

SAFEGUARDING
THE JEWEL OF THE
bahamas
now &
tomorrow





The Bahamas National Trust (BNT) serves as the caretakers, protectors and voice of The Bahamas' most precious natural resource, its unique and diverse National Park System.

National parks are defenders of the environment. They are special areas that have been set aside to ensure that the natural beauty and richness of The Bahamas remain for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations. National parks are also natural barometers of our environment and in today's rapidly changing world, our parks help us target conservation efforts to sustain our country's invaluable natural resources.

National parks are as crucial to the Bahamian way of life as the natural environment itself. Employment, tourism products, fisheries, food and groundwater supply all depend on healthy ecosystems. Well managed parks and the communities that surround them inject new life into natural systems while simultaneously buffering against human impacts at every scale. They sustain the Bahamian economy and culture and contribute directly to the country's ocean and island health. To remain prosperous, nations must protect their environment and preserve it for the future.

With conservation as our North Star, our work extends into Bahamian society far beyond day-to-day park operations. We touch the lives of tens of thousands of people annually with our award-winning educational and outreach programmes. BNT and our many partners utilize national parks as outdoor classrooms that awe and inspire Bahamians and visitors alike to become lifelong caretakers of our most precious natural resources. We conduct and facilitate globally significant scientific research to protect economically important fisheries, conserve critically endangered species, and inform sustainable government policies.

Over the past several years, the BNT has built up and transformed Bahamian parks to a National Park System coveted the world over. However, there is still much more work to be done. Our vision is a comprehensive network of effectively managed Bahamian national parks and protected areas that is recognized as a powerful force for global biodiversity conservation, which is supported and enjoyed by the public.



“The thing I am most proud of in these 15 years is that the BNT is now part of our national identity. Bahamians now identify the National Park System as belonging to them; a treasure to hold and protect for generations to come.”

**– Eric Carey,
Outgoing Executive Director
(2007-2022)**



OUR REACH & IMPACT

- ✓ In the last 20 years BNT has increased the number of national parks from 12 to 32 and growing, increasing the acreage under BNT management from approximately 1 million to over 2.2 million acres today - ultimately positioning us as the largest natural resource manager in the country
- ✓ Park visitorship and user fees generate \$1 million annually and are anticipated to increase as infrastructure in parks is developed
- ✓ We have created many transformative business opportunities for local communities and tourism operators
- ✓ The BNT has scaled its ability to protect nature and provide public access by fully staffing many more parks, providing excellent infrastructure, and dynamic management plans, all while striving toward healthy park-by-park balance sheets
- ✓ Our award-winning Education and Outreach programs reach several dozen local communities across 15 islands, and BNT's membership engages thousands of individuals, families, and organisations
- ✓ We have a direct role in government protections for critically endangered species like Green Sea Turtles, Caribbean Reef Sharks, Queen Conch, and Nassau Grouper



THE BNT BLUE STANDARD

EXUMA CAYS LAND AND SEA PARK

With years of concerted investment, the BNT has transformed the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park (ECLSP) into a paradigm within its parks system. Twenty years ago, this treasured destination was considered in peril of collapse. Vessels were inadequate and ill-suited for enforcement, monitoring, and search and rescue operations; park revenue was at substandard levels, park visitorship was minimal and there was only one warden supervising over 170,000 acres of marine and terrestrial park territory; and enforcement and natural resource protection was ineffective and poaching was rampant.

Fast forward to today, where the park is healthy and thriving and fully operational, providing species protection, science monitoring and research, and a respite for its visitors. Significant measures have been put in place to turn the park into the standard for Marine Protected Areas (MPA) management.

Heavy and long-term investments in staffing, infrastructure, purpose-built vessels and equipment have enhanced the visitor experience, generated critical income and has protected the park from climate change and other environmental and human driven threats.

The BNT is striving to bring the rest of the BNT's parks up to the "Blue Standard" that has been achieved at the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park. Currently only twenty-five percent of the BNT's parks have the minimum level of infrastructure and revenue generating opportunities to support their conservation impact and sustainability.



THE YEARS AHEAD

The BNT aims to ensure that the biodiversity of The Bahamas is protected and that human access to nature is a conduit for societal action.

The BNT is executing an ambitious campaign in 2022 focused on raising \$2 million to enhance The Bahamas' most essential natural environmental and cultural heritage sites.

IN THE NEXT CHAPTER OF OUR 60 YEAR HISTORY, WE ASPIRE TO:

- Dramatically increase park visitorship and park fee revenue generation
- Increase conservation effectiveness and impact through capacity building, infrastructure enhancements, and fully funding all areas within the National Park System
- Grow the number of protected areas and national parks in the system
- Double the size of BNT's loyal membership at home and abroad
- Protect additional IUCN red-listed species such as the Bahama Warbler and maintain protections for sea turtles, sharks, conch, and other economically important species



OUR CAMPAIGN

To build the resources needed this year, and in celebration of the 20 year BNT career of our outgoing Executive Director Eric Carey, 2022 will be dedicated to showcasing our treasured National Park System and our robust impact.

We have the knowledge. We have the experience. And we have an unmatched record of persistence and success.

But we need one more factor to ensure an enduring future of the BNT: your participation.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THIS CAMPAIGN - FOR THE PARKS, FOR THE COUNTRY, FOR THE FUTURE!

For more information on how to get involved, please contact:
Anna Bancroft | abancroft@bnt.bs | +1 (242) 424-1764



Get in Touch

abancroft@bnt.bs



[@bahamasnationaltrust](https://www.instagram.com/bahamasnationaltrust)
#exploreyourpark

www.bnt.bs/legacy