

Harnessing the power of parks and public lands to advance environmental stewardship and human wellbeing.



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.

Using our special model of collaboration and innovation, the Institute identifies and implements real opportunities to enhance policy and practice. We build on the remarkable partnership of the Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service here in the Bay Area, taking best practices and innovative policy ideas to national and international levels. We pilot test locally, assess scalability, refine methods and strategies, and make policy change actually happen.

Since our launch in 2008, we have already achieved some noteworthy

successes, including advancing national policy on sustainable food services in parks, and elevating the role of parks and protected areas as a health resource. Currently, we have programs

focused on how parks can contribute in the areas of health, food systems, climate change education, and urban development.

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Food

Expanding healthy and sustainable food service in parks to catalyze systemic change nationwide

The Institute has forged a national movement to integrate healthy and more sustainable food service within our nation's 10,000 parks, establishing parks as a key player in the broader sustainable food movement. To date, the Institute has actively promoted healthy and sustainable food practices in parks across the country, generated reports and resources for food service providers, inspired leaders in parks and the food industry to action, and influenced a shift in national policy. In partnership with the National Park Service, the Institute recently developed national healthy food standards and sustain-

ability guidelines that will improve the 23.5 million meals served in national parks annually. Locally, the Institute plays a facilitative and catalytic role in pioneering innovative programs designed to keep the Bay Area at the leading edge of best practice. Nationally, the Institute supports cross-sector leadership, collaborating with corporate CEOs, senior government officials, and leaders in the health, education and other sectors to work toward sustainable solutions that improve the overall food service system.

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Health

Connecting parks and health agencies to increase the wellbeing of individuals and communities

Since 2009, the Institute has brought the idea of Healthy Parks, Healthy People mainstream by creating communities of practice among "park prescriptions" programs around the country and inspiring leaders in the parks and health fields. Additionally, the Institute creates local partnerships to pilot health and park programs in our own backyard, which demonstrate tangible evidence of health and community benefit and have the power to inform policy at several levels. Through local programs in partnership with Kaiser



Permanente and others, we pioneer effective Healthy Parks, Healthy People programming in our region while contributing to expertise nationally and internationally. We partner with the National Park Service, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Recreation and Park Association, and Healthy Parks, Healthy People Global to expand our reach and impact.

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Climate Education

Promoting innovative climate change education in parks

The Institute at the Golden Gate's Climate Education & Parks program accelerates the use of parks and protected areas as venues for climate change education. A study from Northern Michigan University found that 67% of U.S. National Park and National Wildlife Refuge users believe parks should be communicating with visitors about climate change. In response, the Institute has identified best practices in climate communication and visitor experiences that we believe could be replicated, scaled, and adopted as policy by key decision makers

opportunity to engage the public on this critical issue. With almost 300 million visitors to National Parks in the U.S. alone, the Institute believes this movement is vital and our aim is to support a sea change in policy and practice in the way climate change is communicated to park visitors.

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Urban Areas

Harnessing parks and open spaces for sustainable urban development

For the first time in human history, more than half the world's people now live in cities. This rapid urbanization is set to continue. Between 2010 and 2050, the Earth's population is expected to rise by another two billion people—almost all of them living in urban centers. Many cities are looking at urban density and considering how to deal with the rapid projected growth. Furthermore, the population of many urban centers is changing. For instance, cities like San Francisco and many others are becoming more diverse and multicultural. As urbanization continues apace, there will be a growing need for expertise on the role of urban outdoor spaces and

nationwide and internationally. Parks are often on the frontline of climate change impacts, and many are already using this as an

their relevance to urban communities. Inspired by our own local models for how effective partnerships can work to overcome obstacles—be they financial, bureaucratic, legal or community-based—the Institute's Urban Areas & Parks program disseminates lessons learned from the most transformative urban park partnerships in support of a more sustainable and healthy future.

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Convene

at Fort Baker, California

The Institute is based at historic Fort Baker in the Golden Gate National Parks and at the foot of the famous Golden Gate Bridge in Sausalito, California. Just minutes from San Francisco, Fort Baker is part of a greater Bay Area community known for its environmental leadership and culture of innovation. In partnership with Cavallo Point—The Lodge at the Golden Gate, we provide reduced-rate green meeting space and accommodation for groups working on environment-related topics. To date, 11,000 participants and hundreds of organizations have taken advantage of this opportunity to meet in an inspiring, affordable and LEED-certified setting.

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