

SAVE THE DATE



EARTH DAY - Saturday, April 22nd

Don't forget to plan your Earth Day activities for next weekend. Naturally, we hope you will visit a park, but [here](#) are other ideas to celebrate the planet. Our favorites include the *foodprint* calculators and the teach-in toolkit.

FEATURED PARK



Photos and facts of
your favorite parks,
one issue at a time

Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve Alaska

FACT 1: Despite bounding one of the largest wilderness areas in the U.S., Gates of the Arctic is not accessible by road. Most park visitors *fly in* on small chartered aircraft while some very experienced visitors choose to hike, although there are no trails or signage for reference.



PHOTO CREDIT: NPS



PHOTO CREDIT: NPS/Kyle Joly

FACT 2: As they have for over 12,000 years, Alaska Native people inhabit this land. The park's *sole* permanent community is the Nunamiut Iñupiat village of [Anaktuvuk Pass](#).

Nominate *your* favorite local, state, or national park [here](#) so our subscribers can learn about it.

PARK PERKS



Visualizing key research to show why parks matter

The Institute is developing programs to spotlight the crucial role parks play in preserving and restoring mental health, specifically among military veterans. A team of Clemson University scholars compiled research that provides an excellent introduction to this topic. In their 2016 [article](#) published in *Therapeutic Recreational Journal*, the authors summarize the four primary - and possibly overlapping - concepts and theories about how immersive recreation in natural settings can **improve the mental and bodily health** of veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress (PTS) symptoms.

Theories Supporting Nature-Based PTS Therapies



Place Attachment

- A strong sense of place influences a person's identity and well-being
- Meaningful places create emotional attachments and even dependence
- Nature fosters attachments to new places, possibly supplanting traumatic ones



Attention Restoration

- Nature provides an escape from unwanted emotions
- Calming stimuli reinforce positive emotions
- The emotional shift restores the capacity for directed attention



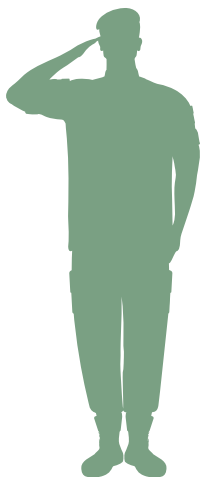
Buffering

- Nature provides separation from daily challenges
- Natural settings reduce negative effects of health stressors
- This enhances bodily health, senses, imagination, and thought



Transcendence

- Natural settings present skillset opportunities and challenges
- Challenges elicit survival instincts and learned military training
- Skills use sharpens mental focus and increases awareness



The authors note that although brief natural immersions can have positive health impacts on PTS symptoms, recreational experiences that are longer and/or more frequent are more likely to have more substantial, longer-lasting positive effects.

FIRST DELIVERIES NEXT WEEK



Celebrate Earth Day and make a statement. Order your Park-It Frame now.

[SHOP HERE](#)

Did you hear the hat's poison ivy joke?

PLAYGROUND

It was a real head-scratcher.