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# National parks

The Magazine of  
The National Parks  
and Conservation  
Association

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1996

**Assault on Alaska**

Boundary Wars

**Voyageurs at Risk**

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**A Rallying Cry**







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# National parks

Vol. 70, No. 1-2  
January/February 1996

The Magazine of the National Parks  
and Conservation Association



JIM LO SCALZO

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## FEATURES

**24 Boundary Wars**  
A proposal before Congress would reduce the authorized boundaries of Shenandoah National Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park in Virginia—and would hamper the Park Service in acquiring additional land for protection.  
**By Chris Fordney**

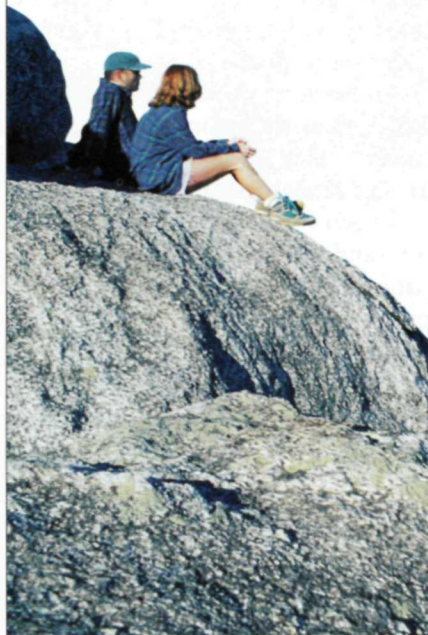
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**By Jim Woolf**



**COVER:** National parks in Alaska are under attack, including Denali, where this moose cow and calf feed. Photo by Darrell Gulin/Dembinsky Photo Assoc.



C.M. GLOVER

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# Crossroads

If environmental standards are compromised, then other health and safety protections could become vulnerable.

**I** SAT NEXT TO President Clinton in the White House cabinet room, watching him take notes as he listened to leaders of 25 environmental groups.

Our agenda was well planned: convey to him the importance of demonstrating his commitment to the environment through vetoing the budget, speaking out on environmental issues, and working with Republicans and Democrats alike to block efforts to roll back 25 years of environmental progress.

We wondered how much he would be able to concentrate on our concerns, given all that was on his mind: the funeral of Israel's slain prime minister and the prospect of closing down the federal government. But he listened intently, replying to each speaker with a sincere response.

After everyone had spoken, he remarked quietly and in a tired voice that America is at a crossroads: would we as a nation be governed by rules that had been formed over generations of give and take, or would we become a nation of tribes, each governed by their own systems of rules, as has occurred in other parts of the world?

His staff signaled that the time was up, but he went on talking about his concern for the environment in the face of third-world economic growth. Then he closed with a challenge. He said that environmental protection is one of many efforts resulting in systems of standards formulated for the health and well-being of us all. If progress on the environment were re-



DUPONT PHOTOGRAPHERS

versed, then other reasonable standards would also be attacked.

Each of us, representing various elements of the environment, felt that he spoke for our particular concerns. I knew he spoke for the parks.

This year Congress has made an unprecedented attempt at turning back

progress on the national parks. Among the bills introduced in the House of Representatives were measures to review parks for closure, eliminate management funds for Mojave, open designated wilderness within Voyageurs to motorized vehicles, shrink Shenandoah's boundaries, and perpetuate concessioners' sweetheart deals.

NPCA is fighting this assault with our Save Our National Parks Campaign, and we need your help. Unless each of us makes it clear to our elected representatives that we value the parks and want them safeguarded for this and future generations, the attack will surely continue.

Just as I sat next to President Clinton to express NPCA's concerns, you too should sit down with your members of Congress and share your commitment to preserving our nation's natural, cultural, and historic heritage. Your representatives are expected to be working out of their district offices during most of January. Please sit down with them on behalf of the parks.

**Paul C. Pritchard,**  
President, NPCA



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## ABOUT NPCA

**WHO WE ARE:** Established in 1919, the National Parks and Conservation Association is America's only private, nonprofit citizen organization dedicated solely to protecting, preserving, and enhancing the U.S. National Park System.

**WHAT WE DO:** NPCA protects national parks by identifying problems and generating the support necessary to resolve them. Through its grassroots efforts, NPCA has developed a base of public involvement that has increased our effectiveness at both local and national levels.

**WHAT WE STAND FOR:** NPCA's mission is to protect and improve the quality of our National Park System and to promote an understanding of, appreciation for, and sense of personal commitment to parklands.

**HOW TO JOIN:** NPCA depends almost entirely on contributions from our members for the resources essential for an effective program. You can become a member by calling our Member Services Department. The bimonthly *National Parks* magazine is among the benefits you will receive. Of membership dues, \$3 covers a one-year subscription to the magazine.

**EDITORIAL MISSION:** The magazine is the only national publication focusing solely on national parks. The most important communication vehicle with our members, the magazine creates an awareness of the need to protect and properly manage the resources found within and adjacent to the national parks. The magazine underscores the uniqueness of the national

parks and encourages an appreciation for the scenery and the natural and historic treasures found in them, informing and inspiring individuals who have concerns about the parks and want to know how they can help bring about improvements to these irreplaceable resources.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE:** A critical component in NPCA's park protection programs are members who take the lead in defense of America's natural and cultural heritage. Park activists alert Congress and the administration to park threats; comment on park planning and adjacent land-use decisions; assist NPCA in developing partnerships; and educate the public and the media about park issues. The Park Activist Network is composed of three groups: Park Watchers, park activists, and park support groups. For more information on the

activist network, contact our Grassroots Department, extension 221. NPCA's success also depends on the financial support of our members. For more information on special giving opportunities, such as Partners for the Parks (a monthly giving program), Trustees for the Parks (\$1,000 and above), bequests, planned gifts, and matching gifts, call our Development Department, extension 131.

**HOW TO REACH US:** By mail: National Parks and Conservation Association, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036; by phone: 1-800-NAT-PARK; by e-mail: natparks@aol.com or npc@npca.org.



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# Campaign

IF YOU'VE BEEN paying attention to what's been happening in Congress lately, you know that the national parks are threatened as never before. In an agenda at odds with the wishes of a majority of Americans, some legislators are intent on weakening, if not destroying, our national park heritage—and NPCA is fighting back.

This special issue is devoted to NPCA's Save Our National Parks Campaign, an effort to mobilize citizen activism in defense of the parks (see "A Rallying Cry," page 45). Since the campaign was launched several months ago, it has already claimed one major victory—the defeat of H.R. 260, the park closure bill—thanks largely to vocal opposition by NPCA and its grassroots activists (see page 12). But continued public pressure is needed to help defeat a number of other anti-park bills, which are the target of NPCA's campaign and the subject of this issue's feature stories:

► Chris Fordney looks at an attempt to freeze the boundaries of Shenandoah National Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park ("Boundary Wars," page 24).

► Kris Capps examines the Alaska congressional delegation's effort to undermine parks in its own state ("Assault on the Last Frontier," page 30).

► Yvette La Pierre describes the controversy over a proposal to expand snowmobile use in Voyageurs National Park ("Divided over Voyageurs," page 36).

Excursions, a regular section about low-impact tourism in the parks, does not appear in this issue so that we could make room for a fourth feature on the significance of urban parks ("In Defense of the Metropolitan Mosaic," page 41).

Sue E. Dodge, Editor





## Feedback on Our Facelift, Wise Use Watch, The Good Old Days, Making Concessions

### Feedback on Our Facelift

What a joy it was to receive the September/October 1995 issue of *National Parks*. It's a wonderful issue...I just can't imagine a more attractive magazine.

**Teresa Glazier**  
Rochester, MN

I thoroughly enjoy the new look. The photos are superb.

**Bill Lemke**  
Waterloo, IA

Yes, I like the magazine's new look! I was an editor for about 15 years and can appreciate your efforts.

**Marion Helwig**  
W. Warwick, RI

### Wise Use Watch

Thank you for your Wise Use Watch column. It's important that we keep an eye on this pseudo-grassroots movement that threatens so much of our environmental progress. Articles on the background of the movement and its connections to extractive industries and powerful politicians such as Rep. Helen Chenoweth (R-Idaho) would be great to see in future issues.

**Tony Porco**  
Columbia, MD

**EDITORIAL REPLY:** Wise Use Watch has been part of NPCA Park News since January/February 1995; it appears on page 22 in this issue. *National Parks* ran a series of articles on the Wise Use Movement in the November/December 1992, January/February 1993, and March/April 1993 issues. Check your library for these back issues.

### The Good Old Days

The article "Congress Takes Aim at National Parks" [News, May/June 1995] raised the question, "Are our parks

preserving the natural beauty with which they were endowed?"

My first visit to Yellowstone was in 1933. A subsequent visit made me sick when I saw the destruction of the park. Handkerchief Pool was no more, many stalls had been built for RVs, and the road was clogged with trucks.

Much of the destruction has resulted from overcrowding. I believe it is very nearsighted to allow ever-increasing numbers of visitors to enter the park and demand more services. These take up parkland and make a city of buildings. Yes, this brings in money for concessions, but is this really what parks are for? Visitors should be admitted only by reservation, obtained before coming to the park entrance. When the park is full for the day, no more permits should be issued.

**Harold Jensen**  
Lyons, KS

Recently I took my young son to Mammoth Cave National Park. I discovered that many of the trips that I went on in my youth are no longer offered because the National Park Service is facing cutbacks. Also, no water or rest rooms were available on the tour. The Snowball dining room was not on the tour since the elevator no longer works. What shocked me most was that our ranger, who had been at the park for some time, had never seen the Snowball dining room.

I have been going to Mammoth Cave since I was eight years old. I am now 38 and the experience is not the same as it was 30 years ago. The interaction and information exchange between the rangers and visitors is not of the quality it was in the past. Let's get the rangers' knowledge level about the park where they are stationed back up to an acceptable level. Maybe it's time to consider giving the tour business to private industry and leave overall park management to NPS.

It's time NPS realizes that the park

belongs to the people and that closing parts of the cave to visitors is not in its best interests. If it's time for visitor fees, then let's do it, but don't close parts of the cave just because of the budget.

**John Knight**  
Bowling Green, KY

### Making Concessions

To improve our National Park System, we need to increase revenues in our national parks through realistic fees for visitors and park concessioners. By increasing revenues, we can improve an inadequate and archaic system without additional tax dollars.

Currently, national park entrance fees (if any) are \$4-5 per car, per week. Compare this to entrance fees at theme parks and sporting events, where fees are \$25 or more per person, per day. National parks are getting only a fraction of the revenue that Universal Studios, the NFL, and Disney are seeing.

Moreover, the fees charged to park concessioners are grossly inadequate! To illustrate, look at the food costs at a professional ball game. The typical arrangement is for the stadium owner to hire a company to run its food operation. These food service companies pay 50 percent of their gross revenues to the stadium owner. Compare this to the fees that our national parks are allowed to charge concessioners. Certainly a great disparity exists!

Let's increase entrance fees at our national parks to \$20 per person, per week, and triple the fees charged to concessioners. By doing this we can improve crowd control, hire more personnel and purchase more equipment for our parks, improve park infrastructure, and increase our parklands. We will benefit by preserving the national parks for us and for posterity while maintaining the viability of our parks despite financial pressure from Washington.

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There has been a lot of discussion lately about the problem of overcrowding in our national parks. The problems arise with the arrival of tour buses. The huge buses dump 50 or more visitors at a time in one area. The visitor centers, bathrooms, and viewing areas become chaos. The buses are also noisy, spew stinking black exhaust, and take up parking space.

Commercial interests have taken over the parks. The lodges and facilities in and near the parks are reserved months in advance by tour operators who pay lower rates and make a handsome profit at the expense of the rest of us. Other concessioners also do very well in the parks, but very little money spent by park visitors is returned to the Park Service.

A lot can be done to relieve overcrowding in the parks. Park fees are ridiculously low. They should be increased to at least \$5 per person in-

stead of per car. This is still less than the price of a movie ticket. The number of tours allowed in a park at one time should be limited. Profits from concessions, including lodges, should be returned to the parks.

It's time to return our parks to the taxpayers. They were not created to be exploited by tour operators and concessioners.

**William and Mary Linz  
Bangor, ME**

**EDITORIAL REPLY:** For more on the status of concessions reform, see the News story on page 12.

**CORRECTION**

Credit for the photo on page 25 of the November/December 1995 issue should have been given to John Dittli.

Write: Letters, NPCA, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Letters may be sent via e-mail to [editorial@npca.org](mailto:editorial@npca.org). Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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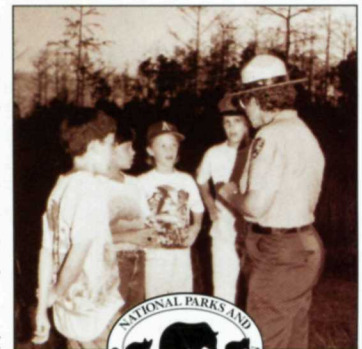
# For Future Generations

Since 1919, NPCA has worked tirelessly to preserve priceless and irreplaceable treasures within the National Park System. One of NPCA's founders, Stephen Mather, and others of his generation had the foresight more than 75 years ago to take action to help save these sites that we all enjoy today.

When NPCA considers the task of preserving the parks for future generations, we know that charitable bequests from wills and other individual estate plans will play a vital role in future funding.

Perhaps you are giving all you feel you can afford on an annual basis but would like to do something extraordinary for your children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. If so, we encourage you to take the time to make a will and include a bequest for NPCA among your other charitable interests.

By remembering NPCA in your will or trust, you can leave a legacy that lasts far beyond your lifetime, enriching the lives of future generations of park lovers.



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# Park News

BY KIM A. O'CONNELL

REHABILITATION

## Agencies Examine Point Reyes Fire

Report addresses impacts on parklands and wildlife.

POINT REYES, CALIF. — Even before an October fire that blazed through Point Reyes National Seashore was brought under control, an interagency team was busy examining burned areas and mapping out the rehabilitation effort.

Ignited on October 3 by an unintended campfire on Mount Vision in adjacent Tomales Bay State Park, the fire spread rapidly to the seashore and to nearby private lands. By the time the fire was contained on October 7, 12,354 acres had burned, including 48 homes and more than 9,000 acres of federally designated wilderness.

Point Reyes Superintendent Don Neubacher immediately convened the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) team, composed of experts from the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Forest Service. Working with California State Parks, Marin County, the California Department of Forestry, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the BAER team produced—within two weeks—a 300-page report outlining post-fire mitigation measures.

“This was a multiagency approach that worked like a fine-tuned machine,” said John Dell’Osso, the public information officer for Point Reyes National Seashore. “We had people looking at soils, hydrology, trails, roads, utilities, vegetation, and wild-



BRUCE FARNSWORTH/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**An interagency team worked quickly to assess damage from a Point Reyes fire.**

life. Every possible topic was covered.”

As one might expect, the fire and subsequent suppression effort significantly altered the natural landscape. Miles of hand-dug and bulldozed firebreaks cut through wilderness areas. Hundreds of burned trees made roads and trails hazardous. Damaged and eroded habitat and turbid streams displaced park wildlife, including several endangered, threatened, candidate, and rare species.

But BAER team members are quick to point out that the fire had positive effects. “Fire is considered a natural part of the landscape,” said Russell Lesko, chief of resources management at Lassen Volcanic National Park and a resource advisor on the BAER team. “The fire went through a significant portion of Bishop pine forest, which is very dependent on fire....The seeds [of the Bishop pine] have to fall in an area

where they can reach the soil. The forest floor was thick with duff, [but the fire] bared the floor so that the seeds could regenerate.”

Seeds are already sprouting in some areas, and the team expects a bumper crop of wildflowers this spring, which may expand the habitat of at least one endangered species, the Myrtle’s silverspot butterfly. Habitat for other species may take longer to recover. “Primarily it’s the temporary destruction of habitat that’s going to result in indirect mortality,” said Scott Stonum, a wildlife specialist for the BAER team and a resource management specialist at Joshua Tree National Park.

The team recommended ongoing monitoring of several species. “The park is going to look at post-burn effects on Point Reyes mountain beavers, because they are strict vegetarians and rely heavily on their forage—without



that, they will starve," Stonum explained. "The [endangered] northern spotted owl also lost some habitat, and this is the southernmost fringe of its habitat. They are already kind of living on the edge."

The BAER team also assessed damage to Point Reyes' cultural resources, which range from archaeological Coast Miwok Indian sites to more recent relics of 19th-century agriculture.

"The worst thing that the fire did to the cultural resources was expose some areas, such as historic dumps," said Erv Gasser, a BAER team leader trainee and a natural resource specialist in the NPS Columbia-Cascades systems support office. "These resources were in the process of being camouflaged with rocks and native vegetation, just to reduce the occurrence of looting."

Tom Gavin, a wilderness manager at Joshua Tree and leader of the BAER team, says the Point Reyes fire was "one of our most complex" because the team had never before worked with private landowners.

"I think the landowners were appreciative that there was an organized

planning approach to the whole rehabilitation," Gavin said. "We tried to put them in control of their own destiny, and we did that through public meetings. They were treated as an educated public."

The fire's aftermath has drawn, not deterred, park visitors. When it was declared safe to do so, people lined up to participate in ranger-led driving tours of the burned areas. The park has also developed informational materials about the fire and the rehabilitation effort.

"We were overwhelmed by the response of local residents," said the park's Dell'Osso. "These people still cared about what was happening in their backyard."

NPCA applauds the quick and thorough response of park staff and the BAER team. "These folks did a tremendous job both during and after the fire," said NPCA Pacific Regional Director Brian Huse. "At a time when NPS is fielding some heavy criticism on several fronts, the BAER team's effort reflects the very best in National Park Service management."

## LEGISLATION

## Concessions Battle Part of Budget War

*"Reform" language perpetuates monopolies in parks.*

WASHINGTON, D. C. — At press time, President Clinton and Congress were still working to resolve their differences over the massive budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 2491), aimed at eliminating the federal deficit by 2002. Among several provisions targeting parks and the environment, the bill includes a measure to perpetuate concessioner monopolies in the National Park System.

Utah Rep. James Hansen (R) worked with the park concessions industry to craft the measure, which would continue the costly taxpayer subsidies enjoyed by businesses that provide food, lodging, and other services to park visitors. Under the reconciliation measure, park concessioners would continue to reap huge profits during their up-to-30-year contracts, while paying a negligible percentage of those profits to the federal government in fees. Potential competitors would continue to be locked out, and fees would go to the Treasury, not to the parks.

The measure also eliminates the National Park Service's authority to ensure reasonable prices in parks, allowing concessioners to charge visitors whatever they wish. And it continues the mounting taxpayer liability for concessioner-financed building improvements within parks. In fact, the cost to the taxpayer would be even greater than it is under the current concessions policy law.

"This bill could harm the parks and rob the taxpayers for the next 30 years," said NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard.

As chair of the House subcommittee on national parks, Hansen has blocked action on an alternative concessions bill, sponsored in the House by Rep. Jan Meyers (R-Kans.) and in the Senate by Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah), that offers real reforms. Strongly

## Committee Drops Park Closure Bill

The House Budget Committee handed NPCA and other conservationists a major victory on October 25 when it removed the "park closure" bill, H.R. 260, from the contentious budget reconciliation package.

The controversial bill, which called for the creation of a commission to determine which units of the National Park System should be closed, was added to the package by House Resources Committee leaders only hours after it had been soundly defeated on the House floor.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, a strong opponent of H.R. 260, wrote a personal note to NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard commending NPCA's work on the issue. Pritchard in turn acknowledged and thanked the NPCA members and other citizen activists who wrote or

called their members of Congress in opposition to the bill.

"The groundswell of outrage against a bill that blatantly disregarded the wishes of the American people was a key factor in defeating this back-door attempt to close national parks," Pritchard said.

Pritchard also praised Rep. Bill Richardson (D-N.Mex.) for leading the fight in Congress against the legislation. "We can take down the 'For Sale' signs at our parks, as there will not be a commission that will close, privatize, or sell our parks to the highest bidder," Richardson said. "If Congress wants to help the national parks, let us consider concessions reform and entrance fee legislation."

Richardson has provided for such reforms in his legislation, the Common Sense National Park System Reform Act (H.R. 2181).



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# REGIONAL REPORT

News Briefs from NPCA's Regional Offices

## ALASKA **Chip Dennerlein, Regional Director**

► The growing popularity of Katmai National Park has placed undue pressures on the park's brown bears. In September, natural resource managers—including Dennerlein and representatives of the state of Alaska, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and Native, Canadian, and Russian interests—participated in an interagency workshop to examine standards for bear watching. "If we want to continue to view these magnificent creatures, we must act now," Dennerlein said.

## HEARTLAND **Lori Nelson, Regional Director**

► NPS officials at Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota are considering adding another campground to the park. The new campground would be built near Cottonwood Campground on the park's south unit and would include horseback riding facilities. NPCA is reviewing this proposal and is urging the Park Service to address safety issues and assess whether the campground is necessary. NPCA notes that visitation to the south unit appears to be declining and that the proposed site lies on a floodplain.

## NORTHEAST **Eileen Woodford, Regional Director**

► A year after they proposed widening part of Minute Man National Historical Park's battle road, the Massachusetts Highway Department and the town of Lexington have reached a settlement with NPS. The Park Service—with NPCA's support—recommended an alternative that would protect the park from increased congestion. Under the settlement, the highway department will make modifications to the road that will redress public safety problems but not degrade park resources. In addition, the state will transfer surplus land outside the park to NPS. NPCA again thanks its members, whose letters prompted this settlement.

## PACIFIC **Brian Huse, Regional Director**

► A new bill (H.R. 2528) would extend the permits for 62 private cabins in the Mineral King Valley area of Sequoia National Park in California. When it acquired Mineral King from the U.S. Forest Service in 1978, after plans by the Disney Corporation to develop a ski resort in the area were quashed, NPS agreed to renew permits for the lives of the existing permit holders, who were paid for their property. Upon the deaths of the permittees, the cabins are to be turned over to NPS for the development of more visitor facilities. Under H.R. 2528, permits for current residents and their heirs would be extended in perpetuity. NPCA says that the bill extends benefits for a few vacation homes at the park's expense.

✍️ **TAKE ACTION:** On November 14, the House parks subcommit-

continued

advocated by NPCA and the Park Service, this legislation would require competitive bidding for contracts, increase franchise fees, and ensure that some revenue is returned to the parks.

The reconciliation package also contains a provision that would increase park entrance fees for visitors. Fees—now usually \$5 a car—would increase to up to \$6 a person. But park visitors should not be charged higher fees, NPCA argues, until concessioners pay their fair share.

When he ended the budget stalemate that shut down the federal government for a week in November, President Clinton vowed that he would not sign a reconciliation bill unless significant changes were made regarding Medicare, education, and the environment. NPCA is strongly urging the congressional leadership to accept the president's recommendations, including real concessions reform.

## LITIGATION

# Legal Decisions Favor Yellowstone

*Bears and bison protected; mine owner held accountable.*

YELLOWSTONE N.P., WYO. — In three separate lawsuits regarding Yellowstone National Park, decisions have been made that will benefit the park's endangered grizzly bears and its pristine waters and ensure some safety for its famed bison herd.

► In October, Federal Judge Paul Friedman ruled that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly bear recovery plan is not scientifically sound and does not comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NPCA and 19 other conservation groups were plaintiffs in the lawsuit challenging the plan, which was being used to justify a recommendation that the bears in and around Yellowstone be stripped of their endangered status and protections under ESA.

The judge rejected the plan's criteria for determining whether the griz-





MICHAEL FRANCIS

**A judge's recent ruling halts efforts to delist Yellowstone's grizzly bears.**

zly is recovered. According to the decision, the plan failed to assess several factors that directly affect grizzly bear recovery: the destruction or modification of habitat, the threat of disease, human-bear conflicts stemming from bear predation on livestock, and geographic and genetic isolation. Thanks to the ruling, efforts to delist the Yel-

lowstone grizzly bear population will be halted.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service must now...reassess the health and vitality of these grizzly bear populations in a scientifically and legally credible fashion," said Doug Honnold, staff attorney for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, which filed the suit.

► In another October decision, Federal Judge Jack Shanstrom ruled that Crown Butte Mines and its parent companies are in violation of the Clean Water Act at their New World Mine site outside of Yellowstone. The decision mandates that the companies clean up existing water pollution at the site caused by historic and recent mining activities. The judge rejected the mine owners' arguments that acid drainage at the site was due to "natural" causes.

The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund filed the lawsuit on behalf of a coalition of environmental groups.

► Some progress has also been made toward protecting from slaughter Yellowstone bison that wander outside the park. Since 1985, more than 1,500 bi-

son that left the park have been killed to appease regional livestock officials who claim that bison could transmit brucellosis to domestic livestock. Brucellosis is a bacterium that can cause abortions in cattle, although transmission of the disease from bison to cattle in the wild has never been proven.

Early last year, the state of Montana filed suit against the departments of Interior and Agriculture, charging that the National Park Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) were ignoring the purported threat bison pose to livestock. In November, the three parties settled the lawsuit, reaching an agreement that will allow bison to wander onto some public lands unmolested. However, bison that roam onto other public or private lands in Montana will still be subject to slaughter, including bison that may not be infected with brucellosis.

"The agreement is a step in the right direction, but public pressure is still needed to protect bison from unneeded slaughter," said NPCA Rocky Mountain Regional Director Terri Martin.

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REGIONAL REPORT *continued*

tee held a hearing on H.R. 2528. Write to your representative (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515), asking him or her to oppose this legislation.

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST** Terri Pauly, Acting Reg. Director

► Mount Rainier National Park in Washington currently has one climbing concession that offers guided tours up the mountain. NPS is expected to release an environmental assessment for another climbing concession sometime this winter. NPCA is asking the Park Service to address several key issues associated with climbing, including: environmental degradation in higher alpine areas, carrying capacity, the climbing permit process, and the necessity of another concession. NPCA says that the concession plan must fit in with a general management plan now being prepared.


**ROCKY MOUNTAIN** Terri Martin, Regional Director

► The Jackson Hole Airport Board has released its environmental assessment for Jackson Hole Airport in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. NPCA, the Jackson Hole Alliance, and NPS find the plan egregious in its utter failure to safeguard park values. The plan calls for shifting the airport runway 1,200 feet deeper into the park and for the construction of 638-foot emergency stopways on either end of the runway. Airlines could figure these stopways into overall runway length and use them to justify more and bigger airplanes. The plan fails to propose mitigative measures such as restricting flights over the park and limiting daily flights.

**SOUTHEAST** Don Barger, Regional Director

► A transplanted Texas cougar has mated with a Florida panther and given birth to two kittens. Last February, NPCA covered the costs of transporting the female cougars—genetically related to the endangered panther—to Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve as part of an interbreeding plan to diversify the panther's nearly bankrupt gene pool. Unfortunately, another cougar, pregnant with three kittens, was struck by a car and killed in October. Despite this, NPCA is heartened that the panther has taken one important step back from the brink of extinction.

**SOUTHWEST** David Simon, Regional Director

► Pecos National Historical Park in New Mexico has a new draft general management plan. NPCA generally supports NPS's preferred alternative, which calls for relocating buildings away from sensitive ruins and for new visitor facilities for the 5,000 acres added to the park in 1990. It also calls for rerouting the portion of New Mexico Highway 50 that now bisects the Pigeon's Ranch unit of the park, where the 1862 Civil War battle of Glorieta Pass was fought.  **TAKE ACTION:** Urge the state of New Mexico to support the relocation of Highway 50. Write to Secretary Pete K. Rahn, Highway and Transportation Department, P.O. Box 1149, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149.

## MANAGEMENT

**South Dakota Parks Transfer on Hold**

Governor's plan stalls before Senate resources committee.

A proposal by South Dakota Gov. William Janklow (R) to give his state control over four national parks appears to be going nowhere.

Badlands and Wind Cave national parks, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, and Jewel Cave National Monument would no longer be managed and protected by the National Park Service under Janklow's proposal. Prompted by the governor's plan, Sen. Larry Pressler (R-S.Dak.) introduced a bill in August (S. 1185) that would turn over the management of these parks—excepting Badlands—to the state's Game, Fish, and Parks Department for a ten-year period.

Janklow contends that state management would relieve some of the financial pressure placed on the national parks, which have been targeted for severe budget cuts. However, despite the presumed support of a Congress that has worked to diminish federal authority, the measure has stalled. At press time, the bill was still awaiting action by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

NPCA attributes the delay to a lack of public support for the plan, which has several inconsistencies. At a public meeting in September in Rapid City, South Dakota, hosted by Rep. Tim Johnson (D-S.Dak.), opposition to the proposal was nearly unanimous.

The plan and the attendant legislation purport to save taxpayer dollars but require the federal government to pay South Dakota up to 100 percent of the parks' fiscal 1994 budgets. NPCA also questions the fiscal sense of entrusting these lands to the state parks department, which manages its parks at a higher cost per visitor and per acre than NPS does. In addition, Janklow criticizes proposals to raise fees at national parks, while stating that he "might



need the latitude to supplement [federal] funds with certain user fees."

NPCA is concerned that the state would base its national park management model upon state park management practices, which allow recreational hunting and timber harvesting. For example, the plan states that joint management of the bison herds within Wind Cave National Park and nearby Custer State Park could result in "new revenues" to offset operating costs.

"If this plan were adopted and then copied, we could eventually have 50 different park management policies," said NPCA Heartland Regional Director Lori Nelson, who spoke at the Rapid City meeting. "These parks are not to be managed for the sole benefit of South Dakota. They are managed by the National Park Service for the benefit of all Americans."

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to your senators (U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510), urging them to oppose S. 1185 if it comes up for a vote.

#### ADJACENT LANDS

## NPS Steps in To Protect Cave

Land managers ensure safeguards for Carlsbad Caverns.

CARLSBAD, N. MEX. — By demanding a seat at the negotiating table, the National Park Service has strengthened the park protection elements of a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plan to allow drilling near Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

As part of a proposed settlement with Yates Energy Corporation, BLM agreed to allow oil and gas drilling at two locations that could affect Carlsbad's Lechuguilla Cave—the nation's deepest, and arguably most spectacular, cave. A 1994 record of decision for an environmental impact statement on drilling near Lechuguilla, coupled with congressional establishment of a "cave protection zone," forbade the company

## NEWS UPDATE

### ► UTAH WILDS BILL DELAYED:

When the Utah congressional delegation introduced its Utah Public Lands Management Act last summer, it hoped to push the legislation through Congress quickly. But after moving rapidly through the appropriate House committees, the bill is languishing before a more moderate Senate, which is likely to require significant changes.

The bill would set aside only 1.8 million acres of redrock canyon country in Utah as "wilderness" and allow dams, roads, and other new development. President Clinton has vowed to veto the bill if it crosses his desk. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has postponed several scheduled votes on the bill, and bill sponsor Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah) has admit-

ted that the holdup is because of concerns about development.

"Members of Congress are feeling the grassroots uprising against the bill across the country," said NPCA Rocky Mountain Regional Director Terri Martin. "But citizens who love Utah's redrock country must remain vigilant."

### ► REFERENDUM REJECTED:

On Election Day, the citizens of Washington State voted against Referendum 48, which required that private landowners whose property is affected by a government action be compensated by the governing body. NPCA worked to defeat this referendum, contending that this "takings" threat would have inhibited the ability of governments to enforce zoning and pollution laws.

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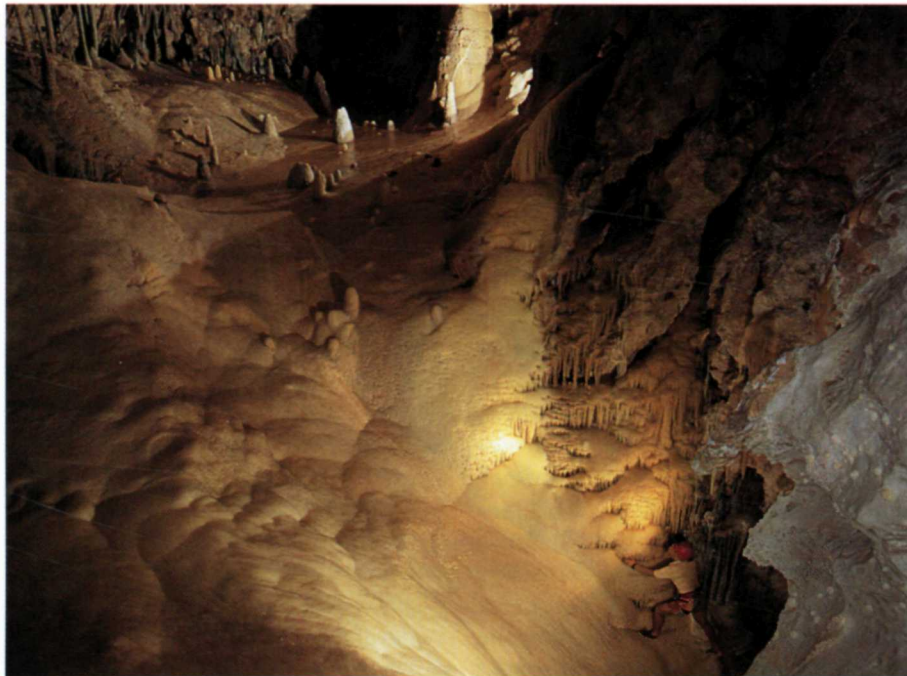
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### Carlsbad's Lechuguilla Cave has again been protected from oil and gas drilling.

from drilling directly on some oil and gas leases. Instead, drilling from outside the zone was required. The company sued BLM for compensation, but after meeting last September, the two parties negotiated a settlement.

In addition to allowing drilling outside the cave protection zone, BLM agreed to pay the company \$2 million in compensation. The agency also agreed to drop "enhanced stipulations" required in the record of decision that were intended to increase protections to Lechuguilla. BLM did not include the Park Service, which was a formal cooperating agency for the preparation of the environmental impact statement, in the settlement negotiations.

Upon learning of the deal with Yates Energy, the Park Service and NPCA requested an opportunity "to strengthen the park protection dimension of the proposed settlement," according to park Superintendent Frank Deckert.

Deckert and NPS geologic and cave resource specialists met with BLM officials in October. BLM agreed to place cement around casings (protective pipes that surround drilling wells) to safeguard the cave from flows of oil—which could pollute park resources—and natural gas, which could asphyxiate visitors or cause explosions. BLM will also require use of steel storage

tanks to protect park aquifers and caves from leaks and contamination.

The agency and BLM also agreed to research the future use of three-dimensional seismic surveys, which aid in the selection of drilling locations by identifying significant cave features that must be avoided.

"Although NPCA was extremely concerned about the initially poor communication between BLM and NPS, we are pleased that the issue has been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties," said NPCA Southwest Regional Director David Simon.

#### LEGISLATION

## Jet Boats Make Waves

*Bill advocates motorized craft on wild and scenic Snake River.*

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Legislation that would give jet boats nearly unlimited access to the 71-mile wild and scenic stretch of the Snake River has been introduced in both houses of Congress.

The bill's sponsors, Idaho's Republican Sens. Larry Craig and Dirk Kemp-





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A new bill would allow a sharp increase in jet boats on the scenic Snake River.

WILDERNESS

## Arts Center Places Wilderness at Risk

Plan for Cumberland Island lacks limits on vehicle use.

ST. MARYS, GA. — Last summer, NPCA was confident that a proposal to create an arts center on Cumberland Island National Seashore had been adequately revised to protect park wilderness. However, the latest draft leaves wilderness at risk.

Nearly a year ago, the nonprofit Plum Orchard Center for the Arts on Cumberland Island drafted an agreement with the National Park Service to renovate the park's century-old Plum Orchard mansion for use as an artists' retreat. The plan called for 30 artists and staff and up to 300 additional guests for four events a year, as well as the almost unlimited use of two cars. Access to the mansion for other park visitors, however, would be limited.

From the first, NPCA had concerns that increased traffic and visitation would impair the federally designated wilderness area that surrounds the mansion. Under the 1964 Wilderness Act, vehicles are prohibited in wilderness areas, with few exceptions.

Along with the Georgia chapter of the Sierra Club, the Georgia Conservancy, and the Wilderness Society, NPCA began to work with the Park Service to revise the unacceptable parts of the plan. By mid-summer, NPS had assured NPCA that a new draft would guarantee public access and restrict the use of automobiles. But an examination of the latest version shows that important provisions have been changed.

The 75-year agreement now allows for automobile use in four situations, three of which NPCA finds acceptable: the vehicles may be used in emergencies; as a "minimum tool," as defined by the Wilderness Act, to manage and protect the wilderness area; and when the center's boat is inoperative. But the proposal also allows the center "programmatic use" of the vehicles when

thorne and Reps. Wes Cooley (R-Ore.), Helen Chenoweth (R-Idaho), and George Nethercutt (R-Wash.), have ignored an eight-year public planning process aimed at striking a balance for recreational use of the Snake River. The measure (S. 1374/H.R. 2568) locks in current levels of jet boat activity on the river, which runs along the Idaho-Oregon border.

The proposal threatens to subvert the planning process and establishes what Ric Bailey of the Hells Canyon Preservation Council characterizes as a "national motorized area." Bailey, who has guided dories on the Snake for 17 years, has had his boat damaged in a close call with a jet boat and has witnessed a near drowning and many kayakers swamped by jet boat wakes. Despite user surveys that identify concurrent use by motorized and non-motorized recreationists as the most serious problem on the Snake Wild and Scenic River, the bill declares that this "shall not be considered... a conflict."

A free-flowing portion of the Snake, which cuts one of the continent's deepest gorges in Hells Canyon, became part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1975. The legislation that designated the Snake a wild and scenic river also established Hells Canyon as a national recreation area under the care of the U.S. Forest Service. The measure further required that the agency "con-

trol" the use and number of motorized craft in the area. More than 20 years later, jet boat use has increased fivefold and remains virtually unlimited while the use of float boats is subject to a limited number of permits.

NPCA has long advocated the transfer of Hells Canyon to the National Park Service for more careful management of the area's sensitive natural and historical resources, which include 2,000-year-old petroglyphs. NPCA's 1988 *National Park System Plan* evaluated Hells Canyon as a "dramatically scenic natural area, one of the world's wonders. It has always qualified for national park status."

Terri Pauly, acting regional director of NPCA's Pacific Northwest office, says that the association has participated in the planning process for the Snake River to preserve the park-like qualities of the Hells Canyon area.

"If it passes, the Snake River jet boat bill will set a dangerous precedent for the region and for the Wild and Scenic Rivers System," Pauly said.

—M. Katherine Heinrich

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to your members of Congress, urging that they oppose the jet boat bill and uphold the principles of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Addresses: U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

JEFF GNASS



travel by boat is either "unsafe or impractical." NPCA says that this imprecise language could be interpreted in innumerable ways, with potentially harmful effects on the wilderness.

"As currently described in the plan, the use of automobiles is a matter of convenience, and the use of vehicles in the wilderness for convenience is unacceptable," said NPCA Southeast Regional Director Don Barger.

The plan could also allow the transference to arts center guests of certain incompatible uses that were granted to private landowners at the time of the wilderness designation.

"Commendably, NPS is experimenting with partnerships as a creative management tool," Barger said. "But such partnerships need to be carefully crafted to protect the resources, such as the Cumberland Island wilderness."

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to Superintendent Rolland Swain (Cumberland Island National Seashore, P.O. Box 806, St. Marys, GA 31558), urging him to protect the wilderness. Ask to be told of future plans.

## MANAGEMENT

# City Claims Land at Klondike Gold Rush

Park Service concerned about development of historic areas.

SKAGWAY, ALASKA — The city of Skagway has once again set its sights on lands within Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park.

Klondike Gold Rush is managed cooperatively by the city, the state, and the National Park Service. The park commemorates the famous gold rush of 1897-98, when approximately 30,000 prospectors settled in Skagway, lured by the promise of gold in the Klondike River. Historic structures in Skagway, as well as the Chilkoot and White Pass trails, treacherous routes that led miners into the Yukon Territory, are preserved in the park.

Under an Alaska state law, cities and boroughs can request possession of

## MARKUP

### Key Park Legislation

#### BILL

**National Park System Reform  
H.R. 260**

#### PURPOSE

Establishes a review commission to consider which national park units should be removed from the system. NPCA opposed.

#### STATUS

On October 25, the House Budget Committee removed H.R. 260 from the omnibus budget reconciliation package.

**Budget Reconciliation  
H.R. 2491**

Includes a measure that perpetuates taxpayer subsidies to the park concessions industry. Raises entrance fees without making concessioners pay their fair share. NPCA opposes.

At press time, President Clinton and Congress were working out their differences over H.R. 2491, which Clinton said he would not sign unless changes were made to protect the environment.

**R.S. 2477 Claims  
H.R. 2081 / S. 1425**

Allows virtually every traveled route to qualify as R.S. 2477 rights-of-way across parks, public lands, and private property. NPCA opposes.

H.R. 2081 was approved by the House subcommittee on national parks on October 31. S. 1425 is awaiting action before the Senate resources committee.

**South Dakota Parks  
S. 1185**

Transfers management of Wind Cave National Park, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, and Jewel Cave National Monument from the Park Service to the state of South Dakota. NPCA opposes.

S. 1185 is awaiting action before the parks subcommittee of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

NPCA is working on 30 bills.

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certain lands in state or federal ownership. Skagway has selected more than 1,000 acres of land within the park, including areas around Dyea, a historic townsite where visitors can still see ruins and a cemetery; the Chilkoot trailhead; and Sheep Camp, several miles up the Chilkoot trail.

Previous attempts by the city to acquire the lands have been denied by the state, which has jurisdiction over these parts of the park. But a new generation of state officeholders has NPS—and NPCA—worried that the city may at last be successful in its appeal.

"If the city acquires the Dyea flats, it wants to build an off-road-vehicle track, a three-hole golf course, and summer homes, a lot of things that are just not compatible with what the Park Service considers the highest and best use of the land," said Clay Alderson, Klondike Gold Rush superintendent.

Alderson points out that, in addition to their historic value, the lands and waterways in question are vital to salmon, bears, and a diversity of plants.

"We must remind decision makers that Klondike Gold Rush is largely responsible for Skagway's booming tourism and that the natural and historic resources that attract tourists must be protected," said NPCA Alaska Regional Director Chip Dennerlein.

At the one public meeting held on the issue so far, sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the lands within the park. A second public comment period is under way, and both the park and the regional NPS office have expressed their concerns about city ownership to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The Alaska state parks office and the state historic preservation office have also weighed in on the city's proposal.

"We recommended that some of the lands within the [park] be retained by the state and that other lands, if conveyed, would have a covenant, which would have protective measures for the historic resources," said Judy Bittner, the state historic preservation officer.

Jim Stratton, Alaska state parks director, says the effect of a land transfer "depends on what mitigative measures would be in place."

**TAKE ACTION:** To support the continued protection of the unique historical resources of Klondike Gold Rush, write to John Shively, Director, Department of Natural Resources, 400 Willoughby Ave., Juneau, AK 99801-1724. Oppose the conveyance of parkland to the city of Skagway.

LEGISLATION

## R.S. 2477 Bill Moves Forward

*Roads may crisscross parks and private and Native lands.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On October 31, the House subcommittee on national parks approved a bill to allow a snarl of roads and highways across parks and other lands.

The Revised Statute 2477 Rights-of-Way Settlement Act (H.R. 2081), sponsored by Rep. James Hansen (R-Utah), would give states, counties, groups, and individuals free rein to assert highway rights-of-way across virtually any tract of land. Because of the bill's extremely lax standards, major roads could be bulldozed through national parks, wilderness areas, wildlife refuges, national forests, Native or tribal lands, and even private property.

R.S. 2477 is a one-sentence provision in an 1866 law that granted rights-of-way for the construction of highways across public lands not reserved for other uses. The statute was repealed in 1976, but claims of preexisting rights-of-way have soared. Under H.R. 2081, footpaths, dogsled routes, or lines on a map could qualify as preexisting rights-of-way.

Hansen's home state of Utah has asserted more than 5,000 rights-of-way claims in just seven counties. If paved, these routes would forever alter Utah's scenic landscape, which includes Arches and Zion national parks.

Under Hansen's bill, claimants must file only a simple notice of their asserted right-of-way with the Department of the Interior. If it chooses to reject any claim, Interior must do so

WISE USE WATCH

## COUNTY THREATENS NPS WITH ARREST AT GRAND CANYON

National Parks is tracking the activities of the Wise Use Movement, a coalition working to roll back environmental protections.

The growing county supremacy movement has pressed its inky thumbprint on Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona. Pressure from the state's Mohave County has forced the National Park Service to back down from plans to remove mining tram towers from potential wilderness in the western part of the park. Removal of the towers was part of a plan to restore the area near a bat cave that was once mined for guano.

Objections from local tribal and rafting interests had already held up an environmental assessment for the project for months when the county issued its threat. The county stated that if the Park Service removed the towers, it would be transgressing a local land-use ordinance, and NPS employees would be subject to arrest. Seeking to avoid a confrontation that might damage relations with the county, NPS decided not to proceed with removal of the towers at this time.

This kind of intimidation is becoming more and more common in the West because of the county supremacy movement, which encourages counties to pass ordinances that claim to supersede federal authority. Emphasizing that the county has no legal jurisdiction over park management, NPCA is urging the Park Service to proceed with removal of the towers.

(For more on the county movement, see Wise Use Watch in the March/April 1995 issue of *National Parks*.)



within two years of its filing. The entire burden of proof is on the federal government, which must file suit to defend Interior's objection.

In addition, the bill makes it more likely that rights-of-way will be granted across private land, despite the objections of owners and without compensation to them. If a right-of-way is claimed on private land, that landowner would have to incur the burden of proof and the expense of instituting legal action to oppose construction.

**TAKE ACTION:** Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) has sponsored a Senate version of the bill (S. 1425). Write to your members of Congress (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510), urging them to vote against H.R. 2081 and S. 1425.

## RECOGNITION NPCA Presents 1995 Awards

*Water resources, Civil War, and archaeology promoted.*

Last fall, NPCA was pleased to honor the 1995 recipients of three of its most prestigious awards, named for ardent park advocates Stephen Tyng Mather, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Freeman Tilden.

► NPCA presented the Stephen Tyng Mather award to Dan Kimball, chief of the National Park Service's Water Resources Division. In honor of the first director of the Park Service, the award recognizes a federal employee who has demonstrated resourcefulness in promoting good stewardship.

Kimball began his career in the

1970s as an environmental scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency and served as the regional hydrologist for the Office of Surface Mining for three years, before joining the Water Resources Division in 1984. He became chief in 1993.

Kimball has been involved in many park protection efforts. He played a major role in efforts to limit damage to Grand Canyon National Park from Glen Canyon Dam, and he is working on the environmental impact statement for the proposed gold mine outside Yellowstone National Park.

► The winner of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas award, Pinkie Lemon, had already spent 30 years in the work force when she began devoting considerable time and energy to Richmond National Battlefield Park, in the Virginia city she has called home for 76 years.

Lemon worked to preserve the ten Civil War battlefields around the former Confederate capital and helped to create the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site in Richmond.

The award's namesake, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, was largely responsible for the creation of world-famous Everglades National Park.

► The 1995 Freeman Tilden award went to Ray Morris, chief of interpretation at Fort Frederica National Monument in Georgia. The award, named for the "father of interpretation," recognizes park employees who find creative ways to educate park visitors.

Morris developed the Archaeological Education Center at the park, designed to teach fourth and fifth graders about archaeology, history, science, and preservation principles and ethics. Children participate in a mock dig using an already disturbed archaeological site that has been deposited with undocumented 18th-century artifacts.



**Dan Kimball, NPS chief of water resources, wins the Mather award.**

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Shenandoah was created more than 50 years ago when Virginia condemned land for the park—an action still resented by some.

PHOTO BY DAVID MUENCH

# Boundary Wars

BY CHRIS FORDNEY

A proposal before Congress would reduce the authorized boundaries of Shenandoah National Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park in Virginia—and would hamper the Park Service in acquiring additional lands for protection.



**M**OUNTAINEER Sporting Goods seems like a typical small-town shop for hunting and fishing supplies, with its rack of rifles, ancient drink cooler, cluster of ruggedly dressed men, cloud of tobacco smoke, and an old black dog.

But this store on the main street of Madison, Virginia, population 293, is much more. It is an unofficial meeting place for people in surrounding Madison County who share an opinion of nearby Shenandoah National Park—one made clear in the shouted response to a visitor who brings up the subject: “Damn the park!”

Driven by hostility toward the park, these rural folk have helped to organize a network of aggressive property-rights groups in Virginia that have taken aim at the National Park Service (NPS) and opposed the effort to save unprotected Civil War battlefields. They have drawn members from the wealthy Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., to the isolated mountain hollows, forged links with out-of-state property-rights groups and the wise use movement, and pushed an anti-park agenda both in the Virginia statehouse and on Capitol Hill. They have found a friend in Virginia’s conservative Republican governor, George Allen, who has appointed some of their most outspoken

members to state boards with influence over conservation policy.

Last spring, the goals of these groups found expression in a bill introduced by Rep. Thomas J. Bliley, Jr., (R-Va.), the powerful chairman of the House Commerce Committee, that would freeze the borders of Shenandoah National Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park to land they now own. The bill would vastly shrink maximum authorized boundaries that

**The property rights agitation is a backlash to efforts of park managers to reach out to their neighbors and deal with suburban development close to their borders.**

have stood for more than half a century and require congressional approval before land could be donated to these parks. Supporters of the bill say it would allow public comment on land donations that affect other landowners, shrink the local tax base, and create additional federal land maintained by taxpayers. At this writing, Bliley’s bill had passed the House of

Representatives by a vote of 377 to 31 and was awaiting action in the Senate, where its prospects were said to be less certain. Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) has said he supports the bill and may sponsor a Senate version. Sen. Charles S. Robb (D-Va.) has indicated that with some changes in the wording of the House-passed bill, an acceptable compromise may be reached.

Park Service officials say the legislation would erect an expensive and cumbersome procedure for land acquisition, and they have asked Congress to defer action until they can come up with realistic boundary recommendations. “We don’t want to have to go to Congress every time there’s an addition” to these parks, says Chris Soller, legislative affairs specialist for NPS.

Another concern is that decisions about expansion “will be based on capricious boundary legislation that disregards any kind of scientific study and public input. No thought has been given to what really needs to be protected,” says Eileen Woodford, NPCA’s Northeast regional director.

The bill’s restrictions on land donations have raised concerns in such conservative forums as the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Bliley’s hometown newspaper. “For the government to restrict private preservation is no less troubling than for the government to compel it,” the paper editorialized. Surprised by



Hikers look out over the valley from the heights of Old Rag, among the most popular spots in Shenandoah.



this criticism, Bliley replied that “absolutely nothing in my bill restricts private preservation.”

Critics of Bliley’s bill acknowledge a skill in its crafting that makes outright opposition difficult. The bill also would create a national historical park preserving the battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley—sought by two other congressmen but opposed by the Park Service, which says a heritage area would be more appropriate—modify the boundary of the Colonial Parkway near Williamsburg to accept land originally slated for houses, and allow ten acres of land to be acquired at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Bliley also agreed to allow 913 acres awaiting donation at Richmond to be included in the park’s new boundary and to direct the Park Service to study preservation options at nearby New Market Heights, where 14 African Americans earned Medals of Honor

in 1864. These provisions won Bliley the unlikely support of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, which owns 750 acres near Richmond and wants to donate them to the park, and Rep. Robert C. Scott (D-Va.), the state’s lone black congressman.

Bliley says his bill addresses the concerns of his constituents who own land within the parks’ maximum authorized boundaries. Congress drew Shenandoah’s boundary at 521,000 acres in 1926, but the park currently covers 196,000 acres of predominantly high land on the Blue Ridge. The Richmond battlefield occupies 764 acres in ten sites scattered around the east side of the city, but its maximum boundary has stood at 225,000 acres since 1936, a swath that takes in much of the metropolitan area. The Richmond battlefield has condemnation authority but has never used it, while Shenandoah has never had it. Yet, landowners within these boundaries sense “a cloud over their property titles,” Bliley says. “This legislation is meant to put those fears to rest.”

The property rights agitation is in part a backlash to efforts of park man-



agers to reach out to their neighbors and deal with suburban growth and development close to their borders. The Richmond battlefield recently released a draft of a general management plan that suggests a tenfold increase in its area to roughly 7,500 acres, while Shenandoah is in the midst of a related-lands study to build a database of natural, cultural, and scenic resources for both the park and community planners. The hope is that local land-use controls will help protect wildlife habitats and views for a park that is prohibited from buying land but is dealing with a variety of problems, such as pollution, scattered housing construction in hollows close to the park, and higher numbers of visitors, who are causing disgruntled landowners to close off public access to trailheads.

“I don’t think there’s anybody who doesn’t recognize that the current boundary [of 521,000 acres] is unrealistic,” says Shenandoah Superintendent Bill Wade. But he says much of the private land contiguous to the park has “park-like” qualities, and owners sometimes contact him about donat-

ing it. He is concerned that the hurdles erected by Bliley’s bill will deter these donations. “They’re going to throw up their hands and say, forget it.”

Shenandoah has grown by 2,149 acres since 1980 through 14 land donations or exchanges. The donation that set off the current uproar—the area has long been a stronghold of opposition—dates back to 1990, the same year the related-lands study was announced. That July, the Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh disclosed a 1,287-acre donation to the park, part of a gift to the federal government of more than 100,000 acres of wildlife habitat and historic sites in seven states. The land slated for Shenandoah included two parcels in Madison County that had been quietly purchased by the Conservation Fund, another nonprofit organization acting as the foundation’s agent.

Some people in Madison saw this as a drive to expand the park’s borders, including two relative newcomers, Alice Menks and Leri Thomas, who live near the Mellon donations. Their anger led them on a statewide crusade against NPS. They gained notoriety in Virginia preservation circles through their 60-page booklet published in 1991: “US vs. NPS.” The booklet alleges that NPS’s “land grab policies” are a “cancer that is eating at the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness that Thomas Jefferson proclaimed.” It has become a manifesto for property-rights groups around the state.

Menks declined to speak on the record for this article, and Thomas did not return several messages left on her answering machine. Menks’ account of her experiences with Shenandoah appeared in the *Policy Review*, the publication of the conservative think tank, The Heritage Foundation. The article, which appeared in 1993, was written by Ann Corcoran, editor of the *Land Rights Letter* and a national figure in the property-rights movement. One official of Virginians for Property Rights says privately that the group has connections with some of the more mili-



tant wise use groups in the West, but the Virginians have not adopted their more extreme tactics. Yet, opponents say they have seen classic wise use intimidation methods, such as intrusive videotaping, at meetings in Virginia.

Menks' and Thomas' booklet, criticized by preservationists as misleading and error-filled, claims that the Park Service and nonprofit conservation groups (including NPCA) are plotting to seize private land. The booklet's conspiracy theories found fertile ground in Madison, where the perception of government rests largely on memories of families being evicted when the Commonwealth of Virginia condemned privately owned land in the 1930s before turning it over to the Department of Interior to create a national park. Other incidents, such as the shooting of a deputy sheriff's hunting dogs by a park ranger several years ago and conflicts with park authorities over access to family cemeteries, have kept these old wounds open.

"They get a lot of play in rural areas where their sort of paranoia strikes a chord in conservative communities," says Michael Green, a member of the board of the Brandy Station Foundation, which has battled property-rights activists in the ongoing effort to preserve some of the 14,000-acre ground of the largest cavalry engagement of the Civil War.

Harold Woodward, vice chairman of the Madison County Board of Supervisors and the proprietor of Mountaineer Sporting Goods, says some valid economic concerns are beneath this emotional opposition. Madison is the only bordering county without an entrance to the park—despite, he says, being promised one when the park was created—so it sees none of the tourism income other localities enjoy. Every donation of land to the park removes private land from the county's tax rolls. NPS pays 75 cents an acre in lieu of taxes, compared with \$30 an

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**AT LEFT: NPS is developing a general management plan for Richmond battlefield that could increase its maximum boundary tenfold.**



DAVID MUENCH



acre for privately owned land. Shenandoah's ability to accept land within the maximum authorized boundary means that 45 percent of Madison County could be included in the park.

One source of tourism dollars for Madison is the steady traffic of visitors who come to hunt in a state-managed preserve that abuts the park, the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The hunting preserve helps Shenandoah control its large population of deer and bear, but hunting is prohibited in the park. Woodward says hunting dogs sometimes chase game into the park, where they are subject to impoundment. Hunters then face a fine and a trip to the park's pound, where they must pay a fee to free their animals. "Hunters get the sense they're being harassed," says Woodward.

Shenandoah officials realize they have a troubled relationship with their neighbors. Assistant Superintendent Vaughn Baker said park management has sometimes "been less than sensitive to the concerns of landowners." But he says hunters are responsible for obeying the law, and rangers have a responsibility to prevent dogs from attacking wildlife in the park.

**A**NY ANTI-GOVERNMENT argument gets a sympathetic hearing in the eight counties around the park—Oliver North won all but one in his losing 1994 bid for the U.S. Senate, with Rockingham and Augusta providing him with three-to-one margins over incumbent Charles Robb. Riding on this sentiment, Menks and Thomas networked with other park opponents to organize and become president and secretary, respectively, of Virginians for Property Rights.

Thomas is among Virginia property-rights activists who have achieved quasi-official status. Allen appointed Thomas to the board of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, a state entity that accepts and holds conservation easements. Also appointed to this board was Marjorie B. Pinkerton, a vocal property-rights activist and leader of opposition to the Richmond battlefield park. They were part of a wave of conservative environmental appointments

and initiatives by Allen, including an effort to privatize the state parks that failed in the legislature.

Before becoming governor in 1993, Allen represented Bliley's 7th District in Congress, where he introduced a bill to allow surrounding property owners to block historic sites from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The measure failed, but a similar law was adopted in Virginia in 1992. That bill, drafted by the law firm headed by developer "Til" Hazel—who sought to build on land adjacent to Manassas battlefield several years ago—allows surrounding landowners

**Any anti-government argument gets a sympathetic hearing in the eight counties around the park.**

to vote to keep nearby historic sites off the Virginia Landmarks Register. Other than that victory, property-rights groups have actually had little success in the state legislature.

Bliley's bill has brought some unaccustomed attention to the Richmond park, one of the more neglected battlefields. The complexity of the military operations around the city—it was at the center of three major campaigns—and the scattered battlefield sites along a 60-mile tour through three counties make it a challenging park for visitors to comprehend. "Richmond is still pretty much ignored," says acting superintendent David Ruth. "We have some of the most outdated exhibitry in the National Park Service."

Since Richmond was established at 764 acres in 1936, great changes have occurred in the surrounding farmland. The combined population of the three counties—Henrico, Hanover, and Chesterfield—has grown from 70,000 in 1930 to 490,000 in 1990. That population is projected to reach 700,000 by the end of the century, as the Richmond urban area creeps outward. Until recently, little was done to protect land around the battlefield or

modify an unrealistic boundary.

In 1993 the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, which had been charged by Congress with identifying threatened battlefields, named seven sites around Richmond in a list of 50 that it said should get priority protection. NPS is using those data as it prepares a new general management plan. A draft calls for a 6,000-acre expansion of the park through the creation of five new units, additions to four existing units, and the construction of a new visitor center. The cost is estimated at \$20 million, excluding land purchases. Under the plan, the park would be willing to give up its condemnation authority, reduce its maximum boundary to 7,500 acres, and accept land only from willing sellers.

Ruth says the drive to improve the Richmond battlefield has strong support from local historians and preservation groups. Public meetings held over the summer had a generally positive turnout, park officials say. But some participants voiced opposition to the plan, and even if the Bliley bill fails the battlefield park faces vociferous local opposition to its plan.

Even so, some people in Richmond want the right to donate their land to the park without congressional approval. In a comment to the *Times-Dispatch*, Anne M. Donley questioned why Congress should be involved in such a decision. "It's hard enough to get the Board of Supervisors to listen to you, much less the U.S. Congress."

Free-lance writer CHRIS FORDNEY is based in Winchester, Virginia.

**TAKE ACTION:** NPCA supports protecting the battlefields in Shenandoah Valley, allowing Colonial Parkway to purchase land to augment its boundaries, allowing Cumberland Gap to acquire land, and boundary modifications at both Richmond and Shenandoah. But Congress should be informed before making a decision on this. Urge your senators (U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510) to defer action on any Senate equivalent of H.R. 1091 until the Park Service has finished its boundary modification studies and reported back to Congress.



# ASSAULT

on the *Last*  
*Frontier*

Alaska's three-man congressional delegation has launched a legislative salvo to develop, log, mine, and give away national parks in its home state.

by KRIS CAPPS

**A** NEW ROAD IS BUILT 60 miles into Denali National Park and Preserve, triggering an explosion of unplanned tourism developments. Timber harvest increases dramatically throughout Tongass National Forest, while required buffers along salmon streams disappear, threatening commercial fishing, wildlife, and recreation.

These scenarios are realistic consequences of legislation pending before Congress. The national parks and wildlands of Alaska are under serious attack by the state's own congressional delegation: Sens. Frank Murkowski and Ted Stevens and Rep. Don Young, all Republicans. For years, the trio has supported development, such as mining, logging, and oil drilling, in national parks and on other federal lands. Now the Alaska delegation may have the power to implement its development plans as a result of the 1994 congressional election.

Under the Republican majority, Murkowski chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Young is chairman of the House Resources Committee. Together, they oversee national parks and public lands. Stevens is the longest tenured of the trio. He controls the Government Affairs Committee and serves as a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Never has one state—particularly a state with only three members of Congress—chaired both of these committees at the same time and held such power over the nation's resources. Because of the state's small population (about 550,000), Young's district encompasses all of Alaska and includes 13 national park units, more than two-thirds of the acreage in the National Park System.

In Young's new role as chairman, he instituted what he calls the "Young

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**Denali National Park and Preserve is among the most visited in Alaska, but Sen. Murkowski would like a second road to cut through the heart of the park.**

DAVID MUEENCH









This method bypasses the public lands committees and avoids debate. When the House defeated the National Park System Reform Act (H.R. 260), also called the “park closure bill,” Young and Rep. Jim Hansen (R-Utah) simply slipped it into a larger budget bill. (It has since been removed.) “No discussion. No debate. That’s how this Congress is doing business,” says Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, who described the work method as a “back-room, back-door, [and] dead-of-night way” to do business.

**S**INCE THE NOVEMBER elections, the Alaska congressional delegation has been extremely busy. Here are a few examples of their handiwork:

► Murkowski has long been an advocate of increasing access to Denali National Park. His plan is for a new road into the north side of the park. Last month, he inserted special language into a budget bill ordering the Park Service to conduct a feasibility study for the road, using funds from the existing budget for park operations.

This will not be the first time a north access road into Denali will be studied. At the senator’s insistence, the Park Service did an earlier study that concluded the road would cost about \$170 million, would be expensive to maintain, and might damage the wilderness and disturb wildlife. When the road was completed, people who used it still would not see the concentrations of wildlife that are present on the current park road, the study said.

A north access road also is not favored by the Denali Task Force, a diverse group of Alaskans appointed by Secretary Babbitt to recommend ways to improve visitor opportunities in the park. In addition to the project’s high cost, most task force members feared the road would result in uncontrolled development on hundreds of acres of old mining claims in the Kantishna area, which the Park Service has been working to acquire. Instead, the group called for better use of the existing park road, a new visitor facility on the south side of the park, and the purchase of the mining claims to protect the

## ALASKA Continued

Rule,” which, he says, is very simple. “You do not hurt your fellow Republicans. If a fellow Republican’s district wants wilderness, you vote for it. If they don’t, you vote against it. That goes for everybody on that committee. On issues that concern Alaska, I hope I have no peel offs [defectors]. In fact, I better not have any peel offs.” As Young told one reporter, “I control what happens in Alaska.”

NPCA Alaska Regional Director Chip Dennerlein advocates local involvement in national park decisions, but he says, “The parks in Alaska are the natural heritage of 260 million Americans, not one state and certainly not one person. The tyranny of the ‘Young Rule’ has no place in the management of our national parks, or anywhere else in our system of government.”

The Alaska delegation meets at least once a month to plot strategy. So far, their actions reveal an attack not just on parks but on public lands in general. The issue that has received the

most attention is the attempt to force oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by including funds for projected lease sales in the federal budget bill. Most of their proposed bills leave little room for compromise. Fortunately, their recent initiatives have met serious opposition—in one case from Alaska’s governor.

Never has one state—  
particularly a state with  
only three members of  
Congress—held such power  
over the nation’s resources.

When faced with opposition, however, they use other means to achieve their ends. Attaching last-minute amendments (riders) to budget bills to gain substantive changes in land management policy has long been a favored tactic of the Alaska delegation.



Kantishna/Wonder Lake area from further development.

In a speech to the Senate in August 1995, Murkowski portrayed Denali as an inaccessible park whose entrance was watched over by an armed guard. He dubbed the guard station "Checkpoint Charlie," a reference to the military station that marked the boundary between East and West Berlin. A station is located at Savage River, not at the entrance, and the guard Murkowski referred to is, in fact, a low-wage seasonal employee whose job is to greet visitors, check permits, and answer questions. Rangers with law enforcement training—the only ones permitted to wear guns—are not assigned to that station.

In the same speech, Murkowski told senators that of the 490,149 visitors to Denali in 1994, only 241,995 were allowed past "Checkpoint Charlie." "Fifty-one percent of the visitors intending to visit Denali National Park were not allowed to set foot in the grandeur of this 6-million-acre park."

Dennerlein says such statements are

simply false and mislead other congressional policy makers. The first 14 miles of the road and surrounding lands are open without restriction. Beyond mile 14, however, use of the road is limited to tour and shuttle buses, although a limited number of special vehicle permits are issued for research, professional photography, and a campground. Murkowski's statistics also do not account for people who choose activities other than the long bus ride beyond Savage River.

Denali Superintendent Steven Martin admits visitation figures are confusing and says the park is trying to get a better handle on how many people are unable to get a bus seat. But it is unlikely that all 249,154 visitors tried, he says.

Martin says he is aware of the need to make more of the park available to visitors, but it must be done in a way that protects the pristine wilderness and "inspirational" aspect of the park, he says. Denali limits vehicle traffic on its 90-mile road to preserve the wilderness of the park. "We have to be care-

ful we don't compromise our ideals," Martin says.

► Southeast Alaska is home to Tongass National Forest, the nation's largest forest. Murkowski introduced a bill that would change key features of the 1990 Tongass Timber Reform Act, requiring the Forest Service to offer enough timber each year to employ 2,400 timber workers, the number working in the industry in 1990. (Since then, employment has dropped to nearly half.) To produce enough timber to keep that many people employed, however, protected areas must be opened to clearcutting and environmental requirements relaxed.

Alaska Governor Tony Knowles (D) opposes the bill, saying it is "based on a false premise" that could eventually erode the state's overall economy by exalting timber-related jobs over all others, including tourism and commercial fishing. Knowles attacked the bill for removing safeguards for fish and wildlife habitat and allowing timber harvesting in areas protected by Congress.



**Wildlife viewing in Denali is relatively easy, because the animals have become accustomed to buses traveling on Denali Road. Here a mother grizzly bear and cub pass behind a bus full of camera-toting tourists.**



The bill, Knowles said, divides Alaskans rather than bringing them together. "We urge that this legislation be withdrawn," the governor told Murkowski. The senator, who changed a scheduled hearing on the bill to a "workshop" to keep the state's testimony out of the official record, said people had misunderstandings and misconceptions about the bill. No one who testified during the "workshop," however, expressed confusion over the proposal.

Taking the attack on forest resources one step further, Young introduced a bill that would transfer Tongass National Forest to the state of Alaska. As part of the transfer, Young's bill would repeal all of the protections enacted by Congress in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980 and the Tongass Timber Reform Act of 1990. While Young touts his bill as one that encourages "local control," the legislation would force Alaska to reinstate a 50-year timber contract that guaranteed supplies of timber to a private company at bargain prices. The Forest Service canceled the contract when the company closed its pulp mill and breached the agreement.

► In 1995, Murkowski decided to consider amending ANILCA to allow all-terrain vehicles in parks and to exempt Alaska from the Mining in the Parks Act as well as other "technical amendments." ANILCA designated 106 million acres of public land in Alaska as conservation units: national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and wild and scenic rivers.

Murkowski said he

has received complaints that federal land agencies are not following the intent of ANILCA and are unreasonably restricting access to the land. In May, he held hearings in Alaska, looking for

All three members of the Alaska delegation look to the parks as a means to bolster the state's economic interests.

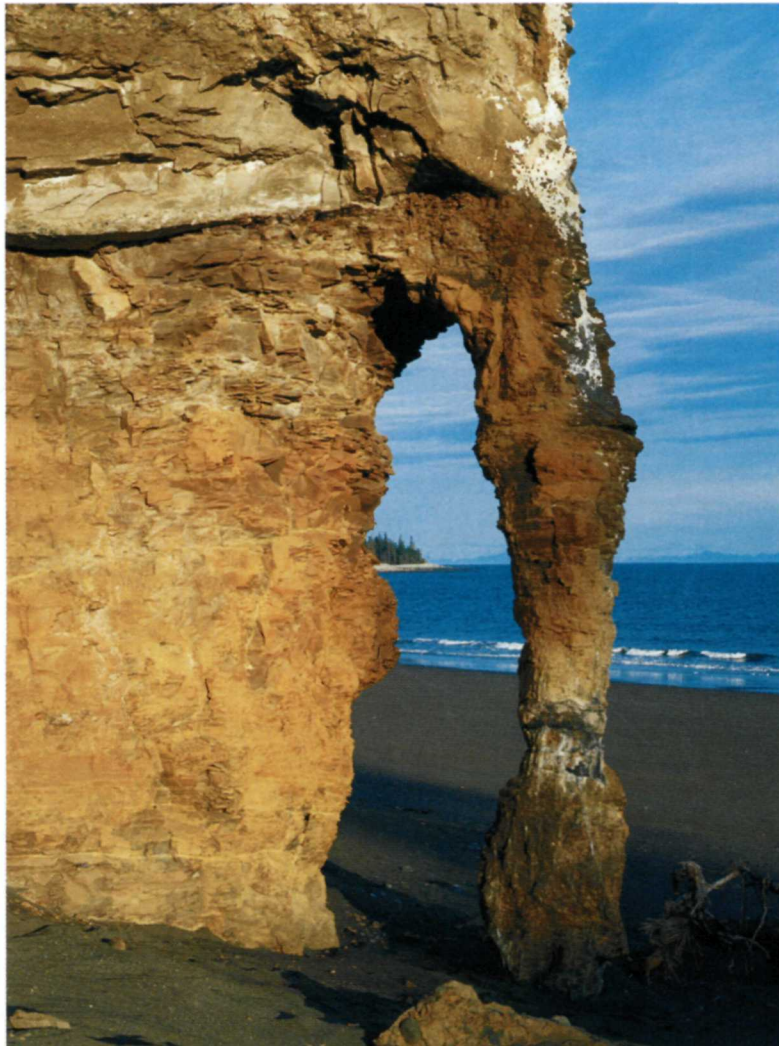
"horror stories" about federal mismanagement, and he heard a few. Murkowski, however, also discovered substantial support for Alaska's national parks and refuges, as evidenced by the

pro-ANILCA demonstrations that greeted the hearings in Anchorage and Fairbanks. And except for groups such as the Alaska Miners Association, which called for establishment of five-mile-wide "development corridors" through the parks, many Alaskans, including the Alaska Federation of Natives, expressed reservations about reopening the ANILCA debate. So far, Murkowski has not submitted legislation to amend the act.

► In 1994 the Senate passed a concession reform bill that would have repealed various preferences and subsidies granted concessioners under the 1965 Concessions Policy Act. The legislation—a top priority for NPCA for the last six years—would change the way contracts are negotiated and would require competitive bidding without preference to the existing contract holder.

The reform bill would also phase out the concessioner's right to ownership of capital improvements. Concessioners now pay only a pittance of their gross revenues in franchise fees to the government, money that is not returned to the parks. Nearly identical reform bills passed both houses by ten-to-one margins. Young, Stevens, and Murkowski were among the handful of legislators who voted against the bills, claiming they would hurt development of Alaska's national parks. Even though the bipartisan legislation had been approved by the 103rd Congress, time ran out in the session before it could become law.

In 1995 Murkowski introduced S. 1144, which would lock in the current noncompetitive system and require that concession-



FRED HIRSCHMANN

Nearly 30,000 acres of coastal lands within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve may be transferred to a Native corporation.



ers' monopolies be maintained in national parks, and be established by statute in national forests, refuges, and Bureau of Land Management areas.

► A bill introduced by Young would transfer 29,900 acres within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve to private Native corporations. This acreage includes about 90 percent of the park's coastline along Cook Inlet and would essentially landlock the park.

The lands in question are part of a 1976 agreement that sought to resolve difficulties that the regional and village corporations encountered gaining land under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Twice, the Interior Department has refused to convey the land to the village corporations' agent, Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI). So the village corporations enlisted Young, who is attempting legislatively to transfer the lands directly to the corporations, bypassing CIRI. In a letter to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, former Alaska Gov. Jay Hammond (R) wrote: "This measure would seem to establish a dangerous precedent capable of totally undermining the intent of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. If this raid is allowed to occur, I wonder who will then get a piece of Denali?"

► While the delegation works to increase development of public resources, it also works to decrease protection. Without analysis or debate, Murkowski and Young slipped "riders" into House and Senate appropriations bills that will require the Department of the Interior to sell off its aircraft in Alaska and contract with private firms.

A recent review shows that the move could cost American taxpayers more than \$2 million a year while decreasing the ability of the Fish and Wildlife and National Park services to conduct research, law enforcement, and search and rescue. "This has particularly serious consequences for Alaska because of the specialized aircraft and specially trained pilots needed," says Dave Cline, Alaska regional vice president for the National Audubon Society. To require fish and wildlife protection officers to charter private aircraft to enforce our



**A bull caribou browses on willows.**

wildlife laws is like making highway patrolmen hail cabs so they can run down traffic violators."

► In a last-minute proposal to amend legislation that funds federal and state road improvements throughout the nation, Stevens made a proposal that would have instantly created a web of nearly 1,700 highway rights-of-way across federal lands, including designated wilderness and national parks. When Senate leaders rejected the proposal, Stevens tried to insert language to force the Interior Secretary to approve road claims under Revised Statute 2477—a Civil War-era law that granted rights-of-way for the construction of highways across federal lands not reserved for other public uses—under state law, rather than reviewing them under federal guidelines. The amendment was withdrawn. As a compromise, the Senate adopted a provision preventing the Interior Department from issuing any new regulations affecting R.S. 2477 claims until 1996.

**T**HE DELEGATION'S approach to Alaska's public lands may vary slightly—Stevens and Murkowski push for commercial development, while Young wants to transfer the lands out of federal ownership—but all three look to the parks as a means to bolster the state's economic interests. As a result, they have appropriated funds to stabilize the historic Kennicott Mine in McCarthy and to restore turn-of-the-century buildings in Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. Stevens secured millions of dollars to purchase mining claims in Denali, and Mur-

kowski lobbied to keep the Park Service's field offices in Anchorage, rather than see them moved to Seattle or San Francisco.

These are important actions, says Dennerlein, who does not hesitate to "give credit when credit is due." In fact, he says, the delegation could take a number of actions that would increase visitor opportunities and economic benefits to communities, and improve resource protection. For instance, he says, Denali, the world's premier subarctic park, has neither an

adequate visitor center nor science center to display the research that has been conducted there.

Congress has charged the Park Service with providing for the enjoyment of the national parks in ways that will leave them unimpaired forever, says Dennerlein. "A \$170 million road that would trigger an explosion of development in the heart of Denali abandons that commitment."

"There is a choice to be made. We can accomplish a lot of good things for the parks and for the people, or we can be locked in combat...and there will be a few, but very few, victories on either side."

**KRIS CAPPS** is a free-lance journalist who lives in Denali Park, Alaska.

**TAKE ACTION:** To help counter the anti-park agenda of the Alaska delegation, send letters to your senators and representative. Tell them the "Young Rule" does not represent your interests or those of the nation. Send copies of your letters to House and Senate leaders to let them know that you oppose the assault on the national parks in Alaska. Send letters to House leaders: Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), Majority Leader Richard Armey (R-Texas), and Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515); and Senate leaders: Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kans.), Assistant Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.), and Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D-S.Dak.) (U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510).







BY YVETTE LA PIERRE

# D I V I D E D

## Over Voyageurs

Voyageurs National Park is at the heart of a debate between locals who want to increase snowmobile and other motorized use and those who want to maintain a balance between recreation and wilderness.

**V**OYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK is named for the colorful French-Canadian trappers who sang, paddled, and portaged through this country of forests and lakes along the Minnesota-Canadian border two centuries ago. The park, little changed from the days the voyageurs traveled their trade routes, contains 30 lakes, hundreds of beaver ponds, 900 islands, and the largest virgin pine stands and one of the last remaining populations of endangered eastern timber wolves in the lower 48 states.

Voyageurs protects a unique area called an "ecotone," where the great boreal forests of Canada meet the hardwoods farther south. Most of the other ecotones along the boreal-hardwood line have long since been logged or cleared, but Voyageurs remains relatively intact. Scientists carefully study

ecotones to monitor the effects of global climate change on natural communities. At the heart of the park is the spectacular Kabetogama Peninsula, a 100,000-acre area that the National Park Service has recommended for wilderness designation.

Last March, bowing to strong pressure from motorized recreation interests, Minnesota State Sen. Bob Lessard (D-International Falls) testified before the House Committee on Resources in Washington, D.C., that Voyageurs, Minnesota's only national park, be downgraded to a national recreation area or given to the state or counties to manage. That move could open the areas to more motorized vehicle use, logging, mining, hunting, and other destructive activities.

Shortly thereafter, Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), whose Eighth District includes the park, introduced what he

called a "compromise" bill that would forbid any wilderness designation in the park and open up 90 percent of the park to snowmobiling, notwithstanding any provision of law, including the Endangered Species Act.

"Congressman Oberstar didn't consult any environmental groups before introducing his bill," says Lori Nelson, NPCA's Heartland regional director. "He tried to get NPCA, the Park Service, and other environmental groups to jump on board by saying that if you don't support his bill, there will be a worse bill that will make more drastic changes."

Oberstar, who worked as a legislative aide to former Rep. John Blatnik, the sponsor of the bill establishing Voyageurs, claims that management has over-emphasized wilderness at the expense of recreation and that his bill, H.R.1310, would return the park to



Locals want to expand snowmobile access at Voyageurs to 90 percent of the park, including the Kabetogama Peninsula.



its "original purpose."

"One of the difficulties is that when a piece of legislation is developed, there are a lot of different opinions expressed in the process," says Voyageurs Superintendent Barbara West. "What we have to be bound by is the plain language of the statute."

Voyageurs National Park was authorized by Congress in 1971 to "preserve for the inspiration and enjoyment of present and future generations the outstanding scenery, geological conditions, and waterway system which constituted a part of the historic route of the Voyageurs who contributed to the opening of the Northwestern United States." The legislation recognized that preservation and recreation were not mutually exclusive goals but put the emphasis on wilderness protection, especially along the near-pristine Kabetogama Peninsula, the quintessence of this remote park.

"...Motor vehicles will be entirely prohibited on the [Kabetogama] Peninsula," Blatnik wrote in a September 1974 issue of *National Parks and Conservation Magazine*. Despite this clear statement by the bill's author, Voyageurs has been plagued by controversy throughout its 20-year history. NPCA and other environmental groups would like to see the peninsula designated wilderness and made off-limits to snowmobilers, but many locals are opposed to any restrictions on their use of the park. (In com-

pliance with a 1992 court order, the Park Service is managing Kabetogama Peninsula as wilderness except for a nonwilderness corridor, where snowmobiling is permitted.)

"Local opposition is stronger here than at most parks," says West, who walked into the middle of the controversy when she became superintendent last June. "I've never encountered anything like it." Eight local groups—some with connections to Western and Washington, D.C.-based Wise Use groups—joined to form the Greater Northland Coalition, which has recently stepped up its opposition to federal management of Voyageurs. This campaign resulted in a joint congressional hearing on the future management of the two public areas. Sen. Rod Grams (R-Minn.) requested the hearing to discuss "concerns about federal land-use restrictions" at the park, such as those that limit snowmobiling. According to Nelson, the political climate is ripe for congressional consideration of any agendas promoted by local special interest groups that want to redirect the management of national parks.

The hearing was held on August 18 in International Falls, the community adjacent to the park, on the assumption that local input is most important. The panels, therefore, consisted of local government officials, Minnesotans (primarily those who live near the park), federal agency representatives, all four members of the Minnesota congressional delegation, and Rep.

James Hansen (R-Utah), chairman of the House subcommittee. The hearing focused on four main areas of contention: economics, increased motorized use, restrictions on other uses, and the call for more local control.

**L**OCAL GROUPS ARGUE that tourism has not reached its potential since the park was established because of restrictions on motorized use. Minnesota Department of Tourism data, however, indicate that use has nearly doubled since Voyageurs National Park was established. A recent independent public opinion survey of Minnesota citizens commissioned by NPCA found that more than half of those polled would be less likely to visit the park if motorized use were increased. Another recent poll by the Minneapolis-based *Star Tribune* and WCCO-TV indicated that a majority of Minnesotans do not favor easing restrictions on motorized vehicle access or limiting wilderness designations in the park or the Boundary Waters. Currently, Voyageurs produces \$20 million in revenues for the local economy in return for an annual budgetary investment of \$2.3 million.

Oberstar and park opponents argue that Voyageurs has become a "single use" park, favoring wilderness protection over snowmobiling, but Voyageurs already has more area open to snowmobiling than any other national park. Snowmobilers have access to 78,000 acres of frozen lake surfaces and 120 miles of overland trails—more than one-third of the park—compared with the park's 4.5 miles of hiking trails and 15 miles of cross-country ski trails. Oberstar's bill would expand snowmobile access to about 90 percent of the park, including the Kabetogama Peninsula. Increased numbers of snowmobiles, which are among the noisiest and most polluting of any vehicle, would seriously threaten park wildlife, which includes about 45 free-ranging eastern timber wolves, bald eagles,

**AT RIGHT: Snake grass and water lilies adorn one of the park's many ponds. More than one-third of the total area of Voyageurs is covered by water.**









bears, moose, ospreys, loons, beavers, and more. According to one study, 1,000 snowmobiles emit the same amount of nitrous oxide and other pollutants as 1.7 million autos.

In the hearing, Sen. Grams suggested that the Park Service has unnecessarily restricted local access to the park and that Superintendent West was ignoring local concerns. Use of the park, however, could hardly be less restrictive—there are no fees for entrance to the park or for camping. In addition, West says that since she became superintendent she has been meeting with local businesspeople, officials, and residents to discuss park management.

But West admits that the standard method of managing a national park does not seem to be working in northern Minnesota and that the Park Service must find new ways of working with local people. "We're starting on a new process where we're going to conduct citizen forums on issues related to the park," she says.

During the hearing, Rep. Bruce Vento was the only member of the congressional delegation to clearly support the park, calling for stronger protection and the need for wild places. He concluded that national parks are "the crown jewels of this country; let's not turn Voyageurs into a rhinestone."

**I**T IS WIDELY BELIEVED that Wise Use groups and politicians in favor of dismantling the park system are closely monitoring this case. "The Voyageurs case is probably going to be a test balloon for downsizing of the National Park System," Nelson says. "If the House and Senate committees seem to think there's some sizable segment of public opinion that management of parks should be changed, they might look for other parks where citizens have allegedly been 'wronged by the park.'"

That balloon, however, seems to have popped. Opposition groups claimed they would fill the August hearing with 5,000 people and stepped up their rhetoric before the hearing. The Greater Northland Coal-

ition ran a four-page ad in the newspaper a week before the hearing that portrayed NPS as "nothing more than a front organization" for environmental groups and accused it of being "an armed federal police force" that offends park users "when rangers pull up to their recreational vehicle or campsite brandishing their guns."

This inflammatory language may have backfired, as only about 1,000 people showed up for the hearing, and approximately one-third of those were wilderness supporters. "We had a stronger showing than anyone anti-

**National parks are  
our "crown jewels...;  
let's not turn Voyageurs  
into a rhinestone."**

ciated," Nelson said. "I think the subcommittee was surprised by the level of support for the park, even in the park's backyard."

Arguing that the fate of a national park should not be decided solely by local opinion, NPCA and others pushed for and finally were granted a hearing on October 28 in Minneapolis/St. Paul, where there is a strong base of support for the park. An estimated 1,500 people attended the hearing, and this time wilderness advocates outnumbered the opposition two to one. In his statement supporting wilderness preservation, Vento cited the survey by NPCA—which, among other things, found that 82 percent of Minnesotans contacted want wilderness maintained at its present level or increased—and asked that it be included in the record.

Oberstar continued his attack on the management of Voyageurs and said that he plans to introduce legislation to set up a federal management council consisting primarily of local representatives who will work with the Park Service to manage Voyageurs. According to Nelson, this proposal would create another layer of bureaucracy and cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000 per year to run. In addition, a state-funded citizens council on the park already

exists. "NPCA would support an advisory commission, but not one that would have direct management responsibilities," Nelson says. "We hope that Oberstar will seriously consider an advisory commission as an alternative to the management council. Otherwise, we're prepared to fight it."

Though the relatively poor showing of local people opposed to federal management of the park may have saved Voyageurs from deauthorization or even downgrading, the Oberstar bill is still a very real threat. If it passes, one of America's premier wilderness parks will be a national park in name only, and a dangerous precedent will be set to manage national parks exclusively for the whims of local interests—at the expense of resource protection and enjoyment for all visitors.

It may seem strange that park opponents and the Wise Use Movement have chosen little-known Voyageurs to begin the campaign against national parks, but Nelson identifies a number of points that make the Minnesota park a logical place to start.

"First, you have a politically well-connected group that has access to Congress. They have an emotional appeal on their side—many locals are hostile because of feelings of lost independence and subservience to federal control. And because it's remote and far removed from a large environmental constituency, the park is vulnerable," Nelson explains. "Also, there's an element of surprise: you'd expect this in the West. But this group has been mobilized for a long time to fight the park."

**YVETTE LA PIERRE** is a free-lance writer in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and a frequent visitor to northern Minnesota's lake country.

**TAKE ACTION:** Help maintain the balance between wilderness and recreation at Voyageurs. Write to Reps. Hansen, Vento, and the Minnesota delegation (Rep. Oberstar and Sens. Wellstone and Grams) and voice your opposition to H.R. 1310. (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510).



# METROPOLITAN MOSAIC

The park closure bill threatened to eliminate many recreational and cultural sites that reflect our nation's diverse history. Although the legislation has been defeated for now, the debate about the importance of these parks continues.



Naturalists and inner-city youngsters are attracted to Gateway's beaches.

**I**F YOUR SUMMER VACATION typically includes a family trip to Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, or another Western national park, chances are good you are white and middle or upper class.

Surveys of visitors to the large West-

ern parks confirm what is obvious to even the casual observer: The vast majority of people gathered at scenic overlooks, hiking the trails, or maneuvering their campers and minivans along winding park roads are the same color.

African Americans, Asians, Latinos, and members of other racial groups use these wilderness parks, but in numbers far less



than would be expected based on their percentage of the total population. They, as well as low-income visitors, are common only in the urban parks, such as Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco and Gateway National Recreation Area along the New York-New Jersey coast.

This situation put an uncomfortable racial twist on a bill—defeated in the House by a vote of 231 to 180, resurrected as part of the budget reconciliation bill, and then killed again—that would have established an independent commission to recommend which units of the park system should be closed. The plan was to turn over “non-essential” areas to state or local governments or private entrepreneurs.

The bill—just one of a dozen pieces of legislation taking aim at the national parks during the last session of Congress—exempted from review the 54 sites designated as national parks, which included the large Western parks, leaving the urban recreation areas and historic sites most often used by minorities and low-income residents vulnerable to closure.

Due in large part to the efforts of NPCA and its members, the bill was killed this session, but many believe it will be resurrected again in a different, possibly less offensive, form. If approved, the legislation has the potential to pit minorities against whites, and urban residents against the rest of the country. “It has nothing to do with attacking particular segments of society,” says Steve Hodapp, an aide to Rep. Jim Hansen (R-Utah), chairman of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Lands and a leading advocate of the bill.

Hodapp says he has seen no data to verify that racial differences exist in visitors to urban and rural parks, but adds: “Even if that is the case, the question still remains if it is the job of the federal government to run city parks in the major cities of this country.” Hansen, who during the last session of Congress became a standard-bearer for anti-park legislation, repeatedly focused on urban parks when discussing the need for a review commission.

He recently asked whether Americans want to continue “to spend limited federal dollars parking cars for concerts at an outdoor amphitheater in suburban Virginia, or to fund city beaches in New York and San Francisco, or for historic re-creations with little or no historic value.”

Before the bill was finally killed, its contents gave rise to an interesting debate concerning the importance of urban parks and historic areas to the

**Urban parks offer an inexpensive recreation alternative for people who cannot afford to “drive the Lexus to Glacier” for a vacation.**

National Park System and the reasons behind the racial imbalance in the Western parks.

Roger Kennedy, director of the National Park Service (NPS), says urban parks are “important to the national park idea.” They provide a handy place for city dwellers to escape the daily routine and “get together rather than going to the other side of the street to avoid each other.” They also offer an inexpensive recreation alternative for people who cannot afford to “drive the Lexus to Glacier” for a vacation.

**T**WO FACTORS EXPLAIN why so few minorities use the large Western parks, says William Kornblum, head of the Center for Urban Research at City University of New York’s graduate school. Most important is money. America’s minority groups are concentrated in urban areas, and it costs a lot for a family from Chicago, New York, or Atlanta to load the kids in the car for a two-week vacation to places such as Zion, Bryce Canyon, Mesa Verde, and Grand Canyon national parks. Low-income families cannot afford it.

Even when they have the money, Kornblum’s studies show, African

Americans and Latinos are less likely to visit Western parks than their white counterparts. “It’s explained by a difference in perception of what the trip will be like, and what will be a pleasurable kind of experience for the family,” says Kornblum.

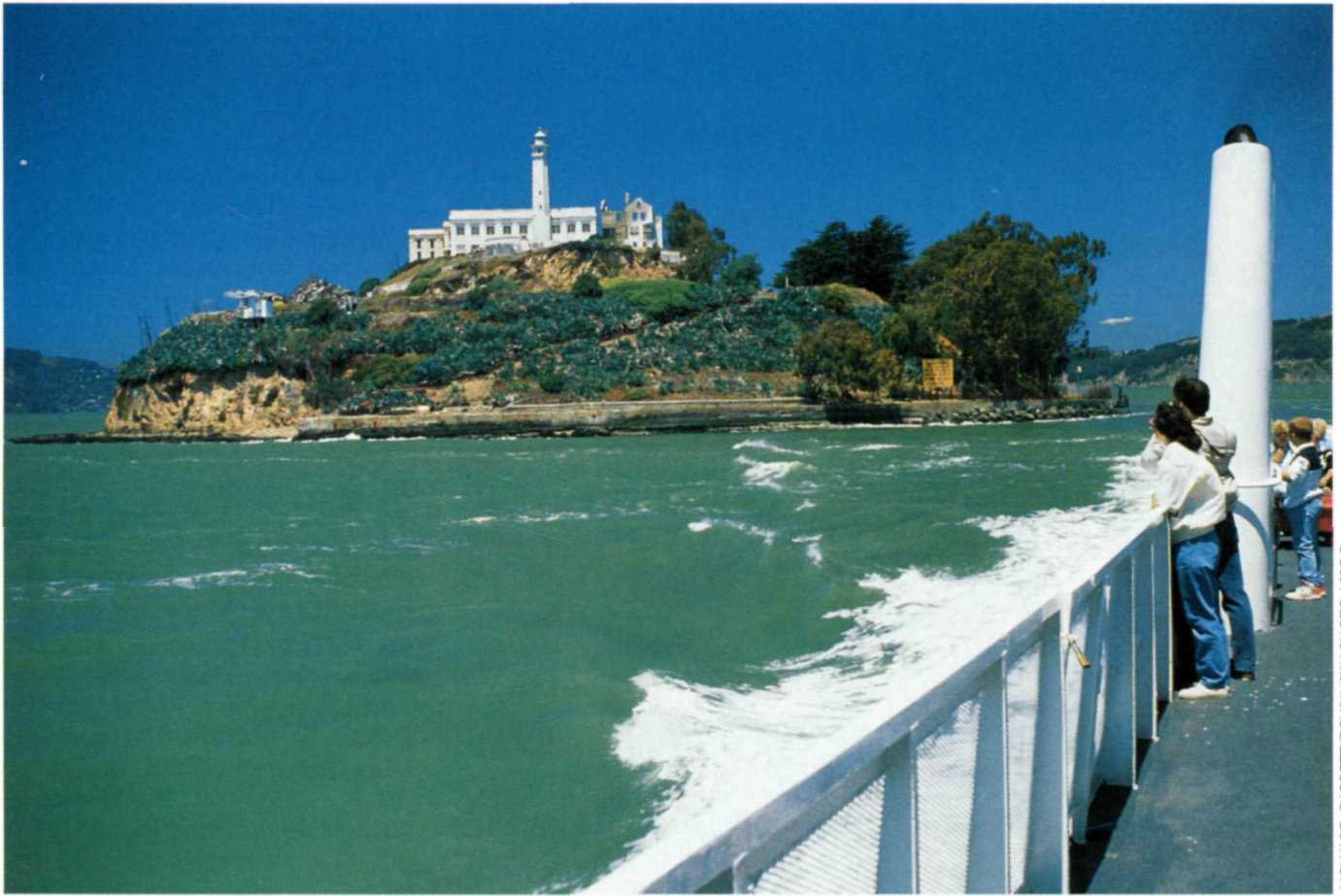
Minorities who have lived their entire lives in an urban area often are uncomfortable with the prospect of a long drive through mainly white and rural middle America, he says, adding that such concerns are heightened by events such as the recent bombing in Oklahoma City, allegedly by right-wing militants. The Park Service’s overwhelmingly white workforce is another factor that discourages minority visitors, says Ray Hutchison, chairman of urban and regional studies at the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay.

“One thing that a bunch of research shows is that if you have people of different races and ethnic groups working at a facility, nonwhite visitors feel more comfortable,” he says. An African-American couple entering the average Western park would feel much like a white couple walking into a room filled with black people, says Hutchison. “It’s just a sign that you don’t belong.”

Kennedy says many of the white visitors to Western parks are following a “North Sea tradition” of traveling to distant natural areas for their vacations. Immigrants from England and northern Europe carried this concept to the United States. This tradition was handed down to Kennedy by his grandparents, who made special trips to wild areas to camp and hunt. Such family experiences help define what a vacation is like and which areas are most desirable to visit.

New immigrants from Africa, southern Europe, Southeast Asia, and Latin America have equally strong traditions of holding family and clan gatherings in village squares, city parks, and orchards closer to home, he says. “Any little poverty-stricken Sicilian village will have a common space—a place where people come together.” Rather than take steps to eliminate urban parks, he says, America should be developing many more of them. “We need to have a much





HOWARD GARRETT/DEMINSKY PHOTO ASSOC.

Visitors to Alcatraz, part of Golden Gate NRA in San Francisco, reflect the racial and ethnic mix of the Bay area.

wider variety of places to go to because we are a more various people....We have to make room in public policy as well as room...for people who have a different set of uses for public spaces.”

Eileen Woodford, Northeast regional director for NPCA, says another aspect of the park-review bill that had “racial overtones” was the idea of closing some of the small historic parks that “represent the broader base of American history.”

“History is a very expansive topic,” she says. “When you have a country as geographically, ethnically, racially, economically, socially, and culturally diverse as the United States, you will have a lot of places that reflect that very rich texture of history.”

Some parts of that history are well represented in the National Park System, but others are only now beginning to be recognized. “African-American history is an example. So is women’s history and the history of Native Americans,” she says.

Woodford fears the few parks tell-

ing this nontraditional story of American history would be particularly threatened by a park-review bill. Closing these sites, she says, would “cut off a portion of our history” that deserves to be recognized.

Iantha Gantt, NPCA’s cultural diversity director, agrees with Woodford. She says that people tend not to understand how much a part of the National Park System cultural and historical parks are. Places such as Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in Washington, D.C., which has importance to both the abolition and women’s rights movements, would be vulnerable to closure, in part because they are in poor neighborhoods.

Statue of Liberty National Memorial, another urban park, includes Ellis Island, the nation’s only museum devoted entirely to telling the story of immigration. Nearly 15 million immigrants—mostly Southern and Eastern Europeans—were processed through this station. “These sites are important to the nation’s history. We should keep

them because when we forget who we are, we forget where we are going,” says Gantt.

**U**RBAN PARKS, in addition to drawing minority and low-income visitors, also harbor endangered species of plants and animals. Howard Levitt, chief of interpretation at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, says Golden Gate is much more than the “city beach” described by Hansen. “It would be absolutely wrong to characterize the beaches, forests, uplands, open spaces, and historical resources as a city park,” he says. “We have more rare and endangered plant and animal species than almost any other park in the National Park System, and more historic structures than any other park in the country.”

In addition, Levitt says, a truly diverse group of visitors can be found at the various units of the San Francisco-area park. “We had a study done in



1990 at Muir Woods National Monument [a redwood forest located about 12 miles from downtown San Francisco that is administered by Golden Gate NRA]. Of the 1.6 million visitors, 20 percent were [foreign visitors]—primarily from Germany and the United Kingdom. Of the U.S. citizens, 30 percent were from California, 6 percent from Florida and New York, and the rest from other states,” says Levitt.

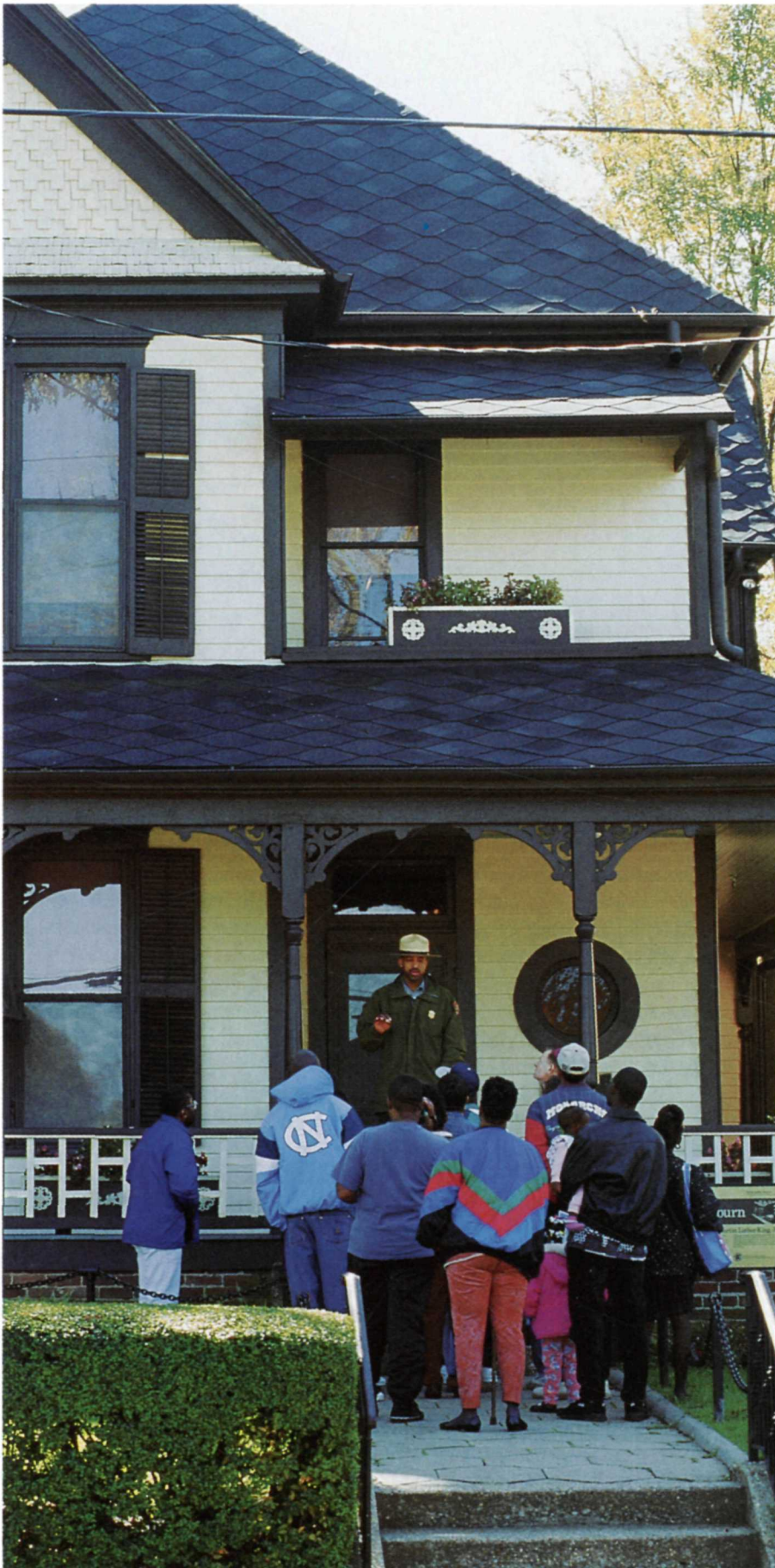
Local visitors reflect the great racial and ethnic diversity of the six million people living in the San Francisco Bay area, he says. That diversity is boosted with “interpretive programs” aimed at school districts with large minority populations in San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento. “We introduce them to the historical and natural resources of this area. Typically, we allow the youngsters to roll up their sleeves and pitch in,” says Levitt. “Some of these kids, even though they live right in this urban area, never get to the park,” says Chris Powell, spokeswoman for Golden Gate. “They are going for a walk on the beach for the first time.”

Besides Muir Woods, Golden Gate also includes the old prison on Alcatraz Island, the historic Presidio military base, and the beaches and headlands along the Pacific coast.

A presidential commission, initiated by former President Ronald Reagan, studied outdoor recreation and concluded that urban parks are vital for the well-being of city residents, regardless of their racial or ethnic background. The commission’s report, included in the book *Americans Outdoors: the Legacy, the Challenge*, says:

“By the year 2000, eighty percent of Americans will live in metropolitan areas. Those of us who do will especially need access to the great outdoors; in concrete deserts we lose touch with the real world of trees, birds, small mammals, and plant life. We each need outdoor recreation opportunities close to home, where they can be part of our daily lives.”

JIM WOOLF is a reporter for The Salt Lake Tribune.



MICHAEL WORTHY

Martin Luther King’s birth home would have been among the vulnerable sites.



# A Rallying Cry

*NPCA has launched the Save Our National Parks Campaign and urges citizens nationwide to participate.*

BY CAROL ATEN

**T**HIS PAST YEAR was a frightening one for parks. Not since the 1940s, when Congress tried to open the national parks to logging and mineral extraction, have these national treasures been viewed as both exploitable and expendable. The list of proposed bad legislation seemed to go on and on. During this session, just the first round in the 104th Congress, at least a dozen separate legislative initiatives threatened parks with reduction or removal from the park system or would have impaired the Park Service's ability to manage and preserve these areas.

The biggest threat came from H.R. 260, legislation that would have established a commission to close or transfer up to 315 of the 369 park units in the National Park System. The bill's attempts to remove "non-essential" parks as a cost-saving measure set the tone for the first half of the 104th Congress. The life of this legislation presents a good example not only of what kinds of threats the parks face from ill-conceived legislation, but how this Congress operates.

In September, H.R. 260 was brought to the House floor for a vote under suspension of the rules—a pro-

CAROL ATEN, senior vice president of NPCA, chairs the Save Our National Parks Campaign team.

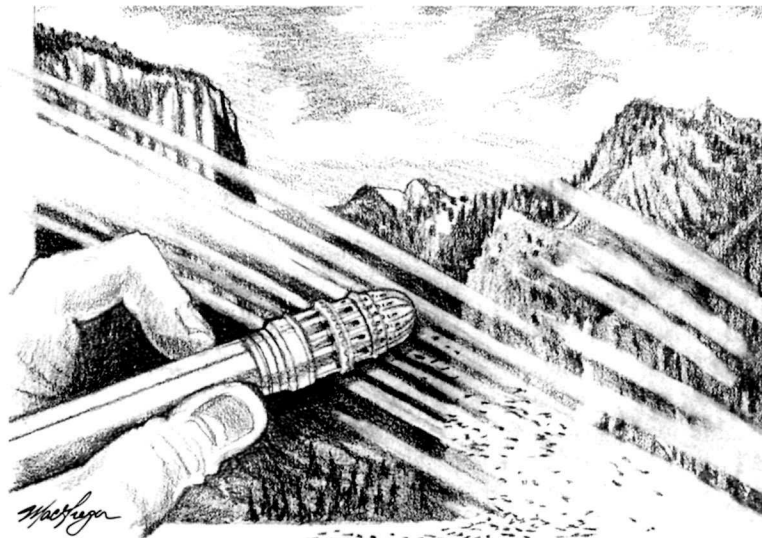
cedure that limits debate, does not allow amendments, and requires a two-thirds vote to pass. The bill was defeated 231 to 180. Hours later, Rep. James Hansen (R-Utah) and Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) slipped the legislation into the budget reconciliation package, along with a version of the concessions legislation that would not

Richmond National Battlefield Park (passed in the House and awaiting consideration in the Senate); open up Voyageurs National Park to more motorized use and eliminate wilderness designation; increase fees to visitors while allowing concessioner monopolies to continue reaping profits and paying a pittance to the federal government as well as require the parks to raise 75 percent of their operating costs through fees; open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling; return the Presidio to the Department of Defense for sale as surplus property should the Presidio Trust Corporation fail; and supply the Park Service with \$1 to administer Mojave National Preserve, a park unit NPCA and others fought for

more than eight years to establish.

In addition to bad park-specific legislation, Congress threatened to weaken the Endangered Species Act, allow more timber sales in old-growth forests, and allow logging in wilderness areas of Tongass National Forest.

I wish I could say that we can look for a more sympathetic agenda in the new year, but the same Congress is back in January, and if the opening salvos in the first session are any indication, the second portion of it will not be much of an improvement.



DOUGLAS MACGREGOR

only continue the monopolies, but extend this method of operation to other federal lands. Their action denied the will of the House and killed any meaningful consideration of concessions reform, something NPCA has been championing for the past six years. After much pressure from NPCA and its members, H.R. 260 was dropped from the reconciliation package. But this bill is bound to reappear.

Congress also considered bills that would reduce the authorized boundaries of Shenandoah National Park and





If the climate does not improve, we cannot afford to sit idly by. Poll after poll shows that the American people value the environmental protections that have been in place for decades—legislation mandating clean water, clean air, toxic waste clean-up, wetland protection, and others. But many in leadership roles in this Congress are not listening. They either do not understand or do not care that they are not representing the environmental views of the American people. They seem more interested in helping business than in protecting our resources and our health. NPCA and its 70-member staff will continue working to protect the parks, but we need your help. And getting that help is a key piece of our campaign to save our national parks.

The anti-park sentiment in Congress is not going to go away quickly, and the grassroots is the key to success in this political environment. NPCA's staff has pulled out all the stops to activate citizen leadership for parks. Rather than rely solely on the traditional tack of building park champions in Congress, we are bolstering our forces by turning to citizen leaders to help us protect our most precious areas. All of us need to understand that our specially loved parks are not immune to this anti-park, anti-public lands sentiment. It can be stopped with an active cadre of people who can be heard above the din.

In addition to enlisting the help of citizens who care about the parks, we are changing the way we operate. NPCA's staff is a diverse one with mixed talents and with a level of energy and commitment to the protection of the national parks that is unmatched. When we decided to look at ways to become more effective, the result was something of a reinvention that brought every employee of NPCA into the fight.

We have created teams to develop ways to address legislative proposals and other threats. These teams have devised strategies that involve tried and

true activities, such as alerts and phone banking. But they also suggested some new approaches for NPCA, such as using public service radio broadcasts to turn out the public for local hearings. We also set up a campaign team specifically to train and activate citizens to push for important national park legislation, block legislation damaging to the parks, and secure enduring support for the National Park System.

The response so far has been over-

**O**ur specially loved parks are not immune to this anti-park sentiment. It can be stopped with a cadre of people who can be heard above the din.


whelming. With your help, we defeated H.R. 260, not once, but twice. You turned out at field hearings on *Voyageurs* to send a strong message of support for the natural values of the national park. You helped convince President Clinton to veto the Interior Appropriations bill, because it did not contain funding for Mojave National Preserve. You wrote letters and made phone calls supporting real concessions reform. You have demonstrated what citizens can accomplish.

Behind the establishment of virtually every national park was a citizen or group of citizens working tirelessly, sometimes for years, to see that a special place was protected for future generations. Marjory Stoneman Douglas was among the most legendary. She was instrumental in the creation of Everglades National Park. Her efforts inspired us to name our Citizen Con-

servationist of the Year Award for her. Each year, NPCA recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding effort for a park or a proposed unit of the National Park System. In 1995, Pinkie Lemon of Richmond, Virginia, was recognized for her work to protect Richmond National Battlefield Park and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site.

We cannot all be a Marjory Stoneman Douglas or a Pinkie Lemon, but we can show our appreciation for them and others like them by ensuring that their efforts are not in vain. We can collectively be "Citizens Protecting America's Parks," as NPCA's slogan declares. It involves taking action at a time when your voice can make a difference.

How can you help? When legislation or other actions that could harm the parks are proposed by a representative or senator, we need you to write or call your members of Congress; meet with them when they are in your district; write letters to the editor; turn out for field hearings; be active and involved in local park friends groups; get on our park activist list; and receive *The ParkWatcher*, our activists' newsletter; or, for those with access to a computer on-line service, check NPCA's World Wide Web (<http://www.npca.org/npca/>) site for park-related information.

You can help by joining the Park Activist Network, which consists of three different groups: Park Watchers, Park Activists, and Park Support Groups. If you want to become part of a phone, fax, or e-mail tree, you can help spread the word when time is of the essence. One of our goals is to have a tree for every key congressional district. We could use your help in identifying other groups that might be allies in fighting for park issues. We need all of you. Please join the Save Our National Parks Campaign. You can make all the difference. To sign up to help us in our efforts to save the national parks, please call 1-800-628-7275, extension 229. 

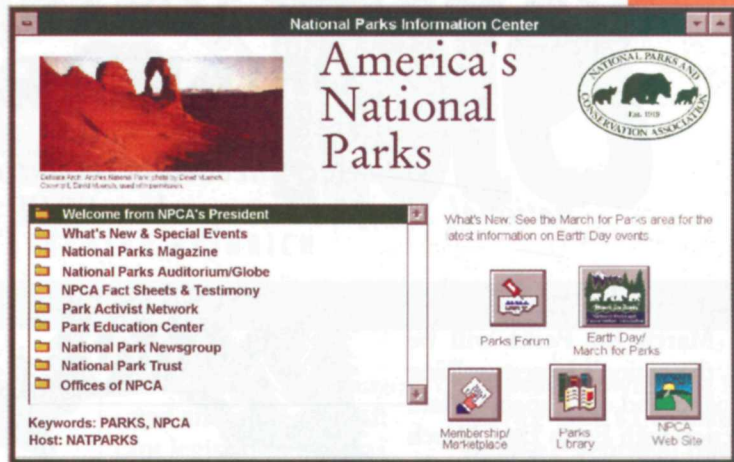


http://www.npca.org/npca/

# NPCA prepares to launch AOL site

Early in 1996, NPCA will expand its online activities. America Online (AOL) has been chosen for the NPCA site dedicated to America's national parks. The site will provide:

- ◆ late-breaking park news
- ◆ easy access to national park info
- ◆ award-winning bimonthly National Parks magazine
- ◆ special park events such as Earth Day March for Parks
- ◆ a place to discuss national park issues, including an AOL forum and easy connection to the Internet's rec.national.parks newsgroup
- ◆ NPCA membership services, including change of address, gift memberships, help with subscription concerns
- ◆ NPCA fact sheets and testimony regarding important national park issues
- ◆ direct connection to NPCA's site on the World Wide Web



## AOL Memberships Support the Parks

Members' use of the national parks area on AOL will help support NPCA's educational efforts.

## Easy Web Access

AOL makes it easy for users to access the World Wide Web. Through the **America's National Parks** site, users will have immediate access to AOL's web browser software and NPCA's web site, which provides the latest information about the parks, links to National Park Service information about the parks, as well as numerous locations providing detailed information on specific parks.

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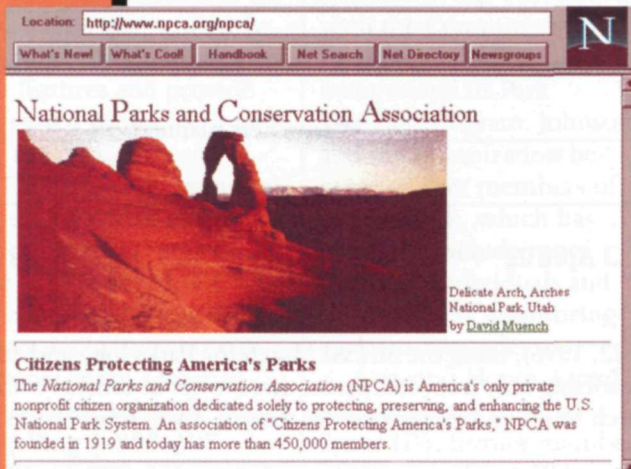
For more information about the upcoming AOL site or about our Web site, send e-mail to:

[natparks@aol.com](mailto:natparks@aol.com)  
[npca@npca.org](mailto:npca@npca.org)

\*\*\*

NPCA members can try AOL free for ten hours by acquiring an AOL start-up kit. Call 1-800-NAT-PARK [628-7275] and request NPCA's AOL kit.

AOL Keyword: Parks





# MARCH FOR PARKS CELEBRATES 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

*Volunteers needed to organize events in  
national, state, and city parks—FREE materials available!*

**N**PCA's SEVENTH ANNUAL March for Parks will be the nation's largest walking event for parks and open spaces. Held in conjunction with Earth Day, March for Parks raises awareness of park problems and funds for park projects across the country. More than 1,000 marches are expected to be organized to help celebrate the 26th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 1996.

NPCA encourages people with an interest in preserving or restoring a park in their community to organize a march sometime on Earth Day weekend, April 19–22, 1996. One hundred percent of



the proceeds from each march will stay in the local community, to be donated to a national, state, or local park.

To support each march, NPCA will provide, free of charge:

- ▲ A comprehensive guidebook on how to organize a local march;
- ▲ A Teacher's Guide for events focused on children;
- ▲ A sample brochure/pledge form for walkers;
- ▲ March for Parks posters and signs;
- ▲ Sample press releases, PSAs, and logo sheets;
- ▲ Certificates of Appreciation for walkers;
- ▲ A toll-free number for advice and answers to your questions.

For free March for Parks materials, fax a signed copy of this form to: 202-659-0650. Or mail to NPCA, March for Parks, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. For more information, call 1-800-NAT-PARK (x225). E-mail: [mrchparks@aol.com](mailto:mrchparks@aol.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

UPS Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Send Teacher's Guide      Member:  American Volkssport Assoc.       NRPA       National Tree Trust

Name of Park: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_ # marchers planned: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ Goal: \_\_\_\_\_ Funds will be used to \_\_\_\_\_

Date of March:  April 19       April 20       April 21       April 22

"I agree to hold a March for Parks on Earth Day weekend (April 19–22, 1996), using the official March for Parks logo and all national sponsor logos on all printed materials. I will accept local sponsorship only from companies that are not in conflict with national sponsors. I will donate all of the net proceeds from my march to the public park of my choice. I will send results, photos, and other information to NPCA after my event is completed."

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



BY M. KATHERINE HEINRICH

## Parks in Small Packages

► In cooperation with NPCA, Abbeville Press has introduced a new Tiny Folio series featuring the national parks. The books take the best elements of a coffee table book—beautiful photographs, insightful text, quality paper and printing—and pack them into a tiny volume that measures only about four inches square.

*Everglades* and *Yellowstone* are the first titles available in the series. Each volume includes prefatory remarks by NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard and an introduction with information on the park's history and ecology. Both books feature more than 250 color photographs including landscapes and studies of wildlife and plants found in the park. Color maps identify the park's major landforms and features and provide suggested routes for touring the park.

The next volume in the series, *Yosemite*, is scheduled for publication in April. The Tiny Folios, \$11.95 each, are available at bookstores, including those in national parks. Order directly from Abbeville Press by calling 1-800-ART-BOOK (1-800-278-2665). A portion of the proceeds

from each title will benefit NPCA's park protection programs.

## NPCA Honors

► This fall NPCA honored three individuals for their commitment to the National Park System and their accomplishments on behalf of the parks.

In October, NPCA presented an Honor Award to Judy Johnson, former president of the Committee to Preserve Assateague. Johnson, a co-founder of the organization (now known as the Assateague Coastal Trust), was honored for her lifelong efforts on behalf of Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland. After recognizing Johnson as the Conservationist of the Year for 1981, and inspired by her successes with the Committee to Preserve Assateague, NPCA inaugurated its Park Watcher program. Johnson and her organization became charter members of the network, which has grown to include more than 700 individuals and organizations monitoring parks nationwide.

A second Honor Award was presented to Mike Synar (D), former member of Congress from Oklahoma. During his 16 years

in the House, Synar advocated and passed significant legislation that has had a lasting impact on the National Park System. In 1980, Synar supported the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), hailed as the conservation vote of the century. ANILCA designated 40 million acres of Alaska lands as national parks, more than doubling the acreage protected by the National Park Service. During the 1990 reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, Synar introduced amendments to raise visibility standards in national parks.

NPCA also recently recognized Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) with a Legislative Achievement Award for her leadership on the California Desert Protection Act and her continuing commitment to national parklands in the California desert. Feinstein sponsored the legislation that established Mojave National Preserve and expanded and redesignated Death Valley and Joshua Tree national parks—one of few environmental victories in the 103rd Congress. Despite recent efforts to undo the accomplishments of the California desert legislation—the House has approved a

measure allowing the Park Service only \$1 to manage Mojave—Feinstein remains a steadfast champion of the desert parks and an advocate for a realistic budget for Mojave.

## Park Impressions

► Bring the beauty and grandeur of the national parks into your home—at the same time you will be doing your part to protect and enhance the legacy of our National Park System. In cooperation with Nature's Lasting Impressions, Inc., NPCA presents a limited-edition print series of the national parks by artist David Harbur. Harbur bases his detailed and lifelike paintings on his travels and photographs of the parks.

The first two images in the series are *Solitude*, a rendering of Rocky Mountain National Park, and *Fire and Ice*, a moonlit landscape of Denali National Park. Harbur plans to expand the series to include each of the 54 "national parks." A portion of the proceeds from each print sold will assist NPCA in its efforts to preserve our parks. For more information about Harbur's national parks series, turn to page 13.



## Building a Park Network

► Representatives of NPCA participated in two conferences this fall that have helped to foster relationships among the many local and national organizations and agencies working on behalf of our national parks. The Partnership Conference, sponsored by the National Park Service, the National Park Foundation, and NPCA, was held in mid-October in Tamiment, Pennsylvania, near Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The priority of the conference was training park leaders and citizens in the skills necessary to improve partnerships between the public and private sectors.

United by the principle that each organization offers part of the vision, wisdom, and action needed to create an effective coalition for the parks, core leaders met again in late October for a Park Summit in Greenbelt Park near Washington, D.C. The summit established a foundation for continuing communication among local and national organizations, emphasizing the need to share skills and information. Participants set priorities for action steps, calling for a national network of park organizations based on cooperation and collaboration at the regional level. NPCA will continue to sponsor and cosponsor national and regional meetings aimed at network building.

## NPCA on America Online

► NPCA is scheduled to open a site dedicated to the national parks and NPCA on America Online in January. When the "America's National Parks" site is completed, America Online subscribers will be able to access it using keywords **parks** or **NPCA**. For further details about the site, turn to page 47.

NPCA has added a new address on the Internet to help members take care of membership business with NPCA. The new address, **members@npca.org**, allows members direct access to NPCA's membership department, enabling them to easily change an address, find the status of a

gift membership, or inquire about a missing copy of National Parks.

NPCA continues its presence on:  
**CompuServe:** GO NPCA  
 Call 1-800-524-3388, representative 156, for a free membership kit.  
**Prodigy:** Use Jump: Science BB.

To receive e-mail alerts on park issues, please send NPCA your e-mail address (along with your name, mail address, and NPCA member number).

For help getting online, call 202-223-6722 and ask for Michael McCoy at extension 119.

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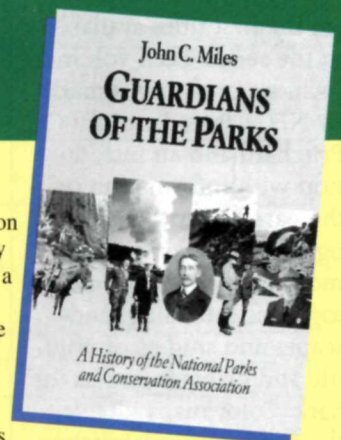
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## Guardians of the Parks: A History of the NPCA

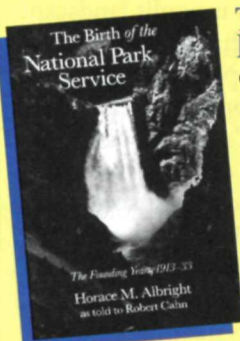
The National Parks and Conservation Association has a history of keeping the National Park Service focused on preserving our nation's natural splendor. Now you can read that 75-year history in **Guardians of the Parks** by John C. Miles, noted environmental professor and scholar. Preservation of our national parks has always been a titanic struggle between those who want to preserve and those who want to exploit. This book chronicles NPCA's efforts — from its founding concurrently with the National Park Service to today — to ensure that the National Park Service remains true to its original purpose: to preserve these wild spaces as "virtually the only places where humans could seek and find answers to questions about nature and their relation to it."

**Guardians of the Parks** is a fascinating story of not only that struggle, but the evolution of America's environmental consciousness. It should be read by everyone with a concern for the future of our national parks.

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**The Birth of the National Park Service** makes an excellent companion piece to **Guardians of the Parks**. It is the story of Horace Albright, one of the National Park Service's key founding fathers, and covers the early history of the National Park Service. An author-signed copy of the **The Birth of the National Park Service** is available at \$14.95 (hardbound), \$9.95 (softcover).

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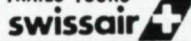
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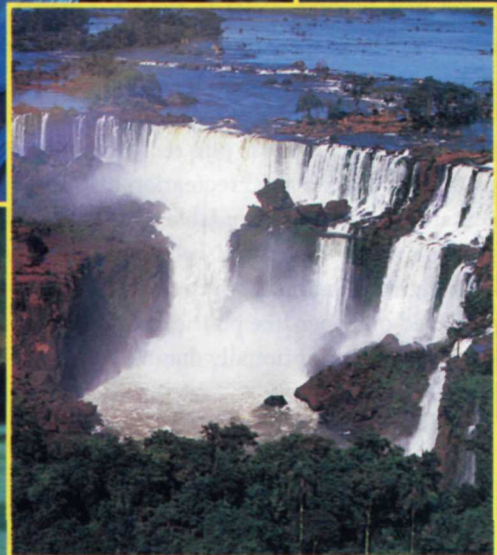
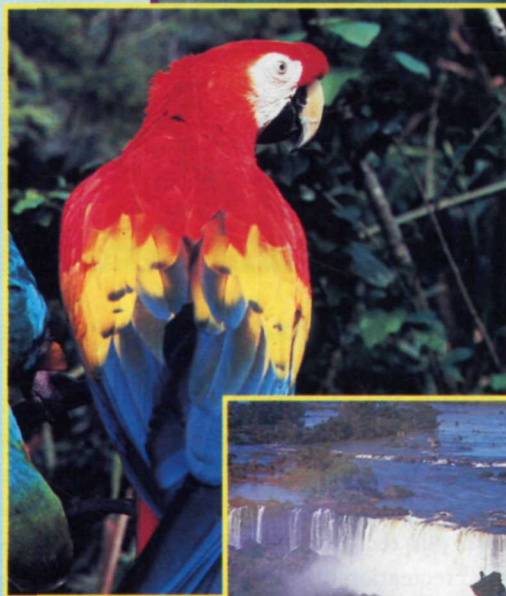
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