

CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION & PARKS

Promoting and accelerating the use of parks as resources and venues for climate change education



A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

The Institute at the Golden Gate is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, a non-profit partner of the National Park Service. Our mission is to harness the power of parks and public lands to advance environmental stewardship and human wellbeing. We recognize

the valuable role parks and public lands can play in solving many of society's biggest challenges. We currently have programs focused on how parks can contribute in the areas of health, food systems, climate change education, and urban development.

To advance our work, we build on the remarkable partnership of the Parks Conservancy and National Park Service in the Bay Area, taking best practices and innovative policy ideas to national and international levels. We pilot test locally to see if they are scalable, refine methods and strategies, and make policy change actually happen.

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The Institute at the Golden Gate's Climate Change Education & Parks program supports and accelerates the role parks and protected areas play as resources and venues for climate change education.

Worldwide, parks are on the frontline of climate change impacts and visibility. The National Park Service and many other park agencies in the U.S. and internationally are taking serious action on climate change—planning mitigation strategies and adaptation responses to local environmental changes. Park leaders and interpreters are also using this as an opportunity to engage the public on this





“Climate change challenges the very foundation of the national park system and our ability to leave America’s natural and cultural heritage unimpaired for future generations.”

—Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service

critical issue. The Institute believes this public engagement is vital and our goal is to support a sea change in policy and practice in the way climate change is communicated to park visitors.

In the U.S. alone, nearly 300 million people visit national parks each year and millions more visit city, state, and other parks. Many learn about climate change during their visit to the park, though many still do not.

The Institute views park visits as an opportunity for parks to communicate with a massive public audience about the impacts of climate change in a manner that is relevant to visitor’s daily lives and the places they live.

The Institute’s Climate Change Education & Parks program seeks to strengthen parks as educational

venues by identifying program, models, and policies that can be replicated, scaled, and adopted as policy by key decision makers.

Many parks already host or are developing climate change education programs that are innovative, locally relevant, and action-oriented. The Institute’s signature climate change publication, ***Climate in the Parks: Innovative Climate Change Education in Parks*** will add momentum to the dialogue among key stakeholders, educators, and park leaders by identifying a selection of strong climate change education programs and trainings in parks around the world.

The Institute will continue to use our strong convening power to create high-level, cross-sector events that will identify new

models and methods for using parks as important educational tools on climate change. These efforts will be complemented by local pilot-testing of identified best policies and practices to generate proof of concept that park-based climate education programs are effective, replicable, and scalable.

