



LEARN THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ORAL HISTORY

A workshop prepared by Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship Program and led by Dr Jennifer Craig



OUR GOAL

In an in-person workshop create a Standard Operating Procedure. An SOP could include the following questions:

- What would a grab+go kit contain for Oral History Interviews?
- What do we do with walk-ins to our Visitor Centers ready to record?
- What do we do after we have a recording?

Over 5 weeks we will watch 5 video recordings of United States scholars and practitioners in Oral History and write up reflections. Reflections are summaries of what struck us in the videos and how it relates to our experiences in the Marianas. In the 6th week we will meet in person to discuss our reflections and draft a Standard Operating Procedure.

WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1: The History of Oral History Dr. Dan Kerr and Dr. Anna Kaplan (American University)

this workshop will unpack the diverse origin stories of oral history practice. It will also examine tensions that result from the professionalization of oral history, from institutional settings to grassroots and community-led initiatives.

Workshop 2: Ethics by Professor Sarah Miligan (Oklahoma State University) and Trauma Informed Care by NPS Wellness & Resilience Branch

will showcase an example of best practices and ethical frameworks of the Oral History Association within NPS. We will read about storytelling of difficult subjects and how to protect participants mental health.

Workshop 3: Oral History: Bridging Theory and Practice by Dr. Francena Turner

will share insights from her archival and oral history practice in community and institutional settings. Informed by a lens of intergenerational care and mutual respect, Dr. Turner will explore interdisciplinary methodologies, self-care, and the necessity of teamwork.

Workshop 4: How to Prepare and Lead an Oral History Project, by Dr. Lu Ann Jones

Based on her career as Oral Historian with the National Park Service will present and workshop best practices in interviewing, including its more technical components.

Workshop 5: Collections Management and Best Practices in Oral History Preservation by Anne Foster

Join NPS Bureau Archivist she presents on collections management, legacy recordings, and their trickiness, and the "what next?" question that follows as completion and preservation of an oral history collection.

DETAILS

Each workshop will introduce a key theme in oral history theory and practice. Reminders to watch the videos and read supporting material will be sent weekly. Participants will be asked to respond to weekly reflections of questions associated with the video/supporting materials. These reflections will contribute to our goal and be discussed at an **in-person 2-day workshop held at AMME** where we will create a SOP for each park.

The **weekly commitment is 2 hrs.** Videos and supporting materials are one hour and thirty minutes. Reflections are 30 minutes to complete.

Please email DrJenny (jennifer_craig@partner.nps.gov) with accessibility requests, questions.



Course Syllabus

Oral Histories of Difficult Histories

Outline and Practicalities Instructor Jennifer Craig can be reached at jcraig@usaconservation.org or jennifer_craig@partner.nps.gov. Please include in the Subject Line : Oral History of Difficult Histories training.

What will attendees get from the course? And how will this impact on-the-job performance and Interpretation results?

Attendees will learn a common language around Oral Histories with the NPS and each park (WAPA/AMME) will develop a

GOAL

Standard Operating Procedure
for collecting new oral histories, public engagement on oral histories and care for the emotions that come with working in difficult histories intrinsic to the nature of work in WWII Marianas Islands.

Shape of the course

Learning = Asynchronous learning over 5 weeks

Preparation = Reflection Questions

Co-creation = 2-day in-person workshop

Outcome = SOP

Attendees must complete the oral history training by:

- ☐ actively participate in a 2 day workshop in-person and develop Standard Operating Procedures on Oral Histories.
- ☐ prepare for the 2 day workshop by bringing completed and thoughtful REFLECTIONS provided with asynchronous learning

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Measurable:

Successful completion of the REFLECTIONS is 55% of the work while 45% of the work will occur during a 2 day in-person workshop held at AMME.

Achievable:

These goals are realistic and achievable within the set timeframe of 5 weeks and 2 days because management of participants have been granted allotted time within their work schedules to complete the training. Management is also organizing and funding the costs of travel.

Relevant:

The goals align with the NPS mission to preserve unimpaired... the cultural resources...for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. [It] cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of cultural resource conservation...throughout this country and the world.

War in the Pacific National Historical Park commemorates the bravery and sacrifice of all those who participated in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

American Memorial Park honors the American and Marianas people who gave their lives during the Marianas Campaign of World War II...the courage and sacrifice of the US Servicemen and Chamorro and Carolinian civilians who were killed in the battles between the United States and Japan that took place on Saipan, Tinian, and the Philippine Sea in 1944.

Oral Histories are particularly a historical source of truth because “those stories and accounts passed on verbally and orally” (Nēpia Mahuika, 2019, 1), are inclusive of the crucial element of language in people’s names and the places they discuss.

The indigenous truth of oral history reveals it as a diversely political endeavor, a multidimensional practice, and multisensory product, exceedingly more complex than the narrow perceptions evident in today’s popular literature.
(Nēpia Mahuika, 2019, 2)

Time-bound:

The set deadline for achieving the goal is the date of the 2-day in-person workshop.

Drawn from [*Learn the Theory and Practice of Oral History*](#)

A workshop prepared by Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Marianas Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 1: Introduction to the Course and Week 1

Purpose: This course was developed out of WAPA and AMME staff expressing interest in developing a Standard Operating Procedure for Oral Histories in their parks. This will be accomplished in-person at a 2 day workshop at the end of the asynchronous learning portion. The asynchronous learning portion of the course is drawn from a Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship Program's 2024 Summer Oral History Workshop Series to give you an idea of context in United States Oral History.

Introduction: Introduce instructor (DrJenny) and share intentions of the course.

The work we do in Oral Histories is important! Marianas Island history is an American History but it is largely missing from the narrative. We are the frontline workers of national Cultural Heritage and Oral Histories are a tradition in the Marianas that is older than the colonial story. We want to grasp that enormity in how we engage in oral histories recording. We also recognize that a lot of our staff are descendants of the difficult histories we record(ed) so this course also offers resources available from the NPS Wellness Branch and the Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship Program's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Accessibility (DEIBA) Toolkit.

Course: Attendees have 2 hours a week allotted from management for this training. Each week we have a video available on YouTube (these are linked to the title of the week) that discusses a broader topic on Oral History. Each week includes a table of minutes and topics. There is content to skip at the beginning of each video and throughout most weeks, so please use the table as a guide for efficiently watching the videos. Two weeks include a podcast, please listen to the whole podcast. Each week includes Readings relevant to the topic, these are optional. I've bolded 2 readings I thought were interesting and well written, again these are optional.

MOST IMPORTANTLY respond to the REFLECTIONS.

Asynchronous Preparation: Reflections are a necessary component to completing the course. Each participant **MUST** have their reflections completed and available for their participation in the 2 day in-person workshop in AMME (date TBD). **If you do not understand something in the reflection questions** please make a note of what is not clear, rewrite the question as you understand it, and provide an answer to the question you stated.

In-person: These reflections will accompany a workshop that entails organized discussions drawing on the REFLECTIONS completed during each week of the asynchronous learning to develop a Standard Operating Procedure bespoke to each park. Examples of current Standard Operating Procedures in use in each park are welcome to the workshop.

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 1: [The History of Oral History](#)

Dr. Dan Kerr and Dr. Anna Kaplan (American University) will unpack the diverse origin stories of oral history practice. It will also examine tensions that result from the professionalization of oral history, from institutional settings to grassroots and community-led initiatives

YouTube

minutes	topic
2:07 - 7:05	Define - meaning and doing
7:05-10	SKIP
10-16	Beginnings - Indigenous Some start at simple/colonial
16-19	SKIP
19-25:15	Case Study: Tichkematse
25:16-27:25	Case Study: Frances Densmore / Extractive vs Preservation
27:16-43:06	Optional - Case Study: Black history - this time is better spent on week 3's presentation, with a more personal experience of black oral history work.
43:06- 53:30	SKIP Academic History, Independent Projects outside academia / people's history
56:40-1:05	People train, conduct, archive stories, oral history out of archive into community i.e. Truck Project
End	End

Readings:

Excerpt from Donald Ritchie, Ch 1 "[An Oral History of Our Time](#)," in Doing Oral History (2015), p1-8

Dan Kerr, "[Allan Nevins is Not My Grandfather](#)"

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Anna Kaplan, “[Before the Last of These Ex-Slaves Had Passed Irrevocably into History’: The Roots of Institutional Oral History in Ophelia Settle Egypt’s Work at Fisk University](#)”

Nēpia Mahuika, Ch 8 “[The Indigenous Truth of Oral History](#),” in Rethinking Oral History and Tradition: An Indigenous Perspective (2019)

Reflection Questions:

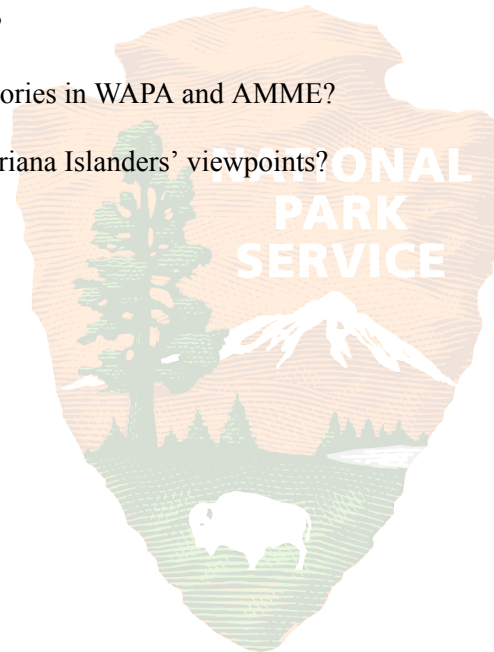
Please list the video topics and readings you watch/read this week. Please be honest so we know what resources we are pulling from to co-create our SOP.

How did Oral History start in the Marianas Islands?

What, in your opinion, is the experience of oral histories in WAPA and AMME?

What would you like to see here that represents Mariana Islanders’ viewpoints?

What were you surprised by?



This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 2: [Ethics and Oral History](#) SUMMARY

Professor Sarah Milligan (Oklahoma State University) will speak on the process of collaboration and data sovereignty with tribal communities in the NPS Southeast Region. She will also discuss the development of best practices and ethical frameworks within the Oral History Association.

+ [Oral History in the Pacific](#) Oceania Currents Podcast

Nepia Mahuika (Massey University), Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor (UH Mānoa), and Ty Kāwika Tengan (UH Mānoa).

YouTube

minutes	topics
6:50-12:50	define-meaning , doing
19:50-29:55	SKIP: Dense ethics
30:50-32:52	Case Study: Step 1 - Review Boards
35:11-36	Initial Questions of How to
36-43:05	Case Study: Women Empowerment
46:03-51	Once completed gathering, past repository, now access
1:05-1:08	Social justice centered practice
1:08-1:12	Vulnerable populations / social movements
1:20 - 1:22	Trauma in Oral History
1:22-end	Additional Ethics Information

Podcast

minutes	topics
48 minutes total	8. Oral History in the Pacific, Part 1: Storytelling in Aotearoa and Hawai'i - Oceania Currents iHeart

Readings:

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Rhonda Povey, Susan Page & Michelle Trudgett, “Getting it Right: Safeguarding a Respected Space for Indigenous Oral Histories and Truth Telling,” The Oral History Review, 50:2, 223-241 (2021) DOI: [10.1080/00940798.2023.2234419](https://doi.org/10.1080/00940798.2023.2234419)

Oral History Association Principles and Best Practices: <https://oralhistory.org/principles-and-best-practices-revised-2018/>

Mary Larson, “[Steering Clear of the Rocks: A Look at the Current State of Oral History Ethics in the Digital Age.](#)”

BBC (Oct 17, 2019) Boston tapes: Q&A on secret Troubles confessions <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-27238797>

Sady Sullivan, “[Public Homeplaces: Collaboration and Care in Oral History Project Design](#),” In Beyond Womens’ Words: Feminisms and The Practices of Oral History in the Twenty-First Century.

Anna Sheftel & Stacey Zembrzycki, “Who’s Afraid of Oral History? Fifty Years of Debates and Anxiety about Ethics,” The Oral History Review, 43:2, 338-366 (2016). DOI: [10.1093/ohr/ohw071](https://doi.org/10.1093/ohr/ohw071)

Kristi Girdharry, “Organizational Sponsorship: An Ethical Framework for Community Oral History Projects,” The Oral History Review, 48:2, 246-257 (2021). DOI: [10.1080/00940798.2021.1927765](https://doi.org/10.1080/00940798.2021.1927765)

Melanie Shell-Weiss, “Good Intentions: Grappling with Legacies of Conflict and Distrust Surrounding a Native American Oral History Project One Generation Later,” The Oral History Review, 46:1, 104-133 (2019) DOI: [10.1093/ohr/ohz004](https://doi.org/10.1093/ohr/ohz004)

Will Havemann, “Privilege and the Belfast Project.” 65 Stanford Law Review Online 79. 2012.
<https://www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/privilege-and-the-belfast-project/>

Reflection Questions:

Please list the video topics and readings you watch/read this week. Please be honest so we know what resources we are pulling from to co-create our SOP.

Do you think the work described in the case study is a collaboration and data sovereignty with tribal communities in the NPS Southeast Region? What do you think of this relates to our experience in WAPA/AMME?

Have you ever considered ethics in oral history? If so, please list the references.

What is your understanding of trauma-informed approaches?

What were you surprised by?-----

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 3: [Oral History: Bridging Theory and Practice](#)

Dr. Francena Turner will share insights from her archival and oral history practice in community and institutional settings. Informed by a lens of intergenerational care and mutual respect, Dr. Turner will explore interdisciplinary methodologies, self-care, and the necessity of teamwork.

+ [Oral History in the Pacific](#) Oceania Currents Podcast

Nepia Mahuika (Massey University), Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor (UH Mānoa), and Ty Kāwika Tengan (UH Mānoa).

YouTube

minutes	topic
Start at 2:52 - Watch the whole thing - 40 minutes	Holistic interdisciplinary approach

Podcast

40 minutes total	9. Oral History in the Pacific, Part 2: Reclaiming Stories for the Collective Futures
------------------	---

Readings:

Beoku-Betts, Josephine. "[When Black Is Not Enough: Doing Field Research among Gullah Women.](#)" *NWSA Journal* 6, no. 3 (Autumn, 1994): 413-43.

Melton, Elizabeth M. "[Hometown Ethnography: Race, Place, and Reflexivity.](#)" *Oral History Review* 46, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2019): 300-323.

Turner, Francena F.L. & James-Gallaway, ArCasia D. "[Black Baby Boomers, Gender, and Southern Education: Navigating Tensions in Oral History Methodology.](#)" *Oral History Review* (Jan 2022):77-96.

Reflection Questions:

Please list the video topics and readings you watch/read this week. Please be honest so we know what resources we are pulling from to co-create our SOP.

What are your thoughts of Oral History methodology in the Marianas Islands?

What Readings or Video would you have liked to see this week from Marianas Islands practitioners?

What topics align with Marianas Islands oral histories?

What were you surprised by?-----

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 4: [How to Prepare and Lead an Oral History Project](#)

Dr. [Lu Ann Jones](#) as Oral Historian with the National Park Service will present and workshop best practices in interviewing, including its more technical components.

YouTube

minutes	topic
Start at 3:04-13:40	Goals and objectives of this workshop
13:40 - 50:00	Oral History Process
50 - 54	Interviews of difficult subjects (outside looking in perspective)
54 - 55:10	After Interview
55:10 - 1:02	SKIP : Break
1:02 - 1:10	Choosing equipment
1:10 - 1:15	Legal and ethical issues
1:15 - 1:24	Presentation and Access
1:24 - 1:27	Transcribe pedal (Equipment interlude)
1:27 - 1:32	Using Oral History Interviews Examples in other parks: Manzanar, Little Rock, Minuteman, Fairbanks Alaska, Civil Rights, Centennial Voices, Podcasts
1:32 - 1:33	Resources

Readings:

On group interviewing, see [Geri Augusto, Wesley Hogan, and Danita Mason-Hogans, "Adapting Critical Oral History Methodology to Freedom Movement Studies," Oral History Review, Vol., 9, No. 2 \(September 2022\): 309-327.](#)

[Oral History Resources - Oral History \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

[Oral History \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/oralhistory/)

The [Introduction to Oral History](#) from Baylor University Institute for Oral History guides you through an oral history project from beginning to end. Here are more [online resources](#) from Baylor.

Essays in [Oral History in the Digital Age \(OHDA\)](#), from the Institute of Museum and Library Services at Michigan State University, describe project planning, choosing digital audio and video equipment, and many other aspects of oral history practice.

[Oral History at a Distance](#) is a just-released guide to remote interviewing. This website is a companion to a book published by Routledge.

[Oral History Association's Principles and Best Practices](#). The OHA sets professional standards for oral history practice in the United States.

[OHA-Archives-Principles-and-Best-Practices-Overview.pdf](#) (oralhistory.org).

Discover how the NPS Park History Program is sharing its interviews in [A Sense of Place podcast](#) and other features such as [Spotlight on Oral History](#).

Reflection Questions:

Please list the video topics and readings you watch/read this week. Please be honest so we know what resources we are pulling from to co-create our SOP.

There were a lot of practical tips and resources provided for this week, what were you drawn to?

What resources are most helpful to our Park team?

What topics align with Marianas Islands oral histories?

What were you surprised by?



This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Week 5: [Collections Management and Best Practices in Oral History Preservation](#)

Anne Foster NPS Bureau Archivist presents on collections management, legacy recordings, and their trickiness, and the “what next?” question that follows as completion and preservation of an oral history collection.

YouTube

minutes	topic
Start at 2 - 2:20	Goals
2:20 - 13	Challenges
13-27	SKIP : Discussion
27:15	Plan for preservation
46:20	legalities
46:20 - 57	Skip: Discussion
57 - 57:40	Archival components
57:40-58:40	transcripts
58:40 - 1	format
1 - 1:00:30	costs
1:00:30 - 1:00:50	After interview
1:00:50 - 1:02:40	challenges
1:08:00 - 1:20	Media types and storage, Digitization and Access
1:20 - 1:27	More challenges
1:27 - end	Skip: Discussion, Questions

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

Readings:

Foulis, Elena, and Brandon D'Souza. "Archiving Bilingual Latin@ Oral Histories." *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion*, vol. 6, no. 4, 2022, pp. 72–83. JSTOR,

Evans, Jeremy, and Melissa Hernández Durán. "Rights Review for Sound Recordings: Strategies Using Risk and Fair Use Assessments." *The American Archivist*, vol. 81, no. 2, 2018, pp. 323–72.

Swain, Ellen D. "Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-First Century." *The American Archivist*, vol. 66, no. 1, 2003, pp. 139–58. JSTOR,

Pearman, Alice. "Teachers' Tales Go Online: Digitizing Oral Histories on Cassettes." *The American Archivist*, vol. 82, no. 1, 2019, pp. 124–36.

Weber, Chela Scott, Martha O'Hara Conway, Nicholas Martin, Gioia Stevens, and Brigitte Kamsler. 2021. *Total Cost of Stewardship: Responsible Collection Building in Archives and Special Collections*. Dublin, OH: OCLC Research.

Reflection Questions:

Please list the video topics and readings you watch/read this week. Please be honest so we know what resources we are pulling from to co-create our SOP.

What, if any, of these steps have you participated in?

What resources provided here are helpful to you and what feels like a specialist should just manage that portion of work? If a specialist should manage it, do you know WHO that is for WAPA AMME?

What were you surprised by?

SEND REFLECTIONS TO DrJenny. jcraig@usaconservation.org or jennifer_craig@partner.nps.gov.

This will confirm with management you are prepared to attend the in person portion of the training.

This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.

Course Syllabus WEEKLY: **Oral Histories of Difficult Histories**

Created by Dr Jennifer Craig

Mellon Fellow, Mariana Islands Wartime Experiences through Oral Histories Fellowship

FINAL: In-person workshop

Workshop Resources:

Difficult Histories Mental Health pamphlets

SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach

Esp pages 14 to 16, SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN IMPLEMENTING A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH



This program is made possible through the National Park Service by a grant from the National Park Foundation, through generous support from the Mellon Foundation. American Conservation Experience (ACE) joins NPS and NPF as a key partner.