

Celebrating our 20th

n 1997, Grand Teton's visitor center was the size of a small house. It had no windows, minimal interpretive displays, and limited space to walk around. The roof had collapsed several times due to heavy snow. The tiny parking lot was so crowded that people often just passed by. to be declined, but he had a better idea. Within a short time, his plan for a new visitor center was born.

Neckels gathered a group of influential locals who were passionate about the park and called a meeting at Lost Creek Ranch, which is owned and operated by founding board member Jerry Halpin. Fast forward to 2004 when the young Grand Teton National Park Foundation and its new president, Leslie Mattson, realized the largest challenge would be navigating the public-private partnership with Grand Teton National Park. Although a number of friends groups were in existence across the country, building a multimillion dollar visitor

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Jack Neckels, Grand Teton's superintendent at the time, knew the facility wasn't particularly welcoming nor did it match the grandeur of the surrounding park. He'd requested funds for a new building for years, but it was never approved. He could continue to ask and continue The topic: Where could Grand Teton find money to fund Neckel's vision? Ultimately, they decided that the private sector—specifically a nonprofit that would support special projects in the park—was the only way a new facility would get off the ground. center was one of the most significant undertakings at the time. The Foundation worked with Congress and the NPS to secure \$8 million in federal funds, reviewed 50+ proposals from architects and exhibit designers, and debated building sites. The group ultimately raised \$16.8 million in private support.

Two Decades of Success



Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center

Built a state-of-the-art visitor center designed by world-renowned architect Peter Bohlin and exhibit designer Ralph Appelbaum Associates. Inspiring Journeys: A Campaign for Jenny Lake

Transformed Jenny Lake through safe and sustainable trails, new bridges, lake overlooks, and modern interpretive exhibits.





Antelope Flats

Helped purchase a 640-acre inholding with critical migration routes and iconic vistas of the Teton Range and valley.

NPS Academy

Introduced diverse college students to a range of career paths within the National Park Service. Since the program began in 2011, over 400 students have participated.





Cultural Resources

Preserved cultural treasures including Menor's Ferry, Maud Noble Historic District, Mormon Row Historic District, Lucas Fabian Homestead, and more.

Anniversary



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Nearly ten years after the meeting at Lost Creek Ranch, the 22,000 square foot Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center opened in summer 2007. Sweeping mountain views, engaging interpretive exhibits, interactive displays, and a modern auditorium now welcome and orient park visitors. The completion of this facility not only laid the groundwork for the partnership that exists between the organization and Grand Teton today, it created what has become a network of supporters who are eager to do more for their favorite national park.

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Since the visitor center's opening, the Foundation and its work in the park has flourished. From annual initiatives supporting youth engagement and wildlife research, to the multiyear transformation that is underway at Jenny Lake and the recent protection of 640 acres of critical habitat on Antelope Flats, this partnership has had a tremendous and long-lasting impact on Grand Teton.

"The real accomplishment is that we have helped pave the way for substantial public-private partnership projects to be executed efficiently in Grand Teton and beyond," Ed Riddell, a founding board member, said. As national parks face modern-day challenges ranging from increasing visitation to climate change, it is now more important than ever to leverage public-private partnerships to benefit our country's public land.

Looking back and pondering the individuals key to the Foundation's creation, Jack Neckels said it would never have happened without Jerry Halpin. It's clear that the same could also be said of Neckels.

To our partners, supporters, and community—we succeed because of you. Here's to another twenty years of ensuring Grand Teton remains one of the most treasured parks in our nation!

Youth Conservation Program

Employed 220 high school students during 11 seasons of the program. Participants improve trails, learn about stewardship, and gain insight into park service careers.





Pura Vida

Engaged 400 local Latino youth and their family members in a program that introduces this population to Grand Teton's resources and recreation.

Wildlife Research

Supported conservation and research for gray wolves, grizzly bears, black bears, pronghorn, bison, osprey, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, mule deer, and more.





Mountains to Main Street Urban Ambassadors

Mentored 46 diverse young people as they developed national park programming in urban areas throughout the country.

Tribal Youth Corps

Connected 11 Native American youth with their cultural heritage through a paid summer internship that improved historical structures and trails.



Message from President LESLIE MATTSON

n 1997, Jack Neckels, Grand Teton National Park's superintendent at the time, approached Jerry Halpin with the idea of forming a nonprofit that would raise funds for a new visitor center.

Grand Teton National Park Foundation began under the leadership of Jerry as board chair and the founding board members who agreed to help. This group included the late Clay James and his wife Shay, Rob Wallace, Ed and Lee Riddell, Brad and Kate Mead, and Bob and Nancy Jaycox.

The board, along with superintendents Jack Neckels, Steve Martin, and Mary Gibson Scott, and the late Senator Craig Thomas, who facilitated an \$8 million federal match of the private funding, was successful in raising \$16.8 million. On August 11, 2007 the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center opened to the public. We estimate over 3.1 million folks have visited the impressive building designed by Peter Bohlin.

Since that initial project, our organization and Grand Teton National Park have been able to execute many important initiatives. We've recapped them for you in this issue, and for me, this was a gratifying stroll down memory lane. It also affirms what I have witnessed numerous times over: There's always a solution. Concerned, committed people can set incredible things in motion.

Since July 2004, I have had the great privilege of leading this wonderful organization. The fledgling Foundation would not have evolved into the Foundation of today without the entrepreneurial spirit of our park friends and the ongoing support of thousands of people who love Grand Teton. I thank all



of you. I also want to recognize Jack Neckels, Jerry Halpin, and the founding board members whose vision twenty years ago resulted in an organization that has an enormous impact on our magnificent park and serves as a national model for park partnerships. Without these core leaders, it's possible the Foundation would have never taken root. They set out to build a building, but they will long be remembered for shaping significant pieces of the process that is now transforming our national parks.

Thank you and Happy 20th Birthday GTNPF!

Leslie Mattson



A rerouted trail from the visitor plaza leads directly to this spectacular lake overlook. It is constructed of granite via a dry-stacked method, using no cement or mortar. The gap between the boulders will contain a bronze 3-D model of the peaks and canyons across the lake. It is designed to help visitors orient and learn the geography of the area.

What to Expect at Jenny Lake this Summer

Summer 2017 marks the last major year of construction as part of our Inspiring Journeys campaign that is renewing Grand Teton's most popular destination—Jenny Lake.

Work during the last three years has restored backcountry trails on the west side of the lake, creating beautiful and sustainable paths that reflect the timeless aesthetic of the Civilian Conservation Corps who built the original trails in the 1930s. Frontcountry improvements began last summer, and crews constructed stunning overlooks and intuitive walkways leading to Jenny Lake for visitors of all abilities to enjoy. After years of planning and construction, we are pleased to see the vision becoming a reality at this iconic spot in Grand Teton National Park. Construction will impact visitors at Jenny Lake again this summer. Temporary visitor services, trail reroutes, and closures will be in place. The ranger station, visitor center, general store, Jenny Lake Boating, Exum Mountain Guides, and Jenny Lake Campground will all remain open.

Please stop by a visitor center for the most up-to-date closure information. We appreciate everyone's patience during this time of renewal at Jenny Lake and look forward to the completion of the project in 2018.

Hiking tips

Plan Ahead

Stop by a visitor center or visit **go.nps.gov/jennylake** for the most up-to-date information on closures and reroutes as they will change throughout the summer

Consider other destinations within the park, there are many great lakeshore hikes

Arrive early or visit late Parking is limited, plan to arrive before 9 am or after 4 pm

Bus, RV, and trailer parking is extremely limited, these vehicles are encouraged to drop off passengers and park elsewhere

Be safe, go slow, be aware South Jenny Lake is an active construction zone so please observe closed areas, follow

signage, and take your time



Photo: Bob Woodall/Focus Productions

Message from Grand Teton National Park Superintendent DAVID VELA Photo: Brad Schwarm/Alpenglow Tours

Prand Teton National Park is truly a spectacular place to live, to work, and to be inspired. I am reminded of this reality each and every day as I have just completed a full three years as superintendent.

The well-known iconic mountain view is breathtaking, no matter how many times our eyes experience it. The archaeological assets and historic cabins remind us of the many years of human footprint on this landscape, and the wildlife viewing is outstanding. However, I believe the most inspirational and valued aspect of Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway is the support, passion, and genuine care that are provided through our employees, partners, and gateway communities. Through the Foundation's work and leadership, critical research has been and is currently underway, infrastructure improvements are being completed, visitor experiences are being enriched, youth and diverse communities are being introduced and engaged with the park and great outdoors, and critical landscapes are being permanently protected. What incredible achievements, thanks to you! It is truly humbling and overwhelming as I reflect upon the enormous impact that Grand Teton National Park Foundation has had on the park over the past twenty years. What a partnership, what a relationship, and what friends! Our sincere appreciation is extended to the staff, board, and members of the Foundation.

In closing, I can only imagine what the next 20 years will generate in our mutual efforts in preserving, protecting, and enjoying all that this very special place and partnership has to offer.

Happy 20th Anniversary!

David Vela Photo: Ryan Sheets/Sheets Studios

Reaching Beyond Borders to Protect Biodiversity

igration is a strategy many animals use to exploit seasonal resources in otherwise inhospitable environments. In Grand Teton, this allows animals to access abundant summer foods but escape the deep snow, cold temperatures, and limited nutrient availability that winter brings.

Seasonal park residents include dozens of birds, several bats, and a handful of larger mammals. To date, migration routes of park bison, elk, pronghorn, moose, and several birds have has tracking technology provided biologists a glimpse into how these animals navigate the landscape and a means to map the corridors. The GPS collar data also reveal important

been documented, and a new study of mule deer is yet again reinforcing the need to look far beyond the perimeter of the park to protect its world-class assemblage of native species.

Since 2013, data from eighteen GPS-collared deer have revealed five previously undocumented, long-distance migration routes from Grand Teton to: the North and South Forks of the Shoshone River near Cody, Wyoming; the Wind River Basin near Dubois, Wyoming; the Teton River corri-



Photo: Brad Schwarm/Alpenglow Tours

stopover sites, where deer linger during migration to exploit important food resources. By overlaying the migration routes on maps of land ownership and use, biologists can identify potential risks to continued movements, such as physical barriers or developments deer tend to avoid.

In the long term, conserving populations of Grand Teton's seasonal residents will depend on protecting the process of migration itself—the corridors, the stopover sites along each route, and the

dor in eastern Idaho; and the Green River Basin near Farson, Wyoming. One-way distances traveled range from 45 to more than 150 miles, with one route traversing the Teton Crest and three routes crossing the Continental Divide. Some park mule deer also make short movements to winter ranges near the town of Jackson. These deer travel about 15 miles one way and complete their movement in a single day, whereas others may spend close to a month migrating.

Mule deer have probably been using these migration routes for hundreds if not thousands of years, but only recently seasonal ranges to which they are connected. Since much of the mule deer migrations occur beyond park boundaries, long-term conservation will require the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders. Moving forward, park biologists plan to collar additional mule deer to bolster sample sizes of individuals using each route so that areas most important to migrating deer can be identified. The park's ongoing research is intended to ensure that deer will be able to make these migrations for generations to come.

Sarah Dewey, Grand Teton National Park Steve Cain, Grand Teton National Park Foundation



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Design: Laura Quinlivan/short dog design Printing: Paragon Press