

# 2019 PARTNERSHIP AWARDS

*Celebrating the Best in Public Lands Partnerships*

## About the Partnership Awards

The Public Lands Alliance Partnership Awards Program recognizes individuals, organizations, publications, products, programs and services that embody leading edge achievements in the preservation of public lands and the enrichment of visitors.

This program recognizes excellence in public lands partnerships, innovative solutions to challenges and outstanding programs and events that enhance the visitor experience on public lands.

Since 2003, the Public Lands Alliance (PLA) has led this program to celebrate public lands partners. The award program categories include:

- Agency Leadership
- Corporate Stewardship
- Public Lands Partners
- Innovative Product of the Year
- Outstanding Public Engagement
- Publication of the Year

Award Winners and Honorable Mentions are selected by a volunteer awards committee and the PLA Board of Directors, and announced at PLA's annual Convention and Trade Show.

All public lands nonprofit organizations, affiliated companies and agency partners are welcome to submit entries to this program, regardless of membership, corporate partnership or affiliation.

As the national organization for public lands nonprofits, PLA welcomes entries from a diverse range of partners supporting national forests, parks, recreation areas, refuges, state and local parks and other public lands.

## 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

The 2019 Partnership Awards received 65 entries. In total, PLA presented 22 Award Winners and seven Honorable Mentions, plus one Partners Choice Award Winner at the 2019 Convention and Trade Show in Denver, CO on February 27, 2019.

Congratulations to this year's recipients for their exceptional efforts to communicate the value of our public lands. Thank you to all those who submitted to this program, who volunteered their time to evaluate entries and who joined us in Denver, CO to celebrate public lands partnerships.

# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Agency Leadership Award

This award recognizes a public land management agency employee for outstanding accomplishments in championing, cultivating and leading partnerships. The award is presented to an individual currently employed by a federal or state public land management agency.

This year, the program recognized three individuals:

### **Jennifer Heroux, Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Jennifer has worked to develop partnerships over her entire career. Since joining the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex (DNWFC) team, she has improved connection with both agency partners and with the NGO community in Southern Nevada.

In 2017, Jennifer embarked on a project to bring together partners to host the 2018 National Duck Stamp Contest in Las Vegas, NV. She collaborated with the Las Vegas Springs Preserve, Southern Nevada Conservancy and Death Valley Natural History Association, bringing more than 2,000 people together to celebrate at the nation's most historic art contest at the Springs Preserve.



*Photo by Meghan Snow.*

## President's Award

Established in 2010, the President's Award recognizes exemplary service by an individual or group which has made a significant impact in the field of public lands partnerships.

This award has only been presented twice in PLA's history. In 2019, the Board of Directors decided to bestow this award on:

### **Jeff Bradybaugh, Zion National Park Nominated by Zion National Park Forever Project**

Zion National Park Superintendent Jeff Bradybaugh has been a champion of public lands-nonprofit partnership throughout his 36-year service career. His support, enthusiasm, vision and wise leadership have been crucial to the success of Zion Natural History Association's transition to the Zion National Park Forever Project (ZNPFP).



Jeff has a deep understanding of, and appreciation for, the importance of nonprofit partners and the impact they can have in helping the park service achieve its mission. Jeff has demonstrated strong vision, trust and faith in ZNPFP by contributing to and fully espousing this bold and fundamental change, and he has always spoken powerfully of his support and belief in their goals.

# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Agency Leadership Award (Continued)

### Arnold Randall, Forest Preserves of Cook County

Under Arnold's leadership as the General Superintendent, the Forest Preserves of Cook County, IL has made significant process in building and strengthening relationships with hundreds of organizations across the Chicagoland region. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the development and implementation of the Next Century Conservation Plan.



This ambitious and visionary strategy lays out a set of bold actions to ensure that the forest preserves' will continue to thrive. Arnold works extensively across geo-political boundaries with a variety of partners to leverage resources and link diverse and urban populations with nature. One example of a recent partnership success is the Conservation Corps program, which mobilizes people from across Cook County's diverse communities to restore nature by providing paid, hands-on restoration experiences in the preserves.



### Susan Sachs, Great Smoky Mountains National Park National Park Service

For more than two decades, Susan Sachs has been a leader in citizen science in the Smokies. In any given year, Susan and her staff have provided citizen science programs to more than 10,000 middle and high school students and trained more than 400 teachers in how to incorporate the topic into their classrooms.



Not limited by park boundaries, Susan brings her experience and accomplishments at a local level to regional and national-scale initiatives for the benefit of the NPS as a whole, as well as its national-level partners. Susan has been instrumental in breathing life into many programs, including the Seeking Paths in Nature Program, which engages more than 900 Native American students in culturally relevant environmental science education.





# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Corporate Stewardship Award

This award recognizes a company that has demonstrated exceptional achievement to enhance the quality of the visitor experience in our public lands. It is presented to a company that has made an impact through activities like product development, cause marketing and philanthropic support.

This year, the program recognized two companies:

**Arizona Public Service Corp / APS Foundation**  
Nominated by Grand Canyon Conservancy



APS and the APS Foundation have supported the Grand Canyon Conservancy since 2010, granting more than \$1.8 million to fund vital initiatives and preservation efforts at the canyon.

That support includes construction of a new trailhead plaza at the iconic Bright Angel Trail, expansion of the Canyon Field School, and many other projects that positively impact the long-term health of the canyon.



*Bright Angel Trailhead Plaza Renovations. Photo by Michael Quinn.*

APS also sponsors the park's largest corporate volunteerism program. Each year, APS employees and their families help to protect the canyon and its wildlife by picking up bits of micro-trash that may be dangerous to animals and mar the visitor experience of a pristine canyon.

**Heineken USA**

Nominated by Southern Nevada Conservancy



Heineken USA spearheaded a community wide, giveback program to curb litter in the Spring Mountains in southern Nevada.

Using their brand leverage, Heineken worked with their local distributor to bring in community businesses to increase donations.



Their efforts provided funding for 13 trash/recycling receptables at the busiest trailheads. These receptables prevent over 200 pounds of litter every week.

# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Public Lands Partner Award

This award recognizes an exemplary partnership for a stunning achievement to protect and preserve our public lands and enhance the experiences of their visitors and users. The award is presented to both the nonprofit and agency partners for their shared achievements.

This year, the program recognized four recipients and their partners:

### Student Conservation Association and Tongass National Forest



This award acknowledges the work of a team of Student Conservation Association (SCA) interns who replaced the Mitchell Creek fish pass in Tongass National Forest to ensure the continuation of a self-sustaining coho salmon population that provides for sport, commercial and subsistence fisheries in the Petersburg, AK area.

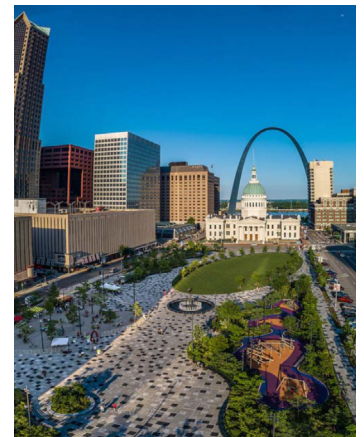
The fish pass, estimated to permit 3,218 harvestable adult coho to make their way upstream each year and access 26 miles of prime spawning and rearing habitat, is the only one specifically constructed to target sport fishing opportunities in the Petersburg area. Due to its popularity, the Mitchell Creek project will also contribute significantly to the Tongass region's economy.

Two of the SCA interns had a personal connection to this project as their fathers constructed the original fish pass in 1992. After hearing Alaska service stories throughout their lives, the two young men were eager to follow in their fathers' footsteps a quarter century later.

### CityArchRiver Alliance and Gateway Arch National Park

The CityArchRiver (CAR) project was a monumental undertaking. A more than \$380 million renovation project of the recently renamed Gateway Arch National Park and its surrounding areas in downtown St. Louis, MO, this effort took 10 years of planning and included five years of construction.

Thanks to this project, seven miles of new accessible pedestrian pathways now connect to surrounding streets, attractions, neighborhoods and the Mississippi Greenway bike/pedestrian trail.



The project represented an unprecedented mix of public and private funding, and it required the collaboration and support of not only the core CAR Alliance partners but also the United States Department of Transportation, Army Corps of Engineers and more.

# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Public Lands Partner Award (Continued)

### San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation and California Department of Fish and Wildlife

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy was founded in 1987 to save one of Southern California's vanishing estuaries and expand its land for community, and for nature. Through stewardship and member and donor support, the Conservancy acquires lands to expand public access and sensitive wildlife areas adjacent to the reserve. In 2018, 77 acres were saved.

In November 2017, ceremonial shovels broke ground on a \$120 million San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Project, called Reviving Your Wetlands, to enhance tidal circulation and coastal habitats while providing for new trail connections.

The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation owns and operates the Nature Center, which oversees reserve visitation with on-staff rangers and interpreters. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife owns portions of the reserve and advises on wildlife and trail matters as well as being key stakeholders in the Restoration Project.



Photo by Darcy Barry.

### Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Partnership and Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area



The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2018 with a year-long celebration to raise awareness. The Birds of Prey NCA Partnership (BOPP) began working with the BLM in 2017 to plan events and activities for that celebration.

Their planning resulted in more than 40 community events, reaching over 18,000 people, doubling the number of people the NCA reaches during a typical year.

BOPP was a leader or major partner in the year's most attended events, including the 25th Anniversary Kick-Off Party, Idaho's Largest Trash Clean Up, Snake River RaptorFest and more.

BOPP has been engaged in a number of other efforts in support of the NCA as well. They received a grant in 2016 for a Native Youth for Habitat Restoration project. In 2017, BOPP engaged high school students from the remote Duck Valley Indian Reservation to learn about native plant restoration - many of the students had never visited the NCA before.



# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Innovative Product of the Year

This award recognizes an interpretive product created in partnership by a nonprofit organization and a land management agency that embodies a path-breaking approach to achieve a public lands mission.

This year, the program recognized two Award Winners and one Honorable Mention:

### Award Winner

#### **Redwood Forest Fog Globe by Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy**

A key goal for the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (GGNPC) is to advance climate change literacy, mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency strategies, and demonstrate environmental leadership by pursuing sustainable practices in all aspects of operations at the park.

In 2018, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (GGNPC) responded to this challenge by creating the Redwood Forest Fog Globe, a clever take on a traditional snow globe that creates an opportunity to focus visitor attention on climate change and the challenges facing urban national parks.

The “snow” is actually small silver chips to simulate the swirling effects of the dense coastal fog in the Golden Gate National Parks, and the gift box is an educational tool showcasing information on Sequoia sempervirens, the monumental coast redwood, as well as California’s other public lands.



### Award Winner

#### **P-22 Limited Edition Plush Toy by National Wildlife Federation**



P-22 is the famous mountain lion who crossed two major freeways to find a new home in Los Angeles, making him a unifying personality for the partnered work of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and the National Park Service.

The cat has become an icon for the urban wildlife conservation movement and his story has captured the imagination of the world. NWF staff and partners have used the plush toy in presentations and are also donating them to classrooms to teach about the ability humans and wildlife have to safely coexist.

### Honorable Mention

#### **Yellowstone App and Yellowstone Live by Yellowstone Forever**



# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Outstanding Public Engagement

This award recognizes exemplary products, displays, programs or services created in partnership by a nonprofit organization and a land management agency that advance meaningful and sustainable connections between individuals and America's public lands.

There are two sub-categories for Outstanding Public Engagement.

- Product or Display
- Program or Service

This year, the program recognized two Award Winners and two Honorable Mentions for Outstanding Public Engagement, Product or Display:

### Award Winner

#### Shenandoah National Park Mobile Visitor Center by Shenandoah National Park Association

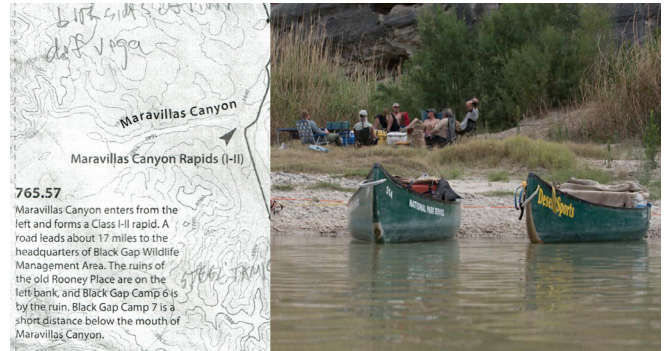


The Mobile Visitor Center helps visitors with questions on hiking trails, where to eat, restrooms and the many other questions about Shenandoah National Park's wildlife, flora and fauna and cultural history.

This project has allowed the Park to provide an interpretive service to the thousands of visitors that enter from their southern entrance, and it has also been utilized for special events in other regions.

### Award Winner

#### River Guide to the Rio Grande: The Lower Canyons by Big Bend Natural History Association



Due to the remoteness and limited accessibility of this stretch of river, a Lower Canyons trip is a commitment that attracts enthusiasts rather than casual visitors, and most prefer independent trips without a river guide so they can discover for themselves what is interesting and meaningful. This publication gives them that opportunity.

The guide makes clear up front that a successful Lower Canyons trip is dependent on experience, skill and common sense; in return, the river runner is given the opportunity to discover the Lower Canyons for themselves.

### Honorable Mention

#### Project Funding Needs Guide and Annual Report by Glacier National Park Conservancy

### Honorable Mention

#### Mount Rushmore Self-Guided Multimedia Tours by Mount Rushmore Society





# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Outstanding Public Engagement (Continued)

This year, the program recognized two Award Winners and one Honorable Mention for Outstanding Public Engagement, Program or Service:

### Award Winner

#### Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage by Great Smoky Mountains Association



The Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage is a 68-year-old annual event that brings expert field biologists and the interested public together to enjoy nature and educate citizens about the importance of biodiversity and conservation in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP).

More than just wildflowers, this event showcases a variety of scientific disciplines, and two new citizen science initiatives allow participants to become invested in the efforts of GSMNP while contributing valuable and lasting work to assist scientists.

The Pilgrimage also encourages attendees to participate in iNaturalist, a mobile app created to record and share biodiversity worldwide. Pilgrims observe and identify organisms seen on their hikes and report them using the app.

### Award Winner

#### Jamestown Glassblowers at Colonial National Historical Park by Eastern National



At Jamestown Glasshouse, visitors are treated to an immersive, interpretive demonstration of a historic handicraft. People from all over the world visit the Park each year, and those who take in a glassblowing demonstration at Jamestown are able to bring that special national park experience home while supporting the interpretive efforts of the park.

In the words of our judges, “the demonstration, information and opportunity to purchase a piece of glass give a lifelong impression. They exhibit a real connection to visitors and the history of the park.”

### Honorable Mention

#### Hawaii National Park Specialty License Plate Program by Hawaii Pacific Parks Association



# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Publication of the Year

This award recognizes a book or other publication created in partnership by a nonprofit organization and a land management agency that embodies innovation in educating and interpreting public lands to its readers and impacts a substantial audience.

Two awards are granted for this category. One is granted to a nonprofit whose gross revenue is less than \$1.5 million per year and one is granted to a nonprofit whose gross revenue is more than \$1.5 million per year.

For nonprofits with less than \$1.5 million per year gross annual revenue, the program recognized one Award Winner and one Honorable Mention:

### Award Winner

**Restoring Oregon's Dunes: The Bid to Save a National Treasure**  
by Oregon Dunes Restoration Collaborative



Due to the rapid expansion of invasive species, the ecology of the Oregon Dunes has made major shifts over the last few decades. The story of the dunes, and how they've been changed, is a complicated one not easily told in a simple soundbite - it's a visual story.

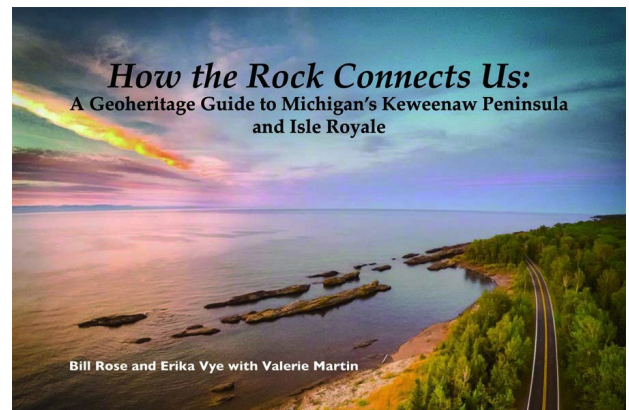
The Oregon Dunes Restoration Collaborative conceived of this book to help both raise public awareness about the current status of the dunes and to generate excitement so people will be encouraged to get involved in this effort.

The book tells the story of the dunes, from how they were created to what lives there, its cultural significance and how people today use them, through beautiful photographs, illustrations and a compelling storyline. The book closes with a call to action to encourage people to give back to this place that they love.

In the words of our judges, "This well made book effectively communicates the need to restore the balance of the dunes for public enjoyment and protection of this unique natural resource."

### Honorable Mention

**How the Rock Connects Us: A Geoheritage Guide to Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula and Isle Royale National Park**  
by Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association





# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Publication of the Year

For nonprofits with greater than \$1.5 million per year gross annual revenue, the program recognized one Award Winner and two Honorable Mentions:

### Award Winner

#### **The Grand Canyon Between River and Rim by Grand Canyon Conservancy**

This publication invites readers on a 750-plus mile, end-to-end journey through areas of the Grand Canyon rarely, if ever, seen by humans.

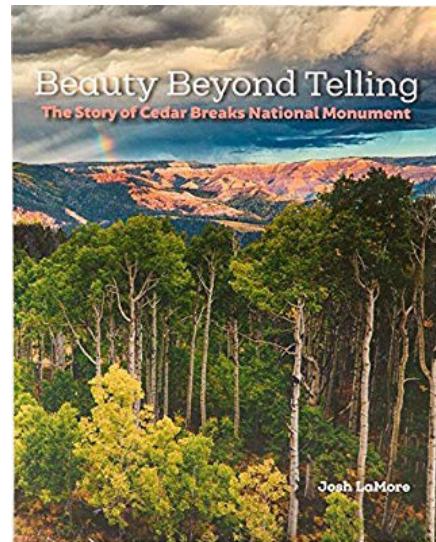
The broad reach of the book helps expand awareness of the challenges facing the Grand Canyon, and its proceeds directly benefit Grand Canyon Conservancy.

In the words of our judges, “this book is a stunning example of showcasing depth and breadth to one of our most iconic national parks. The scope of this project is beyond what most association publishers can create, and it appeals to the adventure traveler who is drawn to being far off the beaten path, the national park enthusiast, and anyone who has been mesmerized and humbled by this incredible national wonder.”



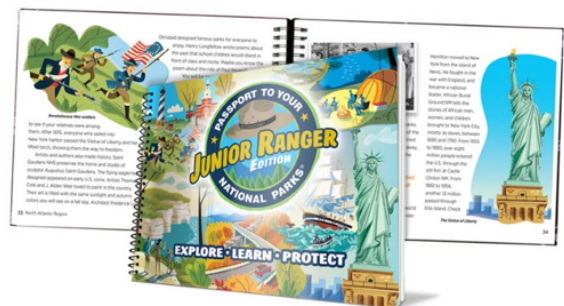
### Honorable Mention

#### **Beauty Beyond Telling: The Story of Cedar Breaks National Monument by Zion National Park Forever Project**



### Honorable Mention

#### **Passport To Your National Parks® Junior Ranger Edition by Eastern National**





# 2019 Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

## Partners Choice

The Partners Choice Award is an opportunity for the public to vote online for their favorite submission to the Innovative Product of the Year, Outstanding Public Engagement of the Year and Publication of the Year categories. One winner with the most votes is recognized as the Partners Choice Award Winner.

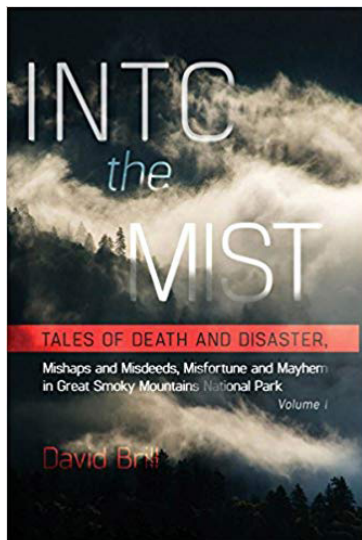
Applicants were encouraged to share the opportunity with their networks and more than 3,000 votes were tallied for 2019's online round of voting.

### Award Winner

**Into the Mist: Tales of Death and Disaster, Mishaps and Misdeeds, Misfortune and Mayhem in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Volume 1**  
by Great Smoky Mountains Association

Into the Mist explores a range of subjects unified by two themes: all involve events and circumstances that directly threatened - and in some cases, claimed - human lives, and all took place within Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Beyond merely engaging readers, the book seeks to educate and inform. Many of the book's chapters are undeniably sad, but all assume a respectful tone in how they depict men and women in extreme situations, struggling to survive.



## Thank You!

Thank you to the PLA Board of Directors for evaluating nominations to the Agency Leadership, Corporate Stewardship and Public Lands Partner categories and to the awards committee for evaluating entries to the Innovative Product of the Year, Outstanding Program of the Year and Publication of the Year categories.

### 2019 Partnership Awards Committee

Linda Appanaitis  
Rika Ayotte  
Paula Degen  
Jess Green  
Jan Lynch

Tom Mullin  
Kim Olsen  
Debbie Piscitelli  
Lloyd Greer Price  
Phil Zuckerman

No member of the awards committee participated in evaluating entries for which their organizations or companies submitted to this year's program.

## Thank You to Impact Photographics

For over 35 years, Impact Photographics has been bringing nature's beauty to the world through the art of photography. Impact has gained its reputation for excellence by combining beautiful images by world renowned photographers with the highest product quality materials and workmanship.



Impact Photographic's support gave PLA the opportunity to promote this program, manage the submission of entries, raise awareness about the work of public lands partners and grant customized award plaques to this year's Award Winners.

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