

El Mapais National Monument
(courtesy of John Kuehnert, NPS)

WNPA | FY19 Annual Report

Western
National Parks
Association



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.

Overview

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) provides aid to partner parks in two forms, direct aid and indirect aid (known collectively as Aid to Parks). In FY19 WNPA provided nearly \$8 million in total Aid to Parks, which brought total lifetime Aid to Parks to more than \$113 million. However, the 35-day government shutdown was one of the largest business disruptions WNPA faced since its establishment in 1938. Though the shutdown had a negative impact on WNPA's internal staff and Aid to Parks, WNPA looked at the shutdown as a challenge to be embraced. Due to this approach, strong fiscal management, and park collaboration, WNPA can proudly report successes which exemplify our strong partnership.

In FY19 WNPA supported more than 280 park initiatives through direct annual aid. This financial aid supported interpretive programs and events, cultural demonstrations, tribal consultations, publications, community outreach, professional development, internships, and more. Park initiatives such as these are important, as they provide visitors with unique opportunities to meaningfully engage with, connect to, and learn about the parks' culture, history, and more.

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 accomplishments from FY19.



*Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area
(courtesy of NPS)*

Golden Spike National Historical Park 150th Anniversary Celebration

Collaboration, innovation, and commitment are just three words to describe the partnership between WNPA and the NPS. This was showcased in the planning and execution of Golden Spike National Historical Park's 150th Anniversary Celebration. This three-day event celebrated one of the greatest technological achievements of the 1800s — the completion of the first transcontinental railroad across the United States. People from all over the country gathered in the park, celebrating the accomplishment that transported people, materials, and culture across the United States and changed our country forever.



WNPA spent two years preparing for this event, focusing on product development and ensuring appropriate interpretive materials were available. Leading up to the event, WNPA sourced 165 new products, including 25 custom products featuring a special commemorative logo developed by WNPA's marketing and communications team.

Due to product development efforts and collaboration with the NPS, thousands of visitors brought home interpretive products, a reminder of their once-in-a-lifetime experience at Golden Spike NHP.

Hubbell Trading Post ON THE ROAD



Trader Edison Eskeets gives a talk on the weaving process, history, symbolism, and artistry of the rugs (courtesy NPS).

In 2016 WNPA launched Hubbell Trading Post ON THE ROAD, bringing Navajo culture, craft, and history to a broader audience. WNPA strives to increase awareness of Hubbell Trading Post, its important story and significance, and magnificent arts and crafts. The Hubbell Trading Post shows are developed and executed in partnership with NPS units. WNPA develops schedules and programming with partner parks up to 12 months in advance. The park team creates interpretive messaging to incorporate into the show and often there is an activity for Junior Rangers.



Hubbell Trading Post ON THE ROAD at Bandolier National Monument (courtesy NPS).

In FY19 WNPA supported four Hubbell Trading Post ON THE ROAD shows, resulting in hundreds of people discovering and learning about the stories and culture found at Hubbell Trading Post. In FY19 shows took place at The National Parks Store (WNPA's store in Tucson, Arizona), the Tucson Festival Books (at WNPA's sponsored area, The National Park Experience Pavilion), and partner parks Petroglyph National Monument and Bandelier National Monument.

Research Matters

Since 1938 WNPA has funded research projects advancing the management, preservation, and interpretation of our national parks. WNPA supports projects in all fields of scholarly research, including anthropology, archaeology, botany, citizen science, ecology, geology, history, natural history, social science, and zoology.

Conducting a meaningful scientific inquiry is only the beginning of WNPA-funded research. One of our key goals is interpretation — turning research findings into relevant, engaging narratives to both inform and entertain park visitors. Researchers are required to work closely with the host park's chief of interpretation and superintendent. In FY19 more than \$50,000 was awarded in scientific research grants. Below are a few projects which received funding this past year.



Three Decades of Ecological Change: The 2020 Saguaro Census



Investigating Distribution and Abundance of American Pikas at Bandelier National Monument to Illuminate How and Why Change is Occurring



Is the Causative Agent of White-nose Syndrome, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, Present in Carlsbad Caverns National Park Bats?

