

12880 N. Vistoso Village Drive
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wnp.org



2026 NOMINATION PACKET

AWARDS

HONORING OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL PARKS

October 5, 2026

Celebrating Excellence: A Guide to the Awards Program

For over three decades, Western National Parks Association, known as Western National Parks (WNP), has celebrated exceptional service to national parks through its awards program. The ***Emil W. Haury Lifetime Achievement Award*** honors individuals whose scholarly research in national parks and monuments has made a significant and lasting contribution to our understanding and appreciation of these places. The ***Edward B. Danson Award*** recognizes those who have demonstrated outstanding support for WNP and/or national parks, reflecting Edward B. Danson's dedication to preserving and promoting the heritage of the Southwest. The ***Stewart L. Udall Award*** recognizes individuals whose work has enhanced park interpretation, broadened public engagement, or fostered widespread support for parks, carrying forward Stewart L. Udall's legacy of environmental advocacy.

Each award provides an opportunity to recognize individuals whose exceptional contributions have advanced the preservation, understanding, and interpretation of national parks.

Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged, alongside nominations of colleagues, mentors, and other deserving individuals.

Find details about the awards at [WNP | Awards](#) and discover the impact of past recipients at [WNP | Past Honorees](#). To learn more about WNP, visit wnp.org.



General Information

Before Starting a Nomination

- Review the award descriptions and eligibility requirements.
- Review samples of the online nomination forms which include uploads and file naming conventions.
 - [Emil W. Haury Lifetime Achievement Award](#)
 - [Edward B. Danson Award](#)
 - [Stewart L. Udall Award](#)
- Consider self-nominations or nominations of others who meet the award criteria.
- Gather nominee contact information.
- Prepare supporting documents, curriculum vitae (CV)/resume recommended but optional. PDF format required.
- Consider uploading additional supporting materials (max 5 pages). PDF format required.

Tips for Strong Nominations

- Be specific about achievements and measurable impacts.
- Include concrete examples of the nominee's contributions.
- For the Haury Award: Focus on career-long impact rather than single achievements.
- Highlight connections to national parks, monuments, historical sites, etc.
- Include a CV/resume and any relevant supporting documentation when possible.

Submissions

- All nominations must be completed through the WNP website: [WNPA | Awards](#).
- Information supplied is limited to the space provided and submitted on the electronic form.
- Nominations received in any other format will not be accepted.
- If you do not have access to a computer and would like to submit a nomination, contact the Program Administrator.

Selection Process and Timeline

- Program criteria has been established by WNP.
- Nominations will be reviewed and scored by a WNP Selection Committee.
- WNP values and respects all individuals. The selection process ensures fair consideration and equal opportunity for all nominees.

Submissions Open: October 5, 2026

Deadline: December 11, 2026, end of day

Recipients Notified: Week of February 15, 2027

Program Administrator

Please address questions regarding this program to Julie Tainter, senior business services manager, via email at julie.tainter@wnp.org.

Award Offerings

Emil W. Haury Lifetime Achievement Award



Honoring individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to scholarly research in the national parks and monuments over the course of a career or lifetime.

Emil W. Haury, a preeminent archaeologist and anthropologist, devoted his career to chronicling the prehistory of the Southwest, compiling the most complete cultural history of any region in North America. He is most famous for his work at Snaketown, a Hohokam site in Arizona. Haury was the first to claim that the Hohokam were descendants of the Paleoindian Cochise culture. In 1938, he was instrumental in founding the Southwest Monuments Association, renamed Western National Parks Association in 2002. A member of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Park System Advisory Board, Haury died in Tucson, Arizona, in 1992.

Eligibility: Individuals who have demonstrated continuous commitment and contribution to scholarly research in national parks and monuments leading to measurable, long-term, and noteworthy impact with sustained results over a career or lifetime.

Nominees must have displayed a clear personal commitment to the management, preservation, and interpretation of national parks and monuments and to turning research findings into relevant, engaging narratives that both inform and engage the public. The nominee's contribution should be substantial enough to have influenced a particular field by sharing new research findings, new interpretations, or new theoretical analysis to advance a society's knowledge or understanding of the subject.

Requirements: The nominee's body of work must be:

- Deemed exceptional in scholarly research over the course of a career or lifetime.
- Significant in its unique or innovative findings, theoretical constructs, inclusive mentorship, educational approaches, or practices and/or has made exceptional practical application(s) of others' research.
- Represented by a single highly significant book, or a minimum of five publications as primary author in refereed academic journals, or a minimum of eight publications as a secondary author in refereed academic journals, or significant contributions as a presenter at professional conferences, or any combination thereof. The Emil W. Haury Award is a one-time lifetime achievement award.

Edward B. Danson Award

Celebrating individuals who display exceptional support for WNP and/or national parks.



Edward B. Danson, a noted archeologist, made Arizona his home in 1937 and discovered his passion for anthropology there. As director of the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff, he helped reveal the past, reshape the future of the West and preserve the grandeur of the Southwest and the legacy of the first peoples of Arizona. He served on the WNP board of directors and the National Park System Advisory Board and received the Department of Interior Conservation Award in 1986. Danson, who was father of actor Ted Danson, died in 2000 in Sedona, Arizona, at the age of 84.

Eligibility: Current and former National Park Service staff, educators, researchers, museum professionals, cultural heritage specialists, volunteers, donors, advocates, and others who display exceptional support for WNP and national parks through dedicated service, advocacy, partnership development, educational initiatives, volunteer leadership, research and cultural interpretation, or other significant contributions to park preservation and public engagement.

[Review a sample Danson nomination form](#) | [Submit a Danson Award nomination](#)

Stewart L. Udall Award

Saluting those who work to boost park interpretation programs, carry the park message to popular audiences, or rally broad public support for parks.



Stewart L. Udall, a pioneer of the modern environmental movement, was a member of the United States House of Representatives from Arizona's 2nd district from 1954 to 1961, and secretary of the interior from 1961 to 1969 under presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. Under his leadership, the Interior Department aggressively promoted an expansion of federal public lands, adding four national parks, six national monuments, eight national seashores and lakeshores, nine national recreation areas, twenty national historic sites, and fifty-six national wildlife refuges. A former WNP board member from 1984 to 1994, Udall died in 2010 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Eligibility: Authors, poets, artists, photographers, writers, publishers, interpreters, media professionals, policy advocates, and other inspirational conservationists who enhance park interpretation programs, engage audiences with park messages, or build broad public support for parks through educational content, media production, innovative interpretation techniques, advocacy efforts, community outreach, or public engagement initiatives.

[Review a sample Udall nomination form](#) | [Submit a Udall Award nomination](#)