

The Hourglass

Newsletter of Friends of the Dunes

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Welcome New Superintendent Pamela Rice!

By Dirk Oden

Pamela Rice began her duties as Park Superintendent July 22. Rice was previously an assistant superintendent at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Arizona and Utah. Prior to her work at Glen Canyon, Rice served as acting superintendents in Capitol Reef National Park in Utah and Kanai Fjords National Park in Alaska. She also has experience as a Chief of Interpretation, and as an Interpretive Ranger. Rice earned a bachelor's degree in wildlife and fisheries sciences and holds two master's degrees—one in interpretation and environmental education and the other in cross-cultural studies and leadership.



“Pam’s collaborative leadership style, strong communication skills and experience working with park partners, tribes and elected officials make her a great addition to our Great Sand Dunes team”

NPS Regional Director Sue Masica, who appointed Rice to the superintendent position at Great Sand Dunes noted that “Pam’s collaborative leadership style, strong communication skills and experience working with park partners, tribes and elected officials make her a great addition to our Great Sand Dunes team.”

Rice is excited about her opportunity to serve in her new role, noting, “I am honored and thrilled to have the opportunity to work at Great Sand Dunes,” she said, adding, “I look forward to working closely with park staff, volunteers, partners and the communities of the San Luis Valley in the stewardship and appreciation of this amazing natural wonder.”

Would you like to help the Friends of the Dunes by serving on the board?

With the geographic relocation of one board member, (we miss you, Reginaldo!) the Friends of the Dunes Board is currently made up of four individuals and would like to have one or two more board members. Being a board member does not take a huge amount of time—we are an all volunteer board and each member has a full-time career. We meet one evening a month to advance our mission of working with the park to support educational, research, and cultural activities related to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. To express interest or learn more, please email board president Lucy Adams at laadams@adams.edu.

Great Sand Dunes National Park Seeking International Dark Sky Park Designation

The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is an international organization dedicated to protecting the night skies for present and future generations. With its prestigious International Dark-Sky Park designation, the IDA recognizes places possessing an “exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage, and/or public enjoyment.” As one of the darkest skies anywhere in the West, Great Sand Dunes National Park is well poised for such a designation with its easily accessible exceptional opportunities for dark sky viewing. However, earning this designation is not just based on having a dark sky alone. A proposed International Dark-Sky Park must also demonstrate a commitment to preserving dark skies and educating visitors about them. The park must have both short-term and long-term plans, practices, and policies



The IDA recognizes places possessing an exceptional quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage, and/or public enjoyment.

that not only ensure any artificial lighting in the area has a negligible impact on the quality of the night sky but also ensures that quality dark skies will be preserved for future generations. The Friends of the Dunes supports the designation of Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve as an International Dark-Sky Park. The park’s application to IDA is almost complete, and we hope that in the near future Great Sand Dunes Park & Preserve will be honored with the prestigious designation as an International Dark-Sky Park.



American Avocet with chicks in the park (Photo courtesy of NPS/Great Sand Dunes)

Upcoming Events

Although the season is winding down, there are still ranger programs scheduled throughout October. Check the park website at <https://www.nps.gov/grsa> (click on Plan Your Visit then Free Ranger Programs) for dates, times, and program descriptions.

Dunes Wheelchairs Status

We received some helpful feedback from visitors this summer about the condition of our aging dunes wheelchairs. Providing wheelchair access to the dunes is very important to the Friends of the Dunes.

We are in the process of closely inspecting each wheel chair for minor/major comfort and functionality issues and will be exploring options for repair or replacement as necessary to ensure a positive experience for all dunes wheelchair users.

You can help with this process by sending donations to the Friends of the Dunes with a memo note for “wheelchair fund”. If you know of a good supplier for beach/dune wheelchairs or have any personal experience with newer models, we’d love to hear from you about that. Email your thoughts to board secretary Dirk Oden at wdoden@gmail.com.



Great Sand Dunes National Park Stars In Gregory Alan Isakov's Video For 'San Luis'

Colorado-based singer songwriter Gregory Alan Isakov just released his fourth album, Evening Machines, and the video for his song, San Luis, just captured the attention of NPR's Bruce Warren, producer of World Café .

The video features the diverse natural beauty of the San Luis Valley and includes high quality footage of Great Sand Dunes filmed at the park by National Geographic photographers who were documenting Gregory's travels.

You can read the NPR article and watch the video at <https://www.npr.org/sections/world-café> (scroll down to the October 17, 2018 issue).

*“weightlessness, no gravity
were we somewhere in-between
i'm a ghost of you, you're a
ghost of me
a bird's-eye view of San Luis”*

Membership and Contact Information

Come join us in protecting and enjoying
a unique and special place.

I would like to join or renew my membership in Friends of the Dunes
at the following level:

- Friend \$25
- Associate \$50
- Family \$75
- Patron \$100
- Lifetime \$1000

I'd also like to contribute \$_____ to the following:

- Wheelchair Fund
- Student Research Grant Fund
- General Operations Fund

Contact information: Check here if label is correct;
 otherwise, please complete:

Name _____

Street _____ DATE _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

(Please print clearly enough for someone not familiar with the address to read) 😊

Check here to receive the Hourglass newsletter by email instead of by hard copy through postal mail.

Friends of the Dunes Board of Directors

Lucy Adams, President (laadams@adams.edu) • Lynne Young, Treasurer • Dirk Oden, Secretary (wdoden@gmail.com) • Loree' Harvey

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Contact the Friends: info@greatsanddunes.org

Visit us online: www.greatsanddunes.org

NEW Friends Members receive the following for joining as a

- ⇒ **FRIEND**—Great Sand Dunes pin, triannual newsletter, advanced notices and invitations to special events.
- ⇒ **ASSOCIATE**—Copy of *The Shape of the Wind* by Stephen Trimble.
- ⇒ **FAMILY**—Annual pass to Great Sand Dunes
- ⇒ **PATRON**—All of the above.
- ⇒ **LIFETIME**—All of the above plus a special gift from the Great Sand Dunes bookstore.