



# 2012 *In Review*

Blue Ridge at Twilight © Kelly Farrer

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*For almost anyone who has a relationship with a National Park, they know the moment when that Park woke them up. It just reminded them of something bigger than themselves, something outside their own lives. What better purpose is there for the Parks than that?* KEN BURNS

**WE ARE BUSY PEOPLE.** We buy and sell, we plan and build, we tear down and we build again. And through it all, we tend to keep our noses to the grindstone. Consumed by the small things, it's easy to forget sometimes where we left the big things. Or that the big things even exist at all.

They do. That simple fact is the reason we have a National Park system. Its founders knew how important preserving wilderness and grandeur would be. They made it possible for us to have places not too far from our own backyards where we can find food for the spirit—places that are vast, and humbling, and exhilarating, and essential. A National Park is a public declaration that these places are worth the effort it takes to sustain them.

**SUSTAINING IS WHAT WE DO.** In 2012, we funded projects to defend Shenandoah National Park against invasive species, to teach the effects of climate change on Park habitats, and to inspire teachers to carry the message of stewardship to new generations of students. We built and nurtured partnerships with local, regional, and national organizations that strengthen and extend our efforts on behalf of the Park. We opened up new opportunities for visitors to participate in the life of the Park, and found new avenues of engagement with constituencies all over our region—and the nation.

**How did we do all that? *With your help.***  
Just look inside to find out more.

## 2012 PARK SNAPSHOT

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**1.2 million**  
**500+**  
**11,000+**  
**1,600+**  
**300+**  
**\$80 million/year**

total visitors to the Park in 2012  
miles of hiking trails  
participants in education programs in 2012  
total number of native species in the Park  
total of non-native plant species in the Park  
total Park impact on local economy



# 2012 ACHIEVEMENTS

Sustaining the Park and enriching the visitor experience is the work of generations. And we're proud to say that, thanks to you, our efforts get deeper and more extensive every year.

IN 2012 WE WERE BUSY...



## FUNDING PROJECTS

*Private philanthropy has been a part of the building of the National Park system from its inception. Park Partner groups like Shenandoah National Park Trust keep that tradition alive and growing. Our funding supported three significant Park initiatives in 2012.*

### CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

Park scientists have begun to pay close attention to the ways that climate change affects high-elevation species. At the top of the list is the Shenandoah Salamander, an endangered, three-inch amphibian that lives only within the boundaries of the Park. The Trust's funding is now bringing that research to the public through ranger programs, fireside chats, and new electronic resources available nationwide.

### FOREST RESTORATION

Invasive species like Japanese stilt grass and mile-a-minute vine disrupt and threaten complex native ecosystems that have developed over millions of years. The Trust's funding assists Park managers in controlling exotic plants, and re-establishing native species in high-priority areas. This work is of such vital importance to the health of the Park that we've now re-upped our commitment for another five years of funding.

### TEACHER RANGER TEACHER

Engaging teachers in the life of the Park is a great multiplier. Teacher Ranger Teacher brings classroom teachers into the Park for two summers, where they work directly with Park Rangers to develop educational programs. They return to their classrooms and pass their knowledge and enthusiasm directly to a new generation of citizens and stewards.

## FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

*The Trust's philanthropic mission includes building partnerships with other organizations in support of the Park and its programs. These partnerships extend our reach, and bring the power of larger numbers of committed people to bear on the challenges and opportunities that face the Park.*

### SMITHSONIAN CONSERVATION BIOLOGY INSTITUTE

An annual joint fundraising effort between SCBI, the Trust and Piedmont Environmental Council has raised awareness and money for our work and has enhanced the relationship between SCBI and the Park. Natural resources staff from the Park and ecologists from SCBI are developing strategies for sharing staff, funding, training and data.

The plans include collaborative surveys of Shenandoah wildlife like the wood turtle and pine snake, as well as a new effort to document under-studied species.

### THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Nature has her own rules, and ecosystems don't notice our petty boundaries. So when TNC heard about our Forest Restoration Project in 2012, they realized that their efforts to control invasive plants in communities outside the Park would benefit from our work inside the Park. As a result, they've matched our funding, bringing additional resources to this initiative for another five years.

### NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

In 2012 the Trust was one of a handful of Park partner groups to collaborate with the NPF on organizational development. We've been using that work to increase our capacities and strengthen partnerships with sister groups across the country. Building capacity means we can do more in support of the Park we love—more programs, more outreach, more funding.



# FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT

*Part of what the Trust does is to open up new avenues of engagement for the public, creating more opportunities for people to participate in the life of the Park. In 2012, those efforts included:*

## 100 MILE CLUB

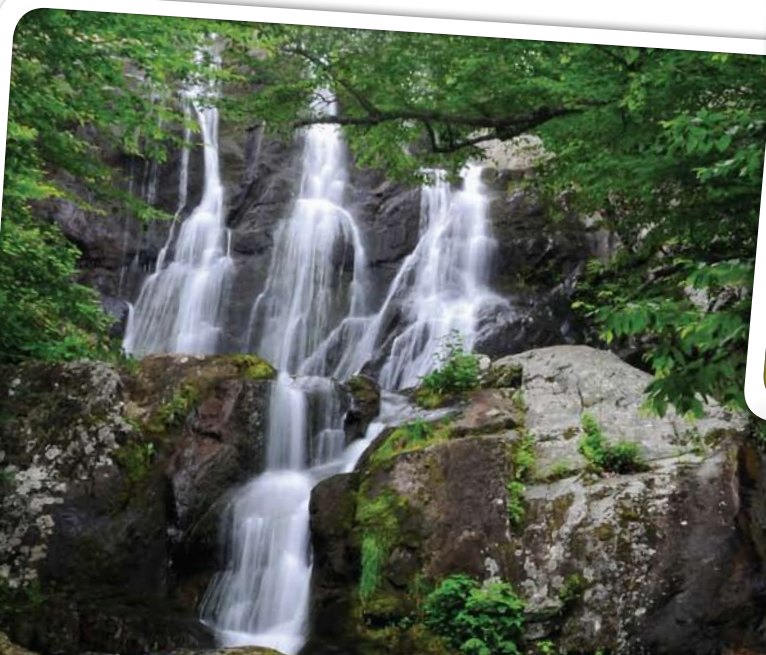
Members have the chance to participate in guided hikes within the Park every month. Hikers log their miles, and earn perks for hiking 25, 50, 75, and 100 miles.

## LICENSE PLATES

The incredibly popular Shenandoah National Park license plate became available for motorcycles in 2012. They continue to raise funds for the Park, to raise the profile of the Park, and allow folks to wear their pride for the Park, everywhere they go on the roads of Virginia and beyond.

## TOURING PHOTO EXHIBIT

As a way of bringing the beauty of Shenandoah to the places people live and work, we've assembled winning photographs from a number of regional competitions. The exhibit has been on display, underlining the beauty of Shenandoah, in communities surrounding the Park. Some of those photographs appear in this Report.



Tiger Swallowtail at Big Meadows © David Anhold



Fall Colors © National Park Service

Dark Hollow Falls © Andrew Sentipal



# Shenandoah National Park Trust thanks the generous individuals, foundations and businesses who supported us in 2012.

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*Government funding allows national parks to do what is required by law. Park partners allow us to do what is required by conscience.*

**MIKE FINLEY**, *former Superintendent, Yosemite National Park*



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## THE TRUST | WORK IN FOCUS



### **Nick Lapham**

*Owner, The Farm at Sunnyside  
Board Member, BAND Foundation*

Nick Lapham's family farm of 400 acres backs right up against Shenandoah National Park in Rappahannock County. His family's BAND Foundation supports conservation causes in the Virginia Piedmont.

"Since my childhood, I have watched invasive plants transform the counties surrounding Shenandoah National Park. Roadsides, hedgerows and old fields are overrun by ailanthus, multiflora rose, and Japanese honeysuckle. Fescue has become the dominant grass in meadows and pasturelands. Stilt grass and garlic mustard are now ubiquitous in the forest understory. The result is a landscape diminished in complexity, resilience, diversity and beauty.

Still, I see two reasons for hope based on experience at our farm. First, smart and timely management can often greatly limit the impact of these species. Second, areas with the least amount of historic disturbance seem less vulnerable to infestation.

One of Shenandoah National Park's key roles is to be a reservoir for our region's rich biodiversity. Fulfilling that role into the future will increasingly entail greater efforts to address invasive species. Success in such efforts, I am convinced, requires not just a commitment from the Park but also the cooperation of adjoining landowners and the support of other institutions and individuals that bring technical and financial wherewithal.

For this reason, our family foundation is pleased to support the Shenandoah National Park Trust in its groundbreaking partnership with The Nature Conservancy to strengthen the Park's response to the invasive species threat."