

Yosemite News Release  
August 18, 2014  
For Immediate Release

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## **Yosemite National Park Receives 2014 America's Best Idea Grant from the National Park Foundation**

Yosemite National Park is one of 39 national parks selected to receive a 2014 America's Best Idea grant from the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's national parks. Inspired by Ken Burns' critically acclaimed documentary "The National Parks: America's Best Idea," this program builds partnerships between national parks and community, state, and other public organizations, and engages diverse audiences in meaningful and relevant ways with national parks and inspires participants to become stewards of our National Park System.

"The America's Best Idea program connects people – particularly youth – to America's national parks, often for the first time," said Neil Mulholland, President and CEO of the National Park Foundation. "Through meaningful and memorable in-park experiences that highlight the natural, cultural, and historical treasures in our National Park System, we are able to inspire the next generation of park-goers."

"We want everyone to find themselves in a national park," said Jonathan B. Jarvis, director of the National Park Service. "These National Park Foundation grants will help people acquire a better understanding of their national parks and, hopefully, of themselves, through place-based learning and recreational activities. Native Americans who will visit traditional homelands, budding scientists who will study environmental impacts, and students from Gallaudet University who will examine aspects of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* are among the many groups which will benefit from the grants."

Yosemite National Park is partnering with Yosemite-based nonprofit Sacred Rok, a non-profit group that supports young people experiencing nature through trips into the Yosemite wilderness. These outings are led by local American Indian community members. Specifically the trips will be led by Sacred Rok Executive Director Ron Kauk and Tribal Elder Bill Tucker. Yosemite has a strong connection to the American Indian community; however, many young people from

the Yosemite area, including American Indians, have never visited the park. This grant will help those young people experience and explore Yosemite and gain a first-time appreciation of their own cultural connection. America's Best Ideas grant is a great opportunity for the collaboration of Sacred Rok, associated tribes of Yosemite and the National Park Service to expand and strengthen their partnership by supporting local American Indian youth in experiencing the park.

For a complete list of parks and their America's Best Idea project descriptions, please visit National Park Foundation website at:

<http://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/programs/americas-best-idea>.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

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 INSPIRE the next generation of park stewards. Find out more and become a part of the national park community at [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org).