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The National Speleological Society

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National Speleological Society Partners with the International Union of Speleology to Celebrate the International Year of Caves and Karst

NSS Headquarters, Huntsville, AL — The National Speleological Society (NSS) is pleased to announce our role and partnership in the International Year of Caves and Karst. Throughout the year we will be working with numerous organizations from around the world to promote exploration, understanding and protection of fragile caves and karst landscapes. The International Year of Caves and Karst is organized by the **International Union of Speleology**, the worldwide organization of cave and karst explorers, scientists, managers, and educators.

The International Year of Caves and Karst is a worldwide project to teach the public about these critically important and widespread natural resources. Through this partnership we are creating initiatives that support the following:

- Improve public understanding of how caves and karst affect the daily lives of numerous populations
- Promote the importance of caves and karst through sustainable development, particularly in water quality and quantity, agriculture, geotourism/ecotourism, and natural/cultural heritage
- Demonstrate how the study and proper management of caves and karst are critical to global economic and environmental health
- Build worldwide educational capacity through activities targeted on cave and karst science
- Promote awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of cave and karst science and management, and emphasize how interactions between different areas of science and management will be needed increasingly in future research, education, and environmental protection
- Establish durable partnerships to ensure that these activities, goals and achievements continue in the future beyond the International Year of Caves and Karst

The International Year of Caves and Karst begins on January 26, 2021 with an opening ceremony that will be held virtually at 10:00 AM Central time. You can access that live stream **here**. If you cannot attend the opening ceremony, the stream will be recorded for later viewing.

We are excited to work together with these noteworthy **partners** nationally and internationally to raise awareness and promote conservation. Our pillars at the NSS are to explore, to study, and to protect. We believe that these pillars seamlessly align with the goals of the International Year of Caves and Karst. This year we will highlight our initiatives, programs, research, and exploration in conjunction with these global organizations to better educate and inform the world.

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For over 70 years, the National Speleological Society has promoted safe and responsible caving practices, effective cave and karst management, speleology, and conservation. Our members are bound together by their love of caves, their desire to learn about the underground wilderness, and their commitment to protect it for future generations.

NSS membership offers worldwide caver camaraderie, networking opportunities, and access to information about discoveries and developments in caving, speleology, equipment, and techniques through our publications, annual conventions, grottos, internal organizations, and NSS-sponsored projects, expeditions, and surveys.

With 7,000+ members and more than 200 grottos (chapters), the National Speleological Society is the largest organization in the world working every day to further the exploration, study, and protection of caves and their environments, and foster fellowship among cavers.