



Providing For Yosemite's Future

Philanthropy's Role in Yosemite and in Our U.S. National Parks Fact Sheet of Milestones

Even before Congress created the National Park Service in 1916, philanthropists helped to create our stunning national parks. Their commitment remains just as deep today. Today's park benefactors include foundations, families, corporations and individuals. Below are facts on the impact of philanthropy in Yosemite National Park and in other National Parks.

Early Support for Yosemite

- **Yosemite Valley Chapel.** In the early 1900s, pennies from schoolchildren helped build the chapel.
- **Tioga Road Donated.** In 1915, Stephen T. Mather raised funds as then U.S. Secretary of the Interior and bought the Tioga Pass, a private road, for \$15,500 and donated it to the federal government.
- **National Parks Portfolio.** Mather spent \$48,000 of his own money and contributions he raised from the railroads to help publish the National Parks Portfolio in 1916, which helped persuade Congress to create the National Park Service. Mather became the Park Service's founding director.
- **Yosemite Museum Association Formed.** In 1923, The Yosemite Museum Association, later the Yosemite Association, is formed to administer private funds to build the first museum in a national park, which opened in 1926 thanks to funding by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial.

Yosemite Conservancy Support

Yosemite Conservancy has over 90 years of experience preserving and protecting Yosemite National Park for current and future generations. The Conservancy established an early model for many of today's national park nonprofit partners.

- The first fundraising organization, 1923.
- The first cooperating association, 1923.
- The first museum in a national park, 1926.
- Today, there are more than 65 national-park cooperating associations, serving more than 400 areas of the national park system.

Yosemite Conservancy inspires people to support projects and programs that preserve Yosemite National Park and enrich the visitor experience. Thanks to generous donors, **the Conservancy has provided \$119 million in grants** to the park to restore trails and habitat, protect wildlife, provide educational programs, and more. The Conservancy's guided adventures, volunteer opportunities, wilderness services and bookstores help visitors of all ages to connect with Yosemite. Highlight include:

- **Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias.** In 2014, work began on a \$40 million improvement project for the Mariposa Grove funded by \$20 million from the National Park Service and \$20 million in private contributions by Yosemite Conservancy donors. With the goal of preserving a natural wonder and enhancing the experience of visitors, crews have been transforming the grove by removing asphalt, planting native vegetation, improving the trail system and developing new educational exhibits. The Mariposa Grove reopens in June 2018.

- **Yosemite Falls.** \$13.5 million went to the Lower Yosemite Fall project, with more than \$11 million from 14,000 contributors, setting a new world-class standard for improving iconic natural locations. A few of the project elements included: habitat restoration of 52 acres; creation of handicapped-accessible trails leading the viewing plaza and main bridge; reconstruction of four bridges and the removal of two; new restrooms and picnic area; new boardwalks over sensitive habitat; and educational exhibits.
- **Yosemite Trails.** \$13.5 million effort to restore popular hiking trails throughout the park. Funding for additional trail improvements continues today.
- **Restoring Scenic Viewing Areas.** Funding for Olmsted Point, Tunnel View, Glacier Point and Half Dome View restored some of the most beautiful, environmentally sensitive and visitor-friendly scenic viewing areas in the world through habitat restoration, trailhead enhancements, educational signage and other improvements.
- **Youth in Yosemite Programs.** More than \$1 million annually for about 13 programs for youth of all ages to create a new generation of park stewards.
- **Wildlife Protection.** Funding has gone to reintroduce the Peregrine falcon and bighorn sheep and to protect Great Gray Owls, Pacific Fishers, Songbirds and more. Thousands of bear-proof food lockers throughout Yosemite keep bears healthy and visitors safe.
- **Habitat Restoration.** Millions in contributions have gone to protect and preserve Tenaya Lake's shoreline and wetlands; restore and protect meadows, including Carlon, Cooke's, Crane Flat, Lukens, Stoneman, Wawona, and others; and to restore Harden Lake, among many projects.

Moments In United States Park Philanthropy

- **Muir Woods.** In 1907, Marin County, California, residents Mr. and Mrs. William Kent donated the land that became Muir Woods National Monument.
- **The Rockefeller Family.** John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and his son Laurance S. Rockefeller gave millions to expand Acadia National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and Yosemite National Park. Their contributions established Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Virgin Islands National Park.
- **The Mellon Family Foundations.** Between 1947 and 1971, millions in donations led to the creation of national seashores and lakeshores, and preservation of Redwood National Park and Rocky Mountain National Parks. In 1990, the Richard King Mellon Foundation donated another \$10.5 million for lands at Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Petersburg battlefields; Pecos National Historical Park; and Shenandoah National Park.
- **Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Great Hall.** The largest park fundraising venture to date. Corporations, individuals, foundations, and nonprofits contributed \$87 million to restore the Statue of Liberty and \$160 million to restore Ellis Island's Great Hall by 1990. Over \$500 million has been raised to date. Pennies from U.S. school children paid for the Statue of Liberty's platform structure.
- **Golden Gate National Recreation Area.** In 1998, the Haas Family Fund donated a \$13 million lead gift toward a \$34 million campaign funded by many that transformed the Presidio's Crissy Field at Golden Gate National Recreation Area into a premier shoreline park on San Francisco Bay.
- **Liberty Bell Complex.** In 1998, Walter and Leonore Annenberg gave \$10 million to help develop the new Liberty Bell complex and provide improvements at Independence National Historical Park.
- **Mount Rushmore.** In 1999, a ten-year, \$56 million fundraising drive for improvements was completed at Mount Rushmore National Park through the Mount Rushmore Preservation Fund.

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