



**American Express Partners with Team Rubicon to Deploy Veteran  
Volunteers in Support of the Department of the Interior's  
Disaster Mitigation and Response Efforts**

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**LOS ANGELES – December 17, 2015** – Thanks to a two-year, \$300,000 grant from American Express, Team Rubicon is launching a new effort to engage its veteran volunteers in disaster mitigation and habitat improvement projects with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and its land management agencies. Team Rubicon brings together the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams. Since its first mission following the Haiti earthquake in 2010, the organization has responded to more than 100 disasters including Hurricane Sandy, the tornado in Moore, Oklahoma and the Nepal earthquakes.

As the caretaker of 20 percent of America's lands, DOI land management agencies are responsible for disaster mitigation and response efforts for millions of acres of forests, coastlines, rangeland, and more than 400 units of the National Park System. The Bureau of Land Management alone oversees the efforts to respond to more than 13,000 wildfires per season. Recognizing the great threat that natural disasters pose to public lands, the DOI recently delivered a mandate to encourage its agencies to explore new strategies to reduce the threat of natural disasters (such as rangeland fires) and to further public-private partnerships that can expand its capacity for improved disaster mitigation and management.

"On behalf of Interior, I want to thank American Express for their generous donation, which will help provide valuable training for veterans as they engage in partnership with our skilled employees in important disaster mitigation and emergency response efforts nationwide," said U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. "Through innovative public-private partnerships, we are leveraging resources to support veterans, volunteers and entire communities in caring for our public lands."



Using the grant from American Express, Team Rubicon will build capacity to deploy its member base of more than 32,000 volunteers to support the DOI in disaster mitigation.

“As a leading disaster response organization, Team Rubicon recognizes that we must have a trained and engaged volunteer base that is mentally, physically and emotionally ready to respond, should they be called to serve,” said Jake Wood, President & CEO of Team Rubicon. “This partnership will enable us to more frequently engage our volunteers throughout the year in projects and training exercises designed to hone their skills and further prepare them for the types of work they will encounter on a disaster response operation.”

In 2015, American Express [announced funding commitments](#) totaling more than \$12 million to support the DOI’s plan to increase the number of volunteers serving in national parks and public lands and to provide preservation funding to ensure historic places in parks are maintained for current and future generations. American Express is one of the premier partners of the National Park Foundation’s Find Your Park campaign, designed to inspire people of all backgrounds to discover all that a park can be, share their experiences with each other, and support these treasured places and their programs in celebration of the National Park Service’s 2016 Centennial.

“American Express has cultivated community service and civic engagement programs throughout its 165-year history,” said Timothy J. McClimon, president, American Express Foundation. “We are proud to help Team Rubicon mobilize veteran volunteers to assist the DOI in its disaster mitigation efforts. Veteran’s skills, experiences and dedication to public service make them ideally suited for these unique volunteer programs.”

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### **About Team Rubicon**

*Team Rubicon unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams. The disaster relief organization offers veterans the opportunity to continue their service by helping those affected by disasters while regaining a sense of purpose, community and identity. For more about Team Rubicon, visit [www.teamrubiconusa.org](http://www.teamrubiconusa.org). Also see us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*



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