

2020

ANNUAL
REPORT



NATIONAL PARKS
TRAVELER

LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

Rebecca Latson
Grand Teton NP

National parks and the wondrous expanses, stories, and connections they showcase are, unfortunately, in peril.

Everglades National Park officially is at risk, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Danger. But across the National Park System, many of the more than 400 units are confronted by development pressures, overcrowding, the crush of infrastructure, structural dilapidation, and an invasion of nonnative species.

National Parks Traveler, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit media organization, brings the majestic, illuminating, and revealing stories of the parks to a global audience.

We take readers underground at Wind Cave National Park, on the water at Everglades National Park, to the roof of Grand Teton National Park, down the Colorado through Grand Canyon National Park, and into the backcountry of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.

But, since 2005 we also have been recounting the park system's stories of decay, threats, underfunding, and conflicting management missions. We do this to educate and inform an audience that collectively as a nation owns the parks and should know how they're being managed.

No other media outlet focuses its daily coverage solely on the environmental, scientific, and newsworthy aspects of national parks and protected areas as does the Traveler. It's a role that grows more and more important as more and more news organizations go dark. Since 2004, almost 1,800 news operations have gone out of business.

National Parks Traveler's focus on the parks is watched by other media. The Washington Post, CNN, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, National Geographic, Outside, and other outlets monitor us for story leads.

Among the organizations that value Traveler's journalism and reach, and which financially support our work, are The Pew Charitable Trusts, Cardno, Nova Scotia Tourism, the Society of Environmental Journalists, the Water Desk at the University of Colorado that is funded by the Walton Family Foundation, and Western National Parks Association.

Nearly 3 million readers and listeners from around the world followed the Traveler's coverage in 2020, and the organization's social media footprint has more than 325,000 followers.

With your help, we can reach more.

Kurt Repanshek



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Grand Canyon NP

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Denise Barnhart
Golden Gate NRA

RICH AND DIVERSE COVERAGE

National Parks Traveler is a news organization. We follow accepted journalistic practices in pursuing stories. Our coverage across the National Park System ranges from search-and-rescue missions and campground openings and closings to the impact of national activities and developments that happen both inside and outside the parks.

We report on scientific research and discoveries and entertain you with travelogues so you can make the most out of your national park adventure. We work with a cadre of freelance and volunteer writers, photographers, and broadcasters who, combined, have more than a century of professional experience.



Above: Kurt Repanshek interviews researcher Matt Kaplinski at Glen Canyon NRA / Inset top: Photojournalist Pat Cone at Lees Ferry / Inset right: Filming Repanshek and Ed Keable, superintendent of Grand Canyon NP



OUR IMPACT AND REACH

National Parks Traveler generates more than 1,000 stories a year, with articles and podcasts spanning the National Park System from Alaska to the Caribbean that reach an audience of millions from around the world.

Coverage cannot always be carefully planned out and executed. On any given day there might be exciting research or discoveries coming from a park, a natural disaster that impacts parks and their visitors, or some other news that might affect visitors. In addition to covering those topics, we develop feature-length stories to help readers make the most out of their national park visits, or to examine an issue that merits greater depth and explanation.

As 2021 dawned, the Traveler expanded its regular coverage by moving into Canada, where Jennifer Bain, an award-winning journalist and former travel editor for the Toronto Star, directs coverage. Through June 30, 2021, Canadian readership was up 100 percent.

As the only media organization focused solely on national parks and protected areas, we also watch for behind-the-scenes stories that affect the parks or how visitors might experience them.

STANDOUT STORIES

Traveler Special Report: Is Padre Island's Renowned Sea Turtle Program Slipping Away?

After the National Park Service recruited Dr. Donna Shaver to build a sea turtle science program at Padre Island National Seashore, a role that saw her bring the program to international prominence, the agency now appears to be squandering her success and hoping she'll retire.



Rebecca Latson

Fort Laramie, An Overlooked Trove Of American History

When the U.S. Army in 1849 bought a fur trading post near the confluence of the Laramie and North Platte rivers on the windswept plains of the Wyoming Territory, it wasn't exactly a turnkey operation.

Giant Sequoias Are Being Tested – Perhaps As Never Before

The giant sequoias, the world's most massive trees, have been in California's Sierra Nevada for 200 million years. Now this species that stood when dinosaurs walked the Earth faces new threats. Is its longevity at risk?

Exploring Canada's Most Accessible Arctic National Park

North of the Arctic Circle, our Twin Otter soars over the Mackenzie Delta's maze of waterways and patchwork of tundra, darts across the Beaufort Sea and passes over the British Mountains before shaking and shuddering its way down to Sheep Creek International Airport. Well, that's what the hand-painted sign says at the end of the grassy wilderness landing area. Parks Canada marks the spot as Imniarvik base camp in Ivvavik National Park, a place that just 100 or so people get to see each year in the extreme northwest corner of the Yukon.

Navajo Artisans Struggle, Adapt To Hubbell Trading Post Closure

A year-long closure of Hubbell Trading Post National Monument due to COVID-19 has disrupted a century-old model of buying and selling Navajo artwork and accelerated a shift of the art scene online.

The Future of Confederate Monuments

As the nation continues to reckon with its racist history, legislation calling for the removal of Confederate commemorative works from national parkland is likely to be reconsidered this year.

2nd Annual Threatened And Endangered Parks

While the coronavirus pandemic largely dominated news about the National Park System in 2020, there are more serious threats and impacts to the parks, ranging from noise and light pollution to oil exploration and even the deterioration of historic structures in the parks that need to be addressed.

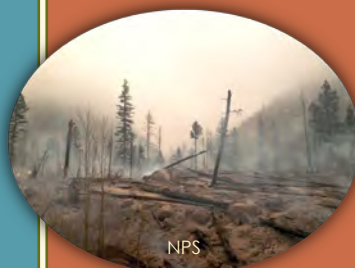
MORE STORIES

"Crab Island:" An Environmental And Safety Challenge For The National Park Service

Rebirth And Recovery At Whiskeytown

Essay | It's Time For A CCC Revival For National Parks And Other Public Lands

Covid Spurred RV Sales, But Can National Park Campgrounds Handle Them?



NPS

Traveler Special Report: Coping With 21st Century Wildfires

Escaping The Coronavirus Pandemic On The John Muir Trail

National Park Service Continues To Grapple With Diversity In Workforce

NATIONAL PARK TRAVELER'S WEEKLY PODCAST



Voices from across the National Park System appeared on National Parks Traveler's weekly podcast series.

Among the guests were Dr. Dave Conlin, chief of the National Park Service's Submerged Resources Center; Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Cam Sholly; Dr. Ilsa Kuffner, the lead USGS investigator working on elkhorn coral transplants; National Park Foundation President and CEO Will Shafroth and Friends of Acadia President and CEO David MacDonald; Cape Lookout National Seashore Superintendent Jeff West; Richard Emmett, director of the Blue Ridge Music Center; and Dr. Jacob Job, research associate and listening lab director at the Sound and Light Ecology Program at Colorado State University.

Traveler Editor Kurt Repanshek and Contributing Editor Lynn Riddick combined to generate 52 episodes during the past year. The shows were produced by sound recording engineer Jess Repanshek. More than 200,000 downloads of Traveler podcasts were recorded through June 30, 2021.

The 40- to 50-minute programs are distributed through libsyn.com, which sends them to iTunes, Facebook, Twitter, radio.com, Spotify, YouTube, and other podcast outlets. **Listeners came from more than 70 countries** to catch at least one episode.



Yellowstone National Park Superintendent
Cam Sholly | NPS/Jacob W. Frank



**LISTEN
NOTES**

GLOBAL RANK
TOP 3%
OUT OF ~ 2,393,928
PODCASTS



THE COUNTRY'S NO. 1
NATIONAL PARK BLOG
AND
BEST NATIONAL PARK PODCAST

LOOKING AHEAD

With the coronavirus pandemic seemingly waning, National Parks Traveler looks to have more on-the-ground coverage from the National Park System in the coming year. Special projects will include one on the impact of invasive species in the park system, and another on how the long-running drought has impacted park units in the Southwest. The Traveler also looks to further expand its coverage of Canada's national parks in the coming year.

A substantial upgrade of the architectural software of the Traveler's flagship website also is planned, and a regular monthly webinar event is in development.



MEDIA ATTENTION

Rebecca Latson
Yellowstone NP

National Parks Traveler garners attention from other media outlets from time to time due to its unique role as the only news organization focused on covering national parks and protected areas.



CHICAGO'S VERY OWN
WGN9

During National Park Week, CNN's Brian Stelter had Editor Kurt Repanshek on his [Reliable Sources](#) podcast to talk about America's treasured places.

Repanshek talks about five hidden gems in a conversation with the anchors at [Chicago's WGN-TV](#) from May 2021.



Also, John DiPietro interviewed Repanshek for [The Camper Report](#) that aired early in April about RVing in our national parks.

2020 FINANCIALS (preliminary numbers)

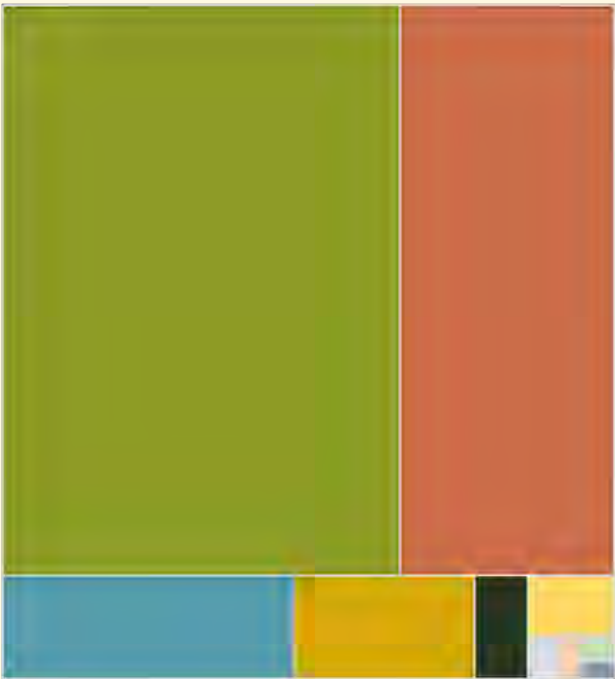
Tony Bynum
Glacier National Park



REVENUE

Direct Public Grants	\$	7,500.00	5.64%
Corporate Contributions	\$	25,000.00	18.80%
Ind., Business Contributions	\$	92,611.29	69.66%
Other Income	\$	7,840.71	5.90%

TOTAL REVENUE \$ 132,952.00 100.00%



EXPENDITURES

Business Registration Fees	\$	194.35	0.23%
Other Business Expenses	\$	273.67	0.33%
Accounting Fees	\$	6,143.21	7.34%
Outside Contract Services	\$	45,986.74	54.97%
Postage, Mailing Service	\$	1,054.88	1.26%
Printing and Copying	\$	112.04	0.13%
Supplies	\$	1,123.65	1.34%
Payroll Expenses	\$	24,801.50	29.65%
Travel	\$	3,788.77	4.53%
Travel Meals	\$	181.09	0.22%

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 83,659.90 100.00%

NET OPERATING REVENUE \$ 49,292.10



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