent the number of children enrolled as Junior Rangers. Junior Ranger programs provide park-based activities that teach children about their national parks. ■

Parks in the **Southeast and National Capital Regions** reported an increase of more than 42 percent in the number of children served by curriculum-based education programs. ◆

Innovative podcasts at **Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Nev., Ariz.)** featuring the stories of a World War II B-29 bomber that crashed into the lake and a submerged rock quarry are presenting this interesting information in exciting new ways. The podcasts will bring these historical features to life with special effects, animation, and underwater images from National Park Service divers. ◆

"Alien Invaders," a 3-D film for middle school science classes about invasive species such as mussels and fish that harm the ecosystem and underwater historic structures of **Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Nev., Ariz.)** was produced by the park staff and their partners. Students participated in the filming, which will be available on DVD and through the local school television station. ◆

Five ParKids workshops were conducted in **Yellowstone National Park's (Wyo., Mont., Idaho)** local communities during summer 2008. ParKids teaches "youth through youth" to create educational products such as video casts, plays, and postcards to share with community members and town visitors. ◆

Yellowstone National Park (Wyo., Mont., Idaho) hired additional seasonal rangers at its visitor centers to assist with the Junior Ranger and Young Scientist programs that reached over 24,400 children in 2008. This was the highest annual participation in the history of these programs. ◆ ■

97%

Park visitors who are satisfied with their experience—the highest rate in more than a decade.

Students write in their journals as part of a curriculum-based program at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park (Ore.) that teaches the power of observation and the importance of data to scientific study. The program is supported by the Lewis and Clark National Park Association.

"Centennial funds allow us to take the lessons of women's rights and antislavery movements into classrooms to reach thousands of students who may never be able to visit the park."

Tina Orcutt, Superintendent,
Women's Rights National Historical Park (N.Y.)

Director Bomar and former first lady Mrs. Rosalynn Carter congratulate a Junior Ranger at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (Ga.).

Student Conservation Association interns learn about tide pools in the ocean education program at Point Reyes National Seashore (Calif.), in partnership with the Point Reyes National Seashore Association.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Centennial Challenge:

Number of projects: **42**
Total Investment: **$12 million**
Partner Contribution: **$6.4 million**

Designed 15 new interpretive exhibits

Implemented 36 projects using new technologies such as computer and web activities, podcasts, or multi-media

More than 50 teachers participated in the Centennial Teacher Fellows program, reaching an estimated 650 students throughout the year

Added a Junior Ranger component to 11 educational programs

Operational Enhancements:

At 97 parks, new educational materials resulted in a 22-percent increase in the number of youth participating in educational programs

Hired 25 interns through the Junior Ranger Ambassadors program to create new Junior Ranger programs, bringing the total to 325 nationwide

Professional Excellence

At Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (Wash.), seasonal rangers and maintenance employees Elizabeth O'Casey, Michael O'Casey, and Ian Fair, hired through the Centennial Initiative, bring fresh perspectives to the NPS and help prepare us for a time when they will lead the organization.

© Sara Lee

The National Park Service demonstrates management excellence worthy of the treasures entrusted to our care.

Preserving the Passion

National Park Service employees are passionate about their work and dedicated to our mission. We work in parks and in communities, helping neighborhoods to preserve their history and create community trails.

No matter our titles, our commitment is the same—to care for America's special places. The Centennial Initiative is preparing new leaders, building expertise, and increasing the National Park Service's capacity to serve a growing and changing nation.

BY 2016, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL:

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals. ●

Attain highest employee satisfaction rate of all federal agencies. ■

Provide park managers with a structured professional development curriculum to apply best practices and superior leadership. ◆

Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission. ▲

Reduce number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent. ❖

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE:

Rangers at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (Calif.) use radio collars to track endangered California mountain lions. The data they collect help the NPS and partner state organizations to understand and conserve the population.

EXAMPLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Park staff used the Student Temporary Employment Program hiring authority to improve the diversity of the workforce. This enabled the parks in the **National Capital Region** to increase the representation of minority employees by over 100 percent from the previous year. ●

Visitor understanding and appreciation of park importance improved to 90 percent in 2008. The Centennial Initiative will serve as a catalyst to create a more strategic communications capacity to connect with non-visitors to improve the understanding of the National Park Service mission. ▲

The National Park Service had a 10-percent reduction in employee lost time cases over the past year under our Safety, Health, and Return to Employment initiative. ❖

"The Centennial Challenge provided a new level of importance to our project. Our donors appreciated seeing that the work we are doing is a part of the broader vision of the National Park Service."

Deb Yandala, CEO,
Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association

By adding seasonal rangers, park search and rescue teams like this one at Acadia National Park (Maine) are able to respond more effectively to emergencies.

Tara Morrison, African Burial Ground National Monument (N.Y.) Superintendent, charts the future of the National Park Service at a leadership workshop.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Centennial Challenge:

Number of projects: 4
Total Investment: $497,000
Partner Contribution: $248,500

80 superintendents and park managers participated in leadership roundtable discussions at the NPS **Conservation Study Institute (Vt.)**

1,000 representatives of organizations that are committed to addressing climate change and environmental sustainability attended a workshop at the Institute at the Golden Gate (Calif.)

At **Bandelier National Monument (N.M.),** 66 affiliated Pueblo members and 28 Hispanic community members participated in focus groups to share ideas on how to make parks more relevant to their communities

Operational Enhancements:

Hired 3,000 additional seasonal rangers and staff to assist with maintenance, interpretation, education, or law enforcement duties

Hired 44 new volunteer coordinators to improve parks' abilities to attract talented volunteers

MAINTAINING **CENTENNIAL MOMENTUM**

Friendship of Salem, a replica of a tall ship built in 1797, is a sailing "centennial ambassador," taking the story of the National Park Service, Salem Maritime National Historical Park (Mass.), and the adjacent Essex National Heritage Area (Mass.) to ports throughout New England.

Visitors are invited to come aboard to learn about their seafaring heritage.

The Department of the Interior and the National Park Service will build on the first-year successes of the Centennial Initiative as we prepare together for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service.

This year was just the beginning.

In the coming year, the National Park Service will continue our proud tradition of public service and steadfast dedication to our mission. We look forward to our centennial not simply as a celebration, but with excitement and anticipation about the work ahead in our second century. Between now and 2016, we will prepare America's national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment, and we will invite all Americans to enjoy their national parks and to join us in caring for America's best idea.

2016

IN 2009, WE WILL:

Complete the planned Centennial Challenge projects and programs. These important projects and programs, solicited from parks throughout the nation, have partner commitments and will enhance the parks and the experiences of their visitors.

Collaborate with the 111th Congress to support continued funding to re-engage Americans with their national parks, increase the capacity of the National Park System, and prepare the next generation of park leaders. We have enjoyed the stalwart support of visionary leaders in Congress, and look forward to continuing to work with a broad coalition of supporters who care for these unique American treasures.

Share ideas with Congress about how projects and programs in national parks provide considerable economic benefits to communities and, therefore, to the nation. National parks are the ideal places to put a green jobs corps to work to reduce backlogged maintenance and to inspire an environmental conscience by engaging citizens in park stewardship.

Welcome new ideas and opportunities and continue to focus all existing resources on achieving our centennial goals, not only the enhanced operations funding and the Centennial Challenge, but also funding for the work of the National Park Service as a whole.

"The coming of the 2016 centennial of the National Park System is an opportunity to restore the luster of our national parks and inspire future generations to protect these national treasures."

U.S. Senator Ken Salazar (D-Colo.)—
Introductory Statement on the National Park Centennial Fund Act, April 3, 2008

The Honorable Ken Salazar was confirmed as the 50th Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior on January 20, 2009.

Children enjoy a hike along a mountain stream at North Cascades National Park (Wash.).

Connecting children with the outdoors is essential to creating future national park stewards.

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THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE THANKS OUR 2008 CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE PARTNERS

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