

Not since the 1970s has Joshua Tree National Park taken census of its desert bighorn sheep, a species that frequents springs. The Canon funds will enable staff to test a noninvasive inventorying technique where researchers identify sheep from unique natural markings, such as scars and horn characteristics. Also funded are projects to convert spring location data into GIS-compatible format and remove tamarisk (a nonnative tree that transpires water and impedes sheep access to the springs) from the water sources.



INVENTORY AND MONITORING PROJECTS GET \$1,200,000 BOOST

By LISSA FOX

AN UNEXPECTED \$1,200,000 corporate grant from Canon USA will put 35 inventory, monitoring, and restoration projects on the ground over the next 2 years. In the first year, volunteers will help 20 parks inventory and monitor their biological resources. These projects will provide resource managers with information vitally needed to make scientifically based management decisions. In the second year, the grant will send volunteers into 15 of the original 20 parks to work on habitat restoration. Canon will also donate equipment such as laptops, cameras, and binoculars to the parks.

The biological inventory and monitoring projects supported by the Canon grant will bring the NPS closer to its goal of completing baseline inventories of biological and geophysical resources in the approximately 250 parks with significant natural resources. Grants such as this allow the NPS to accomplish projects that would not otherwise be possible in this time of shrinking budgets and fewer federal employees.

This grant opportunity came up fast and with an extremely short turnaround time. The National Park Foundation, which raises money to support National Park Service programs, managed to pique Canon's interest in the four-year-

old program called Expedition Into America. This program was designed to stretch park biological inventory and monitoring budgets by providing volunteer labor and funding. All projects considered for the Canon program, now called "Expedition Into the Parks: Preserving America's National Treasures," had to be biological inventory or monitoring projects and needed to include volunteers.

The responsibility for pulling together this program fell to Larry May, NPS Wildlife and Vegetation Division Chief, and Lissa Fox, the author of this article and Expedition Into America program manager. For Larry, this opportunity was a harbinger of things to come. Under the new organization of Natural Resources Stewardship and Science, the need for someone to develop these kinds of relationships had already been identified. As Partnerships Program Manager, Larry will be directly responsible for developing similar partnerships with other agencies and funding sources to support natural resource projects and programs. These partnerships will be designed to complement and supplement NPS programs that support NPS natural resource management policies and goals.

To produce a list of projects for Canon's review, division staff selected proposals submitted for other grants

and relied heavily on the resource management plan (RMP) database. Tim Goddard, the RMP database manager, searched RMP project statements for the key words "inventory" or "monitoring" and "volunteers" to find projects that met program criteria. Parks contacted responded quickly to short-notice demands for additional information, and Canon received a list of 30 projects in one week!

According to the National Park Foundation, grants to support natural resources work are hard to come by—most foundations or corporations do not have a basic understanding of the importance of natural resource management. However, Canon has supported other environmental causes prior to this donation. Their five-year-old Clean Earth Campaign has resulted in over 6,000,000 recycled copier and facsimile cartridges and substantial donations to The Nature Conservancy and the National Wildlife Federation.

While concerns remain about "selling" the NPS to the highest bidder, every precaution is being taken by the National Park Service and National Park Foundation to ensure the continued integrity of the NPS image. Guidelines delineating NPS behavior direct all activities. Among the rules are that NPS employees cannot endorse a prod-

Expedition Into the Parks Projects:

1. Big Bend National Park: inventory and preserve two candidate plant species, tall paintbrush and Guadalupe fescue
2. Buffalo National River: plant inventory of selected springs and seeps within the park
3. Crater Lake National Park: inventory and monitor rare plant, Mount Mazama collomia
4. Fire Island National Seashore: inventory and monitor effects of sand compaction or burial on soft-bodied beach insects, including threatened northeastern beach tiger beetle
5. Gateway NRA—Breezy Point and Jamaica Bay units: conduct limnological monitoring of east and west ponds
6. Golden Gate National Recreation Area: determine wildlife habitat relationships and monitor ecology
7. Grand Canyon National Park: monitor brown-headed cowbird impact on nesting neotropical migrant birds
8. Great Smoky Mountains National Park: inventory brook trout distribution and implement restoration efforts
9. Gulf Islands National Seashore: monitor populations and restore habitat for the recovery of the endangered Perdido Key beach mouse
10. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park: inventory and monitor populations of rare lowland plants
11. Joshua Tree National Park: inventory bighorn sheep at Stubbe Springs
12. Mammoth Cave National Park: inventory cultural and paleontological resources in Mammoth Cave
13. Olympic National Park: monitor visitor impacts on wilderness resources and rehabilitate targeted areas
14. Padre Island National Seashore: inventory and monitor threatened and endangered sea turtles
15. Rocky Mountain National Park: Determine productivity and survivorship of songbirds in elk winter habitat
16. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area: determine status and distribution of large carnivores
17. Shenandoah National Park: study impacts of white-tailed deer on forest communities in the eastern United States
18. Yosemite National Park: inventory nonnative fish in alpine lakes
19. Yellowstone National Park: survey for *Agrostis rossiae* and *Abronia ammophila*
20. Cape Cod National Seashore: restore kettle pond habitats

uct and that no NPS uniforms can appear in corporate advertising. All promotional activities and materials are reviewed by technical and policy experts. In order to direct the focus of the promotional materials produced by Canon, the NPS provided the company with realistic, technically accurate descriptions of each project and potential products, as well as general ideas they could emphasize, such as the threats to natural resources, the importance of information gathering, and the connection between a single species and its habitat. To date, Canon has been cooperative and quite willing to help us spread the story of our threatened natural resources to the public.

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