In the summer of 2016, Yosemite National Park delegates, Peggy Moore, Joseph Meyer and Leslie Chow visited Ulaan Taiga Specially Protected Areas to plan an inventory and monitoring program for the parks. An outcome of this field visit and research, Natural Resource Inventory and Monitoring for Ulaan Taiga Specially Protected Areas - An Assessment of Needs and Opportunities in Northern Mongolia report has been published by the U.S Geological Survey. The report outlines recommendations for an inventory and monitoring program for the three protected areas of Ulaan Taiga and Horidol Sandag Strictly Protected Areas and Tengis Shishged National Park. The report is available at https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2017/1025/ofr20171025.pdf

Our Junior Ranger Program was selected as one of the ten projects to be sponsored by 2016-2017 Direct Aid Program of the Australian Embassy in Mongolia. Junior Ranger Program will now reach two hundred students in 4th to 6th grades at the secondary schools in Hatgal village and Hankh soum. As part of the project, a Junior Ranger Class-room was fully renovated and equipped at Hatgal Secondary School. Mrs. Oyunkhord Dulamsuren, Minister of Environment and Tourism along with delegates including Mr. Munkhbaatar Lkhagva, Member of Parliament, Mr. Batansar Ch, Acting Chief of Protected Areas Administration and Mr. Robert McIntosh, Board Member of Mongol Ecology Center and Mr. Tom Medema, Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers at the U.S National Park Service attended the opening ceremony of the classroom and program in Hatgal on January 28, 2017.

The Junior Ranger Program will provide children in Hovsgol with environmental education through after-school activities and a summer camp. The program is designed to foster student skills in environmental science and natural resources through nature games, hands-on GPS, and water monitoring exercises. Comprehensive Junior Ranger Curriculum is under development, featuring topics on protected areas, endangered species, water cycle and much more.

Earlier this year, MEC acquired rights to translate the Sharing Nature: Nature Awareness Activities for All Ages, a classic guidebook on nature education by Joseph Cornell into Mongolian. The book has already been translated into 23 languages and has been a valuable resource to help parents, teachers, youth leaders and others in their efforts to connect children with nature on a deeper level.
At the invitation of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia, Mr. Tom Medema, Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers at the U.S National Park Service and Mr. Robert McIntosh visited Mongolia from January 22-February 3. The delegates traveled to Lake Hovsgol National park with the Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mrs. Gyuunkhorol and other government officials. During their visit, all representatives met with community members in Hagtai to discuss pressing issues in the park and planned next steps to implement the international best practices in park management.

"NATIONAL PARKS OF MONGOLIA" MOBILE APPLICATION

In a collaboration with the Environmental Fellow Program by Zong Foundation, MEC is developing a mobile application to help travelers to plan their trips to the popular national parks of Mongolia. One of its kind in Mongolia, the application will feature visitor information, trail maps, park highlights and more. Please stay tuned for the release date!

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING IN HOVSGOL PROTECTED AREAS

Building upon his two summers of field experience with MEC creating maps and GIS database for Hovsgol protected areas, our volunteer Simon McIntosh, a recent graduate of the University of Vermont, wrote his college thesis on Transportation Infrastructure Planning in Hovsgol Aimag’s National Parks. His research closely examines six potential routes for road development in the Darkhad Valley and its surrounding protected areas in terms of physical and socio-economic attributes. Based on the data from GPS trackers, personal observations and interviews with community members, the research identified two mountain passes most suitable for route development that would benefit all stakeholders, including the parks, rural communities and the visitors. Learn more about the research at http://www.mongolec.org/uploads/Simon_McIntosh_Thesis.pdf

RALLY FOR RANGERS 2017* AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RALLY FOR RANGERS FOUNDATION

As you may remember, back in 2014, we started the Blue Waves Campaign and donated 15 motorcycles to Lake Hovsgol National Park rangers. The campaign continued the following year to equip 20 more rangers at Ulaan Taiga Protected Areas with new Yamaha-AG 200 motorcycles. Reliable transportation and gear are helping our rangers to patrol and protect the Hovsgol ecosystem at large.

Blue Waves Campaign rallied hundreds of volunteers from around the world. To continue the success of the campaign, expand its scope and to assist the rangers worldwide, the Rally for Rangers Foundation was established. Rally for Rangers Foundation plans to deliver ten motorcycles to the rangers of Ogontenger National Park this summer. For more information please visit www.rallyforrangers.org.

Funder: