Patagonia Park
Wild Heart of Patagonia

Project Profile

Project of Conservacion Patagonica
Chacabuco Valley, Aysén Region, Chile

*Private conservation lands acquired: 80,651 hectares (199,293 acres)*

Conservation Objectives

- Grasslands restoration
- Endangered species protection
- Creation of Patagonia National Park
**Patagonia Park** is an innovative, hopeful example of people working together to help heal a degraded landscape, encourage ecological processes, and provide a permanent sanctuary for wildlife to flourish. When complete, the future Patagonia National Park in Chile’s Aysén Province will be a nearly 650,000-acre protected area with spectacular scenery, thriving wildlife populations, and outstanding public access architecture. As of 2016, most of the park’s infrastructure—campgrounds, hiking trails, restaurant and lodge, etc.—is complete and open to the public, innovative restoration and wildlife recovery efforts are ongoing, and the park is helping foster tourism-related economic development in local communities.

Under the leadership of Kris Tompkins and with the support of many donors, Conservacion Patagonica purchased a large private ranch in 2004 to launch the park effort. The Chacabuco Valley’s extraordinary beauty and biodiversity had made it a top conservation priority. All of the region’s native species, from Andean condors to guanacos and pumas, are still present. Subsequent purchases have increased the private holdings to roughly 200,000 acres. Ultimately, Conservacion Patagonica intends to donate its holdings, which would be combined with two adjacent national reserves, to create the future Patagonia National Park.

**Accomplishments**

- **Using volunteers from around the world,** the park project’s science team is undertaking the largest-ever grassland restoration initiative in Chile and one of the largest on Earth. Hundreds of miles of fencing and other ranch infrastructure have been dismantled.
- **Restoration efforts including eradicating exotic species, countering erosion, and restoring native plants have been highly successful.** In the few years since livestock were eliminated from the landscape, the historically overgrazed grasslands are showing strong recovery and wildlife populations are rebounding.
- **The park dramatically expands the amount of permanently conserved habitat for the huemul deer,** the iconic and endangered species that graces Chile’s national shield.
- **Working with local communities,** the park has implemented an outdoor education program that brings young people to the park for natural science and physical education activities.

**Near-term Priorities**

- **Complete the park headquarters visitor information center,** which will interpret the ecological and cultural history of the area as well as inform visitors about how national parks respond to the global challenges of our time.
- **Continue wildlife recovery programs including puma monitoring, huemul deer recovery, and Darwin’s rhea captive breeding and population augmentation effort.**
- **Complete trail-building and campground construction.**
- **Negotiate terms and timing of park donation and implement transition-period management structure.**

**Funding Needs**

**$11.7** million for 2016–2018

- **Operational support:** $600,000. For next two years of administration and park operations including science program and visitor services.
- **Private-to-public Management Transition:** $400,000. For legal, technical, and staff work to coordinate the park’s transfer to public ownership.
- **Public Access Infrastructure:** $5.2 million. To complete campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, bridges, signage, lodge annex, sustainable energy system, and visitor center.
- **Land Acquisition:** $5.5 million. To complete the acquisition of six private in-holdings within the proposed national park.

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**2004** The 175,000-acre Estancia Valle Chacabuco acquired  
**2005** Transition from sheep ranching to conservation begins  
**2008** Second major property (21,000 acres) added to park holdings  
**2016** After a decade of work, park infrastructure is 95 percent complete  
**2018** Projected donation of the park to Chile’s national park system  
**2018–2022** Anticipated transition period for transfer of administration