



# National Park Legacies

Gift and Financial Planning Information

Winter 2011

## Fine-tuning Plans for the Future

The first part of the year is traditionally a time for new beginnings—a time for reflecting on the past and planning for the future.

For many, the beginning of the year is also a time for reviewing and updating their long-range financial plans. In addition to taking care of family and others, such a review often includes finding ways to make provisions for charitable interests through estate plans.

### Simple and rewarding

Including National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) in your estate and financial plans can be a simple and rewarding process. In fact, you can often accomplish the results you desire with very minor modifications to existing plans.

As you review your plans for 2011, you may wish to consider arranging a gift through your will, living trust, or other plans. After providing for loved ones and others who rely upon you for support, you may choose to remember NPCA and/or other charitable interests with a gift of a specific amount, a percentage, or the residue of your estate.

### A special opportunity

As part of recently enacted tax legislation, Congress has extended special provisions to help those age 70½

and older make tax-free gifts directly to qualified charities from their retirement accounts. Donors can make charitable distributions from their IRA in any amount up to \$100,000. A couple with separate IRAs can each make gifts up to \$100,000. See your advisors for more information about this special giving opportunity.

### Meeting needs and goals

Most people would agree it is important to exercise their right and responsibility to make their own plans. Regular reviews of your long-range plans are the best way to make sure your arrangements are up to date and meet your current needs and goals.

### Learn more

In this issue of *National Park Legacies*, we share practical ways to take charge of the planning process for your benefit and for the well-being of your family and others.

Read on to learn how you and those you care about can benefit from thoughtful planning and protect the parks for future generations. Please contact us for more information without obligation.

Above: © Frank Kovalchek. Below left: © Benjamin Zingg. Below right: © Jud McCranie



## Inside:

Take this quiz

Mather Society member: Trish Kaspar

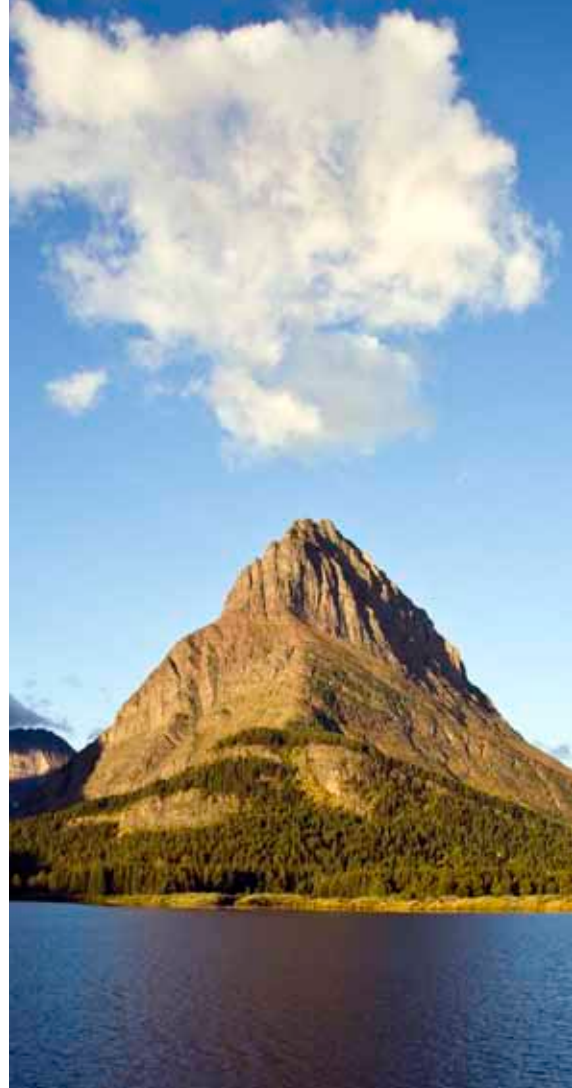
## Failure to Plan Leads to Use of All-Purpose Plan

**A**long with the right to own private property comes the right to decide how you want to have it distributed when you no longer need it. Yet as many as 50 percent of all Americans fail to make even the simplest estate plans.

State laws provide standard treatment for those who choose not to plan their estates, such as:

- equal provisions for heirs, regardless of their different needs;
- a court-appointed guardian for minor children if no legal guardian survives;
- payment of maximum taxes, fees, and expenses in some cases;
- no regard for your desire to provide for friends and charitable interests, such as NPCA.

Procrastination may be the greatest threat to your economic security and that of your loved ones. Make an appointment with your attorney today. With a valid, up-to-date will in place, you can enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing you have provided for those you care about most.



Mount Grinnell and Swiftcurrent Lake in Glacier National Park, Montana. © Acroterion

### Is Your Will the Best It Can Be?

These questions may be helpful as you review and update your will and other long-range plans:

1. Have you moved to another state since you made your will?
2. Has your marital status changed since you last reviewed your plans?
3. Have you recently retired from full-time employment?
4. Is the person you named to settle your affairs now unable to serve?
5. Do you need to recommend someone as guardian for your children?
6. Do you want to continue your support of charitable interests, such as NPCA, in the future?

Any yes answer indicates that a review of your plans may be necessary to bring them up to date.

## You Make the Call

In a society where private ownership of property is allowed and encouraged, the right to decide who should eventually receive specific property at the end of your lifetime is a vitally important responsibility. The last will and testament has been carefully designed over centuries to be a primary vehicle for use in directing future disposition of your property.

### Remember loved ones first

When properly drafted by a qualified attorney, a will minimizes estate settlement costs and taxes, arranges for your property to be managed as you want, and provides for your spouse, children, friends, and others you wish to remember.

### A flexible instrument

Wills are extremely flexible. Through your will you can provide others with particular sums of money, certain properties, or percentages of your estate.

You can mix methods as well. For example, you may choose to leave specific amounts to certain heirs while directing that others split the remainder of your assets in the percentages you determine.

### Include charitable gifts

Many use their wills as vehicles for charitable giving. After family and others have been provided for, you may wish to name NPCA and/or other charitable interests to receive whatever property is left.



The Gibbon wolf pack, Yellowstone National Park.

© Doug Smith / NPS

### Coordinate with other plans

Remember that your will by itself may not determine who will receive many of your assets. One big mistake is ignoring the impact of other ways of distributing property to heirs.

For example, if you own real estate jointly with another person, your will may have little or no effect on who will ultimately own the property. The same is true for proceeds from life insurance policies and retirement plans. A beneficiary designation completed years ago could determine who receives the benefits, not the terms of your current will.

### Make your own plans

Your will and other plans are personal statements. Having earned your property, you have the right to distribute it after you no longer need it. Plan today, however, so *you* will be the one who does *your* planning.

The purpose of this publication is to provide general gift, estate, and financial planning information. It is not intended as legal, accounting, or other professional advice. For assistance in planning charitable gifts with tax and other financial implications, the services of appropriate advisors should be obtained. Consult an attorney for advice if your plans require revision of a will or other legal document. Tax deductions vary based on applicable federal discount rates, which can change on a monthly basis. Some opportunities may not be available in all states. ©MMXI RFSCO, Inc. All Rights Reserved. NFXX-11

Biscayne National Park, Florida.

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## The Parks Are Part of Her DNA

Trish Kaspar has spent a lifetime visiting our national parks, starting with Yosemite when she was five years old. “I remember standing at Glacier Point, struck by the incredible view,” she says. Trish revisited that view several more times over the years.

In addition, she has volunteered on trails at Mori Point, the Presidio, Sweeney Ridge, Milagra Ridge, and Muir Woods. “And, of course, I’ve hiked many of our California national parks,” she adds. “I think the national parks are part of my DNA.”

When asked about her favorite national park, Trish couldn’t choose just one, but has treasured memories of many: Yellowstone, where her father took a picture of the Falls that hung in their home for many years; a hike up Mt. Lassen with a friend; and climbing Mt. Rainier “with wildflowers dancing across the mountainside like ballerinas in Swan Lake.”

So it was only natural, when she began to put together her estate plans, that NPCA was right at the top of her list of groups she wanted to support. Her

gift to the parks is not earmarked for a particular purpose, just “wherever it is most needed when the time comes.”

“I’d like the gifts that I’ve been given—both in national parks experience and the dollars in my bank account—to continue to make our parks available for future generations.”

We are grateful to Trish Kaspar and other Mather Society members who have made a point of including NPCA in their estate plans. Their legacies will live on for years to come.

If you would like to join them, or want more information about the Mather Society, please contact us at the number and address below, or return the enclosed card. There is no obligation.



Trish Kaspar

Below: Brown bear at Brooks Falls, Katmai National Park, Alaska. © Mila Zinkova



National Parks Conservation Association®  
Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

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### *NPCA's Recommended Bequest Language*

Including NPCA in your will is among the easiest ways to offer support of NPCA's work for years to come. NPCA's Board of Directors has suggested the following language to include NPCA as a beneficiary of a will or trust: “I give \_\_\_\_\_ (specific amount, percentage, or residuary share) to the National Parks Conservation Association, having its principal offices at 777 6th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001-3723. (Federal Tax Identification Number 53-0225165).” If you already have a will, you can have your attorney add a codicil to include NPCA.

