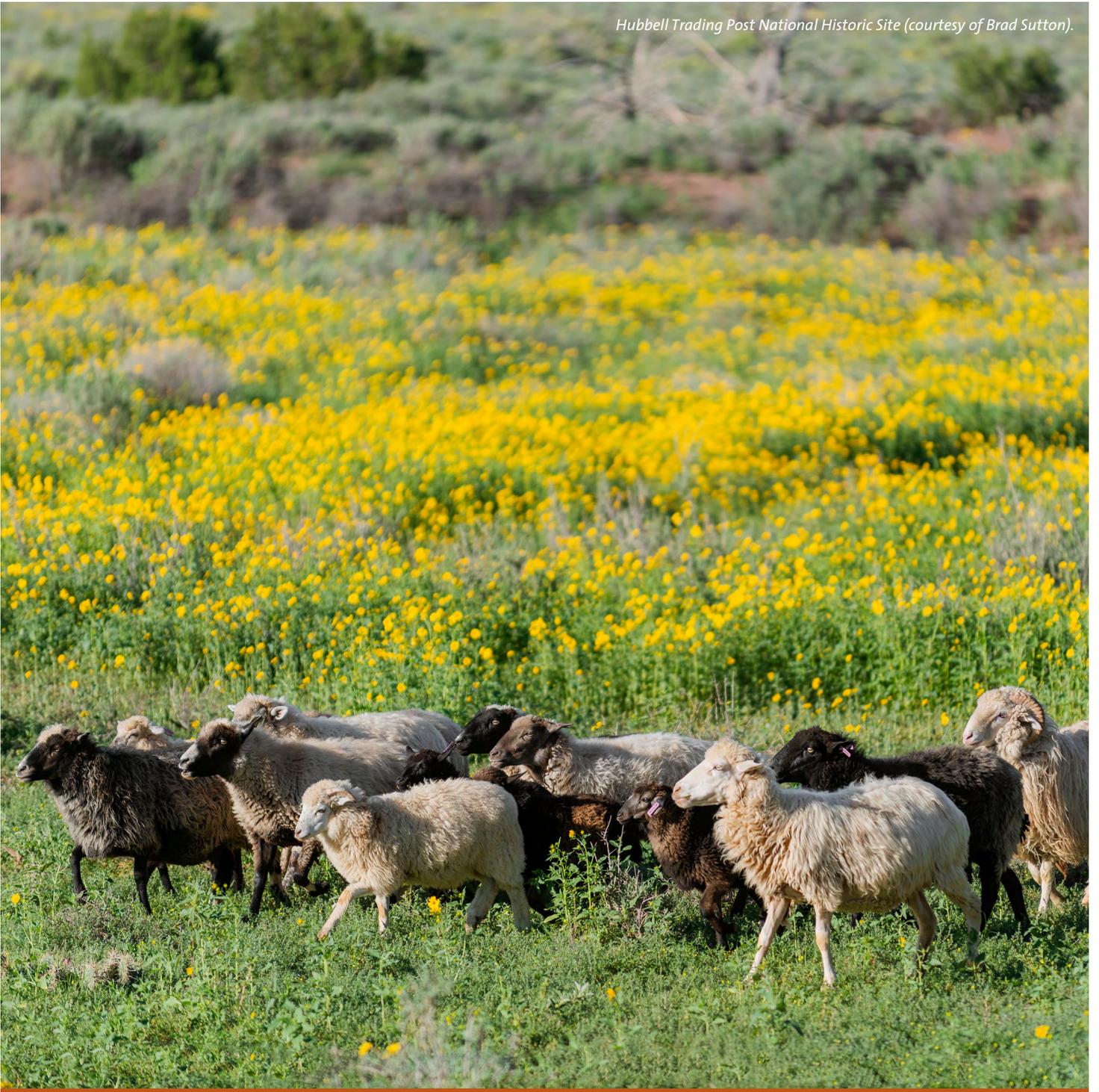


Chaco Culture National Historical Park
(courtesy of Laurie Miller).



Western National Parks Association | FY21
Annual Report

Western
National Parks
Association



In partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) since 1938, Western National Parks Association (WNPA) advances education, interpretation, research, and community engagement to ensure national parks are increasingly valued by all.

Overview Since our founding in 1938, WNPA has provided more than \$126 million in aid to our partner parks, funding educational materials and programs, interpretive initiatives, park research projects, and community engagement programs for NPS. In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), we provided more than \$6.5 million in direct and indirect aid to parks. WNPA staff in park stores provides not only retail assistance to visitors but also interpretive services and park information alongside, and sometimes in place of, NPS park staff.

In FY21, during the COVID-19 pandemic, WNPA revamped strategies and systems and created new opportunities for sharing park information and stories. From centralized purchasing to the launch of a new organizational website, WNPA adapted and evolved through the pandemic to better serve the park visitor. Read on for details of some of our FY21 accomplishments that support the visitor experience, research, and community engagement.



Casa Grande Ruins National Monument (courtesy of Zack Frank)

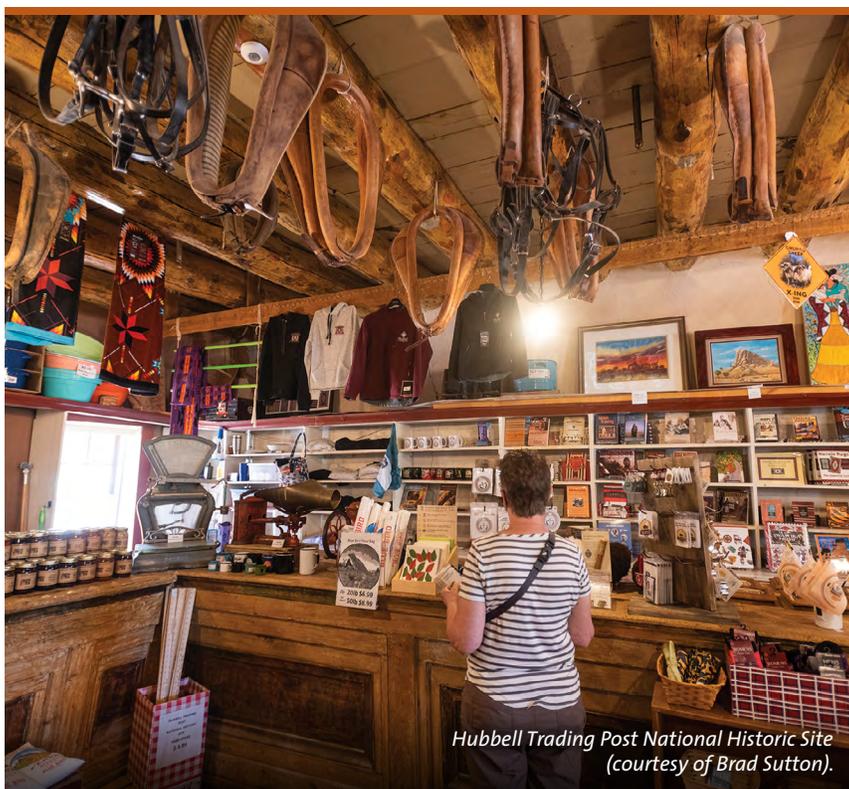
Interpretation: Improving Retail Systems and Interpretive Products

In FY21, WNPA streamlined retail purchasing strategies and systems, converting to centralized buying for more than 70 park stores. WNPA's purchasing and product development teams, in collaboration with retail leadership, is using Retail Pro, a powerful point-of-sale and retail management system, to streamline product purchasing and inventory management. This system, and the data it generates, ensures that park stores have the right inventory at the right time, so every visitor can commemorate their park visit. When many stores faced challenges caused by supply chain issues, WNPA was able to avoid problems via these system improvements.

Centralized purchasing reduced ordering times from eight hours to two hours per park, and teams could ensure that product availability matched visitor demand. In addition to streamlining our internal processes, purchasing teams focused on vendor relationships, negotiating minimum order requirements that improved inventory management. These efforts have strengthened WNPA by reinforcing data-driven decision making, increasing flexibility and stability, and improving our ability to meet ever-changing visitor needs by deepening visitor knowledge of natural, cultural, and historical resources in parks through interpretive products.



Canyon de Chelly National Monument Store
(courtesy of Brad Sutton).



Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site
(courtesy of Brad Sutton).

Research: Sharing Results and Stories of Research Projects We Support

Grant from National Park Foundation Helps Fund New Website for WNPA

WNPA was awarded a Capacity Building Grant from the National Park Foundation through the Strong Parks, Strong Communities program, a collective effort to grow national park philanthropy that provides specific aid to park partners like WNPA to build capacity to better serve partner parks, visitors, and surrounding communities. Such funding supports resources, research, and activities to help parks tell their own stories and to aid management, preservation, and interpretation of parks.

With these funds, WNPA created a website that

- Communicates WNPA's mission and how it is fulfilled.
- Delivers accessible interpretive and educational programming.
- Builds awareness and fosters support of national parks and the mission of NPS.

Western National Parks Association

Discover Our Parks

Interesting and important history and culture; spectacular nature that brings inspiration, peace and calm; fun recreation; fascinating science—it's all here at the 70+ Western national parks we support. Find a place to visit!

State: New Mexico | Activities: Any Activities | Interests: Caves | Search

Need help finding the perfect park? | Clear Filters

3 places meet your criteria

- Carlsbad Caverns**
NATIONAL PARK
New Mexico
Visit Park Page →
- El Malpais**
NATIONAL MONUMENT
New Mexico
Visit Park Page →
- Gila Cliff Dwellings**
NATIONAL MONUMENT
New Mexico
Visit Park Page →

Our new interactive map at www.wnpa.org/discover-our-parks-map/.

Park Stories

Park Stories | Search here...

- Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Through a Living Memorial**
This year, park staff are creating a series of videos that will explore the diverse heritage of...
Read More →
- John Muir: A Passion for Nature**
We all have legacies that will extend beyond our lifetime. Muir died on December 24, 1914 at...
Read More →
- Fort Davis and the Trail to Civil Rights**
The US Army also served as a means for African American women to have a steady incom...
Read More →
- Grant Enables Research on Rare Biodiversity in Saguaro National Park**
By Dave DeFusco A team of National Park Service researchers will study the...
Read More →
- Interpretation of a Decisive Civil War Battle Evolves**
By Robert Pahr The Battle of Glorieta Pass, which took place from March 26 to 28, 1862, wa...
Read More →
- Desert Plants at Saguaro National Park Resist Ravages of Drought**
By Dave DeFusco Desert vegetation surrounding the saguaro cactus in Saguaro...
Read More →

Explore park stories at www.wnpa.org/category/park-stories/.

- Broadens the multigenerational scope of our online audience.
- Provides a reliable and effective tool to support and increase giving.
- Highlights national park interpretive products that create a stronger connection with the parks.
- Amplifies the efforts of our NPS partners by sharing parks stories and research projects.

The resulting website highlights more than 70 partner parks, each with its own page featuring a brief description, directions to the park, social media links, contact information, a photo gallery, video and stories from the park, and a link to its National Park Service website. Visitors on wnpa.org can also view all our partner parks on an interactive map, where they can search for their perfect park by state, interest, or activity.

By featuring our partner parks' stories, we help them share their history, culture, and plans for the future with a broad audience in their own voices.

The park stories section of the WNPA website offers a searchable archive of stories from the parks, covering a range of subjects from community conservation efforts to historical research.

Research is a WNPA mission pillar, and from FY17 to FY20 we funded more than \$231,600 in research grants for projects in our partner parks. In FY21, during the COVID-19 pandemic, WNPA paused the distribution of research grants. The new website includes an online directory of past research projects conducted in WNPA partner parks, providing an important tool not only for researchers looking for information on past projects but also for visitors interested in learning about the discoveries and importance of research in parks.

The directory (found at www.wnpa.org/research) can be searched by keyword or filtered by park, state, and year; projects can also be accessed by browsing the titles and colorful photos on the landing page. Research projects are linked to the final PDF reports, and some projects have a story accompanying the report. This directory calls attention to the parks, the partnership between WNPA and NPS, and the importance of research in parks.

Saguaro National Park is particularly biologically diverse and has a rich scientific legacy that we feel responsible for continuing. A lot of people who started the studies that I'm working on passed away many years ago. Like them, I hope that I become a conduit for young people to continue these studies long after I'm gone.

— Don Swann, wildlife biologist at Saguaro National Park



Documenting Domestic Landscapes at Crow Stone Circle Sites in Bighorn Canyon, Southern Montana and Northern Wyoming
BIGHORN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



Determining Butterfly Responses to Management Practices in Bandelier National Monument
BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT



Ground-Penetrating Radar Survey of Compound A at Casa Grande Ruins National Monument
CASA GRANDE RUINS NATIONAL MONUMENT



Ecology of Round-tailed Squirrels at Casa Grande Ruins National Monument
CASA GRANDE RUINS NATIONAL MONUMENT



Attitudes Toward and Options About A Louisiana Black Bear Recovery in and Around Big Thicket National Preserve
BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE



Climate Change-Mediated Expansion of Utah Juniper Across the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area: Implications for Bighorn Sheep
BIGHORN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



Aquatic Microinvertebrate Inventory and Assessment of Springs and Seeps within Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area
BIGHORN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



Are Caves a Source of Bat Microbiota? A Comparison of Microbial Communities in Caves and Cave Roosting Bats in El Malpais National Monument
EL MALPAIS NATIONAL MONUMENT



Pathways to Understanding: Archaeological Survey of the Zuni-Acoma Trail
EL MALPAIS NATIONAL MONUMENT



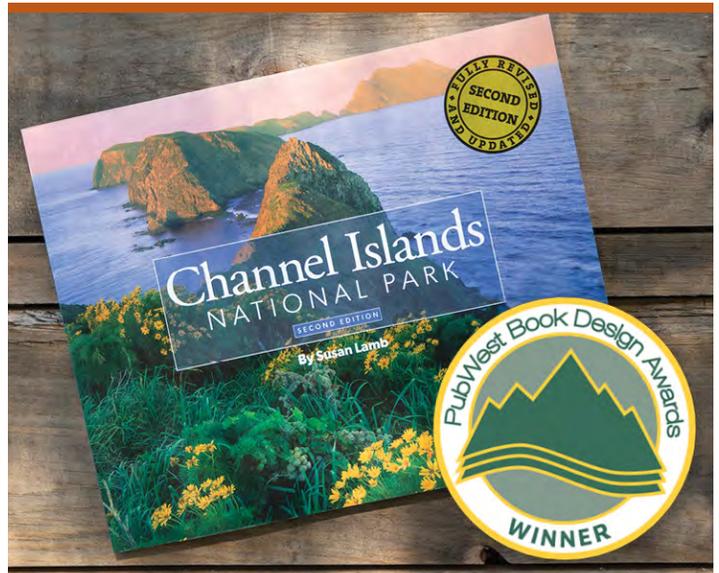
Outstanding Waters Designation: Data Collection & Analysis of Water Quality Parameters Curecanti National Recreation Area
CURECANTI NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Examples of featured research stories available on wnpa.org.

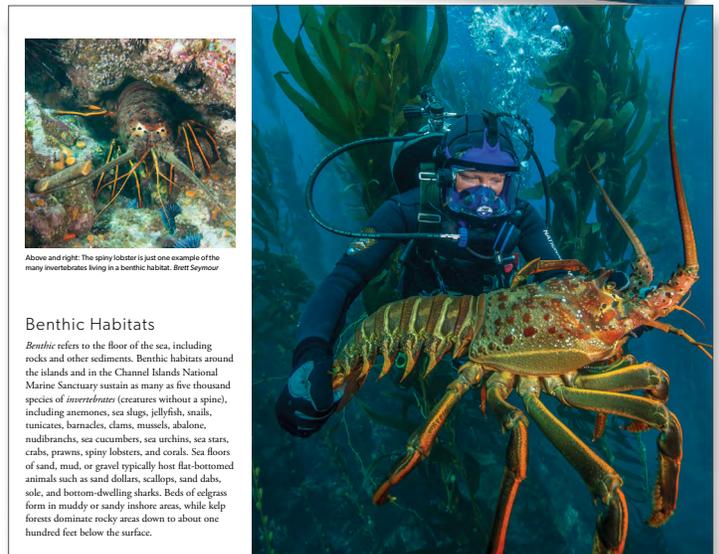
Education: Inspiring the Next Generation of Park Advocates

WNPA Takes the Gold with Channel Islands General Interpretive Publication

A WNPA-published book, *Channel Islands National Park* (2nd ed), received the Gold Award for Guide/Travel Book at the PubWest Book Design Awards, which recognizes superior design and outstanding production quality of books. The award was announced during PubWest’s annual conference in February. Designed by Theresa Reindl Bingham and produced by WNPA, the book features stunning photographs and illustrations from several photographers and artists, including National Park Service staff and renowned photographer George H. H. Huey. This book continues WNPA’s nearly 84-year-old legacy of publishing beautiful, educational books about national parks, American Indian culture and crafts, plant life, wildlife, weather, geology, and history. Learn more about WNPA’s publishing program at wnpa.org/publishing, or take a peek inside the book by visiting WNPA’s online store at store.wnpa.org.



Cover and selection of interior pages from the award-winning second edition of *Channel Islands National Park* by Susan Lamb.



Community Engagement: Making Public Lands Welcoming for Everyone

Connecting Youth to National Parks in the Digital Age

For more than two decades, WNPA’s partner—the Udall Foundation’s Parks in Focus® program—has been putting cameras in the hands of Tucson youth and leading them on fun and educational outings to explore and photograph some of Arizona’s most incredible national parks and public lands. However, like most schools and youth-serving organizations around the country, Parks in Focus had to consider new ways to achieve its mission in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

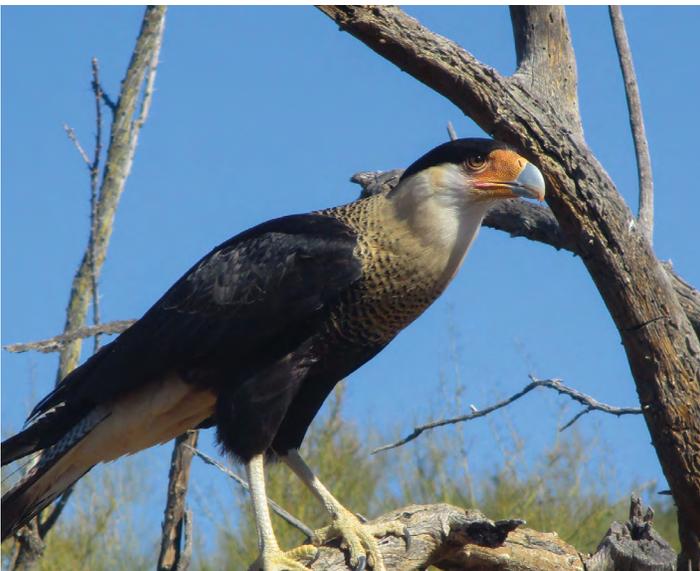
Parks in Focus used online platforms to host virtual programming, including interactive lessons from the Parks in Focus curriculum, as well as simple photography activities that participants could do at home, either on their own or with their families. More important, these virtual activities provided a vital space where students could connect and share their photos and stories with each other. To enhance their virtual programming, Parks in Focus has also been producing short videos to help reinforce learned concepts and curating educational care packages to mail to participants in advance of virtual activities.



Saguaro National Park (courtesy of Eddie, age 13, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tucson).



Kids at sunset (courtesy of Aliscella, age 10, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tucson).



Crested Caracara (courtesy of Isabella, age 11, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tucson).



Chiricahua National Monument (courtesy of AaBriyonna, age 8, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tucson).

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument
(courtesy of NPS).



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wnpa.org

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