

National Park Service
2002 Environmental Achievement Awards
Winner

Death Valley Sustainability Committee,
Death Valley National Park

The remoteness of Death Valley National Park requires that waste generated at the Park be transported long distances to be disposed of properly. Therefore, the more waste that is generated, the more the Park must pay in transportation costs and the more air pollution is released into the atmosphere. Additionally, the only available nearby landfill in Pahrump, NV is slated to shut down in the next two years if the waste stream is not reduced. Given these circumstances, waste reduction was necessary to control costs and sustain the operation of Death Valley National Park. Fortunately, three individuals proactively formed a partnership to increase awareness and participation in the recycling program through better signage, advertising, education, and placement of collection sites.



Paper Recycling at DEVA

The Death Valley Sustainability Committee - Ainsley Holeso (National Park Service), Craig Peterson (Xanterra – a concessionaire), and Lloyd “Tree” Crabtree (China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station – Department of Defense) - recognized that each of their organizations alone could not adequately reduce the waste stream. Holeso pursued a partnership with Xanterra and China Lake, and formed a team to address different aspects of the waste problem. Peterson made the most of Xanterra’s limited funds and authorized the company to create homemade recycling bins. Tree facilitated the exchange of vital infrastructure by helping the Park procure military surplus recycling bins, storage bins, and bailers. Together, they developed an incredibly effective recycling program.

In FY 2001, the recycling program was successful in diverting over 100 tons of material from the local landfill and saving \$5000 in landfill fees. Before the program was implemented, both the NPS and Xanterra were making daily runs to the landfill with full garbage trucks. Now, they only need to make *one trip per week*. These award winners created a model for partnerships between Parks, their concessionaires, their community, and other government facilities. The program continues to grow, and visitors to Death Valley National Park can enjoy the fact that these recycling efforts will help future generations enjoy the Park for years to come.