

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eastern National and Western National Parks Association Receive Capacity Building Grant from National Park Foundation

New grant funds Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging initiative for the two largest nonprofit cooperating associations supporting our national parks.

October 29, 2022 - The National Park Foundation recently announced that 41 park partner organizations have received a Strong Parks, Strong Communities grant including Eastern National and Western National Parks Association, the two largest nonprofit cooperating associations who support a combined total of 241 national parks across the country.

This grant will enable these two organizations to identify gaps and opportunities to incorporate justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging into their internal operations, partner relations, and service delivery. The results of this joint initiative will also create a toolkit of shared resources and learning opportunities for other park partners of all sizes to utilize in their own organizations.

“Our organizations are uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in integrating justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging principles into our cultures and practices impacting millions of park visitors each year. As long-time partners of the National Park Service, we are also poised to help accelerate the National Park Service’s goal of creating public lands that are accessible and inclusive of the people, stories, and experiences these places protect.” said Eastern National’s President and CEO, Kevin Kissling and Western National Parks Association’s CEO, Marie Buck, in a joint statement.

The Strong Parks, Strong Communities grants help address park partner needs most urgent to the parks they serve. The grants will enable partner organizations to invest in strategic planning,

community engagement, improving visitor experience in parks, increasing organizational relevancy and resiliency, and launching new fundraising campaigns.

“Philanthropy and partnership are essential to the success of America’s national parks,” said Will Shafroth, president and CEO of the National Park Foundation. “New funding will help park partners across the country to build capacity, improve strategic planning and fundraising initiatives, and to more deeply engage the communities and national parks they serve. Ultimately, investing in the growing community of park partners is a commitment to expanding and transforming the role philanthropy plays to ensure national parks reach their full potential.”

[Strong Parks, Strong Communities](#) is a collective effort to grow national park philanthropy across the country. Working together on this initiative, the National Park Foundation, National Park Service, and Friends Alliance enhance local philanthropic organizations, bringing park philanthropy to an elevated level. The Strong Parks, Strong Communities capacity building grant program is made possible by the National Park Foundation Board of Directors.

About Eastern National

Eastern National is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit cooperating association, that promotes the public’s understanding and support of America’s national parks and other public trust partners by providing quality educational experiences, products, and services. Learn more at www.easternnational.org

About Western National Parks Association

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) is a nonprofit education partner of the National Park Service. WNPA supports parks across the West, developing products, services, and programs that enhance the visitor experience, understanding, and appreciation of national parks. Learn more at www.wnpa.org

About the National Park Foundation

The National Park Foundation is the official charity of America’s national parks and nonprofit partner to the National Park Service. Chartered by Congress in 1967, the National Park Foundation raises private funds to help protect more than 84 million acres of national parks through critical conservation and preservation efforts and connect all Americans with their incomparable natural landscapes, vibrant culture, and rich history. Learn more at www.nationalparks.org.

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