Restoring Great Waters & National Parks for the 2nd Century of the National Park System: A National Overview

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National Park Service Mission

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.
NPS: Natural Resources

The Adornato Boys in Yosemite. © John Adornato

Hiker in Denali. © Kent Miller, NPS

Recreating in Lake Mead. © Christie Vanover, NPS

Green Sea Turtle in Biscayne. © NPS
NPS: Historical Resources

Clockwise: Gettysburg NMP © C. Kurt Holter | Istock Photo; Liberty Bell © Actionsports | Dreamstime.com; Statue of Liberty © NPS; Tuskegee Airmen © Library of Congress; Pointing to Grandfather’s name on the Vietnam War Memorial © Tom Kiernan.
NPS: Cultural Resources

Clockwise: Mesa Verde © Duncan Gilbert | Dreamstime.com; Canyonlands © NPS; Petroglyph © Kman59 | Dreamstime.com
NPCA’s Role

- Advocate for the national parks- their natural, historical and cultural resources, and the entire NPS;
- Educate decision makers and the public about the importance of preserving the parks;
- Ensure Congress upholds the laws that protect the parks and to support new legislation to address threats to the parks;
- Fight attempts to weaken these laws in the courts;
- Assess the health of the parks and park management to better inform our advocacy work.
NPCA’s Regional Offices

- We are on the ground, collaborating, and connecting with local communities and diverse constituents to create lasting protections for the region’s national parks.
America’s Great Waters
Coalition Goals and Objectives

1. Build public support to make restoration of our Great Waters a national priority;
2. Secure long term sustainable funding for restoration;
3. Enact and ensure sound implementation of restoration legislation; and
4. Provide a forum for information and resource sharing.
America’s Great Waters in Gulf

Rio Grande

© National Geographic

Galveston Bay

Sunrise over Galveston Bay © wunderground.com
America’s Great Waters in Gulf

Coastal Louisiana

Mississippi River

Oyster Bayou inland of LA Coastline. © National Geographic

Gulf Outlet of Mississippi River. © Anne Marino, USACE

NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
America’s Great Waters in Gulf

ACF River Basin

Flint River © Tom Wilson

Everglades

© NPCA
NATIONAL PARKS IN THE GULF OF MEXICO & RESTORATION OPPORTUNITIES
There are 10 national park units in the Gulf Region!

These parks attract more than 9 million* visitors annually!

These visitors contribute nearly $540 million* to local economies!

*According to NPS, 2011
National Parks of the Gulf: Florida

Gulf Islands National Seashore (FL & MS)

DeSoto National Memorial

Big Cypress National Preserve

Everglades National Park

Dry Tortugas National Park
Restoration Projects: Gulf Islands

- Provide passenger ferry service to Fort Pickens, Santa Rosa and Perdido Key.
- Acquire lands critical to protecting the Gulf Islands ecology.
- Establish a research-learning center for scientific studies and student learning.
- Restore and rehabilitate beaches, for shorebirds and remove old asphalt.
Restoration Projects: Everglades

- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan
- Repair earthen dams on Cape Sable will restore critical marsh habitats and reduce saltwater intrusion
- Improve fishery science and habitat
Everglades: Let it Flow

- Bridge Tamiami Trail to increase water flow into Florida Bay and the Gulf.
- Construct the Caloosahatchee River (C-43) Reservoir to reduce harmful water releases from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf.
- Water Quality Components
Tamiami Trail: Restore Water Flow

Elevating Tamiami Trail

✓ 1-mile bridge constructed!
✓ 5.5 miles of additional bridging approved
✓ Funding committed for the next 2.6-mile bridge span
Central Everglades Planning Project

Goals Include:

✓ Restore sheet flow to the heart of the ecosystem
✓ Send clean water south to Everglades National Park
✓ Eliminate harmful discharges to the Caloosahatchee and Gulf of Mexico
Reality: Impaired Water Quality

Caloosahatchee River Sign. © Mike Dove

Left: Microcystis bloom in Caloosahatchee River. © floridawatercoalition.org; Above: Satellite image of FL coast algae blooms. © evergladeshub.com
National Parks of the Gulf: Texas

Padre Island National Seashore

Palo Alto Battlefield NHS

Big Thicket National Preserve
Restoration Projects: Padre Island

- Strengthen the sea turtle stranding network and nest detection programs, esp. for the Kemp’s Ridley, the world’s most endangered sea turtle.
Restoration Projects: Big Thicket

- Restore abandoned oil well sites within the park boundary.

Leaks and drips from oil production equipment. © NPS
Gulf National Parks: Louisiana

Jean Lafitte NHP & Preserve

© National Geographic

New Orleans Jazz NHP

© NPS
Restoration Projects: Jean Lafitte

- Reclaim historic oil-drilling canals in the 25,000-acre Barataria Preserve.
- Acquire lands for the furtherance of the park story.
FUTURE PARK OPPORTUNITIES
Lone Star Coastal NRA

- Restore tidal marshland, coastal prairie, and estuarine habitat in Galveston Bay
- Offer recreational opportunities
- Provide ecological services
- Mitigate storm surge from hurricanes and sea level rise
Mobile - Tensaw River Delta

Clockwise: “America’s Amazon” © al.com; Kayaking © mobilepaddler.blogspot.com; Swamp Wildlife Tour © 5rds.com
Mobile -Tensaw River Delta

- Long-term protection of the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta could include protecting part of it as a national park and preserve, representing one of the most species rich environments in North America.
Questions?

• Learn More:

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