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## **APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY RECEIVES NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION GRANT SUPPORTING AMERICA'S NATIONAL TRAILS AND WILD & SCENIC RIVERS**

**HARPERS FERRY, W.Va. (July 18, 2018)** – In celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Trails and National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems in 2018, the National Park Foundation today [announced](#) a grant to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) in support of its Improving Overnight Site Infrastructure Experience initiative on the New England portion of the Appalachian Trail (A.T.).

The New England section of the 2,190-mile A.T. spans five states and 734 miles with 133 designated overnight sites. The A.T. is currently experiencing rising annual visitation rates, with the number of visitors doubling in the past four years. This has placed additional strain on these popular overnight sites, many located in environmentally fragile areas. The Improving Overnight Site Infrastructure Experience initiative will help reduce this strain by upgrading outhouse facilities to moldering toilets, mitigating hazard trees and improving tenting opportunities.

“This generous grant from the National Park Foundation will help protect one of the most important landscapes in the eastern United States, the Appalachian Trail,” said ATC President and CEO Suzanne Dixon. “These funds will help protect the A.T.’s natural resources and provide a safer, healthier and more enjoyable overnight experience for Trail visitors.”

This project is one of 20 across the country being funded by the National Park Foundation as part of this effort. All project descriptions can be viewed on the [Rivers and Trails 50th Anniversary Grants Map](#).

“Trails and rivers bring people together for shared experiences that last a lifetime,” said Will Shafroth, president of the National Park Foundation. “The National Park Foundation’s grants help maintain these treasured resources and enable more people to connect with them and each other.”

These grants demonstrate the impact of the National Park Foundation’s [Centennial Campaign for America’s National Parks](#). To date, this comprehensive fundraising campaign to strengthen and enhance the future of America’s treasured national parks has raised more than \$500 million in private donations from individuals, foundations, and companies.

National Park Foundation Find Your Park/Encuentra Tu Parque partners The Coca-Cola Company and Nature Valley are proud to support this effort. Additional support comes from partners Niantic and Bandit Wines.

Beyond funding much-needed site-specific projects, the National Park Foundation is also inspiring more people to [#FindYourWay](#) along trails and rivers across the country.

[#FindYourWay](#) aligns with the [#FindYourPark/#EncuentraTuParque](#) movement and invites the public to discover their own personal connections to thousands of trails across the National Trails System and more than 12,000 miles of rivers protected by the Wild & Scenic Rivers System.

### **About the Appalachian Trail Conservancy**

The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. A unit of the National Park System, the A.T. ranges from Maine to Georgia and is approximately 2,190 miles in length. It is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world. The mission of the ATC is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail –

ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come. For more information, please visit [www.appalachiantrail.org](http://www.appalachiantrail.org).

#### **About the National Park Foundation**

Celebrating 50 years, the National Park Foundation is the official charity of America's national parks and nonprofit partner to the National Park Service. Chartered by Congress in 1967, the National Park Foundation raises private funds to help PROTECT more than 84 million acres of national parks through critical conservation and preservation efforts, CONNECT all Americans with their incomparable natural landscapes, vibrant culture and rich history, and ENGAGE the next generation of park stewards. In 2016, commemorating the National Park Service's 100th anniversary, the Foundation launched The Centennial Campaign for America's National Parks, a comprehensive fundraising campaign to strengthen and enhance the future of these national treasures for the next hundred years. Find out more and become a part of the national park community at [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org).

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