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SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS RECEIVED 2013/2014 TICKET TO RIDE GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

(Friday, August 1, 2014) Three Rivers, CA – Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park was selected to receive a 2013/2014 “[Ticket to Ride](#)” grant from the [National Park Foundation](#) (NPF), the official charity of America’s national parks. The Ticket to Ride program, supported by a \$500,000 grant from the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund, helps students explore the outdoors by providing transportation and program support to national parks around the country.

“Providing the means for America’s youth to experience all that our national park system has to offer is imperative,” said Neil Mulholland, president and CEO of the National Park Foundation. “Disney’s support has helped make it possible for us to engage thousands of young people in life changing park experiences, and ultimately inspiring the next generation of park enthusiasts.”

Now in its second year and with continued support from the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund and Disney Friends for Change, “Ticket to Ride” provides financial resources for transportation, in-park educational programming, and meals that make national park field trips possible for schools across the country. The grant from Disney will help more than 60,000 students to experience location-based learning in their local national parks this year. Disney is committed to connecting kids to nature, ensuring they appreciate and understand the beauty and value of our natural resources.

Due to this grant, in collaboration with the Kiwanis Division 18 Foundation, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks has been able to provide a three-day, experiential outdoor learning program called “Sequoia for Youth” for seventh- and eighth-grade students from agricultural communities of the San Joaquin Valley. In the company of National Park Service rangers and classroom teachers, students spend most of the three days in the outdoors. They explore the natural world in depth and learn about the watershed that links the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks to the agricultural hub of the San Joaquin Valley and its neighboring cities. This life-changing outdoor immersion program instills a lifelong curiosity for national parks and the outdoors, while helping to build the next generation of national park stewards. Last winter’s program served students from Dinuba, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake. This program will continue in 2015.

According to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park Ranger Dani Crawford, *“At the end of the three-day program, the kids often give me a big hug, and tell me that they wish they never had to leave, and that they’ll never forget their time in the park.”*

For many students, the Ticket to Ride field trip will be their first visit to a national park. Recognizing that once in the parks a world of experiential learning opens up, the National Park Foundation and the [National Park Service](#) are dedicated to providing this critical access to the parks. Through these field trips, young people discover their natural, cultural and historical heritage, participate in volunteer and service-learning activities, enjoy recreational opportunities and most importantly, begin a lifelong relationship with their national parks.

In addition to the grant, Disney’s Friends for Change – a program that inspires kids and families to make a positive impact on their world by helping people and the planet – developed a [public service announcement \(PSA\)](#) that will air on Disney Channel and Disney Online. The spot encourages kids and families to explore the outdoors, whether at a local, state, or national park. Disney Friends for Change also created an online action kit (disney.com/friends) that helps families plan a park visit in four easy steps and provides ideas on park activities ranging from hikes to wildlife exploration.

For more information about Ticket to Ride, corporate partners and ways to support this and the other exceptional National Park Foundation programs, go to www.nationalparks.org.

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

You are the owner of 84 million acres of the world’s most treasured memorials, landscapes, ecosystems, and historic sites -- all protected in America’s more than 400 national parks. Chartered by Congress, the National Park Foundation is the official charity of America’s national parks. We work hand in hand with the National Park Service to connect you and all Americans to the parks, and to make sure that they are preserved for the generations who will follow. Join us in supporting your national parks -- this is your land. www.nationalparks.org.

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