

Great Sand Dunes NP&P



How does Nature provide portable hydration?

Solution: ID the strategies that Nature uses to provide hydration. Use biomimicry as a systems-based approach to solve this challenge.

In order to comply with Federal Executive Orders, the Great Sand Dunes NP&P requested assistance from EPA in finding a sustainable solution to the large quantity of plastic drink bottles from 350,000 visitors in their trash.

Working with their biologist, P3T identified an innovative solution that moved away from traditional recycling and achieved long-term environmental protection.

Results:

- ✓ Hydration delivered to visitors sustainably.
- ✓ EO requirements exceeded.
- ✓ Energy, water, and BTU's reduced, money saved.
- ✓ Sustainable solution pilot tested and promoted at national parks.
- ✓ Visitors educated on the value of looking for solution in the local ecosystem.

As a result of EPA's assistance, the Great Sand Dunes made changes to solve the drink bottle problem in the areas of park policies, practices and procedures and in concession contracts.

Examples of these changes include:

- ✓ Educating visitors that no other organism climbed the dunes during the hot part of the day and they shouldn't either. Scheduling interpretive programs in the afternoon to encourage visitors to stay indoors or under shade.
- ✓ Installing water filling stations and selling refillable bottles only in their visitor's center.
- ✓ Delivering all drinks in screw-top aluminum cans, which are easily recycled in the local ecosystem.
- ✓ Developing an Environmental Management Systems for the park and working with the local community to expand recycling.

For the complete report: <http://peakstoprairies.org/library/webinars>