

Western
National Parks
Association

WNPA | FY18
Annual Report



Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

In partnership with the National Park Service since 1938, Western National Parks Association (WNPA) advances education, interpretation, research, and community engagement to ensure national parks are increasingly valued by all.

WNPA provides aid to parks in two forms, direct aid and indirect aid. In FY18 WNPA provided more than \$7,939,000 in total aid to parks, a 10 percent increase over FY17.

The amount of direct aid provided was more than \$645,000, a 24 percent increase over FY17ⁱ. The majority of direct aid was used to support WNPA's direct annual aid program, which helped fund 580 direct annual aid requests. Some of the uses of direct aid in FY18 included funding 10 research grants, producing more than 35,000 Junior Ranger publications and products to give to visitors free of charge at outreach events, and supporting more than 40 educational programs, events, cultural festivals, demonstrations, and workshops at partner parks.

The amount of indirect aid provided was more than \$7,293,000, a 9 percent increase over FY17. Uses for indirect aid primarily consisted of paying staff in the parks but also included general and administrative support to parks, including providing creative services, publishing, purchasing, finance, information technology, and human resources support out of WNPA's Home Office in Tucson, Arizona. Additionally, WNPA continues to advance education, interpretation, research, and community engagement by hosting programs at its Home Office. This year the programming department hosted 69 events for nearly 3,000 attendees.

Every year WNPA strives to strengthen partnerships, develop and support new and innovative park initiatives, and remain an unwavering advocate and resource for partner parks. The following demonstrates a few of WNPA's many accomplishments from FY18.



ⁱIncludes cash expenses of \$25,844 for utility costs at Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site and \$30,000 for WNPA's sponsorship of TFOB, not reported on forms 990 and 1040.

Parks & Partners

Parks & Partners is a rare opportunity for WNPA and NPS staff to meet in person for training. Meeting in person allows staff members to get a better understanding of not only each organization, but of one another. As a continuation of the first Parks & Partners training in 2016, the 2018 training focused on enhancing the partnership between WNPA, the NPS, and other cooperating associations. Twenty training sessions occurred over a four-day period, including “Mission and Purpose of Cooperating Associations,” “Bridging NPS and Cooperating Association Cultures,” “Enhancing Public Satisfaction and Visitor Experience Through Park Stores,” “Accountability, Integrity and Transparency,” “Developing a Park Operating Plan,” and “Driving Results Through Strategic Planning.”

Parks & Partners provides a forum to discuss goals and objectives, share best practices and new learnings, celebrate successes, and promote new initiatives. In 2018 there were 150 participants, including six WASO and regional representatives, 49 NPS representatives from partner parks (a 9 percent increase from 2016), more than 70 WNPA staff (including field staff, Home Office staff, and regional operations managers), six NPS representatives from parks not affiliated with WNPA, and eight representatives from other cooperating associations.



PARKS & PARTNERS 2018

Training

Tucson, Arizona • July 2018

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Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park



I Hike for Health Challenge

In FY18 five WNPA partner parks (Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Chiricahua National Monument, Fort Bowie National Historic Site, Coronado National Memorial, and Tumacacori National Historical Park) launched a hiking challenge called I Hike for Health. I Hike for Health encourages people to explore their natural surroundings through exercise, just like Healthy Parks Healthy People. Visitors were challenged to hike a predetermined number of miles at each park and show a ranger photographic proof of their hike to receive an exclusive pin. Participating parks used direct annual aid from WNPA to produce 6,000 of these pins.

The National Park Experience Pavilion at the Tucson Festival of Books

The Tucson Festival of Books is one of the largest book festivals in the United States with more than 130,000 visitors annually. 2018 was WNPA's eighth year participating. WNPA and 20 of its partner parks welcomed thousands of festival-goers of all ages to The National Park Experience Pavilion, where they had the opportunity to participate in educational activities, learn about national parks, and interact with NPS rangers. The Junior Ranger Jamboree activity, which guides kids through The National Parks Experience Pavilion to talk to rangers about each park's unique nature, history, geology, and ecology, had 1,246 participants. Dozens of fourth graders and their families learned how to earn a free annual park pass as part of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Every Kid in a Park program.

WNPA also held its annual essay contest in partnership with Tucson's Metropolitan Education Commission. This year's essay contest invited Southern Arizona students in grades 9 through 12 to answer "Why do people need parks? Why do parks need people?". Essay winners were honored on stage during the event and had the opportunity to meet WNPA-featured author Florence Williams, who wrote *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*.

