

# Columbia Sportswear and the UK's National Parks Announce Five Year Partnership

Submitted by: Canoe  
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23rd May 2017, London, UK. Today, Columbia Sportswear and the UK's National Parks announced a first of its kind five-year partnership, making Columbia the official outfitter of the National Parks' rangers and staff – the people who protect and promote some of Britain's best-loved landscapes.

Columbia has committed to outfitting upwards of 2,000 National Park staff for five years, including 300 rangers, providing high quality clothing that's 'tested tough' and designed to keep them warm, dry, cool and protected in Britain's toughest conditions.

Rangers and staff are entrusted to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks for all who visit. Their efforts range from rebuilding mountain paths to repairing river moorings, and from leading guided walks to educating school children and community groups about the great outdoors. And they undertake much of this work in some of the wettest, most challenging weather in the world.

"At Columbia, our mission is to help people enjoy the outdoors longer. That's why we consider it our responsibility to be conscientious stewards of our shared environment. Becoming a partner of the UK's National Parks is an unrivalled opportunity to highlight the amazing work conducted by rangers and staff," said Andy Barker, General Manager UK & IR Columbia Sportswear.

Containing some of Britain's most important and beautiful landscapes, the UK's 15 National Parks (ten in England, three in Wales and two in Scotland) are free to visit and host over 100 million visitors each year. In addition to outfitting rangers and staff and obtaining their valuable feedback on the gear, Columbia will work alongside the National Parks on new initiatives to deepen the public's understanding of their National Parks and encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors.

Jacque Burgess, Chair of National Parks UK says, "Columbia Sportswear is showing a strong commitment to the UK's National Parks with this partnership. Providing clothing for more than 2,000 staff is a very significant contribution, supporting the very heart of our work. Columbia will take a leading role in helping to increase public understanding of our wonderful National Parks by sharing the stories of our people and our Parks over the coming five years."

Steve Curl, Chair of National Parks Partnerships LLP, the organisation that facilitates corporate partnerships on behalf of the UK National Parks, says, "We applaud Columbia for this enlightened investment in the UK's National Parks. This is a high-value partnership, enabling us to focus our resources towards looking after these special places for now and for future generations to enjoy. We have been hugely impressed by Columbia's environmental and ethical commitments as well as their genuine enthusiasm for the UK's National Parks and their plan for support over the next five years."

Columbia will outfit National Park rangers and staff with several performance pieces, including the OutDry Extreme ECO Jacket. The ultimate sustainable waterproof breathable solution for extreme conditions, the OutDry Extreme Jacket is sustainably manufactured without PFCs (Perflourinated

compounds)2. The jacket's design represents a sea-change in the development of performance rainwear, and signifies an important environmental advance. For more information on the OutDry Extreme ECO Jacket, go to: [www.columbiasportswear.co.uk/outdry-extreme-eco](http://www.columbiasportswear.co.uk/outdry-extreme-eco)

For more information on Columbia, please visit: [www.columbiasportswear.co.uk](http://www.columbiasportswear.co.uk), National Parks UK, please visit: [www.nationalparks.gov.uk](http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk) and for National Parks Partnerships, please visit: [www.nationalparks.co.uk](http://www.nationalparks.co.uk)

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About Columbia:

Columbia, the flagship brand of Portland, Oregon-based Columbia Sportswear Company, has been creating innovative apparel, footwear, accessories and equipment for outdoor enthusiasts since 1938. Columbia has become a leading global brand by channeling the company's passion for the outdoors, and an innovative spirit into technologies and performance products that keep people warm, dry, cool and protected year-round. To learn more, please visit the company's website at [www.columbiasportswear.co.uk](http://www.columbiasportswear.co.uk).

About the National Parks:

The UK's 15 National Parks<sup>1</sup> exist to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of their protected landscapes, and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the national parks by the public. The Broads has additional responsibilities to manage its waterways. The Scottish national parks also have a purpose to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area. Within England and Wales, in pursuing these purposes the National Park Authorities have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national park.

The 15 organisations that look after the UK's National Parks are the guardians of some of Britain's most precious and best-loved landscapes. Park authorities have a wide range of responsibilities including conserving wildlife and historic features; improving access; providing education, volunteering and outreach programmes; delivering planning; and helping visitors to make the most of their time in the Park.

1. Brecon Beacons, Broads, Cairngorms, Dartmoor, Exmoor, Lake District, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs, New Forest, Northumberland, North York Moors, Peak District, Pembrokeshire Coast, South Downs, Snowdonia, Yorkshire Dales.

2. No PFCs intentionally used in this product. (May contain trace amounts.)