

# 2019

## HOT SPOTS REPORT

LEAVE NO TRACE CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS





# 9 10 2 HOT SPOTS REPORT

The Hot Spot Program was created to address the severe impacts often times associated with heavy use and outdoor spaces being “loved to death.” Through a nationwide nomination process, areas are selected and provided with a unique blend of educational programs, trainings, service projects and more. With site-specific Leave No Trace measures in place, the areas are equipped to bounce back from impacts and recover their natural qualities.

With visits to public lands in the United States in the tens of billions, many outdoor areas experience impacts that stem from a lack of outdoor education for visitors. Although they do not generally intend to cause harm,

*9 out of 10 people in the outdoors are uninformed about their impacts.*

That’s where the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and the Hot Spot program steps in, teaching communities how to provide effective visitor education to prevent future impacts.



## NOMINATIONS

In April of 2018, the Center opened nominations for 2019 Hot Spots. The Center received 133 nominations from land managers, friends groups, partner organizations and concerned citizens. In selecting the areas for the 2019 visits, Center staff considered the following factors:

- **The types and severity of impacts an area is facing**
- **On the ground staffing resources**
- **The presence of a collaborative community of stakeholders**
- **Ability for work to be continued beyond the Leave No Trace team's week onsite**
- **Potential for community and media engagement**
- **Geographic diversity of locations**
- **A range of agencies, from city parks to large national parks**

In selecting the 2019 revisit locations, Center staff considered opportunities for continued engagement with locally based and Leave No Trace-provided educational programs. Several factors play a role in a park or protected area having this type of opportunity. Selected sites generally have stakeholders that are enthusiastic about the initial Hot Spots efforts and are looking to further the progress they have made.

A handful of sites are selected for Hot Spots revisits — these places may have had staff turnover creating opportunities for more staff training. Additionally, sites may be selected if the Leave No Trace staff was only able to engage a limited number of stakeholders and visitor groups during their first campaign.

## 2019 HOT SPOT LOCATIONS

**Mar. 1-4 (revisit) | Dawsonville, GA**  
**AMICALOLA FALLS STATE PARK & CHATTAHOOCHEE NATIONAL FOREST**

**Mar. 18-25 | Death Valley, CA**  
**DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK**

**Mar. 18-25 | Tamasee, SC**  
**SUMTER NATIONAL FOREST**

**June 17-24 | Alton, NH**  
**MOUNT MAJOR RESERVATION & STATE FOREST**

**June 24-July 1 | Hood River, OR**  
**COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE**

**July 15-22 | Leavenworth, WA**  
**ENCHANTMENTS SPECIAL PERMIT AREA (ALPINE LAKES WILDERNESS)**

**July 22-29 | Littleton, CO**  
**CHATFIELD STATE PARK**

**Aug. 7-14 | North Elba, NY**  
**EASTERN HIGH PEAKS WILDERNESS**

**Aug. 19-26 | Greenfield, CA**  
**ARROYO SECO GORGE**

**Aug. 24-27 (revisit) | Grahamsville, NY**  
**PEEKAMOOSE BLUE HOLE**

**Aug. 26-Sept. 3 | Mitchell, OR**  
**PAINTED HILLS (JOHN DAY FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT)**

**Sept. 16-23 | Kooskia, ID**  
**LOCHSA POWELL RANGER DISTRICT**

**Sept. 23-30 | Lake Mojave, NV**  
**SIX MILE COVE**

**Oct. 15-18 | Monticello, UT**  
**INDIAN CREEK**

**Oct. 15-22 | Twentynine Palms, CA**  
**JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK**

**Oct. 30-Nov. 5 | Jackson, WY**  
**BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST**

**Nov. 4-7 | Page, AZ**  
**HORSESHOE BEND (GLEN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA)**



# OVERALL IMPACT

The 2019 Hot Spot program supported 15 parks and protected areas, with two additional revisits to sites from previous years. Leave No Trace efforts were strengthened in each location, as well as providing for training of key staff, volunteers and stakeholders directly involved with the stewardship of each location. Leave No Trace provided a total of 171 events, with trainings, service projects and outreach events specifically tailored to each location and audience.

*Through these efforts, over 6,000 people engaged in the stewardship of public lands, contributing 1,300+ volunteer hours and removing over 8,000 pounds of trash.*

Not only did land managers, key stakeholders, volunteers and community members engage over the course of each Hot Spot — through the action planning meetings at the end of each activation week a roadmap of continued support was laid out, leading to the continued revival of each of the 17 Hot Spots.



6,138

**Land Managers, Key Volunteers and Community Members Inspired by Leave No Trace**



8,055

**Pounds of Trash Removed From Nature**



1,354

**Volunteer Hours Logged**



50+

**Miles of Public Trails Stewarded**

GEORGIA

# AMICALOLA FALLS

STATE PARK &

# CHATTAHOOCHEE

NATIONAL FOREST (REVISIT)

## PROBLEM:

In 2016, Leave No Trace carried out a Hot Spot at the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail (AT). Since then, the number of aspiring thru hikers, as well as day hikers, has only increased. Currently, over 4,000 people start a thru hike on Springer Mountain each year. These, along with hundreds of spring breakers and weekend campers, create a major impact on the AT in Georgia.



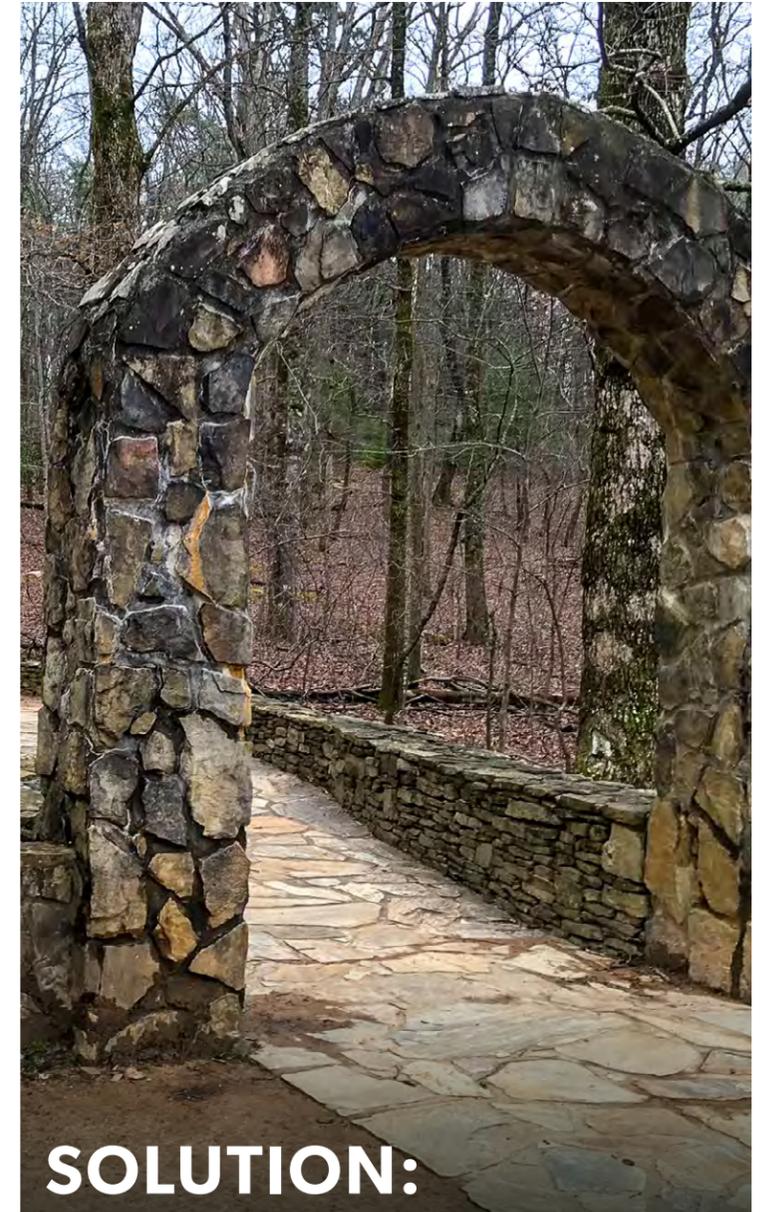
45  
Volunteer Hours



145  
People Educated



6  
Educational Programs  
in 4 days



## SOLUTION:

The revisit provided an opportunity to promote Leave No Trace practices to hikers at the well-attended Appalachian Trail Kick-Off event at Amicalola Falls State Park. Trainers were able to augment the education hikers receive at the AT Basecamp during a one-hour Awareness Workshop. Furthermore, Trainers provided an additional communications training opportunity for both Appalachian Trail Club and Georgia Appalachian Trail Club staff and volunteers. We hope that by instilling and/or reinforcing Leave No Trace best practices at the outset of this iconic thru hike, backpackers will be able to hone their own skills as well as share them with the other hikers they encounter.

CALIFORNIA

# DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK



**19**  
National Park  
Staff Trained



**512**  
People  
Educated



**1**  
Educational  
Video  
Produced



## PROBLEM:

Death Valley is the largest national park within the continental United States and boasts over 3 million acres of designated wilderness. The landscape is one of extremes, being the lowest and driest place in North America and the hottest place on Earth. The park is 91% designated wilderness and holds an International Dark Sky designation and includes salt flats, 11,000-foot peaks, winding canyons, sand dunes, historic mining sites and cultural lands of the Timbisha Shoshone. Its remoteness presents both opportunities for unique experiences and challenges for park staff and visitors alike. From 2017 to 2018 Death Valley experienced a 30% increase in yearly visitation. While some of this increase can be attributed to new counters being installed and more accurate numbers, it is clear that the park is gaining in popularity and attracting more people. In addition to this, some types of recreation are growing in popularity as well, mainly cycling, backcountry 4X4 camping and backpacking. With these increases, the park has also seen an increase in impacts.

## SOLUTION:

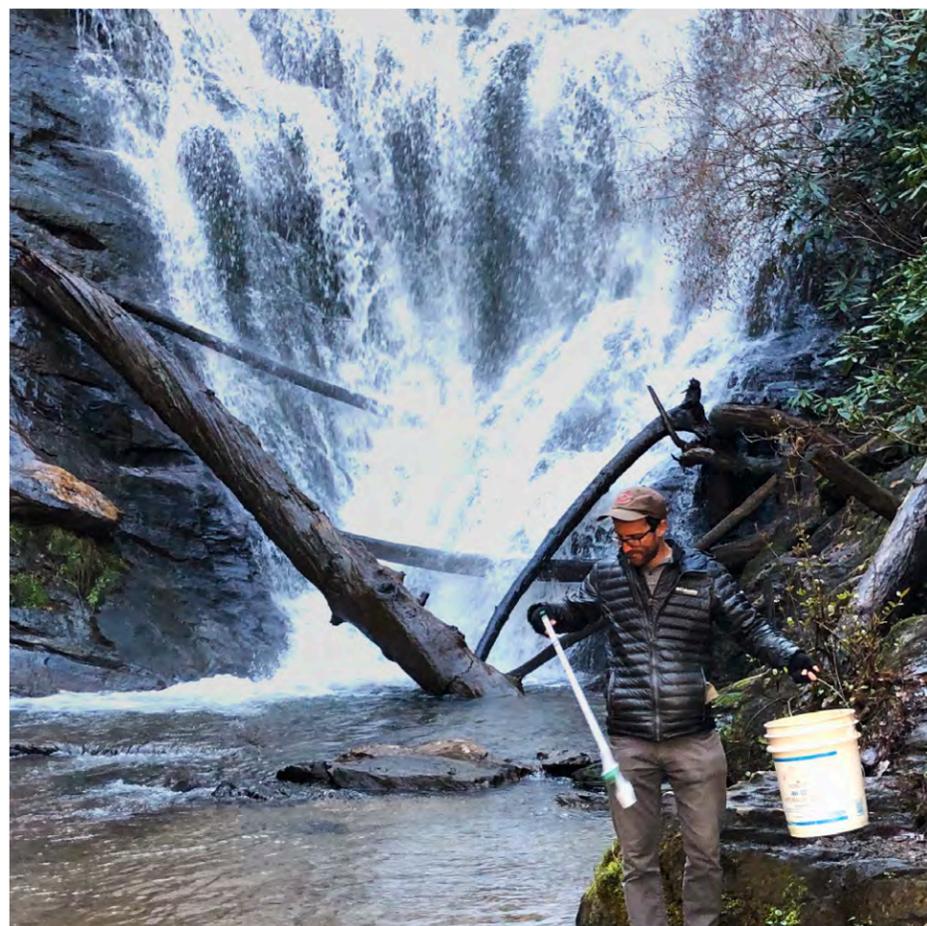
Because of Death Valley National Park's remote location, our typical goal of bringing together local stakeholders for educational and strategic planning was challenging. Our time on-site was largely spent training and educating NPS staff on effective Leave No Trace communication and producing an educational video that can be played at visitor centers and online. Of course, the park's remoteness presents unique challenges and opportunities for implementing additional Leave No Trace education and building a supporting community of stewards. Next steps, in the form of an action planning session and future recommendations in our report were tailored for these unique constraints.

SOUTH CAROLINA

# SUMTER NATIONAL FOREST

## PROBLEM:

The Burrell's Ford area within the Sumter National Forest is a very popular area that draws visitors from a two-hour radius, including one of the country's fastest growing cities (Greenville, SC), and one of its largest (Atlanta, GA). The primary draws include the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area and the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River, both accessed from Burrell's Ford. Visitors come for a variety of recreational opportunities like hiking, frontcountry and backcountry camping, fishing, rafting and many others. However, the significance and meaning of the Wilderness and Wild & Scenic designations are often lost on the region's anglers, campers, hikers and paddlers. This lack of understanding is one of the greatest concerns for the Sumter's Andrew Pickens Ranger District — nearly all physical impacts tie back to that lack of recognition.



## SOLUTION:

Leave No Trace partnered with Andrew Pickens Ranger District of the Sumter National Forest and other key stakeholders to implement a week of Leave No Trace training and outreach that will help the Burrell's Ford recreation access area along the road to recovery. During the week, the Leave No Trace team met with area stakeholders for strategic planning and unifying stewardship efforts. The Hot Spot efforts joined in with the Chattooga Conservancy's annual River Sweep event which resulted in 2,200 pounds of trash being removed. In addition to those programs and events the Traveling Trainers hosted a communication workshop for land management staff and stakeholder representatives.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

# MOUNT MAJOR RESERVATION & STATE FOREST



**180**  
Volunteer Hours



**248**  
People Educated



**120**  
Pounds of Trash Removed

## **PROBLEM:**

Mount Major is the second-most-climbed mountain in New Hampshire, behind Mount Monadnock — recent visitation data collection puts annual visitation around 80,000. With the trail itself being only a few miles roundtrip, recreational use of this landscape is extraordinarily concentrated. However, this hike is very accessible and offers outstanding 360-degree views of the surrounding mountains and lakes, so visitation is not expected to decline anytime soon. Mount Major attracts a diverse crowd of visitors of all experience levels. Many hikers are first-time visitors and come from out of town or out of state. A considerable amount of visitors travel from Boston and other nearby metropolitan areas. Groups include families, college students and trail runners. A considerable portion of visitors are also comprised of local dog walkers out of state visitors. Park that social media and local press coverage have contributed to increasing visitation over the past decade. The high visitation has accelerated many of the cumulative impacts that Mount Major faces today.

## **SOLUTION:**

This Hot Spot targeted litter and off-trail travel as the primary impacts. Local land managers, stewardship groups, volunteers and tourism organizations came together to collaboratively assess communication strategies, as well as host and participate in various training workshops, service projects and other public events. By coming together in such a collaborative fashion the local stakeholders were able to not only learn Leave No Trace practices and communication styles, but also strengthen themselves as a stewardship community for Mt. Major. By empowering themselves to meaningfully interact with the recreating public, they made great strides toward successful reduction in impacts like litter and off-trail travel. Furthermore, the action planning meeting at the end of the activation week resulted in next steps with actionable items planned for the near future.

# COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

OREGON



**10**  
Informational  
Programs Delivered



**262**  
People Educated



**20+**  
Local and Regional  
Stakeholders Actively  
Participated

## PROBLEM:

Over three million people visit the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area every year. This 85-mile long canyon is only 20 miles from 2.5 million people living in the Portland metropolitan area — the most populous area in Oregon. Because of this, many Gorge visitors are from the metro-Portland area. Tourism agencies, such as Travel Oregon and Travel Portland, have also publicized the Gorge as a must-see destination to both United States and international visitors. This publicity has attracted visitors from throughout Oregon and Washington, as well as many tourists from other states and countries. Up to 30% of Gorge visitors are from outside of the United States. As growth in visitation continues to accelerate the most pressing recreation impacts are visitor-created trails (and the subsequent trail erosion), invasive species and litter. Secondary impacts include unprepared visitors, dogs off-leash, pet waste, strains on local search and rescue organizations, and congestion along historic Highway 30, as well as in parking lots, at trailheads and at waterfalls.

## SOLUTION:

The complexity of the Columbia River Gorge and its patchwork of state, federal, and private land across such a vast landscape and in such close proximity to Portland presented unique challenges. Before the Hot Spot efforts began, many local stakeholders had already begun collaborative work on educational campaigns aimed at mitigating some of these impacts. Throughout the Hot Spot planning process and activation week, we were able to re-stoke those ongoing efforts by bringing those stakeholders, and some new ones, back to the table to discuss future opportunities. Throughout the activation week, we held a variety of successful educational programs, presentations, panel discussions, and strategic planning sessions to engage a wide variety of key stakeholders across this stunning landscape.

# ENCHANTMENTS SPECIAL PERMIT AREA (ALPINE LAKES WILDERNESS)



## PROBLEM:

Located in the iconic Alpine Lakes Wilderness (ALW) in the Central Cascades of Washington, the Enchantments Special Permit Area (the Enchantments) is known for its multitude of beautiful alpine lakes, stunning views, challenging hiking and climbing opportunities and unique subalpine vegetation. In 1987, this 24,000-acre area was designated as the first limited overnight permit area in the nation, in response to a decline in Wilderness character and a dramatic increase in recreational impacts — including a decline in water quality, loss of vegetation, wildlife negatively affected by dogs and improperly disposed human waste. In the past decade visits to the Enchantments have increased significantly. Combined day and overnight use has increased from 19,678 visitors in 2009 to 45,810 visitors in 2018. The number of day hikers (who are not limited in numbers by the permit system) has increased from 14,224 in 2009 to 30,358 in 2018. Currently, day use accounts for approximately 70% of visits to the Enchantments. Increased visitation is taking a toll. In the past seven years, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) staff have observed an upswing in many recreational impacts, including crowding, human waste, social trails, trampled vegetation, erosion and habituated wildlife.

## SOLUTION:

Over the course of the Hot Spot activation week Center staff hosted educational workshops, spent time in the field with USFS staff, volunteers and stakeholders, interacting with the public and rehabilitating campsites. They also produced a site-specific educational video. Given that this is a wilderness area and backcountry permits are now largely dispersed online, opportunities for face-to-face interactions are fairly limited. Because of this, ensuring that the interactions that do occur are effective, informative and affirmative is very important. Our communication workshops helped with this ongoing effort. However, because of these limitations, the video may provide the most enduring educational opportunities for those researching and seeking permits online — many of whom may not ever interact with a ranger in-person. By bringing various stakeholders into the planning and execution of this Hot Spot many of the working relationships have been improved and will benefit future stewardship efforts.



**144**  
Volunteer  
Hours



**200**  
People  
Educated



**4**  
Campsite Restoration  
Projects Completed



COLORADO

# CHATFIELD STATE PARK

## PROBLEM:

During its early years, Chatfield State Park was isolated and maintained itself as a natural recreation park. However the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood area has increased from a little over 1.2 million people in 1975 when the park opened to nearly 3 million residents in 2018. When the Colorado Springs Metro area is included in this total, nearly 4 million people live within a one-hour drive of the park. The front range's population boom has resulted in large changes in developed areas and urban sprawl. Chatfield State Park is now surrounded on all borders by businesses, highways and housing developments. Visitors to Chatfield are primarily from the immediate surrounding communities. A smaller portion are traveling visitors. Many are families, young couples and retirees who view the park as their backyard. They take ownership of the park, but also feel entitled to it and may not always view it as a natural space, a state park or the place where their drinking water comes from. There are two new housing developments currently being built around the park's perimeter, and one of these developments has plans to give all homeowners a park pass, adding to the sense of entitlement the community feels. All of this is leading to accelerated cumulative effects impacting the park and its natural features.

## SOLUTION:

Center staff worked closely with Chatfield State Park staff and volunteers, as well as representatives from Denver Audubon, nearby Roxborough State Park and various other local stakeholders to facilitate and lead educational opportunities and strategic planning sessions. Chatfield State Park is in very close proximity to a variety of other parks and protected areas, so combining forces to streamline Leave No Trace implementation and share best practices was a focal point of this Hot Spot. During the activation week, we were able to bring these groups together for educational workshops, lay the foundation for future plans to further implement Leave No Trace onsite, as well as get our hands dirty with a successful volunteer service project. Work with Chatfield State Park and Colorado Parks and Wildlife is not done, but a clearer path to recovery and sustainability has been lined out moving into the future.



**58**  
Volunteer Hours



**177**  
People Educated



**7**  
Educational Programs Led



**54**  
Trees Planted



# EASTERN HIGH PEAKS WILDERNESS



## PROBLEM:

The High Peaks Wilderness Area is the most heavily used area within the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The busiest trailhead, the Heart Lake Program Center, received over 73,000 visitors in 2017 (both novice and experienced users). With only 173 acres across 21 summits near the Heart Lake Program Center the alpine zone in the Adirondacks contains some of the most critically endangered plants in the northeast. As recreation impacts increase the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Forest Rangers and the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) Summit Stewards at the most visited sites have been reporting traffic congestion along Route 73, illegal parking at trailheads, litter, human waste and toilet paper on the trail and trail widening due to visitors avoiding the rough, muddy and rocky terrain of the trail. Managers and stakeholders involved in the Hot Spot also reported the spread of invasive aquatic species, dog waste left at trailheads in bags, illegal camping and campfires, strain on local DEC rangers for search and rescue, rock stacking, cairn tampering and graffiti in alpine areas.



**150**  
Volunteer  
Hours



**4,000**  
People  
Educated



**2**  
Miles of Sustainable  
Trail Constructed



## SOLUTION:

The Hot Spot activation programs throughout the week were successful and well received by participants and the public. In particular, we found the Social Media Rendezvous, public awareness and communication workshops, the trail building service project and the final action planning meeting to be valuable both for advancing communication and education efforts, as well as gaining a better understanding of impacts and current impact mitigation efforts. Through the efforts of ADK Education Director Seth Jones, the Hot Spot week was a holistic affair with ADK staff operating tables and booths at popular trailheads and the High Peaks Information Center each day of the week, Leave No Trace themed evening campfire programs, plus guided Leave No Trace hiking tours each day of the Hot Spot. While there is still a lot of work to be done in the future, the focus on strategic planning and furthering educational outreach during the Hot Spot was a critical step forward for this popular area.

CALIFORNIA

# ARROYO SECO GORGE

## PROBLEM:

The Arroyo Seco is a mountain river, with headwaters originating above 4,000 feet in the Santa Lucia Mountains. The Arroyo Seco Recreation Area includes a developed campground, a day-use picnic area and overnight parking for those hiking into the Arroyo Seco Gorge. Fall through spring, the area's primary users are hikers and backpackers who begin their trips at the base of the Gorge. During the hot summer months, most visitors are frontcountry campers and picnickers visiting the day-use area. Many visitors hike in to float in the Gorge's deep pools, then return on foot, but some will follow the river up or downstream for several miles where light canyoneering is possible. Unfortunately, there is a cost to the river's popularity. In the day-use area, broken glass, left-behind food, abandoned gear and other trash are common issues. Between shoreline erosion and the volume of visitors (500+ per day on busy weekends), it is likely that water quality in the river is suffering. Upriver from the day-use area, trash, toilet paper, illegal campfires, vegetation damage (carving and cutting of trees) and abandoned items are common impacts. From Arroyo Seco/Indians Road, river access is difficult, as the canyon walls are extremely steep. The trek can take longer than anticipated, and visitors to the Gorge often abandon gear and leave trash.



## SOLUTION:

Through a highly collaborative planning and activation process, Center staff completed eight educational and community building programs, both onsite and in the communities surrounding the Arroyo Seco Gorge. Strengthening the stewardship community through these collaborative efforts will prove to be extremely valuable moving forward when it comes to cohesive messaging and educational opportunities for such a unique recreational area. We have recommended increasing training opportunities for agency staff, as well as relevant stakeholders, volunteers and the general public. Furthermore, guidance on improved signage, paired with specific alterations to infrastructure, were assessed.



**192**  
Volunteer  
Hours



**210**  
People  
Educated



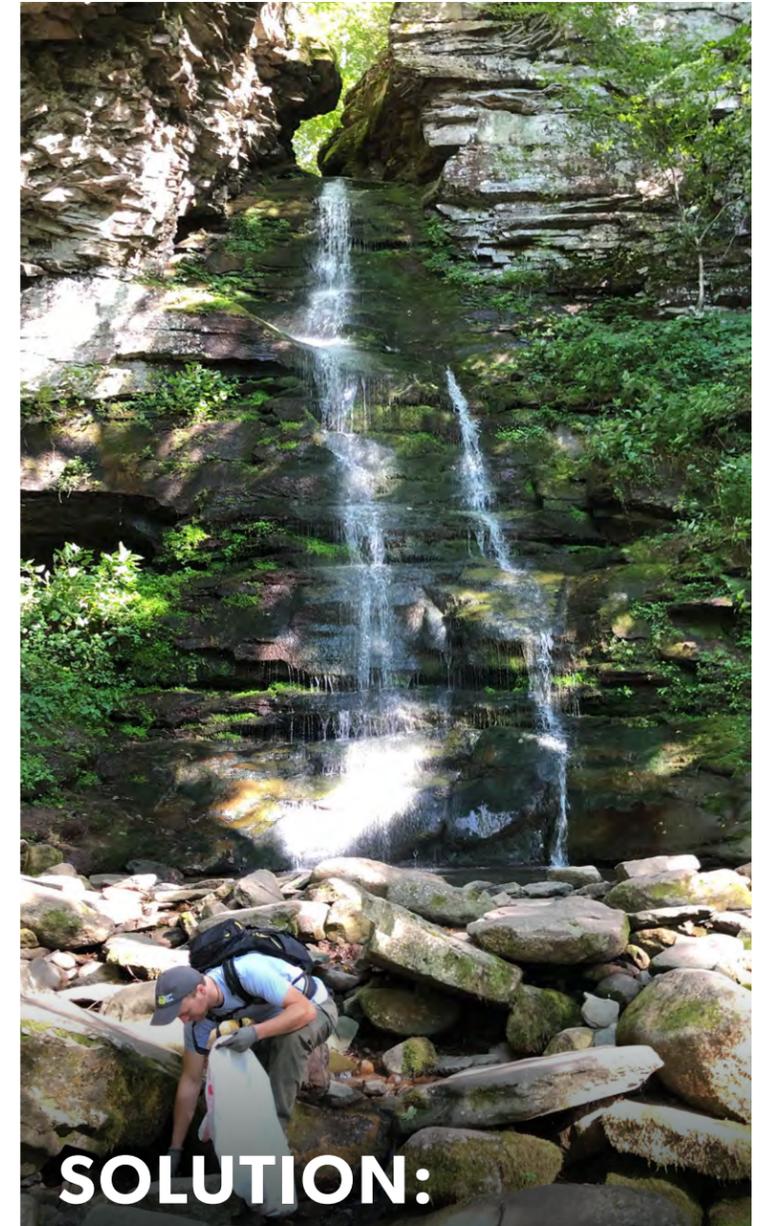
**415**  
Pounds of Trash  
Removed

NEW YORK

# PEEKAMOOSE BLUE HOLE (REVISIT)

## PROBLEM:

The Center first hosted an outstandingly successful Hot Spot at Peekamoose Blue Hole in 2017, and we returned to follow up on a few targeted objectives. On a busy day, hundreds of people can be seen enjoying the cool spring water in the beautiful Catskills forests. Sadly, crowding, litter, undesignated trails and human waste impacts have heavily degraded the landscape. Since 2017, a limited quota system has been implemented, as well as a newly developed dedicated stewardship program overseen by the Catskill Center. We will be working with the Catskill Center, New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK), and other local stakeholders for strategic planning and further communication training, as well as a large-scale cleanup event, to gauge how successful the limited quota system has been at mitigating litter impacts.



## SOLUTION:

The concerted efforts by both the DEC and the Catskill Center have led to a remarkable decline in overuse and visitor-created impacts. While there has been clear progress, stakeholders have also expressed the need to keep moving forward by continuing to provide consistent, site-specific Leave No Trace education and by continuing to monitor the permit system. With the continuation of this work, the Center sees The Peekamoose Blue Hole, and the greater Catskill Region as having potential of becoming a Gold Standard Site. The Center can help contribute to this goal by suggesting written and verbal educational messages for partner and agency websites, social media, trailhead signage and public-facing staff, and by providing resources regarding waste management and the newly adopted permit system.



**32**  
Volunteer Hours



**276**  
People Educated



**21**  
Bags of Trash Removed  
(a 61% reduction from 2017 Hot Spot)

OREGON

# PAINTED HILLS/ JOHN DAY FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

## PROBLEM:

In 2014, Painted Hills became one of the Seven Wonders of Oregon as part of a campaign by Travel Oregon. While the Painted Hills are certainly a unique wonder of Oregon, this resulted in a significant increase in visitation. Since then, park staff have noticed a dramatic increase in undesignated trails, unauthorized removal of fossils and unmanned aircraft (drones). Because of the fragile nature of the soils that comprise the painted hills, a small number of visitors can have huge impacts, thereby degrading the scenic value of the landscape. The Center will be working with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, the nearby town of Mitchell, Travel Oregon and other local stakeholders to address these impacts through communication workshops, strategic planning and public educational programming.



## SOLUTION:

The Leave No Trace team spent a week at the Painted Hills Unit of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and nearby town of Mitchell working with the National Park Service and many other local/regional stakeholders to address increasing recreational impacts. Education focused on the fragile nature of the Painted Hills is key to mitigating long-term degradation to this unique landscape. We were able to work with various land managers and related stakeholders on effective communication through face-to-face interactions, social media and other onsite educational resources. In addition to this, we were able to add value to existing ranger-led programming and provide examples of how Leave No Trace education can be further integrated into these programs moving forward. With the enthusiastic and collaborative nature of the stakeholders we were able to facilitate an effective planning process to continue to build from the momentum generated during the activation week.

IDAHO

# LOCHSA POWELL RANGER DISTRICT



152  
Volunteer  
Hours



360  
People  
Educated



15  
Educational  
Programs Hosted



## PROBLEM:

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest consists of 4 million acres of beautiful and diverse mountain landscape in northern Idaho. The forest is known for being especially wild — nearly half of its acreage is designated as Wilderness, alongside three Wild and Scenic River systems. The area is a prominent source of cultural and historical significance from the ancestral presence of numerous Native American tribes, and subsequently being on the path of the Lewis and Clark expedition. In 2018, over 200,000 visitors stopped by the Lolo Pass Visitor Center and this number is likely to continue to increase in the coming years. Many of these visitors are accessing the hot springs and other areas within the forest. Though the impacts are negatively affecting the natural resources. However, the forest is getting ahead of the curve in dealing with these impacts and planning for sustainable use in the future. For example, a dumpster was recently added to the Jerry Johnson parking area during the summer months, helping mitigate trash overflows. Many other tangible solutions are being studied to protect the natural qualities of this area.

## SOLUTION:

During the Hot Spot activation week, Leave No Trace staff led 15 educational and stewardship-focused programs across the region, from Missoula to Kooskia. These targeted programs helped to educate the public and spread Leave No Trace awareness, strengthen stewardship practices, and enhanced communication with USFS staff. Other stakeholders include local volunteers, students at a local school, and students from University of Montana, University of Idaho and Washington State University. Through the Hot Spots programs and service projects, the Traveling Trainers and stakeholder groups were able to highlight future opportunities to implement Leave No Trace across the forest and surrounding communities and build upon already significant local enthusiasm.



## SIX MILE COVE

**PROBLEM:**

While Lake Mead National Recreation Area attracts visitors pursuing a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, the sandy beaches and cool water of southern Lake Mohave are particularly popular with families seeking relaxation and relief from the desert heat. Many of these visitors are not necessarily experienced outdoor enthusiasts in the traditional sense and may only be vaguely aware of the delicate ecosystems which surround them. The severe and adverse human impact occurring at Six Mile Cove is not the result of conscious indifference but rather a consequence of limited understanding of best practices which can be addressed and reduced through education and outreach. While these issues have been observed in the park for many years, they have increased over time. In order to address these impacts, the park installed pit toilets in the area and brought in three roll-off dumpsters to the area to collect the trash. Additionally, park staff provided plastic bags to encourage visitors to pick up and pack out their trash. These strategies helped, but the issues continue at Six Mile Cove and other locations around the park. During the summer months, the roll-offs are full after long weekends and piles of trash and unburied human waste are still frequently found around the beach.

**SOLUTION:**

The Traveling Trainers worked closely with an interdepartmental committee from Lake Mead National Recreation Area to plan and execute a series of educational and strategic programming onsite and in surrounding communities. The awareness workshops formally trained 28 individuals between the three sessions. Participants in the sessions included local community leaders, park staff and park volunteers. The goal of the sessions was to teach leaders of youth groups and individuals working with children about Leave No Trace principles and recommendations. Participants were taught about local Leave No Trace practices related to visiting the park. Additionally, attendees were instructed in how to lead activities to teach these principles to younger-aged groups. The service project resulted in significant improvements to Six Mile Cove. The result of the project was a noticeable reduction in visible litter in the area.



**100**  
Volunteer  
Hours



**128**  
People  
Educated Across  
9 Programs



**12**  
Yards<sup>3</sup> of Trash  
and 1,000 lbs of  
Glass Collected



**1**  
Educational  
Video Produced

CALIFORNIA

# JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK



## PROBLEM:

Joshua Tree National Park is the closest national park to both San Diego and Los Angeles. This close proximity to such major population centers brings with it extreme levels of visitation with varying levels of stewardship education as well as a diverse range of recreational interests. Even with extensive infrastructure in the park the fragile desert ecosystem, including vast amounts of living soil crust (also known as cryptobiotic soil), is being heavily degraded by unsustainable cross-country travel. Other major impacts include illegal off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel, graffiti and building of illegal structures within archaeological sites. In the context of this Hot Spot, the primary impact issues have to do with damage to archaeological resources and disruption to ethnological resources. The degradation of resources primarily occurs around rock shelters, and commonly stem from issues such as human waste, campfire impacts, trash and soil disturbance. These impacts are frequently associated with illegal camping as well as unauthorized rock climbing/bouldering around closed formations. Visitor created trails to access climbing/bouldering areas and traverse backcountry areas are also a concern.



## SOLUTION:

Throughout the Hot Spot activation week, Center staff was able to host and facilitate a variety of educational and strategic planning sessions aimed at addressing current needs while also focusing on future planning in regards to Leave No Trace implementation. A series of educational workshops were held for NPS and other local stakeholders, such as outfitters and guides, as well as the regional climbing community. Part of the programming overlapped with the annual "Climb Smart" event, aimed at building stewardship ethics in the local climbing community. As part of this, we were able to interact with and educate many climbing enthusiasts. In addition to the educational programs and future-forward planning sessions, we produced an educational video that can be used in visitor centers and for web-based resources.



WYOMING

# BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST

## PROBLEM:

The Bridger-Teton National Forest holds some of the most iconic and pristine mountainscapes, rivers, and forests in the West. The town of Jackson has become a year-round recreation Mecca. One of the most notable features found here is the level of geothermal activity including natural hot springs. Many of the easily accessible hot springs near the town of Jackson are frequently visited and have shown increasingly high levels of related impacts. The Center's team will be working with the USFS and other local stakeholders on a series of guided roundtable strategy meetings, communication workshops and public outreach programs to work toward addressing these impacts.



**7**  
Educational and  
Strategic Programs

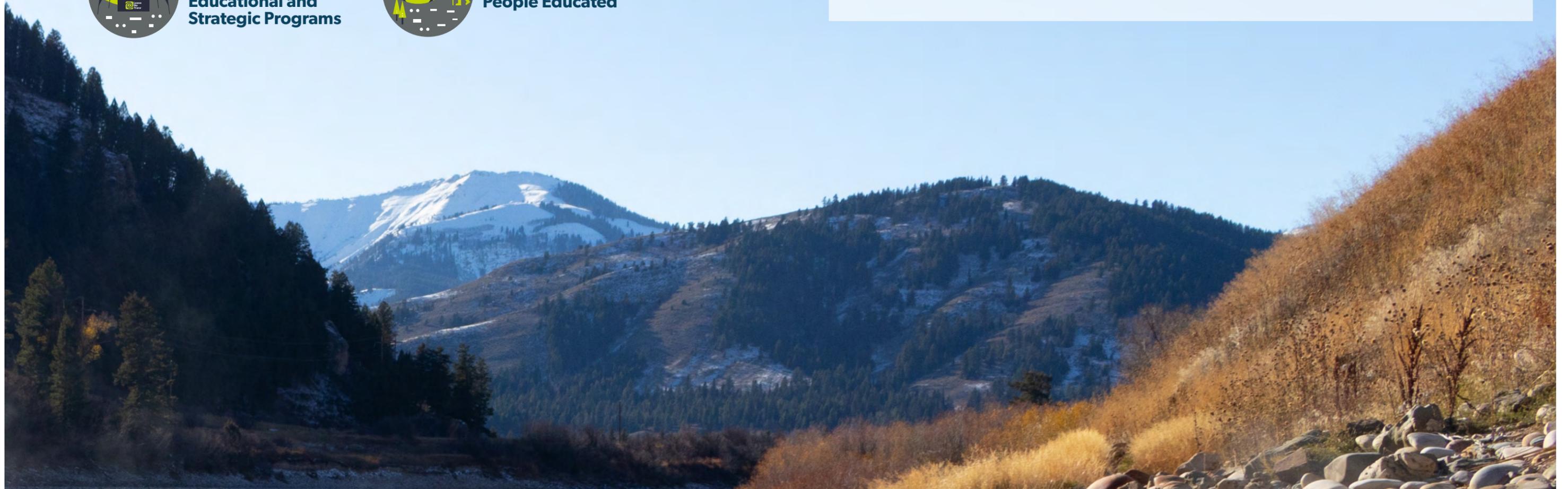


**79**  
People Educated



## SOLUTION:

The Leave No Trace team spent a week on-site in Jackson to host and facilitate various educational and strategic planning workshops. Topics included improved face-to-face communication techniques, as well as creating clear and consistent messaging across stakeholder groups for web-based resources. Using the Hot Spot as a catalyst to discuss the foundational work necessary to build consistent messaging holds great promise moving forward. As these plans develop, Leave No Trace education and information will be a vital part of the management strategy.



\*This Hot Spot was split into two sections, with Part 2 taking place in April of 2020. Due to this, solutions and stats are not available at this time.

## ARIZONA

# HORSESHOE BEND/GLEN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



### PROBLEM:

Horseshoe Bend has become internationally celebrated as one of America's premier desert canyon overlooks, drawing crowds from all over the globe. While this area was once a locally known, relatively obscure location, spikes in social media use over the last decade have brought it to the forefront of many itineraries for those visiting the southwest region. This growing visitation has led to hardening and rerouting the trail, expanding and paving the parking lot, installing safe-viewing infrastructure on the canyon rim, and a fee booth at the parking lot entrance. Leave No Trace staff worked with multiple agency leaders and citizen's groups to address litter, cumulative impacts to fragile desert ecosystems and creating an effective communication strategy around this coveted landscape.

\*This Hot Spot was split into two sections, with Part 2 taking place in March of 2020. Therefore, solutions and stats are not available at this time.

## UTAH

# INDIAN CREEK



### PROBLEM:

Indian Creek is a BLM-managed desert landscape located in southeast Utah. The towering rock formations offer a world-renowned destination for the rock climbing community, as well as other visitors. There are also a large number of sensitive archaeological and culturally significant sites for native tribes like the Hopi, Zuni, Paute and Navajo (among others). These aspects, combined with growing popularity for other recreational opportunities, have brought unsustainable increases in visitation over the last few years — resulting in significant impacts to the landscape, ecosystems and cultural sites. Leave No Trace will be putting on a two-part Hot Spot with the BLM, USFS, NPS as well as local and regional stakeholder groups from recreational, municipal, and tribal communities, to address impacts through effective messaging and communication and, as with any Hot Spot, growing the stewardship community to benefit this cherished landscape.



# LOOKING FORWARD

The Leave No Trace Hot Spot program provides more than just a week of onsite training and outreach. Each visit is designed to engage land managers and other key stakeholders by creating a roadmap for integrating Leave No Trace education for visitors, as well as inspiring robust community involvement in these plans.

The various trainings and planning sessions incorporated into each Hot Spots effort play a vital role in helping locations carry the efforts beyond the weeklong visit.

*Many of these programs help participants get a better understanding of Leave No Trace skills and ethics as well as how these practices can help mitigate or even prevent the recreation-related impacts facing these areas.*

The Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops also help to educate on the impacts facing these areas with the visiting public and partner groups.

A good example of the specific visitor education methods that Leave No Trace provides is the Authority of the Resource Technique (ART) workshop. This teaching session equips communities with a proven model for

communicating Leave No Trace practices. Rather than using harsh fines and citations to prevent these impacts, land managers and communities gain a strategy for persuading visitors to lessen their impacts. Studies show that when visitors understand the long-term implications of their actions, they are more likely to change their behavior. The ART trainings are designed for the land managers, key volunteers, and partner groups who come in direct contact with recreating visitors, and published research reveals that it's a highly effective strategy.

At the conclusion of each Hot Spot campaign, Leave No Trace staff sit down with all of the local stakeholders involved to discuss the week's successes, challenges and opportunities. The outcome is to produce a future-forward action plan. To ensure consistency, the Leave No Trace staff employs a detailed scoring rubric for each site, helping to highlight attainable goals as well as more long-term intensive measures.

Finally, Leave No Trace works to continue the long-lasting effects of the Hot Spot effort at each location by assisting with fundraising and grant-seeking to bolster local resources. One of the key outcomes of this place-based fundraising is to assist in the capacity for "community science" which encourages Hot Spot communities to monitor the impacts that the Hot Spot work addresses, and provides tools for enduring oversight and protection of natural resources. Hot Spot communities may also decide to re-engage the Leave No Trace Center after a Hot Spot campaign has concluded through fee-based consulting contracts.



In the spring of 2019, the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics launched the nomination process for 2020 Hot Spots. The Center accepted nominations for six weeks and received about 70 nominations from

across the country and from various agency representatives, friends groups and concerned citizens. For 2020, Leave No Trace staff selected 14 new Hot Spot locations and two revisits:

February 20-25, 2020 | Florida Keys, FL  
**FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY**

February 26-March 2, 2020 | Phoenix, AZ  
**BASE & MERIDIAN WILDLIFE AREA**

March 5-10, 2020 | Austin, TX  
**BARTON CREEK GREENBELT**

March 19-23, 2020 | Monticello, UT  
**INDIAN CREEK (PART 2)**

March 26-30, 2020 | Tulsa, OK  
**TURKEY MOUNTAIN**

April 2-6, 2020 | Page, AZ  
**HORSESHOE BEND (PART 2)**

July 9-13, 2020 | Milwaukee, WI  
**LYNDEN HILL**

July 17-21, 2020 | Philadelphia, PA  
**WISSAHICKON PARK**

July 20-27, 2020 | Anchorage, AK  
**CROW PASS (CHUGACH STATE PARK)**

August 13-17, 2020 | Kerhonkson, NY  
**MINNEWASKA STATE PARK**

August 21-25, 2020 | Panthertown Valley, NC  
**PANTHERTOWN VALLEY**

September 17-21, 2020 | La Crosse, WI  
**HIXON FOREST**

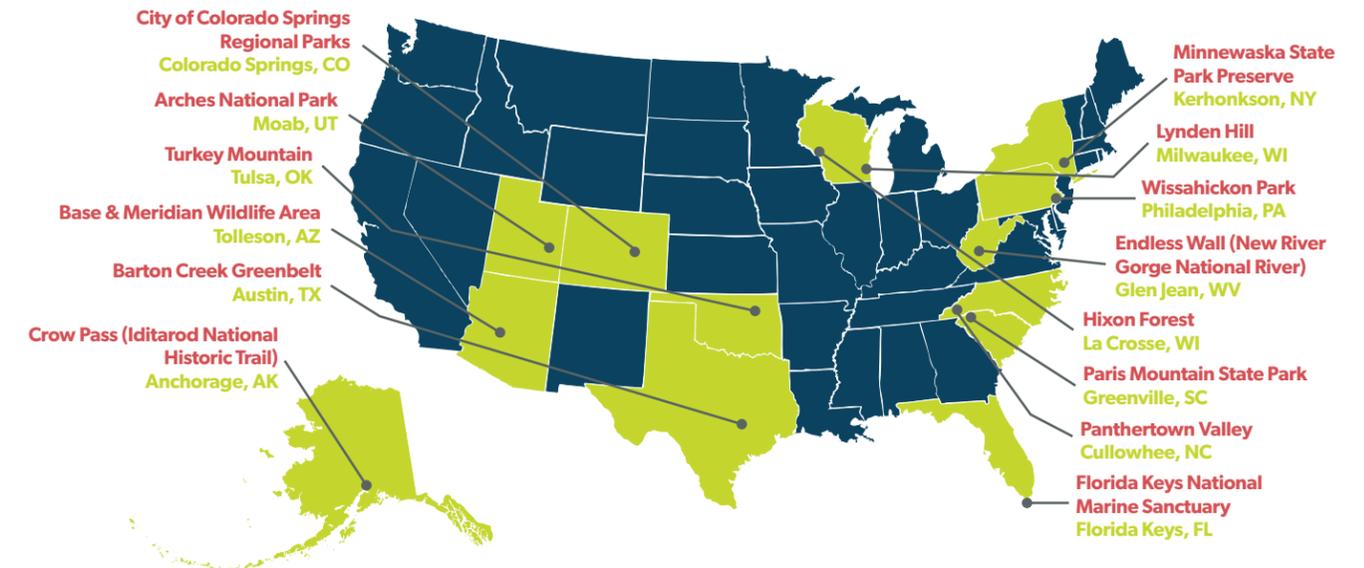
September 18-22, 2020 | Glen Jean, WV  
**NEW RIVER GORGE**

October 1-6, 2020 | Colorado Springs, CO  
**STRATTON OPEN SPACE**

October 9-13, 2020 | Moab, UT  
**ARCHES NATIONAL PARK**

October 14-19, 2020 | Greenville, SC  
**PARIS MOUNTAIN STATE PARK**

## 2020 HOT SPOTS:



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

*A very special thank you to KEEN, L.L. Bean and REI for their support of the Hot Spot program! The Center would also like to extend a thank you to the organizations listed below for their participation in and contributions to the 2019 Hot Spot visits. These programs would not have been a success without all your hard work.*



L.L.Bean



46er Trailhead Steward Program  
 Adirondack Mountain Club  
 Alvarado Street Brewery  
 Amicalola Falls State Park  
 Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
 Athletic and Outdoor Professionals  
 of Portland  
 Belknap Range Conservation Coalition  
 Blue Mountain Land Trust  
 Cascadia Conservation District  
 Castlewood Canyon State Park  
 Catskill Center  
 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest  
 Chattooga Conservancy  
 Chattooga River Trout Unlimited  
 City of Mitchell  
 Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation  
 & Cultural Services

Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Denver Audubon Society  
 Foothills Trail Conservancy  
 Friends of the Columbia Gorge  
 Friends of the Enchantments  
 Friends of Joshua Tree  
 Georgia Appalachian Trail Club  
 Get Outdoors Nevada  
 GLOBE Observer  
 Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance  
 Joshua Tree National Park Association  
 Lakes Region Conservation Trust  
 Leavenworth Mountain Association  
 Litter Free TV  
 Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce  
 and Visitor Center

Mt. Hood and Gorge Regional  
 Destination Tourism Organization  
 Mt. Hood Wilderness Stewards  
 New York/New Jersey Trail Conference  
 North Fork John Day Watershed Council  
 Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests  
 Oregon Department of Transportation  
 Oregon State Parks  
 Pacific Crest Trail Association  
 Pacific Northwest Experience  
 Patagonia - Santa Cruz  
 Parks Management Company  
 Portland State University  
 Prineville District BLM  
 Roxborough State Park  
 Selway Bitterroot Frank Church  
 Foundation

Southern Appalachian  
 Wilderness Stewards  
 Stone Adventures  
 The Nature Conservancy  
 Teton Backcountry Alliance  
 Teton Photography Club  
 Topo Designs  
 Trailkeepers of Oregon  
 University of Wyoming  
 US Army Corps of Engineers  
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 Ventana Wilderness Alliance  
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