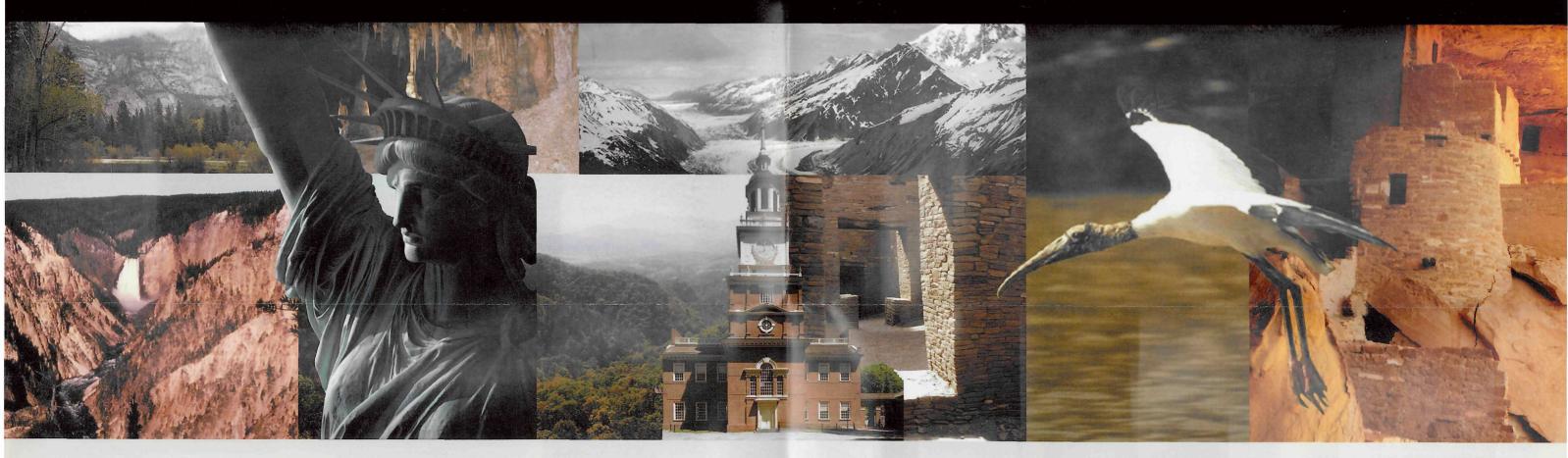
# **U.S. World Heritage Sites**



What do national treasures like the Grand Canyon, Independence Hall, Yellowstone and the Statue of Liberty have in common with the Great Wall of China, Taj Mahal, Galapagos Islands, and the Tower of London?

They are World Heritage Sites. They are such outstanding universally recognized natural and cultural features that they attract admiration and interest in conservation by people worldwide. They are a heritage Americans share with the world.

The mere mention of their names evokes this nation's heritage and universal human values. Independence Hall honors the key American governmental documents whose words have echoed in struggles for independence and self-government

around the world. The Statue of Liberty, a gift of friendship from the French people, is a universal symbol of freedom. Thomas Jefferson's designs for Monticello and the University of Virginia are recognized worldwide as exceptional examples of Neoclassical architecture. The massive fortifications of San Juan, Puerto Rico, recall the epic struggles of Spain with other European powers for empire in the Americas. Mesa Verde, Chaco Culture, Cahokia Mounds and Pueblo de Taos are supreme achievements of Native American civilizations.

And the U.S. sites embrace extraordinary natural wonders in the national parks: the world's tallest trees at Redwood, the Earth's longest underground passageways at Mammoth Cave, North America's largest assemblage of glaciers and peaks above

16,000 feet at Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay, the world's greatest geyser system at Yellowstone. Similar superlatives can be applied to Carlsbad Caverns, Everglades, Glacier, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, Hawaii Volcanoes, Olympic, and Yosemite.

The inscription of these 20 American properties as World Heritage Sites formally recognizes the capacity the U.S. has for conserving the outstanding universal values which merit this international recognition. These U.S. sites are connected to the global community through the contemporary successor to the ancient list of the wonders of the world-the World Heritage List.

# List of U.S. World Heritage Sites



#### **Cahokia Mounds** State Historic Site

Managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, in Collinsville, Illinois, is located on the Mississippi River floodplain, across from St. Louis, Missouri. This site was first inhabited by Indians of the Late Woodland culture about AD 700. The site grew during the following Mississippian period, after AD 900, and by AD 1050-1150, the Cahokia site was the regional center for the Mississippian culture with many satellite communities, villages and farmsteads around it. After AD 1200, the population began to decline and the site was abandoned by AD 1400. In the late 1600s, the Cahokia Indians (of the Illinois confederacy) came to the area and it is from them that the site derives its name. However, it is the building accomplishments and cultural deve Indians that make this site significant. They constructed more than 120 earthen mounds over an area of six square miles, although only 80 survive today. These industrious people moved over an estimated 55 million cubic feet of earth in woven baskets to create this network of mounds and community plazas. Monks Mound, for example, covers 14 acres, rises 100 feet, and was topped by a massive 5,000 square-foot building another 50 feet high. As the largest prehistoric earthen construction in the Americas, Monks Mound is a testament to the sophisticated engineering skills of these people. Additionally, they built several "Woodhenges," large post-circle monuments that appear to have been used as solar calendars, and they also constructed several defensive palisades nearly two-miles long around the central ceremonial precinct. Inscribed in 1982 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (iii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.cahokiamounds.com



## **Chaco Culture**

Chaco Culture preserves a very special chapter in human history and is comprised of several sites-Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument and five units administered by the Bureau of Land Management: Twin Angels, Casamero, Kin Nizhoni, Pierre's Site, and Halfway House. Between AD 850 and 1250, Chaco Canyon was a major center of ancestral Puebloan culture. Many diverse clans and peoples helped to create a ceremonial, trade, and administrative center whose architecture, social organization and community life was unlike anything before or since

Chaco is remarkable for its monumental public and ceremonial buildings and its distinctive architecture. The Chacoan people combined pre-planned architectural designs, astronomical alignments, geometry, landscaping, and engieering to create an ancient urban center of spectacular public architecture. Chaco was connected to over 150 communities throughout the region by engineered roads and a shared vision of the world. After 1250, the people migrated from the area, moving south, east, and west, to join relatives living on the Hopi Mesas, along the Rio Grande, and around Zuni Mountain



## Glacier National Park

Glacier National Park in northwestern Montana on the United States side and Waterton National Park in Alberta on the Canadian side, were designated by law as the world's first International Peace Park in 1932-Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. The park is traversed by the Lewis Range and contains outstanding glacial lakes and alpine scenery and is significant as a habitat exceptionally rich in plant and mammal life.

Glacier National Park has mountain peaks exceeding 10,000 feet and includes nearly 50 glaciers, many lakes and streams. The two parks sustain exceptionally diverse and productive habitat, reflected by the natural populations of large mammals and carnivores, including wolves, bears and mountain lions. Glacier National Park is the only location in the 48 contiquous states where these three major predator populations still occur naturally. The park has a wide variety of wild flowers and wildlife, including bighorn sheep and bald eagles.



#### **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

The Cherokee described this place as Shaconage, meaning "blue, like smoke." One of the largest protected land areas in the eastern United States, Great Smoky Mountains National Park contains an enormous variety of plants and animals. Biodiversity is indeed a watchword here, as scientists from around the world are currently engaged in a monumental effort to find and describe all of the estimated 100,000 forms of life that occur in these ancient mountains. Since the project began in 1998, thousands of new park records have been discovered and hundreds of species new to science have been identified.

While World Heritage status was conferred to the Smokies primarily for the park's natural features, a significant record of human history is preserved here as well. From Native



#### La Fortaleza/San Juan National **Historical Site**

The system of fortifications in San Juan built by the Spaniards in the early 16th century is the oldest European construction in the United States and one of the oldest in the New World. Their main purpose was to protect the entrance of San Juan Bay, ensure that Puerto Rico remained under the sovereignty of Spain, and protect Spanish commerce in the Caribbean basin. The system that defended San Juan includes three major fortifications. The

first, La Fortaleza (1533) or "Palacio de Santa



# Mesa Verde National Park

Mesa Verde National Park, in southwestern Colorado, covers 52,121 acres of finger-like mesas cut by steep-walled canyons. Tucked into sandstone alcoves in these canyons are more than 600 cliff dwellings, for which the park is best known. These stone masonry dwellings were built by the Ancestral Puebloans (previously known as the Anasazi) in the late 12th and 13th centuries and have stood uninhabited for over 700 years. Thousands of prehistoric villages and archeological sites, which usually pre-date the cliff dwellings, dot the tops of the mesas. With the first permanent dwellings, built around AD 550, and the continuous occu-

The cultural sites of Chaco Culture are fragile and irreplaceable, and form a significant part of our global heritage. They are part of the history and traditions of the Hopi, the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico, and the Navajo, who continue to respect and honor them. Inscribed in 1987 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/chcu/

Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park protects an important biological crossroads at the point where the Rocky Mountains reach their narrowest width. The park celebrates the longest undefended contiguous border between two nations and reminds us that nature knows no boundaries. Inscribed in 1995 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (ii) and (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/glac/

American sites to one of the largest and finest collections of Southern Appalachian vernacular architecture to be found anywhere, the park is the keeper of stories that might otherwise be lost. Located within a two-day drive for over half the nation's population, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the country, with over eight million visits annually. Inscribed in 1983 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grsm/



#### Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

several of the volcanoes that formed the Hawaiian islands are still active, providing a place for scientists to study the mysteries of olcanic eruptions and the earth's formation. It is thought that the Hawaiian islands were created when molten rock pushed through the earth's crust, forming volcanoes. Over millions of years, eruptions built up these volcanoes until their tops emerged from the sea as islands. Measured from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean, these volcanoes are among the greatest mountain masses on the earth. Kilauea and Mauna Loa, two of the active volcanoes in the park on the Big Island of Hawaii, usually give ample warning before they spew forth hot lava (molten rock); their eruptions sometimes add new land area to the island. These volcanoes are evidence of the powerful forces of nature. Inscribed in 1987 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (ii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/havo/

#### Independence National **Historical Park**

Independence Hall in Philadelphia can be considered the birthplace of the United States of America, as it was here that the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, the Articles of Confederation uniting the thirteen colonies

were ratified in 1781 and the Constitution setting out the nation's basic laws was adopted in 1787. The Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had its Speaker, Andrew Hamilton, design the building for its state house. Once the grandest public building in the British North American colonies, Independence Hall today is the international symbol of the radical documents that originated there and which have influenced the constitutions of many democratic nations throughout the world. Inscribed in 1979 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (vi). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/ inde/

Catalina" was and continues to be the residence of governors. Fort San Felipe del Morro (1539), perhaps the most distinct fortification, was built at the entrance of the harbor and withstood five major attacks against the colony.

Fort San Cristóbal, which was constructed in 1634 after the devastating assault by the Dutch, protected the city from land attacks and is the largest fortification built by the Spaniards in America. A fourth, smaller fort, Fort San Juan de la Cruz (1606) strategically positioned across from Fort San Felipe del Morro, provided crossfire to the larger fort and helped control the entrance to the harbor. San Juan is one of the few walled cities left in the New World. The forts and three miles of city wall (mostly still standing) are fine examples of 18th century military architecture and will forever be linked to the power and glory of the Spanish Empire, and the beginning of European ascendancy in world affairs. Inscribed in 1983 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (vi). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/saju/



#### Mammoth Cave National Park

Mammoth Cave is the most extensive cave system in the world, with more than 365 surveyed miles of cave passageways, and perhaps as many more still to be discovered. The flora and fauna of Mammoth Cave is the richest cavernicolous wildlife known; of the more than 130 species documented in the cave, 12 are eyeless, unpigmented cave dwellers such as fish, crayfish, beetles, and harvestmen. It is of geological importance due to the 10 million years of caveforming action by the Green River and its tributaries; nearly every type of cave formation is known within this site, and the geological processes involved in cave formation are continuing. Long passages with huge chambers, vertical shafts, stalagmites and stalactites, gypsum "flowers" and "needles", and other natural features of the cave system are all superlative examples of their types.

Outside the cave, the karst topography is superb, with fascinating landscapes, luxuriant vegetation, and abundant wildlife; all of the features of a karst drainage system—vast recharge area, complex network of underground conduits, sinkholes, cracks, fissures, and surface and underground springs—are found within the site. Inscribed in 1981 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (iii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/maca/

pation of the area lasting until the end of the 13th century, Mesa Verde National Park preserves a vital link to North America's prehistoric past. Inscribed in 1978 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/meve/



### Monticello and the University of Virginia

Thomas Jefferson was a man of creative genius whose writings and architecture embody ideals of universal freedom, self-determination and self-fulfillment that continue to inspire humanity. Jefferson gave form to the nascent United States through his philosophical writings, his service to the country, and more literally through his architectural innovation. Between 1784 and 1809 he designed, built and then rebuilt his home, Monticello, perched atop a hill in Virginia's Piedmont. The low, red-brick structure with its Doric portico and white octagonal dome served as a laboratory for Jefferson's landscape, architectural, political, and domestic ideas. Monticello and the University of Virginia were both strongly influenced by Jefferson's study of neoclassical architecture, to which he was introduced during his years as American Ambassador in Paris.

In 1819, Jefferson founded the University of Virginia. His design for the University is extremely significant as a physical architectural embodiment of his social and educational vision and unique view towards providing educational opportunity for all citizens of the new republic. The University Grounds were centered on a central domed Rotunda (modeled on the Pantheon) which served not as a chapel, but as the library, flanked by two parallel facing rows of buildings on either side of a central common space, the 'Lawn.' Each row included five 'Pavilions,' or houses, for each of the University's ten schools. These were occupied by 1-2 small classrooms downstairs and a faculty residence upstairs. The Pavilions were separated along a covered exterior walkway, or 'Colonnade,' by a row of student room Jefferson modeled the design for each of the 'Pavilions' as an "architectural specimen" based on an example from Roman or Neoclassical Architecture, Inscribed in 1987 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (i), (iv) and (vi). For more information, visit www.monticello.org and www.virginia.edu.



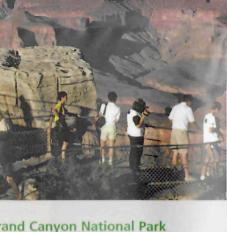
#### **Carlsbad Caverns National Park** Located in the Chihuahuan Desert in southeastern New Mexico west of the Pecos River, Carlsbad Caverns National Park is outstanding in its profusion, diversity and beauty of mineral formations that occur in a network of more than 100 limestone caves. Lechuguilla Cave, in particular, is an underground laboratory where geological processes can be studied in a virtually intact setting.

The park was established to preserve Carlsbad Cavern and numerous other caves within a Permian-age fossil reef. The park contains 109 known caves, including Lechuguilla Cave, the nation's deepest limestone cave (1,604 feet) and third longest (over 112 miles). Carlsbad Cavern, with one of the world's largest underground chambers and countless formations, is also highly accessible, with a variety of tours offered year-round. Established first as a National Monument on October 25, 1923, it was made a National Park on May 14, 1930. Inscribed in 1995 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i) and (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/caca/



#### **Everglades National Park**

The Everglades, or Grassy Waters as the Seminole Indians call it, is a fragile ecosystem that demonstrates the delicate balance within nature and the threats from humankind. It is formed by a river of fresh water that originally varied from depths as little as 6 inches and stretched more than 50 miles wide, flowing slowly across the flat expanse of land at the southern tip of Florida. Sawgrass marshes, pine forests and mangrove islands support a variety of wildlife. In 1947, Everglades National Park was established and now covers more than 1.5 million acres. More than 300 species of birds have been recorded in the park. Several of them, such as herons and earets, were seriously threatened by plume hunters at the turn of the last century. All the park's varied wildlife, including birds, alligators, manatees and Florida panthers are now protected. The terrestrial and aquatic plant and animal communities have adapted to each other and to the climate of wet summers and dry winters. They are, however, dependent on the flow of water which has been severely altered by urban and agricultural development in south Florida beginning at the turn of the last century. Half of the original Everglades has been drained and all water, including deliveries to the national park, is harnessed through canals and floodgates. Scientists and engineers are planning ways to re-establish a more natural flow of water to help meet the area's environmental needs. Inscribed in 1979 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (ii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/ever/



#### **Grand Canyon National Park**

The Grand Canyon is among the earth's great est on-going geological spectacles. Its vastness is stunning, and the evidence it reveals about the earth's history is invaluable. About 65 million years ago in the earth's shifting, a huge area of land was lifted a mile and a half above sea level, forming what is now the Colorado Plateau. For the last 5-6 million years, the Colorado River has been slowly carving its way down through the many layers of rock. The river and its tributaries, together with the erosive forces of rain, snow, heat and cold, have formed a spectacular gorge one-mile deep and at some points 18 miles across. The colorful strata of the canyon walls reveal the rock formations of the earth's evolution from nearly 2 billion years ago. The river continues to carve into the earth's surface. Inscribed in 1979 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grca/

# **U.S. World Heritage Sites**



#### **Olympic National Park**

The 1,400 square miles of Olympic National Park in northwestern Washington state encompass not only snow-capped Mount Olympus, glaciers, alpine meadows and rocky Pacific Mountain coastline, but also one of the few temperate rain forests in the world. The luxuriant forest is created by the warm, moistureladen air from the Pacific, meeting the mountains and dropping more than 12 feet of rain a year. This cool, perpetually damp environment results in a dense, green, jungle-like world. It is home to some of the world's largest conifers, towering 230 feet; moss-enshrouded maple trees with 40 foot spans; and a dense undergrowth of shrubs, wildflowers, ferns and lichen. All are vying for light and room to grow. The cycle of growth and decay is abundantly demonstrated here, for example when new trees sprout up along the decaying trunks of fallen trees. The biological evolution, the ecological variety and the sheer splendor of the coastline, forests and mountains of Olympic make it a special place. Inscribed in 1981 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (ii) and (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/olym/

#### Pueblo de Taos

Located in the valley of a small tributary of the Rio Grande River in northern New Mexico, Pueblo de Taos comprises a group of habitations and ceremonial centers which are representative of a culture largely derived from the traditions of the pre-historic Anasazi Indian tribes who settled near the present borders of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. Pueblo de Taos is thought to have appeared before 1400 and is the best preserved of the pueblos north of the border defined by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848).

Taos Pueblo has been a center of Native-American culture since the 17th century. The Pueblo of Taos, still active today, symbolizes Indian resistance to external rule. The mission of San Geronimo, one of the earliest in New Mexico, was built near Taos Pueblo in the early 17th century. During the 18th century, Taos played an important role in resisting Spanish colonization

As the need for defensive structures relaxed, certain European architectural traits were adapted. These included fireplaces, exterior doors and a more extensive use of windows. Nevertheless, Taos is a remarkable example of a traditional type of architectural ensemble from the pre-hispanic period of the Americas unique to this region. It is representative of a culture which has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change. Inscribed in 1992 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (iv). For more information, visit http://taospueblo.com.



#### **Redwood National Park**

Redwood National Park contains the tallest living trees on Earth. The coast redwood can grow to more than 350 feet. Sitka spruce, hemlock, Douglas-fir, berry bushes, and sword ferns create a multiple canopied understory that towers over visitors. The park's mosaic of habitats include prairie/oak woodlands, mighty rivers and streams, and 37 miles of pristine Pacific coastline. Cultural landscapes reflect American Indian history.

The National Park Service and the California Department of Parks and Recreation cooperatively manage the national park and three state parks as one unit-Redwood National and State Parks-for improved preservation of the resources and the enjoyment of visitors. Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, together with the national park lands contain 45 percent of all the old-growth redwood forest remaining in California. Together these parks are a World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve, protecting resources cherished by citizens of many nations. Inscribed in 1980 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (ii) and (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/redw/





**Statue of Liberty** National Monument Standing at the entrance to New York harbor is a 151-foot statue of a woman holding a book and a raised torch. "Liberty Enlightening the World" was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the United States to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of liberty in the United States and the end of slavery after the American Civil War.

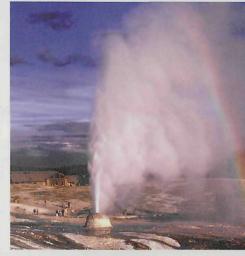
After Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi prefabricated the figure in Paris by molding sheets of copper over a stainless-steel framework, it was shipped to the United States in 214 crates in 1885. The pedestal was designed by Richard Morris Hunt and funded through American fundraising. The sculp-

tor intended his work to be an immense and impressive symbol of human liberty. It inspired the millions of immigrants who came to the United States in the early 20th century seeking freedom and fulfillment of their dreams. It is one of the most universal symbols of political freedom and democracy in the world and is embraced frequently by advocates of self-governance around the globe. Inscribed in 1984 as a Cultural site, under Criteria C (i) and (vi). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/stli/

#### Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay **National Park and Preserve**

Located on the border between Alaska and Canada, the Wrangell-St. Elias and Glacier Bay National Parks, together with the Canadian protected areas Kluane and Tatshenshini-Alsek, contain a huge chain of glaciers, comprising the first bi-national entry on the World Heritage List. Here, gargantuan ice sheets continue to move, shaping and transforming the landscape. It is a phenomenon that has been occurring since the last Ice Age 11,000 years ago.

The icefields and the 2,000 glaciers that radiate from them are fed by 20 feet of snow each year created by the moist Pacific air running into the high coastal mountains. The glaciers grind and scour the rock beneath as they move slowly under their own weight, generally traveling only a few inches or feet a year. Glaciers that work their way to the ocean's edge create gigantic icebergs. Over eons of time, some glaciers have gradually retreated leaving a sculpted landscape of valleys, peaks and lakes. n addition to representing an incredible ongoing geological process, this premier wilderness contains extensive bird, animal and marine mammal habitats where trumpeter swans, Daal sheep, bison, sea lions and much more are protected. Inscribed in 1979 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (ii), (iii) and (iv). Further inscriptions to extend the designation to cover additional protected areas came in 1992 and 1994. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/wrst/ and www.nps.gov/glba/



## Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone, the world's first national park, was established by act of the United States Congress in 1872. As a source of public recreation and renewal, as one of the world's great scientific laboratories, and as an exemplar of a global conservation movement, Yellowstone is a unique natural and cultural resource. Originally set aside to preserve geological and geothermal wonders, such as several hundred geysers, many thousands of hot springs, and a complex volcanic and glacial landscape, Yellowstone's purposes have multiplied and broadened throughout its long life. It quickly became one of the world's foremost wildlife refuges, launching more than a century of ecological research and on-the-job training for generations of managers.

As ecological awareness grew, the park become a testing ground for new approaches in the management of predator-prey systems and native vegetation communities, as well as a leading presence in scientific inquiries into

ecosystem management. Most recently, microbiological treasures from park hot springs have again redefined Yellowstone's role in human society. In a hundred ways, Yellowstone has challenged its stewards and the public with great questions about our relationship with nature. All these additional roles have only heightened the pleasure, enrichment, and education received by ever-increasing numbers of park visitors, who now total in excess of 130 million since the park's creation. Inscribed in 1978 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/yell/

## **Yosemite National Park**

Yosemite is located in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains. The alpine wilderness, groves of giant Sequoia trees and the spectacular valley landscape of Yosemite make it a pre-eminent natural marvel. In articulating the beauty of this place, the naturalist John Muir said, "No temple made with hands can compare to Yosemite."

Yosemite was made by glaciers. During the last Ice Age, the granite bedrock was gouged and shaped into bare peaks, sheer cliffs, rounded domes and huge monoliths. The flat valley floor evolved from a large meltwater lake that slowly filled with sediment. Now flowering meadows fill the valley and dramatic waterfalls surround it. Geological evolution is ongoing here, as lakes continue to silt up. Biological adaptation is evident also in the Giant Sequoia trees which are resistant to fire and for which periodic fires are, in fact, necessary to clear the dense undergrowth and make way for young sequoias. Breathtaking panoramas of rugged scenery and huge variety of plant and animal life are protected in this incomparable valley. Inscribed in 1984 as a Natural site, under Criteria N (i), (ii) and (iii). For more information, visit www.nps.gov/yose/



Location of U.S. World Heritage Sites

The United States established Yellowstone as a national park in 1872 and initiated the worldwide movement to protect such areas as national treasures. One hundred years later, during the Nixon Administration, the United States introduced the concept of the World Heritage Convention to the international community and was the first nation to ratify it. The World Heritage Convention, the most widely accepted international conservation treaty in human history, is the American national park idea being carried out worldwide.



# Voluntary Nominations

All nations signing the World Heritage Convention voluntarily nominate their own sites embracing superlative natural or cultural attributes. Among other requirements, the sites must be authentic and meet at least one of several highly stringent criteria for outstanding universal value. (see Sidebar for Criteria)

Each signatory to the Convention maintains sovereignty over its sites, is responsible for their protection, and pledges to assist others in preservation efforts. Direct authority over individual sites remains with the ownership, whether it be national, state, tribal, territorial or local government or private.

The Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, is responsible for identifying and nominating U.S. sites to the list. Proposed U.S. sites must be either federal property, such as national wildlife refuges and national parks, or sites already designated as national historic landmarks or national natural landmarks. Properties not owned by the Federal Government are nominated only if their owners agree to do so and pledge to protect their properties in perpetuity.

Most U.S. World Heritage Sites are administered by the National Park Service. The others are managed by states, a foundation, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and a Native American tribe.

While maintaining authority over their own parks, the United States and Canada jointly nominated two World Heritage Sites: Waterton-Glacier, and Wrangell-St.Elias/Glacier Bay/ Tatshenshini-Alsek/Kluane. These designations underscore the mutually beneficial interaction among these bordering parks in long-term resource management and in such day-to-day activities as mountain and river rescue operations.

The World Heritage emblem symbolizes the interdependence of cultural and natural properties; the square is a form created by humankind and the circle represents nature, the two being intimately linked, the emblem is round like the world and at the same time it is a symbol of protection.





The Convention is based on key principles. Each nation retains sovereignty and control over its World Heritage Sites. All participating nations pledge to identify and protect their key natural and cultural sites as part of the heritage of humanity and to cooperate with each other to achieve that goal.

By the World Heritage Convention's 30th anniversary in 2002, over 175 nations had ratified the agreement and placed nearly 800 sites on the World Heritage List.

# Additional Information

The World Heritage Committee is a 21-nation body elected from among all those that have ratified the Convention to carry out its program of recognition and mutual assistance. The Committee reviews nominations by member countries to the World Heritage List and designates World Heritage Sites.

Through the World Heritage Fund, the Committee can provide countries requesting assistance with studies, advice, training, and equipment in order to eliminate problems, restore damaged areas, and set up safeguards.

The Committee also places properties on a List of World Heritage in Danger. This action may be taken in view of specific and proven imminent danger to the sites such as man-made factors, natural disasters or civil strife.

The Committee's role, however, is limited to placing sites on both lists and offering technical advice and assistance. Inclusion on the List of World Heritage in Danger imposes no legal requirements, but can alert others of international concern about threats or damage to a site. For more information, visit http://whc.unesco.org/.

## World Heritage Criteria

The World Heritage Convention provides for the protection of those cultural and natural sites deemed to be of outstanding universal value. The World Heritage Committee applies two sets of criteria: one set for cultural sites and another set for natural sites.

Sites nominated under the cultural criteria should:

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; or
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; or
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; or
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building or architec-

tural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; or

(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures). especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or

(vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and liter ary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances and in conjunction with other criteria

cultural or natural); Sites nominated under the natural criteria should:

(i) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of

For more information about the World Heritage Convention, write to: Chief, Office of International Affairs, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20005. The National Park Service web page at http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/heritage.htm also contains additional information.

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life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; or

tion.

- (ii) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial. fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of
- plants and animals; or (iii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; or
- (iv) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conserva-