

FALL / WINTER 2015



# TETON STEWARDS

NEWSLETTER of the GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION



Photo: Brad Schwarm/Alpenglow Tours

## Engaging the Next Generation in Grand Teton

### CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF THE YOUTH CONSERVATION PROGRAM

*"I didn't think I was capable of doing what I was able to at the end of the season,"*

Katie Luck, 2015 Youth Conservation Program (YCP) participant, said. "Now that I am back home and settled into life here, I am unstoppable. No task, mentally or physically, is too much for me. That is something I never believed in before YCP."

These powerful words perfectly sum up the Foundation's hope for all who participate in YCP, a transformative youth program that promotes environmental stewardship and accomplishes much-needed work that would not be completed otherwise. YCP celebrated a milestone in 2015—its tenth season in Grand Teton National Park.

Ten years ago, Foundation President Leslie Mattson sat down with friends Shelby and Gale Davis who saw an opportunity for youth engagement in Grand Teton. They supported a youth program in Acadia National Park where students (including their children) worked on the trail crew for the summer. "The program was a big success, and we were surprised Grand Teton didn't have one," the Davises said. "We felt strongly that the park needed to get younger generations involved, and this was a great way to do it." Mattson saw the incredible potential for this program, proposed it to the park, and YCP in Grand Teton was born.

*Continued on next page*



# 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY —YCP—



## YCP's Extraordinary Achievements in 2015

- **450** cubic feet of asphalt removed at the Lupine Meadows trail
- **780** feet of logs peeled for new bridges along Cascade Creek for the Jenny Lake project
- **679** feet of historic fence restored at Mormon Row
- **and much more!**



YCP is a 10-week program, empowering 16-to-19-year-olds to build trails, restore historic sites, and participate in team-building activities. This summer, YCP participants completed 6,671 hours of work, hiked 164 miles, built 3,484 feet of new trail, and more. Not only do participants positively impact the park, they also gain valuable leadership skills and a work ethic to help guide them in their future careers. Elizabeth Koutrelakos, YCP crew leader who works with and mentors the students, sees first-hand the incredible impact the program has on its participants. "The highlight of my summer was watching the crew transform from a collection of individuals to a working, cohesive team. As the crew learned important teamwork and trail building skills, they were able to accomplish things that would have been impossible on the first day. Each crew member played an integral role in assessing situations and finding solutions to complete certain projects," Koutrelakos said. "Watching each member connect with their own confidence and leadership was amazing."

To date, the Foundation has provided nearly 200 students with the chance to explore Grand Teton, make friends, and share a rewarding experience they will remember for a lifetime. In preparation for its 100th birthday, the National Park Service (NPS) wants to engage the next generation of park stewards in a time when young people are less connected to the natural world. As we move into the next century of the NPS, YCP will continue to provide an example of how working in wilderness environments can instill lasting conservation ethics and an appreciation of the outdoors in today's youth. At the end of the day, hours worked or miles of trails built can be tallied, but the true impact of YCP—the growth in maturity, confidence, and sense of wonder in each participant—is immeasurable.

*If you want to change a young person's life,  
support a teen trail crew member.*

Contact Kim Mills at [kim@gtnpf.org](mailto:kim@gtnpf.org)  
or 307-732-4192.

YCP Photos: group -Tim Anderson, log peeling-Ryan Sheets

## 2015 Highlights

Raised \$5,016,904

1,303 donors supported our work



- Trail crews moved over 1 million pounds of stone to build rustic steps, drainage, and dry-stacked rock walls, transforming trail conditions between Hidden Falls and Inspiration Point



## Message from President LESLIE MATTSON

**I**n late August, I saw the whole of Grand Teton National Park from the top of the Grand Teton. I'd summited twenty years ago, but this time felt different.

My connection to the park and the impact the organization I lead has on this special place provided clarity and a more expansive perspective than before.

Looking down 13,775 feet at the vast landscape and the Snake River moving through the valley, I thought of the incredible team who works together on behalf of the park. Our partnership with Superintendent David Vela and his staff is strong and collaborative. We have dedicated board and resource council members. They are passionate, smart, and loyal, and our effect wouldn't be what it is today without them. My colleagues are talented and committed to our mission. The many individuals, foundations, and corporations that support our work keep programs and projects growing. We are successful due to the affection people feel for Grand Teton. This group has tremendous energy, and as you read, I think you'll agree it shows in the amazing year we've experienced.



Hannah Rigsby, Leslie Mattson, and Exum Guide Jessica Baker on the summit of the Grand Teton.

*Inspiring Journeys* is nearing completion, and it is exciting to see the transformation on Jenny Lake's backcountry trails. In late fall, I walked from Hidden Falls to Inspiration Point on the trail that was closed all summer. This well-known challenging route has been beautifully reconstructed to eliminate difficult hiking conditions and tremendous erosion. I can't wait for you to see it next year when it reopens to the public.

In 2016 we will honor the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. The renewed trails, bridges, and upcoming visitor plaza will be our gift to Grand Teton National Park. You are the reason we are able

to provide the park with essential funding—the partnership we've built together is far-reaching and effective. Much like my experience on the peak this summer, this work is challenging but there's no place I'd rather be. It feels great to overcome obstacles and to be part of a forward-thinking group dedicated to reaching goals and celebrating accomplishments. Thanks for your support!

Leslie Mattson

President

- **\$12.8 million raised toward our goal of \$14 million for *Inspiring Journeys: A Campaign for Jenny Lake***



- **Planning and design for the interpretive and interactive exhibits at Jenny Lake are near completion and will greatly improve visitor experiences**





**Before/After:** Trail crews completed impressive work this summer in the full reconstruction of this iconic 1930s-era trail. The new trail will allow safe and enjoyable passage for all visitors.

Photos: Ryan Sheets

# Jenny Lake Project Update

## INSPIRATION POINT TRAIL TRANSFORMED

When the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built the trail that climbs from Hidden Falls in the 1930s, they did not know millions of visitors would hike this route.

They blasted the path out of cliffs and supported it with sturdy stone walls, engineering passage to Inspiration Point—the prominent and now well-known lookout over Jenny Lake and the Jackson Hole valley. It is a testament to the vision and craftsmanship of the CCC that their work lasted so long. Ultimately, the sheer number of hikers venturing to Inspiration Point caused conditions to deteriorate, creating an unsustainable and rugged trail.

This summer, as part of the Foundation's *Inspiring Journeys* campaign, Grand Teton crews completely restored this iconic trail, building new bridges, walls, steps, and drainage structures using long-lasting

dry-stone masonry techniques. The newly restored trail is designed to be durable and crews have placed each stone thoughtfully in an effort to keep the rustic CCC aesthetic intact.

Building on the long tradition of high-quality work throughout the 300 miles of maintained trails in Grand Teton, this summer's accomplishments raised the bar not only for workmanship, but also the tremendous scope of the project. Trail crews built over 1,300 square feet of stone masonry dry-stacked walls, 224 steps, 628 lineal feet of single tier wall, and 1,100 cubic feet of stone causeway during the complete reconstruct of nearly one-half mile of trail leading to Inspiration Point. The trail will open to visitors in late June 2016 before the busy summer season that will mark the centennial of the National Park Service.

**\$1.2 Million Needed.  
8 Months Remaining.**

We have raised \$12.8 million toward our goal of \$14 million for *Inspiring Journeys*. We need your help to reach our goal by August 25, 2016 and complete our gift to Grand Teton for the National Park Service centennial celebration. Gifts of \$25,000 and above will be recognized in the Jenny Lake visitor plaza.

Join this once-in-our-lifetime campaign at [www.gtnpf.org/donate](http://www.gtnpf.org/donate) or call Leslie Mattson at 307-732-0629.

As part of *Inspiring Journeys*, backcountry trail construction will continue in the Jenny Lake area throughout 2017 along with renovations and improvements to frontcountry visitor facilities. This comprehensive effort will greatly enhance the visitor experience at this spectacular destination in Grand Teton National Park as well as better protect it for the enjoyment of future generations.

- 21 teens had a summer to remember, logging 6,671 hours on the Youth Conservation Program trail crew



- 10 college students gained park work experiences through NPS Academy, a model career-prep program that began in GTNP and expanded across the country



## Message from Grand Teton National Park Superintendent DAVID VELA



Photo: Ryan Sheets

*I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to live and work at Grand Teton National Park.  
What a gem of the National Park Service!*

I am constantly energized and inspired by the park's incredible landscape and the many passionate and caring individuals I am honored to work with on a daily basis.

The support from the park family is outstanding, and humbling, to say the least. Specifically, my sincere appreciation goes to the Foundation board, staff, and supporters for their continued partnership in creating a shared strategic vision for achieving our mutual goals. I truly believe it is through our collaborative efforts that we can continue to enhance the visitor experience, protect park resources, and meet the ongoing challenges before us.

This past year has been remarkable. The improvements at Jenny Lake are becoming tangible, which is exciting for all of us. The craftsmanship of the dry stone masonry is impressive, and the designs

for the frontcountry visitor areas are being finalized and adding to the excitement. The various youth programs sponsored by the Foundation are continuing to create our future park stewards while cultural treasures, such as the structures along Mormon Row and the Lucas Fabian Cabin, are being preserved. These projects and many more are the fruit of your hard work and foresight.

With these collaborative projects and programs, we were also able to address some changing park dynamics. To date, we have experienced an 8% increase in visitation from last year's record setting levels. I expect this dynamic to continue next year as we celebrate the National Park Service centennial. We enjoy welcoming visitors to the park from around the country and abroad, but it does create some unique challenges.

As we host record levels of visitors, we are doing so with less financial capacity and approximately 20% fewer staff compared to five years ago. There is also an ever-increasing need to address the maintenance backlog of our park's facilities. We maintain over 1500 built assets including structures, roads, trails, campgrounds, and utility systems. The cost to address this maintenance backlog is estimated at \$216 million, which is no small sum!

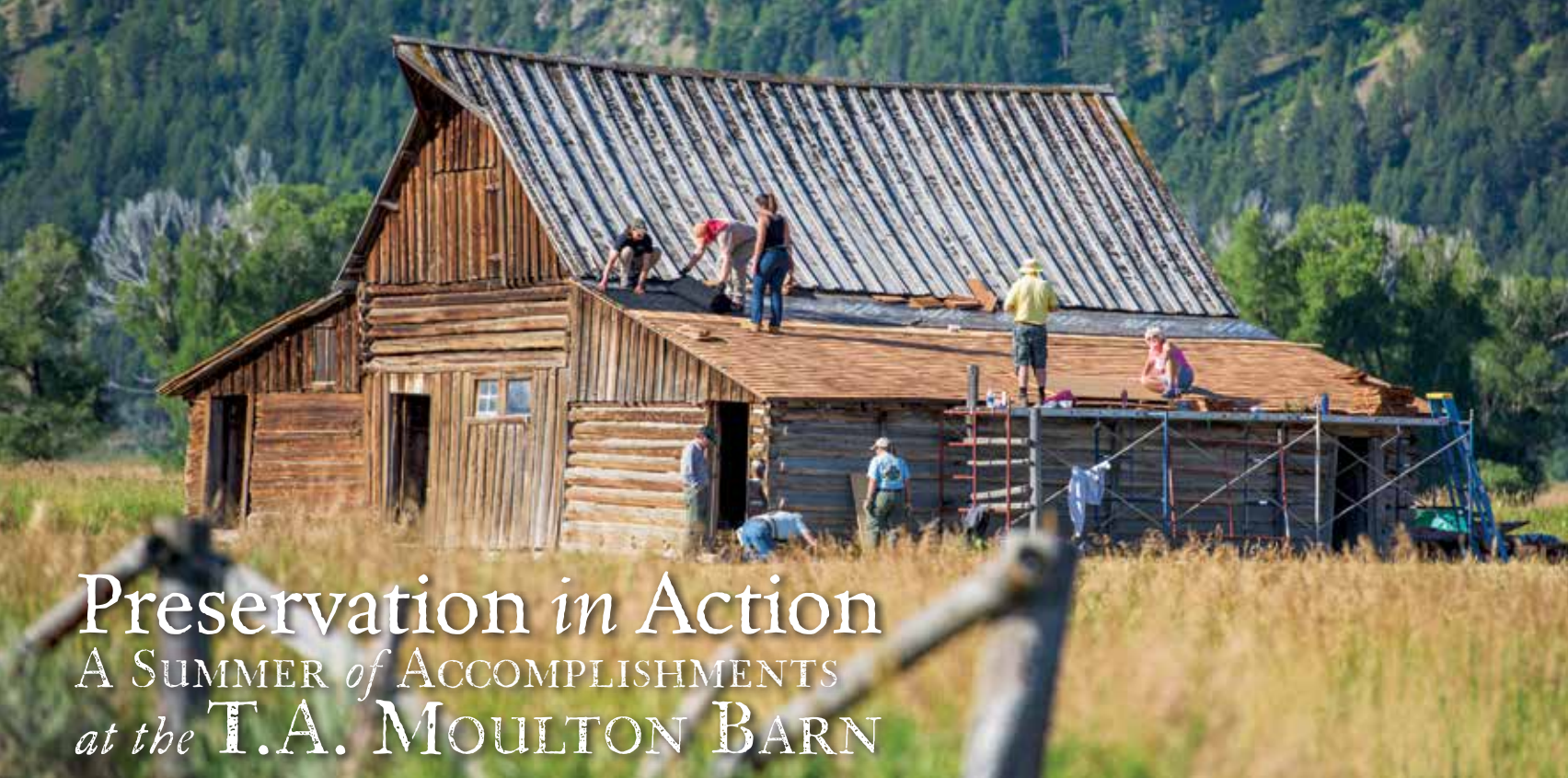
As the National Park Service enters a second century of service in protecting our nation's most special places, we extend our profound thanks and appreciation for all that you continue to do on behalf of Grand Teton National Park.

- Donor-funded wildlife research and protection efforts helped preserve Grand Teton's species



- Local Latino students and their families gained knowledge and had unforgettable experiences through Pura Vida's diversity outreach





# Preservation in Action

## A SUMMER of ACCOMPLISHMENTS at the T.A. MOULTON BARN

Photos: Ryan Sheets

The T.A. Moulton Barn is one of Mormon Row's most iconic structures and a favorite destination among Grand Teton's visitors. After decades of deterioration from exposure to the harsh weather in Jackson Hole, the barn was identified as a preservation priority for Grand Teton National Park in 2015. The goal this summer was to stabilize the barn, restore unique interior elements that were damaged, and install a new, durable roof to match the original.

Harrison Goodall, an experienced preservationist who has worked on projects in Grand Teton for over thirty years, led the work at T.A. Moulton Barn with the help of two volunteer groups. The first group was comprised of preservation professionals, enthusiasts, Mormon Row residents, and relatives

of the Moulton family from across the country. Most were returning volunteers with a personal interest in preserving Mormon Row. The second group, known as the Michigan Volunteers, marked their twentieth year of volunteerism in the park in August. This crew has assisted on over forty-five structures within Grand Teton in addition to preservation projects across the nation.

Preservation work at the T.A. Moulton Barn would not be possible without generous support from American Express, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, committed individuals, and dedicated volunteers.

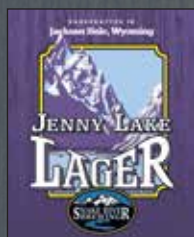
Want to get involved in cultural preservation projects? Contact Cathy Wikoff at 307-732-0629 or [cathy@gtnpf.org](mailto:cathy@gtnpf.org).



Thanks to the support of American Express, the Michigan Volunteers were able to replace the roof on the side shed additions, and a specialized crew was hired to finish the steep gable portion of the roof.



Both volunteer groups completed incredible work on the T.A. Moulton Barn, including foundational support, flooring, and log work to improve the overall condition of the barn, ensuring its longevity within the Mormon Row Historic District.



- Support *Inspiring Journeys* by purchasing Snake River Brewing's Jenny Lake Lager! Proceeds from beer sales are funding on-the-ground work



- In partnership with the park, the Foundation funded grooming on Teton Park Road, providing incredible winter access to Grand Teton



# HORACE ALBRIGHT SOCIETY

*Creating Conservation Legacies Today*



## CHARITABLE ESTATE PLANNING is EASY

GIVE LIFE INSURANCE, RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS, or a GIFT through your WILL to ASSURE the FOUNDATION *can* CONTINUE VALUABLE IMPROVEMENTS and OUTREACH WELL into the FUTURE.

CONTACT KIM MILLS at 307-732-4192 or VISIT [www.gtnpf.org](http://www.gtnpf.org) to DISCOVER WAYS you CAN SUPPORT the FOUNDATION *without* IMPACTING the WAY you LIVE TODAY.

Photo: Brad Schwarm

# BEAR BOXES

## A Unique Gift for the Wildlife Enthusiast in Your Life

\$1,500 funds a bear-resistant food storage box in Grand Teton National Park with a 3 x 5" stainless steel plaque to honor your special person. They'll receive a lovable teddy bear and information about why bear boxes are so important, wrapped in a festive box and tied with a bow.

Your bear box will be located at one of the park's scenic campsites. It's sure to bring a smile to friends and family who care about protecting park wildlife and keeping Grand Teton's bears wild and visitors safe. Thanks to donors, nearly 350 boxes have been installed to date, moving us closer to our goal of installing 1,000 bear boxes in Grand Teton National Park.



Visit [vimeo.com/114686254](https://vimeo.com/114686254) to learn more about bears and these life-saving lockers. Contact Cathy Wikoff at 307-732-0629 for your bear box today!



Photo: Diana Stratton

- Funded 46 bear boxes for picnic areas and campsites, nearly 350 bear boxes have been funded to date



**Stay in touch**—visit [www.gtnpf.org](http://www.gtnpf.org) and sign up for our monthly eNews featuring park happenings, wildlife whereabouts, videos, and more!

Highlight Photos: Ryan Sheets, Tim Anderson, David Swift, Diana Stratton and NPS





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Photo: Diana Stratton

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