

NEWS



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CONCESSIONERS HELP VISITORS CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL PARKS

Washington, D.C. (December 2, 2016) - National park visitors are making important gifts to many of America's most iconic destinations through the National Park Service's Guest Donation program! Donations of just one dollar per stay at America's national park lodges and other overnight facilities generated more than \$1 million in 2015, and are nearing \$1 million in 2016, according to park concessioners and the National Park Foundation. The funds are available for use within the collecting park by qualifying non-profit groups. Eligible uses include restoration projects, trail maintenance, expanded visitor services and more.

The donations are especially important as the National Park Service (NPS) moves into its second century and seeks to provide great visitor experiences to younger, more diverse audiences at more than 400 sites across the country. NPS efforts using traditional appropriations have not kept pace with the challenges of operating and caring for our national parks, contributing to a \$12 billion maintenance backlog.

"The American public strongly supports continued federal appropriations for our national parks. This support is bipartisan and cuts across all demographic groupings of Americans," said Derrick Crandall, Counselor for the National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA). "This support also contributes to a willingness to provide additional, voluntary, sustainable and supplementary resources for our parks. The Guest Donation Program makes it easy for park visitors to make contributions, increases visitor awareness of the challenges facing our parks and boosts valued services for all visitors. And as the holiday period approaches, concessioners want to thank the visitors we serve for their valuable gifts to America's national parks."

Guest donations were highest at Yosemite National Park and Grand Canyon National Park, with 2015 totals of \$461,000 and \$253,000 respectively. Olympic National Park appears to be the biggest winner for 2016, with donations more than doubling and approaching \$100,000.

According to Crandall, an expanded Guest Donation Program is likely through revisions to the NPS Director's Order 21, which could allow matching of contributions and expand opportunities for other park visitors to contribute as they buy food and souvenirs and pay for

(more)

Guest Donation Programs Add One

transportation services. According to NPHA, these new donation opportunities can help the program increase to a goal of \$10 million annually. And changes in existing concessioner operations in the parks, such as longer hours at the Statue of Liberty and increased non-peak visitation, would also significantly boost franchise and other park fees, 80% of which are retained in the parks generating the revenues. The NPS Director has broad discretionary authority over use of the remaining 20%. In 2016, concessioner operations generated more than \$100 million in franchise fees.

Information on franchise fees and Guest Donations generated at specific parks is available from NPHA.

Guest Donation Programs, expansion of visitor services and more were among the topics discussed at the NPHA Fall Meeting held November 13-15 in Washington, D.C. For more information on the Fall Meeting, visit www.parkpartners.org.

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About the National Park Hospitality Association:

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) – is the national trade association of the businesses that provide lodging, food services, gifts and souvenirs, equipment rentals, transportation and other visitor services in the National Park System. Concessioners have played an important role in creating lasting national park memories for more than 125 years. Concessioners operate in more than 100 national park units with combined sales exceeding \$1.2 billion annually and \$100 million+ in franchise fees paid to the National Park Service each year. The in-park concessioner workforce of some 25,000 persons assists visitors an estimated 100 million times annually. Information on national park concessioners is at www.parkpartners.org.

Concessioner Guest Donation Programs

Park	Concessioner	Donations sent to Friends Group, Park or NPF?	FY2015	FY2016
Badlands National Park	Forever Resorts	Friends Group	\$4,132	\$3,881.00
Big Bend National Park	Forever Resorts	Friends Group	\$25,026.20	\$21,426.65
Blue Ridge Parkway		Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation	\$19,356.00	\$11,669.00
Bryce Canyon National Park	Forever Resorts	National Park Foundation	\$15,959	\$14,292.96
Bryce Canyon National Park		Bryce Canyon Natural History Association	\$11,523.00	\$21,931.00
Crater Lake National Park		Crater Lake National Park Trust	\$11,641.00	\$11,744.00
Fort Sumter National Monument		Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust	\$2,934.00	\$2,000.00
Glacier National Park		Glacier National Park Conservancy	\$42,569.00	\$42,376.00
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area		Glen Canyon Natural History Association	\$44,028.00	\$47,852.00
Grand Canyon National Park	Forever Resorts	National Park Foundation	\$25,723.02	\$27,668.59
Grand Canyon National Park		Grand Canyon Association	\$226,840.00	\$224,297.00
Grand Teton National Park	Forever Resorts	Friends Group	\$7,167.75	\$7,181.98
Grand Teton National Park	Grand Teton Lodge Company	Grand Teton National Park Foundation	\$58,267.25	\$58,947.31
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	LeConte Lodge	Friends Group	\$2,927.54	\$4,346.50
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	LeConte Lodge	National Park Foundation	\$2,173.00	\$0
Great Smoky Mountains National Park		Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park		\$2,227.00
John D. Rockefeller Memorial Parkway	Grand Teton Lodge Company	Grand Teton National Park Foundation	\$4,763.10	\$3,721.99
Lake Mead National Recreation Area	Forever Resorts	National Park Foundation	\$3,404.53	\$3,252.00
Lake Mead National Recreation Area		Lake Mead National Recreation Area	\$3,414.00	\$4,565.00
Mammoth Cave National Park	Forever Resorts	National Park Foundation	\$10,181.34	\$5,657.00
Mammoth Cave National Park		Friends of Mammoth Cave	\$10,524.00	\$4,918.00
Mesa Verde National Park		Mesa Verde Foundation	\$86,565.00	\$31,896.00
Olympic National Park		Washington's National Park Fund	\$39,102.00	\$91,956.00
Oregon Caves National Monument & Preserve		Friends of Oregon Caves & Chateau	\$234.00	\$630.00
Rocky Mountain National Park		Rocky Mountain Conservancy		
Shenandoah National Park		Shenandoah National Park Trust	\$29,880.00	\$30,373.00
Yosemite National Park		Yosemite Conservancy	\$461,050.00	\$314,964.00
Totals			\$1,149,385	\$993,773.98

Highlighted information was provided by NPHA member concessioners. All other information was provided by the National Park Foundation, which supplied only outlay information. We believe in and outlay numbers correspond.