

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Polar Bears Featured on 2016 Federal Recreational Lands Pass

The 2016 America the Beautiful Pass, an annual pass for entrance to more than 2,000 national public recreation sites, will feature a touching photograph, taken by Gregory Teller, of a polar bear and her cub in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The 2016 image was selected from about 22,000 images submitted to the annual "Share the Experience" contest, sponsored by the National Park Foundation, Active Network and Celestron in partnership with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service. The contest gives amateur photographers the chance to showcase their skills by capturing the beauty of the nation's public lands.

The "Share the Experience" photo contest highlights our nation's public lands – including national parks, wildlife refuges, forests and recreation areas – and draws entries from across the United States. As the grand prize winner, Gregory received \$10,000, and his photograph will be featured on the 2016 [America the Beautiful pass](#), an annual pass for entrance to more than 2,000 national public recreation sites. Each year, approximately 300,000 people purchase this pass, which pays for itself in as few as four visits to flagship national parks.

"Moments with mothers and their cubs were just perfect, especially this shot as the cub reached up to his mother," said Gregory, who took the photograph while visiting Alaska for the first time on a six-person tour to see the Northern Lights and polar bears. Photography is a hobby for Gregory, who frequently visits public lands. "I feel in love with the area. We stayed a couple of days in a village near the refuge where polar bears frequent."

Photographs for the 2015 "Share the Experience" contest must be taken between January 1, 2015, and December 31, 2015. Contest entries are accepted from April 30, 2015, to December 31, 2015, and photographers can participate by uploading photos on www.sharetheexperience.org. Winners will be announced by May 1, 2016.

Prizes for winning entries include monetary awards, outdoor equipment, annual federal recreation passes and hotel packages courtesy of Historic Hotels of America. Prizes are offered for fan favorites and for one winner in each for the following six categories:

- Adventure and Outdoor Recreation
- Historical and Cultural
- Scenic, Seasons and Landscapes
- Every Kid in a Park (new category as part of President Obama's initiative)
- Wildlife
- Night Skies