

Beat: Travel

NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION And HELMSLEY CHARITABLE TRUST Provide LEAD GRANT

EXPERIENCE AT BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK

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USPA NEWS - National park enthusiasts can look forward to a new visitor center within the Cedar Pass section of Badlands National Park, thanks in part to a lead investment from the National Park Foundation made possible by generous funding from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. The Helmsley Charitable Trust granted \$3.3 million for the project. The Badlands Natural History Association and Badlands National Park Conservancy are also providing support to this project.

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"The National Park Foundation is grateful to the Helmsley Charitable Trust for their investment in what will be a stellar visitor center experience that will welcome people to this stunning national park for generations to come," said National Park Foundation President and CEO Will Shafroth. "This project is a true testament to what partnerships make possible."

A new visitor center in the Cedar Pass area of the park will help provide park visitors with more opportunities to learn about Badlands National Park's natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources; improve scientific study and understanding of its unique paleontological and geological resources; and help people connect with the past and present history, culture, and heritage of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Lakota People.

"Badlands National Park's layered rocks formations and stunning buttes offer visitors a breathtaking glimpse into a scenic landscape that began forming millions of years ago," said Helmsley Charitable Trust Trustee Walter Panzire. "We're excited to lead the funding effort to construct a new, modern visitor center to highlight the park's splendor and significance."

"We greatly appreciate the meaningful generosity and support of the National Park Foundation and the Helmsley Charitable Trust, which in part, will help us improve the visitor experience at our park," said Badlands National Park Superintendent Mike Pflaum. "We look forward to working closely with the Oglala Sioux Tribe to ensure that the visitor center accurately portrays the Lakota history and heritage. We are grateful for the support of all of our valued partners including the Badlands Natural History Association and Badlands National Park Conservancy."

"The Badlands Natural History Association has proudly supported Badlands National Park for 60 years and we are excited to join the National Park Foundation and the Helmsley Charitable Trust in the collective effort to make the visitor experience even better," said Badlands Natural History Association Board President Sam Benne. "We pledge to contribute \$1.8 million for a new visitor center which will greatly enhance the overall experience of the traveling public."

"We are thrilled to see national and local support come together to benefit visitors to Badlands National Park," said Badlands National Park Conservancy Chair Randy Seiler. "The Conservancy is honored to complement the National Park Foundation and the Helmsley Charitable Trust's lead grant with an initial contribution of \$100,000 toward this important project."

Source: National Park Foundation

Ruby BIRD

<http://www.portfolio.uspa24.com/>

Yasmina BEDDOU

<http://www.yasmina-beddou.uspa24.com/>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com