

# National Parks

The Magazine of  
The National Parks  
And Conservation  
Association

\$2.50

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1996

Civil War Memorial

Prairie Dog Plight

Wise Use Scare Tactics

Parks by Paddle

Trading Park Futures



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# National parks

Vol. 70, No. 9-10  
September/October 1996

The Magazine of the National Parks  
and Conservation Association

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FRED HIRSCHMANN



**COVER:** Civil War reenactors with the 54th Massachusetts, Company B. Photograph by William B. Folsom.

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JOHN W. HERBST

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# End of an Era

Editor Sue Dodge says goodbye after six years with National Parks magazine.

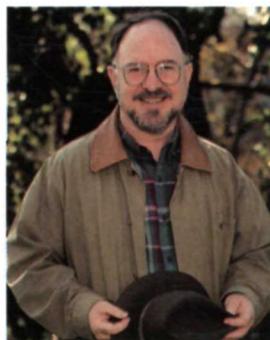
LOSING A PARTNER is tough anytime in one's life journey. So it is with the departure of our editor, Sue Dodge, here at NPCA.

"The editor rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm," said English essayist Joseph Addison—a fitting summation for Sue as she wove hundreds of articles and thousands of photographs into the image of our collective commitment to the parks.

As publisher of *National Parks* magazine, I had the task of staying out of Sue's way, for she and her staff did it all and did it well. And she did more than the magazine. Our annual reports, books, mailings, and other printed materials all passed under her careful eye.

During her six years at NPCA, Sue has demonstrated a commitment to accuracy, color, style, and quality. She has been vigilant about adapting the magazine to reflect the ever-evolving concerns and interests of our members, as evidenced in the recent redesign. Among the other major changes she implemented were printing the magazine on recycled paper with soy-based ink, using color photography throughout each issue, and moving production in-house via desktop publishing, thereby saving considerable time and money.

Throughout NPCA's history, the magazine and its editors have played a prominent role. One of NPCA's founders, Robert Sterling Yard, was a journalist and served concurrently as the association's chief executive and



DUPONT PHOTOGRAPHERS

editor. In 1920 he published our first journal, *The Nation's Parks*. Unfortunately, the association lacked the resources to publish a regular magazine. Yard was succeeded by Devereux Butcher, who brought Yard's dream of a magazine to fruition. Over the years, Butcher and the editors who followed him

broadened the magazine's scope and appeal, making it into a vital tool for promoting the organization, attracting members, and advancing the cause of national park protection.

These past few years have taxed our resources and our capacity to keep the parks on the right course while defending them from an unprecedented range of assaults. The truest compliment of Sue's skill, as Walter Lippman said, is that in the last analysis she was responsible to her own conviction of what is in the public interest.

Like all endings, Sue's departure brings a new beginning. Her successor—my new partner—will be Leslie Happ, who comes to us with years of experience in editorial management.

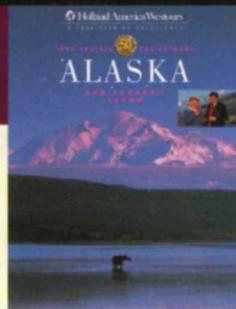
We are confident that Leslie will uphold the high standards of *National Parks* magazine; yet, we will miss Sue and her professionalism and conservation spirit.

Paul C. Pritchard

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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 support necessary to resolve them. Through its efforts, NPCA has developed a base of grassroots support that has increased effectiveness at 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 146.

**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 npca@npca.org; on America Online: keyword PARKS; and <http://www.npca.org/> on the World Wide Web.



# Farewell

**W**E EDITORS often think of our magazines as progeny. We nurture them, help them evolve, and hope the world will love them as much as we do. Having *National Parks* magazine under my care has been an immensely satisfying experience.

But it's time to move on, and this issue will be my last. I am stepping down to run my own publications consulting business. Although I am excited about this new venture, I am also sad to leave the magazine that I have helped shape over the last six years.

Looking back over the 36 issues produced by my staff and me, I am reminded of the diversity of our editorial mission. The covers alone show the range of themes the magazine addresses—endangered species, scientific research, cultural history, resource management challenges, and the unrelenting threats to the parks' integrity. The national parks are an endless source of story ideas, and the stories are as varied as the parks themselves.

The cover of this issue is a case in point. The photo is a departure from our usual landscape or wildlife shots, but it is just as relevant to our editorial mission. The photo and its corresponding story ("Fighting for Freedom," page 24) represent an often overlooked aspect of the National Park System—sites that commemorate significant events or struggles in our nation's diverse history.

The cover is a fitting "parting shot" for me, as the cover of my first issue was also unusual: a photo of Ellis Island, New York (Nov/Dec 1990).

So farewell. I am entrusting my progeny to my wonderful staff and to Leslie Happ, the next editor. I wish them all the very best.

**Sue E. Dodge, Editor**

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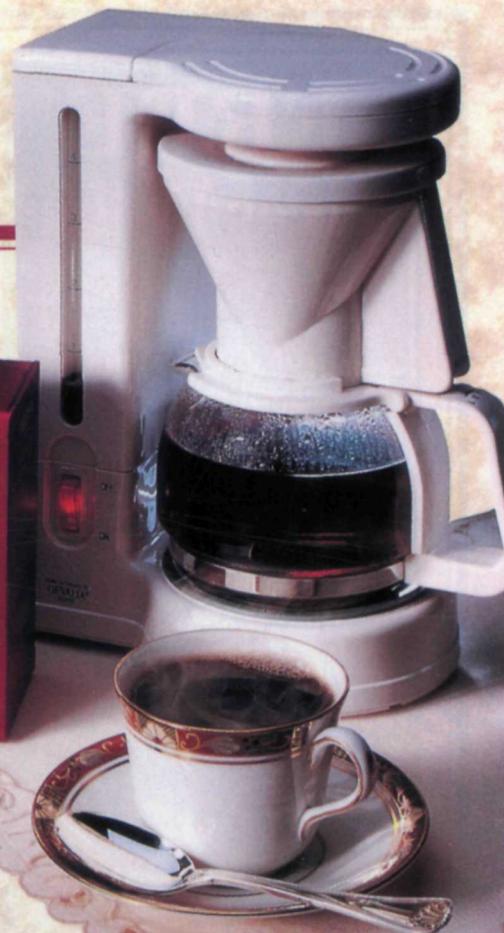
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## The Day of the Condor, SOS, Keeping the Peace

### The Day of the Condor

The federal government's efforts to save the California condor from extinction are laudable, but once again, and with the same negative results, the government seems to have fallen short in the public relations department ["Homecoming," May/June 1996]. Prior to the release of the birds—and not a few weeks before, but years—were people in northern Arizona and southern Utah educated about the implications of having an endangered species in their backyards? Were there media campaigns to instill in people a sense of pride in and respect for condors? Now, with an endangered species in their midst, the uninformed populace imagines the evil feds curtailing their freedoms. No wonder the Wise Use Movement finds fertile ground.

*José Placer*

*South San Francisco, CA*

### SOS

The problems reported at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park transcend a mere lack of funds ["Staying Afloat," March/April 1996].

Virtually all of the managers had no prior experience in museum management, curatorial functions, cataloging, or historic maritime preservation and restoration. The superintendent had no experience managing a large staff, overseeing complex projects, or running a museum. The last two persons in charge of the maintenance division, which oversees the historic ships, had no experience working in a museum or maintaining historic vessels.

The museum's management ignored a maintenance plan for the historic vessels that had been prepared by experts and failed to produce a plan of its own. The superintendent has overlooked qualified applicants and filled craft and artistic positions with individuals who had no experience with wooden ships, historic ships, or replicas.

The only managers with any relevant museum or historic maritime preservation and restoration experience were ostracized by upper management because they criticized the way the museum was being run. Other employees who were critical of museum operations faced reprisals such as termination, demotion, and reduction in salary.

The incompetent management of San Francisco Maritime is an unconscionable fraud. Its historic ships are going to sink before our grandchildren will be old enough to appreciate them. This state of affairs is entirely preventable. All that is needed is competent and professional management.

*Raymond W. Laing*  
*San Geronimo, CA*

### Keeping the Peace

I was appalled to read in the May/June issue about the threat of aircraft overflights at Rocky Mountain and Grand Canyon national parks [NPCA Park News]. I have visited both parks. Peace and quiet were among the most valuable aspects of our visits.

Americans are privileged to be able to use the parks. Appreciating them, however, is a different story. If people want to see the parks, visit the parks! A park is in the soil, the trees, the wildlife. No one could possibly comprehend that from an airplane or helicopter.

*Laura Hastings*  
*Dallas, TX*

**EDITORIAL REPLY:** At press time, the Federal Aviation Administration was expected to release regulations restricting overflights at Grand Canyon. Transportation Secretary Federico Peña announced plans in May to ban commercial overflights at Rocky Mountain.

### ANSWER TO "YOU ARE HERE"

Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
North Carolina, Tennessee



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**Grizzly Bear** premieres the "Endangered Animals of Our National Parks Collection". Sculptured by *Lenox* artists and reviewed by Zoological experts for authenticity, this piece captures the attachment between the grizzly mother and her attentive cubs. Enjoy this beautiful depiction of this solitary animal currently being threatened by ever diminishing wilderness.

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# NPCA LAUNCHES THE YELLOWSTONE PARKWATCHERS NETWORK

**O**NE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE years ago, the United States made one of its major contributions to world culture by designating some 2 million acres in the Western territories as federally protected land, to be held in trust for future generations. Since then, 368 other sites in the United States, and thousands worldwide, have been similarly preserved. But Yellowstone National Park itself, while revered by millions, has never been protected as unconditionally as those early park activists might have envisioned. The park faces many challenges, including:

## ■ BISON AND ELK SLAUGHTER

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem has been called the Serengeti of North America. It is a sanctuary for an impressive number of wild animals, including the largest bison and elk herds in the United States. It is the only place where wild, free-roaming bison have survived; the animal was reduced to near-extinction in the late 1800s. But thousands of bison and elk in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks could be slaughtered under a plan proposed by federal agencies and some state officials to eradicate brucellosis. Brucellosis, which causes domestic cattle to abort their young, is a disease that some livestock officials believe could be transmitted by bison and elk. It appears to have few long-term negative effects on wildlife. While the transmission of brucellosis has been documented in animals in captivity, it has never been proven to occur in the wild. In any event, vaccinating cattle and temporarily keeping them off bison and elk winter ranges and spring calving areas can largely prevent transmission.

## ■ TAPPING OF RENOWNED GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES

Yellowstone's natural features include more than 200 active geysers (more than the rest of the world combined) and approximately 10,000 additional geothermal features, including bubbling mudpots, multihued hot springs, and hissing fumaroles. This multitude



of geothermal features is not only a major attraction for visitors but also supports myriad life forms and is critical to the park's ecological balance. Many steps have been taken to protect these fragile resources, both at the state and federal levels, but they remain vulnerable to potential oil and gas drilling, as well as geothermal development on adjacent nonfederal lands.

## ■ PROPOSED NEW WORLD MINE

A huge gold, silver, and copper mine proposed in the headwaters of the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River has been a primary threat for six years. For the latest information on the mine, see page 13.

Because of these threats, NPCA is organizing a national constituency for the park—one that is already present but not well organized. Speak to any ten randomly selected Americans from anywhere in the country, and you will find several Yellowstone advocates willing to defend the park with their time and money—you might be one of them! No other park—not the

Grand Canyon, nor Yosemite nor the Great Smokies—generates quite that level of passion nationwide. NPCA will organize this national constituency by identifying leaders and citizen activists, developing communication and education tools, and using the resulting network to fight off threats to the park's health one by one. NPCA plans to launch a major campaign on behalf of the world's first national park, Yellowstone, during its 125th anniversary year. Although Yellowstone faces myriad challenges to its integrity, NPCA offers the benefits of a national constituency that will complement local support organized by NPCA and other groups. The

Yellowstone Parkwatchers Network will be a project of NPCA's Park Activist Network (PAN), more than 40,000 self-identified member-activists. By joining the Yellowstone Parkwatchers Network, you and your fellow activists will form the first line of defense for our oldest park. You will receive timely alerts specifically targeted to Yellowstone decision-makers and will be put "in the loop" when it comes to issues affecting the park.

To join NPCA's Yellowstone Parkwatchers Network, write to NPCA, Yellowstone Parkwatchers, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Please include your name, address, phone/fax numbers, e-mail address, and membership ID number.

# Park News

BY KIM A. O'CONNELL

## AIR QUALITY

### Commission Votes To Limit Haze on Colorado Plateau

*NPCA applauds industry's vow to clean up emissions.*

GRAND CANYON, ARIZ. — Perhaps setting a precedent for national parks across the country, the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission released in June a report outlining steps that may reduce haze at Grand Canyon and 15 other national parks and wilderness areas on the Colorado Plateau.

In 1990, when it reauthorized and amended the Clean Air Act, Congress directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish the commission to identify sources of air pollutants and determine ways to improve visibility on the plateau. Power plant emissions, the spread of urban areas, and other sources have degraded the air quality of the region, which includes Petrified Forest, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Canyonlands, Arches, and Mesa Verde national parks, all "Class I" areas under the Clean Air Act.

The report calls for regional sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions to be reduced by 13 to 30 percent by 2000 and by 50 to 70 percent by 2040. If voluntary progress toward these targets is not reached, a "cap" on regional emissions would be set and a market-based emissions trading program initiated. The commission also recommended more



KATHLEEN N. COOK

**A new report could clear the skies over Grand Canyon and other national parks.**

efforts to control vehicle emissions, implement aggressive energy conservation measures, and supply 20 percent of regional power needs from renewable energy sources by 2015.

"A regional commitment to pollution prevention, clean and renewable energy, and cleanup of major emissions sources is what holds this report together," said David Simon, NPCA Southwest regional director.

The commission's report represents a bipartisan, collaborative effort. The commission was composed of the governors (or their designated representatives) of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming and leaders of the Navajo, Acoma, Hualapai, and Hopi tribes. The commission depended

often on the work of local, state, and federal agencies (such as the National Park Service), industry officials, conservation groups, other tribal representatives, academics, and residents.

NPCA played a significant role in the process of developing the report and believes the results, while not perfect, were a step in the right direction. NPCA finds the local industry's willingness to reduce its emissions promising and is especially pleased with the response of the Mohave power plant.

Located in southern Nevada near the western end of Grand Canyon, the plant emits 40,000 tons of sulfur dioxide annually and is the largest uncontrolled source of SO<sub>2</sub> in the area. Initially resistant to being singled out, the plant's owners, Southern California

Edison, finally agreed to complete pollution attribution studies and work with EPA to take appropriate action within two years. In a survey released by NPCA and Colorado State University this year, 88 percent of respondents believed that companies should clean up their pollution if it affects the air quality of national parks.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt also praised the commission's report, particularly its recognition of the impacts of fire and smoke on visibility and the need for prescribed burns in Western forests. "The commission has acknowledged that burning under prescribed conditions offers an opportunity to reduce impacts below what wildfires would produce, while reducing risks to health and property," Babbitt said.

Improving visibility on the Colorado Plateau now hinges on how effectively the report is implemented. Over the next 18 months, EPA will integrate the commission's report into a regional haze program that will address visibility issues around the country. Some yet-to-be-defined entity will now continue the commission's work.

"For years I have watched in dismay as the awesome vistas of my childhood faded to a smoky haze," Babbitt said. "The commission's courageous recommendations will begin a new era."

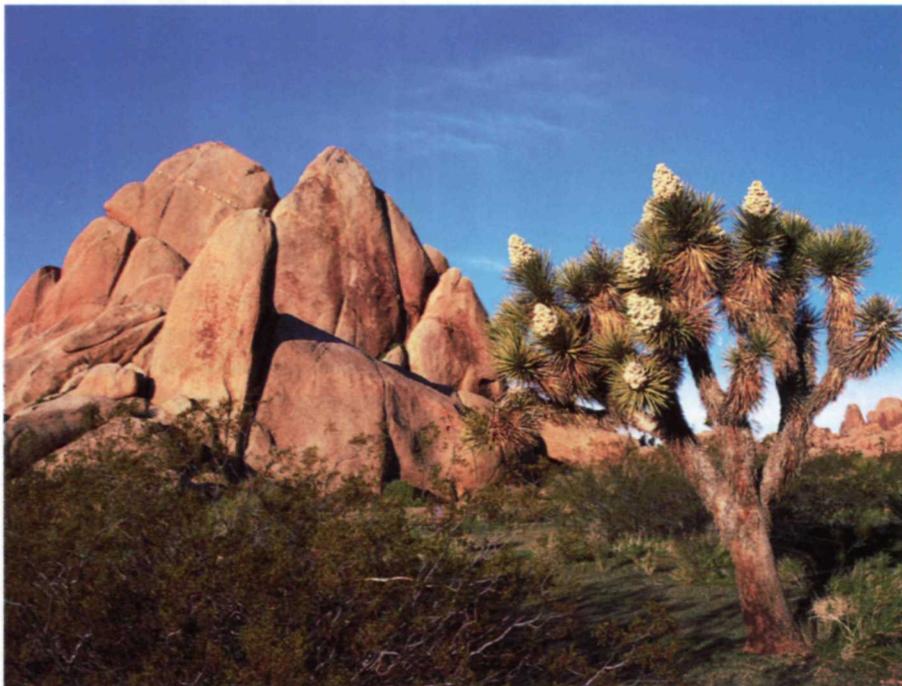
#### ADJACENT LANDS

## Landfill Plans Move Forward

*Massive trash heap will be within two miles of Joshua Tree.*

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF.—The Mine Reclamation Corporation (MRC) doggedly continues to push for the development of a more than 2,200-acre landfill next to Joshua Tree National Park.

Located less than two miles from the park on the site of the defunct Eagle Mountain iron ore mine, the world's largest trash heap would receive 20,000 tons of garbage a day from Los



TOM BEAN

**A proposed landfill could bring trash, noise, and pollution to Joshua Tree.**

Angeles and other cities, eventually accumulating 670 million tons over its projected 70- to 145-year active life span. Although a 1994 lawsuit filed by NPCA and other citizen activists led to a rejection of MRC's previous landfill plan, the company redrafted its proposal and released an environmental impact statement for the project on July 3. NPCA and other conservationists contend that, despite a few new measures designed to protect park resources, the plan still presents an unprecedented threat to a national park.

"It doesn't make any sense to take all the solid waste from the L.A. basin, bring it next to a national park, and bury it there," said Nicole Walthall of the Conservation Law Project, which is representing NPCA on Pacific issues.

In response, MRC says that the landfill will use natural and synthetic liners, water sensors, and other technology to prevent waste waters and noxious gases from leaching into the park. However, NPCA and others say that MRC's plan does not adequately address all possible environmental impacts, such as the effect of tons of garbage on soil conditions, habitat, and wildlife such as the endangered desert tortoise. Trains transporting trash will likely increase air pollution, and garbage could blow

into the park and attract vermin. Also, because the landfill would be a 24-hour operation, artificial lighting and noise would diminish the wilderness experience for overnight park visitors.

Many of MRC's concessions are inadequate and even disingenuous, NPCA says. To move forward with the landfill, MRC wants to exchange a land parcel it now owns—a prime desert tortoise area divided by an old railroad track—for Bureau of Land Management land on which the abandoned mine sits. Although the company argues that the tortoise would gain some much-needed habitat through the swap, it fails to mention that the track would be put back in use once the landfill was built, further endangering the tortoise.

In addition, the company has proposed using helicopters to see whether trash is blowing into the park. NPCA says monitoring is not enough and that noisy park overflights—which the association is working to limit at other parks—would add another impact.

NPCA will submit its objections to MRC's plan and continue to press for its withdrawal. "If this project is approved, other parks could be vulnerable to similarly dangerous developments adjacent to park resources," said Brian Huse, NPCA Pacific regional director.

# 1997 Budget To Be Approved

*Funding allotted for Mojave, but not for Everglades and Elwha.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — At press time, the Senate was about to approve an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior and related agencies, including the National Park Service, for fiscal year 1997. The House passed its version of the bill on July 20.

The bill under consideration by the Senate provides \$6.2 billion for Interior, with total funding for the Park Service at \$1.4 billion. Of that amount, \$1.16 billion would go toward NPS operations. The budget for NPS construction is set at \$165 million.

The Senate may also approve \$48 million for NPS land acquisition to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The proposal provides for significant components of the president's "Parks for Tomorrow" ini-

tiative, such as funding for Mojave National Preserve in California.

However, both the House and Senate have set inadequate funding levels for two projects highlighted by President Clinton: restoration of the Everglades ecosystem in south Florida and federal acquisition and removal of two dams on the Elwha River in Olympic National Park in Washington. The Senate is considering repealing the 1992 Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act and transferring responsibility for dam removal to the state.

AIR QUALITY

## Skies May Clear At Mount Rainier

*Agencies, local utility work to reduce emissions.*

ASHFORD, WASH. — The Centralia power plant—the largest producer of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in the western United States—has diminished visibili-

### SAVE OUR NATIONAL PARKS

► **YELLOWSTONE MINE:** Among the most endangered national parks is Yellowstone, the cornerstone of NPCA's Save Our National Parks Campaign. The park is at risk from the New World Mine, proposed for a site less than three miles away.

During his August 1995 vacation to Wyoming, President Clinton spoke out against the mine, joining the 72 percent of Americans who, according to a recent NPCA poll, want the mine stopped.

Crown Butte Mines could be ready to give up its nearly six-year struggle to develop the mine. Clinton may soon announce an expected land swap between Crown Butte and the Agriculture and Interior departments that would stop the mine.

NPCA, American Rivers, and other organizations are urging the Senate

to support a bill (S. 1737) that would protect Yellowstone and the surrounding area from mining. The bill was scheduled for a July 25 hearing, but it was abruptly canceled. Rep. Bill Richardson (D-N.Mex.) has introduced similar legislation (H.R. 1846).

Meanwhile, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Forest Service are wrapping up work on the long-awaited environmental impact statement on the mine, expected this fall.

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to your members of Congress, urging them to cosponsor S. 1737 and H.R. 1846. Addresses: U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510; U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. Check <http://www.npca.org/congress.html> for congressional e-mail addresses.

## 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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## NPCA PARK NEWS

ty at Mount Rainier National Park by 30 percent or more. But efforts are now under way to clean up Centralia, which burns low-quality, locally mined coal and does not employ scrubbers.

A little more than a year ago, the Southwest Air Pollution Control Agency of Washington came to a pollution control agreement with PacificCorp, the plant's primary owner. The com-

pany agreed to acquire "reasonably available" control technology to reduce the plant's emissions by 20 percent. Although this was an important first step, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the state's Department of Ecology believed it did not adequately protect Mount Rainier from SO<sub>2</sub>, a gas produced by burning coal that contributes to haze and acid rain.

With the help of facilitator Tim Thompson, Superintendent Bill Briggie and representatives of other agencies and PacificCorp began innovative negotiations—termed a "collaborative decision-making process" or CDM by the participants—to bring about emission reductions in a short period of time. The group has been meeting about twice a month and plans to come up with a preliminary plan—which will be available for public review—by March 1997. The group hopes to have clean-up equipment, or scrubbers, installed at Centralia by 2001.

"[We wanted to] see if we couldn't sit down and do what dueling lawyers and dueling scientists couldn't do," Briggie said. "We've all agreed to pursue the reduction of emissions from the plant."

NPCA and the local conservation community have vigilantly pressured CDM participants to aim for a 90 per-



CHARLES MAUZY

**Visibility at Mount Rainier National Park has been reduced by about 30 percent.**

cent reduction in emissions. "After PacificCorp does everything it can to install air pollution control technology, any remaining costs pursuant to a 90 percent reduction could be amortized over the life of the plant," said Phil Pearl, NPCA Pacific Northwest regional director.

The negotiators plan to use the CDM results as a building block for resolving other air

quality issues in the region. "What you're beginning to see emerge, particularly in the Pacific Northwest where you have heightened awareness about environmental concerns, is a rejection of traditional ways of dealing with these issues," Thompson said. "We're looking at a host of technologies that would give us significant emissions reductions and keep the company open."

**TAKE ACTION:** For information on upcoming public hearings, write to Superintendent Bill Briggie, Mount Rainier National Park, Tahoma Woods, Star Route, Ashford, WA 98304 or Tim Thompson, 2200 First Interstate Plaza, P.O. Box 1157, Tacoma, WA 98401.

## LEGISLATION

# Congress Debates Voyageurs Bills

*NPCA and wise users face off over political "hot potato."*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The controversy surrounding Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota continues. In July, pivotal congressional committees

held hearings on legislation that could have consequences for the entire National Park System.

On July 16, the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Lands held a hearing on H.R. 3298, the Voyageurs National Park Intergovernmental Council Act, introduced in April by Rep. James Oberstar (D-Minn.). The bill would create an 11-member intergovernmental council to make recommendations for the future management of Voyageurs. Composed largely of local and state officials—only one person would represent the national interest—the council would likely promote increasing motorized use in the park's wildest areas. On July 18, the Senate subcommittee hosted a hearing on similar legislation (S. 1805) sponsored by Sen. Rod Grams (R-Minn.).

At press time, Oberstar had just introduced a "compromise" bill, H.R. 3880, that would expand the Voyageurs council to 13 members, with five people representing the national interest. However, NPCA still opposes both of Oberstar's bills and Grams' bill on the ground that they jeopardize the National Park Service's high standards and transfer management authority to individuals with decidedly parochial interests. "By stripping the National Park Service of management planning authority, this legislation effectively takes the word 'national' out of the title and function of Voyageurs National Park," testified NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard at the House hearing.

Opposition to expanding motorized activities such as snowmobiling—which is already allowed on more than one-third of the park—at Voyageurs appears to be growing. A recent survey showed that 69 percent of Minnesotans said they support further restrictions on motorized use in Voyageurs.

Yet a vocal minority led by the Blue Ribbon Coalition, an Idaho-based Wise Use group, continues to press for more local control of Voyageurs. "A beachhead in winning the War on the West has been established in Minnesota," the coalition proclaimed recently.

This "divide and conquer" approach has NPCA and others worried about the ramifications for other national

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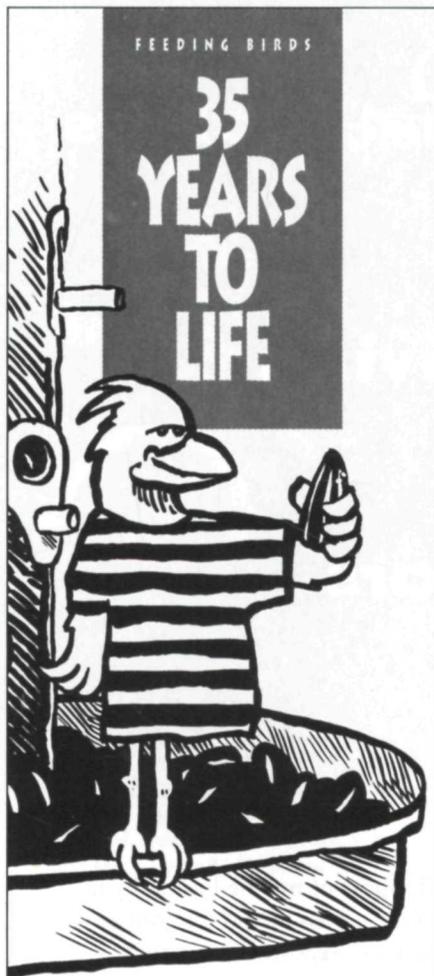
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park units. "This is the opening shot to breaking up the National Park System," said Rep. Bruce Vento (D-Minn). NPCA supports legislation (H.R. 3470), sponsored by Vento, that would designate the heart of Voyageurs—the Kabetogama Peninsula—as federally protected wilderness.

NPCA will be party to a mediation process proposed by Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) and facilitated by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. "It's a political hot potato and our job is to see if it's possible to find some common ground," said Dave Helfert, the agency's coordinator.

**TAKE ACTION:** Urge your members of Congress to oppose H.R. 3298, H.R. 3880, and S. 1805. Write to U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 and U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Check <http://www.npca.org/congress.html> for congressional e-mail addresses.

LEGISLATION

## V.I. Government May Develop Park

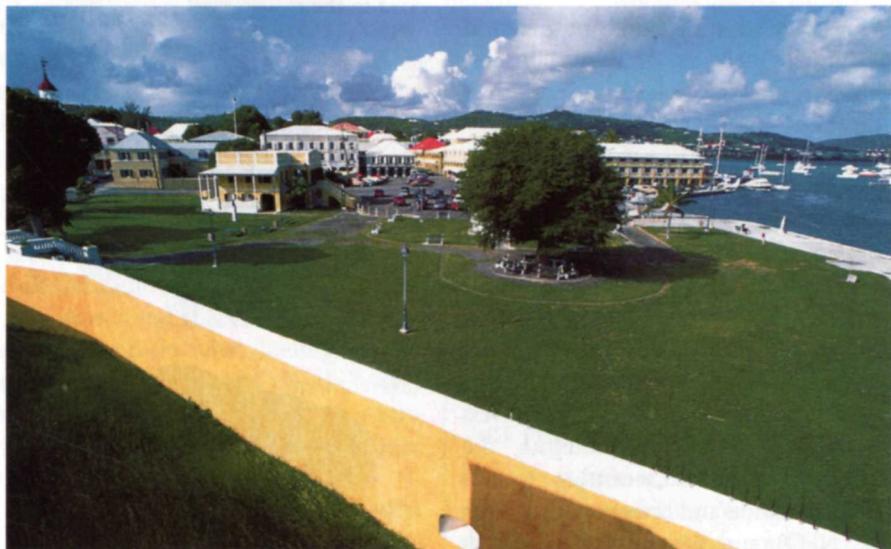
*Proposed bill would transfer Christiansted management.*

CHRISTIANSTED, ST. CROIX, V. I. — Built on the foundation of slav-

ery, the neoclassical structures of colonial Danish sugar planters are the dramatic focus of Christiansted National Historic Site. Although the National Park Service has protected this waterside park since 1952, legislation would transfer its management to the Virgin Islands government.

Rep. Victor O. Frazer (I-Delegate-V.I.) introduced the legislation (H.R. 3635) on June 13. The measure directs the secretary of the Interior—upon the request of the governor of the Virgin Islands—to enter into an agreement to turn over park management, although the federal government would retain fee title to all park property. The House Subcommittee on Native American and Insular Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 3635 on June 26.

NPCA has serious concerns about the proposal. The association believes that the transfer would allow the Virgin Islands government to act on its admitted interest in using the park's historic facilities as a staging area for disembarking cruise ship passengers, who would be channeled into the town's commercial districts via a new boardwalk. The local government has also proposed building a restaurant in the commandant quarters of Fort Christiansvaern, a principal part of the historic site. "The bill calls for inappropriate development of a national park and its transfer to an unqualified management entity," said NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard.



Christiansted's harbor and historic structures, seen from Fort Christiansvaern.

CAROL LEE

John Garrison, president of the Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park, praised the Park Service for restoring and preserving Christiansted's unique structures. "The government of the Virgin Islands simply does not have the expertise," Garrison said.

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to your representative, urging her or him to oppose H.R. 3635, at U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. Check <http://www.npca.org/congress.html> for congressional e-mail addresses.

#### LEGISLATION

## Riders Added To Omnibus Bill

*Dozens of anti-park measures attached to "clean" Senate bill.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—When a conference committee convened earlier this summer to ready the omnibus parks bill for the president's signature, the House brought a more than 400-page document to the negotiating table. In it were dozens of controversial riders that would turn a pro-park bill into a dangerous piece of legislation.

Last September, the House passed H.R. 1296, a bill creating a management entity for the Presidio in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. On May 1, the Senate passed a heavily amended version that contained several NPCA-supported measures, such as the creation of Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Kansas and the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail in Alabama and the expansion of Walnut Canyon National Monument in Arizona. This was the Senate's second attempt: an earlier omnibus bill including harmful Utah wilderness language was rejected.

In several cases, the provisions in the House proposal are bills that have drawn fire on their own. One measure would prohibit the further expansion of Shenandoah National Park and Richmond National Battlefield Park in

## NEWS UPDATE

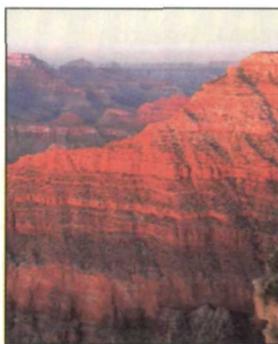
► **CHANNEL ISLANDS:** A draft resource management plan released by Channel Islands National Park in California is "woefully inadequate," said Neil Levine of the Environmental Defense Center, which is representing NPCA. The plan insufficiently addresses ways to protect the water quality, riparian habitat, and rare plants on the park's Santa Rosa Island, which has suffered from extensive grazing resulting from a commercial ranching operation.

**TAKE ACTION:** Urge Acting Superintendent Tim Setnicka to ensure that the plan truly protects Santa Rosa. Write to Channel Islands National Park, 1901 Spinnaker Drive, Ventura, CA 93001.

► **JUDGE ALLOWS CLIMBING:** In June, federal judge William Downes

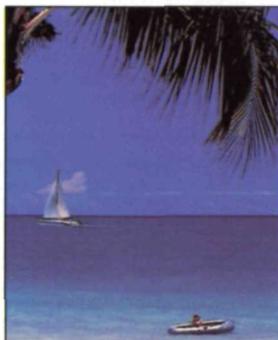
ruled that the National Park Service cannot ban commercial rock climbing at Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming. The Mountain States Legal Foundation had sued NPS over its imposition of a ban on climbing during the month of June. NPS made the decision out of respect for local Indians who consider June a holy month and the tower a sacred site. The judge stated, however, that NPS can still request that climbers avoid the monolith in June. NPS plans to appeal the decision.

► **NPS ASSERTS AUTHORITY:** In response to questions about jurisdiction over park waters in Alaska, the Park Service has published a rule clarifying its authority to manage waters within parks and designate wilderness waters.



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# REGIONAL REPORT

News Briefs from NPCA's Regional Offices

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

► A federal judge recently stated that a Native village was not entitled to lands it expected to receive from Cook Inlet Region, Inc., a wealthy Native corporation. The decision has implications for legislation (H.R. 2560) sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) that would transfer 29,500 acres of Lake Clark National Park to Native villages that say their legal claims to land were not satisfied. NPCA says that such claims have indeed been met, which was corroborated by the ruling. However, Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) has introduced a bill (S. 1998) that could force the land transfer.

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

► NPCA is praising an amendment to the 1997 Interior appropriations bill that bars the use of any funds for the design, planning, implementation, or construction of a proposed scenic drive in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan. Introduced by Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Mich.), the amendment was approved by the House on June 20. NPCA continues to promote another bill (H.R. 2958) introduced by Stupak. Cosponsored by Reps. Vern Ehlers (R-Mich.) and Collin Peterson (D-Minn.), the bill would help NPS to upgrade a nearby county road for park access instead of building a new one.

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

► The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997 includes a title that would transfer land from the NPS-run Arlington House in Virginia—the Robert E. Lee Memorial—to Arlington Cemetery for the expansion of burial grounds. Conservationists including NPCA are concerned about the destruction of woodlands that surround Lee's antebellum home. NPCA supports an amendment by Sen. Charles S. Robb (D-Va.) that mandates a study of historic and natural resources before any transfer is approved. The study's results would then be transmitted to Congress for review. The association notes that other locations around the Washington, D.C., area may be better suited for additional burial grounds.

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

► On June 13, the House subcommittee on national parks approved a bill (H.R. 3534) that would extend to the heirs of 65 permit holders the opportunity to lease cabins in the Mineral King area of Sequoia National Park. Sponsored by Rep. George Radanovich (R-Calif.), the bill would stymie NPS plans to convert the cabins to campgrounds, extending private use of the area at the public's expense. NPCA disputes the permittees' contention that the cabins are historic and their claim that they are entitled to these extensions.

✍ **TAKE ACTION:** The bill's prospects depend on California Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D) and Barbara Boxer (D). Urge them to oppose the bill.

continued

Virginia. Another could grant virtually perpetual leasing rights to private occupants of public land in Sequoia National Park in California (see Pacific regional report this page).

Parks and public lands in Alaska are especially at risk. The proposal would add land to Gates of the Arctic National Park only in exchange for allowing oil and gas drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; remove nearly 1,000 acres of wilderness from Glacier Bay National Park; and downgrade part of the Fortymile River to facilitate mining.

At press time, the Senate had made a counteroffer that also contains controversial provisions. President Clinton has promised to veto the bill.

✍ **TAKE ACTION:** Urge your members of Congress to support a "clean" omnibus parks bill. Write to U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 and U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Check <http://www.npca.org/congress.html> for congressional e-mail addresses.

## TRANSPORTATION

# Destroyed Road Will Be Rerouted

*Gulf Islands resources will benefit from realignment.*

GULF BREEZE, FLA.—For nearly a year, National Park Service officials have worked to restore Highway 399, the hurricane-damaged road that cuts through Santa Rosa Island, part of Gulf Islands National Seashore. But now a dispute over relocating the road has finally been resolved.

When Hurricane Opal thrashed the seashore last October, demolishing the highway, the park's resource management team and NPCA and other groups immediately saw an opportunity. The original road was laid straight as an arrow close to the primary dune line, preventing the natural development of secondary dunes, which help to protect the island from severe storm surges. Because the road had to be rebuilt any-



REGIONAL REPORT *continued*

Write to them at U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 or send e-mail to senator@feinstein.senate.gov and to senator@boxer.senate.gov.

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST** Phil Pearl, Regional Director

► Olympic National Park in Washington is preparing a thorough environmental impact statement (EIS) on various activities, including personal watercraft (PWC) use, at the park's Lake Crescent. NPCA and other conservationists had raised concerns about the continued and increasing use of PWCs, which are disruptive to park visitors seeking quiet and solitude. Pearl noted that PWC use was recently banned in Glacier National Park in Montana and that the EIS process presents a unique opportunity to prevent a park threat before it becomes unmanageable.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN** Mark Peterson, Regional Director

► In May, the Biodiversity Legal Foundation filed a notice of its intent to sue NPS over its failure to study the impacts of increasing winter use—especially snowmobiling—at Yellowstone National Park. Jasper Carlton, director of the foundation, says the suit could be avoided if NPS agrees to prepare an environmental impact statement on winter use and outline ways to protect resources from the noise and exhaust of snowmobiles. "We do not want a legal train wreck," Carlton said. NPCA is encouraging NPS to develop a plan that protects the park from overvisitation in the wintertime.

**SOUTHEAST** Don Barger, Regional Director

► Proposed concept plans by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to develop a national recreation area in its care have been vigorously opposed. TVA had hoped to make Land Between the Lakes more self-sufficient by generating 80 percent of its operating money through private or commercial development. NPCA had serious concerns about sacrificing parklands for intensive development, and the public agreed. After receiving 635 completed surveys, 677 comment forms, and three petitions, TVA reconsidered its proposal.

**SOUTHWEST** David Simon, Regional Director

► For the first time since a recovery program began in 1978, endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles released at Padre Island National Seashore in Texas returned home to nest. Yet sea turtles are still facing extinction, and the shrimping industry continues to be a primary threat. NPCA supports National Marine Fisheries Service plans to restrict certain shrimping activities, although it suggests stronger measures. NPCA promotes the creation of "shrimping-free" turtle protection zones, the use of more efficient Turtle Excluder Devices on shrimp nets, and more steps to control marine debris.

 **TAKE ACTION:** Support the creation of turtle protection zones. Write to Theresa Conant, Chief of the Endangered Species Division, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Introduced by Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-Delegate-D.C.) in April 1995, the bill (H.R. 1508) was signed into law on July 19. The proposal transfers title of Heritage Island and part of Kingman Island to the District of Columbia government, which plans to allow the Island Development Corporation (IDC) to build a theme park on the islands. The for-profit theme park would charge admission (currently the park is free) and offer rides, games, and movies on the islands.

Children would undoubtedly enjoy the theme park, but NPCA and other environmental and civic organizations are concerned that the park's natural values will be forever lost to these children and to future generations. Home to more than 60 pairs of great blue herons as well as osprey, bald eagles, and other wildlife, the park is one of the last remaining places in the Washington metropolitan area not yet touched by development.

"This short-sighted legislation provides a dreadful precedent that will be difficult to distinguish from other attempts to give away our children's heritage for the benefit of a few," stated NPCA President Paul C. Pritchard in a July 17 letter urging Clinton to veto the bill. NPCA contends that the proposal directly countermands the president's recently announced initiative to aid the Anacostia area and conservationists' continuing efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

In addition, the new law nullifies a court order. In December 1993, a U.S. District Court judge decided in favor of a lawsuit contesting the transfer that was filed by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund on behalf of NPCA and other groups. The judge declared the transfer improper and ordered the Park Service to prepare an environmental impact statement in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Although the new law requires that the District of Columbia review IDC's plans in full compliance with NEPA, it negates the judge's order for a full environmental review by NPS.

NPCA will continue to work with all parties to protect the islands' natural features.

# Alaska Lands Act Overhaul Proposed

Bill undermines protections for parks and other public lands.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 130 million acres of national parklands, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges in Alaska will be stripped of safeguards that have been in place since 1980 if a bill introduced by Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) moves through Congress.

The legislation, S. 1920, weakens the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), a landmark conservation measure that established or expanded 13 national park units, more than doubling the acreage preserved in the National Park System. ANILCA also created or expanded 16 national wildlife refuges, designated new wilderness areas, and set up man-

agement guidelines for these lands.

"S. 1920 outlines 28 amendments, most of which overturn major policy decisions in ANILCA," said Chip Dennerlein, NPCA Alaska regional director. "These changes constitute a complete shift in the balance Congress sought for public lands in Alaska."

One measure eliminates ANILCA's system of checks and balances for right-of-way claims in parks and other protected areas, waiving requirements for permits and exempting even major road development from environmental review. Another provision requires proof that an activity is "specifically and tangibly" detrimental to the resource before an area can be closed to that use. Conservationists contend that this requirement ignores essential park values such as silence and solitude.

Recreational hunting and fishing are allowed by law on national preserves and wildlife refuges in Alaska, but this legislation establishes these activities as statutory purposes of these units, giving managers less authority to protect wildlife. In one of the most far-reach-

## MARKUP

### Key Park Legislation

**BILL**

**Omnibus Parks  
H.R. 1296**

**PURPOSE**

Proposals by Congress would add dozens of controversial riders to a bill whose primary functions once were to create the Presidio Trust and Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. NPCA opposes.

**STATUS**

A joint conference committee is considering the proposals. If these are approved, the bill faces a veto from the president.

**Voyageurs  
H.R. 3298 / S. 1805  
H.R. 3880**

Creates a locally driven management council for Voyageurs National Park that does not adequately represent the national interest. NPCA opposes.

The House held a hearing on H.R. 3298 on July 16, and the Senate held a hearing on S. 1805 on July 18. H.R. 3880 is awaiting action by the House Resources Committee.

**ANILCA  
S. 1920**

Weakens the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), stripping national parks and public lands of safeguards in place since 1980. NPCA opposes.

S. 1920 is awaiting action before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which has scheduled a hearing for September 18.

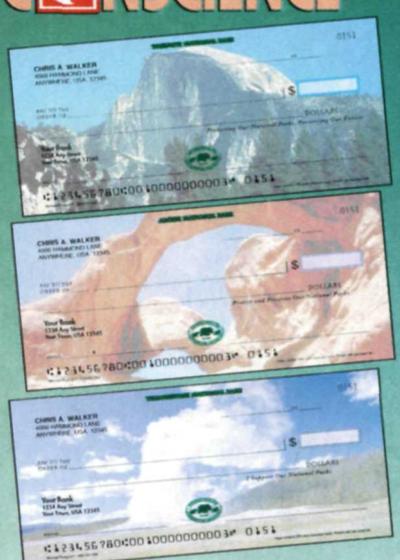
**Virgin Islands  
H.R. 3635**

Transfers management of Christiansted National Historic Site to the Virgin Islands government. NPCA opposes.

The House Subcommittee on Native American and Insular Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 3635 on June 26.

NPCA is working on more than 30 bills.

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TOM BEAN

**Legislation would imperil Alaska parks, such as Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.**

ing amendments, S. 1920 authorizes motorized access in all areas where hunting and fishing are permitted, eliminating ANILCA's requirements for proof of pre-existing use. "This bill would open virtually all national parklands and wilderness in Alaska to motorized vehicles," Dennerlein said.

Dennerlein will testify at a September 18 hearing on S. 1920.

—M. Katherine Heinrich

**TAKE ACTION:** Write to your senators, urging them to oppose S. 1920, at U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Check <http://www.npca.org/congress.html> for congressional e-mail addresses.

PARTNERSHIPS

# NPS Initiative Assists Landmarks

Network would provide guidance to owners of historic sites.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — What do Helen Keller's birthplace in Alabama, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site in New York, and the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico have in common? They are three of the 2,302 national historic landmarks that

stand to benefit from a new National Park Service program.

For more than a decade, the Park Service has been responsible for identifying nationally significant representations of our history and culture and designating them as national historic landmarks (NHLs). Although the sites are owned by federal, state, local, private, or tribal entities, NPS monitors their conditions and works with owners to preserve them. To streamline this work and foster partnerships, NPS has launched the National Historic Landmark Assistance Initiative, a working group of site owners and travel, environmental (including NPCA), and other organizations.

"We would help set up [the program] but the owners would run it," said Susan Escherich, coordinator of the initiative. "Our main goal is to get them networking together and identifying problems and sharing solutions."

Part of the initiative's mission is to prepare a report to Congress identifying threats to NHLs and suggesting ways to address them. Many NHLs are buildings, which are vulnerable to deterioration because of funding shortfalls, damage from floods, fire, or other disasters, and adjacent development. Although NPS in 1995 identified 138 NHLs as severely damaged or threatened, 58 other sites have been removed from the endangered list as a direct result of cooperative action by owners, friends groups, state historic preservation offices, and legislatures.

"NHLs are a special class of sites that need to be managed with care," said NPCA Northeast Regional Director Eileen Woodford. "Congress should dedicate the funding for this initiative."

To improve public outreach and education, the initiative is planning a conference for owners and friends of NHLs in the Northeast next year.

**TAKE ACTION:** An Internet discussion group has been launched for people connected with or interested in NHLs. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to [majordomo@web.cr.nps.gov](mailto:majordomo@web.cr.nps.gov). In the body of the message, type "subscribe h-landmarks" and your name and address, and identify site affiliation, if any.

WISE USE WATCH

# FLY-IN TARGETS GREEN GROUPS, LAND MANAGERS

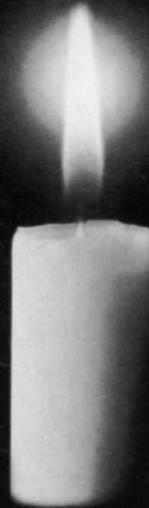
In June, influential Wise Use Groups—as part of their campaign to roll back environmental protections—sent representatives to Washington, D.C., for the Fly-in for Freedom, the movement's annual lobbying effort. In addition to meeting with individual members of Congress, several representatives testified at a hearing hosted by the House Resources Committee.

Led by Committee Chair Don Young (R-Alaska), the hearing was designed to air wise users' allegations of mismanagement by federal land agencies. Groups such as the American Land Rights Association and Alliance for America derided the National Park Service and other land managers—as well as conservation organizations one witness termed GAGs ("green advocacy groups")—for continuing the so-called War on the West.

Using the brusque language that so often undercuts the movement's credibility, Clark Collins, executive director of the Blue Ribbon Coalition of Idaho, accused Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt of enforcing "gestapo-like methods of dealing with land users he and his GAG friends don't approve of." Collins denounced the Park Service's efforts to balance motorized recreation at Voyageurs National Park with protection of its wilderness values, which is strongly supported by NPCA and other conservation groups. Other witnesses complained about the Endangered Species Act and the reintroduction of the gray wolf to Yellowstone.

The hearing was sparsely attended by committee members, indicating, perhaps, a growing bipartisan aversion to bashing the environment.

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# FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

A new memorial that honors African Americans who fought in the Civil War is an important step toward broadening our understanding of history.

BY LINDA M. RANCOURT

**W**HEN CONFEDERATE Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender signaled the end of the Civil War more than 130 years ago, the Union wasted no time planning a victory parade. On May 23, 1865, more than 200,000 troops from all over the Union paraded down Washington, D.C.'s, Pennsylvania Avenue—a roadway that symbolically links the nation's icons of power, the White House and the Capitol.

But the victory parade was incomplete. Not one of the more than 188,000 African-American soldiers and sailors who fought in the war marched in the "Grand Army of the Republic Review," and no one seems to have a satisfactory answer as to why.

This September, District of Columbia Councilmember Frank Smith, along with dozens of others, will make a small adjustment to history when the African-American Civil War Memorial, a National Park Service (NPS) unit, is dedicated in Washington, D.C. As part of the week-long dedication, a parade has been planned on Pennsylvania Avenue that will include African-American Civil War reenactors.

"It may not last two days [as did the original], and it may not have 200,000 troops in it, but their time has come," says Smith, who has spent the past six



**Although the Union army initially excluded blacks, many slaves escaped from the South and found ways to aid the war effort. This young contraband became a Union drummer boy.**

years working to bring the memorial to fruition. "A Philadelphia paper wrote [at the time of the Review] that 'their time will yet come.' Well, 130 years later, their time has come."

When Smith first conceived of the memorial, he had no intention of creating a national park site, nor did he realize the Shaw neighborhood, in which the memorial would reside, was named for Col. Robert Gould Shaw, the leader of the 54th Massachusetts, an African-American Civil War regiment. Initially, Smith wanted simply to compensate a neighborhood in his ward for the damage caused by the construction of a long-awaited subway station.

Active in the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Smith is fascinated by the Civil War and African Americans' role in it. The memorial, he says, will serve as a reminder that the fight for civil rights continues and as a point of pride for all African Americans, especially those who had ancestors who fought in the Civil War.

Before the memorial was designated by Congress, the Park Service already had begun the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors project to identify the 3.2 million men who fought on both sides. The Park Service, working cooperatively with the Federation of Genealogical Societies and The Genealogical Society of Utah (the Mormon Church), will eventually make the names available

MASSACHUSETTS COMMANDERY MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION AND THE U.S. ARMY MILITARY HISTORY INSTITUTE



FORT SCOTT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry was the first regiment of African-American soldiers from a northern state to engage Confederate forces in combat. The battle, which took place at Island Mound, Missouri, on October 28 and 29, 1862, is depicted here. The regiment was trained at Fort Scott, now Fort Scott National Historic Site, Kansas.

through a data base at its Civil War sites. Working with NPS, Howard University is trying to identify African Americans who served in the Navy, which, unlike the Army, did not separate service records by race.



BRAD MARKEL

**District of Columbia Councilmember Frank Smith displays plans for an information center that will be part of the new African-American Civil War Memorial.**

At Smith's request, the Park Service agreed to identify African Americans first. Their names will be engraved onto plaques and attached to walls that will stand in semi-circles behind the memorial's centerpiece, an Ed Hamilton sculpture that depicts African Americans: soldiers and a sailor on one side, women and children on the other. Altogether, more than 188,000 names of soldiers and sailors, as well as

their officers, who were most often white, will be part of the \$6-million memorial. So far, the city's public transportation system has donated \$1 million. The remainder will be raised through additional donations.

Although the movie *Glory*—starring Denzel Washington and Matthew Broderick and depicting the struggles of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry—raised the consciousness of some about the role of African Americans in the war, few realize the extent of their involvement. African Americans fought in 449 engagements, of which 39 were major battles. About 37,000 African Americans died. They came from eight northern states, seven southern states, and the District of Columbia. They fought in every major engagement from 1863 through 1865, except Sherman's march to the sea. Sixteen black soldiers and four black sailors received Medals of Honor for bravery. Fourteen of those medals went to black soldiers who fought at the battle of New Market Heights, part of a major offensive to capture Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital.

In the last few months of the war, even the Confederacy—in a desperate move because of a severe shortage of manpower—passed legislation that allowed slaves to fight in exchange for their freedom. Those who fought could be freed only if their owners consented. This move was considered the death rattle of a dying Confederacy, which had, after all, believed that arming the slaves was a criminal act. Two compa-

nies were formed, but never saw action.

"The key to interpreting African American troops is that they were active members in securing their freedom," says Peter Carmichael, a seasonal ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park. "This was not just something that the federal government and Abraham Lincoln bestowed on them."

African Americans volunteered to fight for the Union almost as soon as Confederate cannons fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina; after all, their ancestors had fought in both the War of 1812 and the War for Independence. But federal law prevented them from serving in state militias, and initially they had little success getting into the Union Army. (Unlike the Army, the Navy did not exclude blacks, and

**African Americans fought in every major engagement from 1863 through 1865, except Sherman's march through Georgia.**

10,000 would serve during the course of the war.)

Despite the obstacles, they found other ways to aid the war effort. "A few light-skinned black men 'passed' and joined white regiments. Thousands of other civilians worked in the Union army as cooks, laborers, and teamsters," says Pulitzer Prize-winning historian James McPherson in his book *Marching Toward Freedom: Blacks in the Civil War 1861-1865*.

Still others, mostly slaves escaping from the South to reach Union lines, worked as scouts and spies, including one husband and wife team who devised a system of signals using a clothesline loaded with laundry. In another famous incident, slave brothers Robert and John Smalls, a pilot and an engineer, respectively, of the steamship *Planter*, hijacked the Confederate gunboat from Charleston Harbor in May 1862 and surrendered it to the Union.



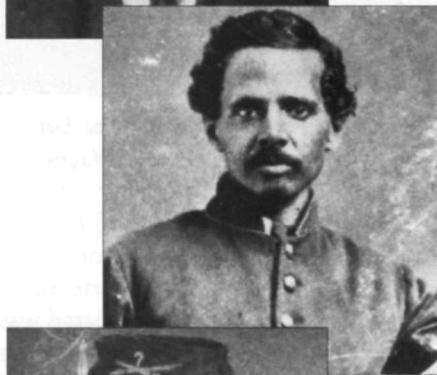
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

But the greatest glory was reserved for soldiers in the army. Pressure from abolitionists, including prominent African-American orator Frederick Douglass, mounted to allow African Americans into the Union Army and to eliminate slavery.

Initially, President Lincoln hesitated to free slaves because he feared that the slave-holding states of Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Delaware would bolt from the Union. Slowly legislation adopted by Congress through the spring and summer of 1862 chipped away at slavery and the resistance to enlisting blacks in the war.

In September 1862, after a strategic Union victory at the battle of Antietam, Lincoln issued a preliminary emancipation proclamation, paving the way for African-American enlistment. Two months later, Lincoln authorized the first black regiment. Freed slaves on the South Carolina Sea Islands formed the 1st South Carolina Volunteers, led by Massachusetts abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

After New Year's Day 1863, when the Emancipation Proclamation became law, African Americans began to enlist in droves. Even though blacks had shown their willingness to join the



PHOTOS COURTESY DALE RICH, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**ABOVE: Black and white sailors on the Union gunboat USS Hunchback. LEFT, from top: Alexander Kelly, Powhatan Beaty, and Christian Fleetwood were among 16 black soldiers who received Medals of Honor for bravery in action.**

Union effort from the start, many white officers and soldiers did not believe the men would fight. Even Lincoln, in the beginning of the war, suggested, "if we were to arm [the blacks], I fear that in a few weeks the arms would be in the hands of the rebels."

Throughout the remainder of the war, African-American soldiers would prove their critics wrong, and toward the end of 1863, the tide of public opinion would finally change. Col. Higginson and the 1st South Carolina Volunteers fought, and fought well, in a number of skirmishes, but the first major battle came in May 1863.

McPherson writes: "On May 27, 1863, two regiments of Louisiana's Corps d'Afrique took part in an assault on Port Hudson, a Confederate stronghold on the lower Mississippi River. The attack failed, but the blacks fought courageously, advancing over open ground in the face of deadly artillery fire."

On June 7, African Americans again fought bravely, when two regiments of newly recruited freedmen beat back a Confederate attack on Milliken's Bend, a Union outpost on the Mississippi River above Vicksburg. Fifty percent of the "colored troops" were lost in that engagement, primarily because they were made up of new recruits. "Some of these poor fellows had been in service for one day," says Terry Winschel, historian at Vicksburg National Battlefield Park. "Some of them hadn't been trained how to reload their muskets."

At great cost, the troops won the respect of the Army and the nation's leaders. McPherson writes that during a review of Milliken's Bend after the battle, Assistant Secretary of War Charles Dana related that "the bravery of the blacks ...completely revolutionized the sentiment of the army with regard to the employment of negro troops. I heard prominent officers who formerly in private had sneered at the idea of the negroes fighting express themselves after that as heartily in favor of it."

On July 16, 1863, the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry fought at Honey Springs, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, holding the center of the Union line and firing at the Confederates until the rebels broke and ran. Even before "colored troops" could enlist in the U.S. Army, the 1st and 2nd Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry regiments trained at Fort Scott, now Fort Scott National Historic Site. Kansas was the first state in the Union to officially recruit and train African-American military units.

One of the best known regiments was the 54th Massachusetts, organized by Massachusetts Gov. John Andrew and led by Shaw, an abolitionist and veteran of the battle at Antietam. One of Frederick Douglass' sons served in

the 54th. After completing basic training near Boston, the 54th was assigned to active duty in South Carolina, and Shaw volunteered his regiment to make the initial charge on Fort Wagner, one of a string of forts surrounding South Carolina's Charleston Harbor.

The battle at Fort Wagner is perhaps the most famous battle involving black troops. Immortalized by both Augustus Saint-Gaudens' statue, now standing in Boston Common, Massachusetts, and the movie *Glory*, the battle on July 18, 1863, claimed 235 of the 600 men in the regiment, including Shaw.

"With all of that smoke and gunfire, you ask yourself: 'How could anyone ever survive an assault like that?'" asks Mel Reid, an equal opportunity manager for the Park Service and a Civil War

fell back, Carney—wounded in the arm, chest, and both legs—brought the flag away safely. The original flag is in the basement museum of the State House in Boston.

Although the assault on Fort Wagner was a military failure, in "a broader sense it was a triumph for the Massachusetts 54th," writes McPherson, because it proved once again that black troops would fight with courage and conviction.

It succeeded in another way as well. After hearing about the 54th, Andrew Jackson Smith, an 18-year-old slave who had run away from a farm in Kentucky, made his way to Chicago to enlist. He was among the first five men to join the 55th Massachusetts regiment. Grandson Andrew Bowman of Indiana,

Illinois, has been on a decade-long quest for information about his maternal grandfather, who was turned down for a Medal of Honor. "He was recommended for a medal for saving the flag during the battle at Honey Hill, South Carolina," says Bowman. "The color sergeant was killed, and the man carrying the state flag was wounded. My grandfather ended up carrying both flags in a battle that killed a third of the men in his regiment."

Black troops played a key role in the fierce fighting around Petersburg and at the Battle of

the Crater outside of the city in 1864, a siege that is commemorated at Petersburg National Battlefield Park. The battle has been described as one of the worst Union fiascoes of the war. Union soldiers had dug an underground tunnel from their position to a point beneath Confederate lines, where they placed a huge quantity of gunpowder. They set off the explosion, but the commander waited before sending in the troops, eliminating the crucial element of surprise. The Union also underestimated the strength of the remaining Confederates. Whites led the



**Saint-Gaudens' statue portrays Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts regiment in their ill-fated assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina.**

reenactor with Company B of the 54th Massachusetts. Reid and some in his company acted in the movie *Glory*. "That last scene, where the charge was made on Fort Wagner, took two and a half weeks. In all that heat, we wore the wool uniforms and carried the ten-pound muskets."

Like many Civil War reenactors, Reid knows the story and history of his regiment. He recounted the story of Sgt. William Carney, who won the Medal of Honor. As attackers met defenders on the rampart of Fort Wagner, Sgt. Carney planted the flag. When the 54th



WILLIAM B. FOLSON

Civil War reenactors relive the struggles of the 54th Massachusetts, one of the best known black regiments.

charge into what was later called a “slaughterpen.” Blacks followed and actually had to fight their way through the retreating white soldiers to get to rebel lines. After a brief, desperate fight, they too retreated.

Besides battling Southern troops, African Americans faced challenges during the war that were foreign to most of their white brethren. They lived in fear of capture by Confederates, who were rumored to murder black Union soldiers even after surrender. On April 12, 1863, at Fort Pillow, a Union garrison on the Mississippi River, it became more than a rumor. Confederates attacked and captured the Union outpost, then murdered several dozen black troops, who had already surrendered. White officers of black regiments also faced death for arming “slaves and encouraging insurrection.”

The inequality in pay was among the most galling discriminations against African Americans. A law stipulated that blacks would be paid \$10 a month, out of which \$3 would be deducted for clothing. White privates received \$13 a month, plus a clothing allowance of \$3.50. Congress finally

enacted legislation on June 15, 1864, that granted black soldiers equal pay.

The Civil War brought significant changes to African Americans, but not without resistance from the white community. While the black troops

**Although the assault on Fort Wagner was a military failure, it proved that black troops would fight with courage and conviction.**

proved their bravery in battle, other newly freed African Americans headed North to look for work. Many whites, including some immigrants, resented the competition, and African Americans became targets of the white working class. Many whites also resented being called to fight in a war that, from their perspective, was simply to free the slaves. These tensions erupted in several serious race riots in northern cities in 1862 and 1863, but by far the

worst violence occurred in New York City in July 1863. African Americans, already the targets of resentful white workers, became the objects of rioting white men infuriated by newly enacted legislation that allowed any man with \$300 to hire a substitute to fight in the war in his place. When the draft office opened in New York in July, a white mob burned it down and began four days of rioting and bloodshed in which dozens of blacks were murdered or left homeless.

African Americans made great strides toward achieving civil rights during the Civil War, a fight that provides some valuable lessons today. “Blacks fought in the war for their freedom, after the war they were elected to all kinds of offices, and then it all disappeared,” says Councilmember Frank Smith. “By the time I was born [into the segregated South] we had to do it all over again. We did it the first time, fighting for our freedom; why did we have to do it again? It is important to keep asking that question.”

LINDA M. RANCOURT is associate editor of National Parks.



Billions of prairie dogs once inhabited the plains, but politics, poison, and plague have turned many of their colonies into

# GHOST TOWNS

BY GEORGE WUERTHNER

**W**ITHIN THE FIRST few miles of the entrance to Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the main road climbs a hill and tops out on a wide rolling expanse of prairie. This section of prairie is no different from the thousands of square miles of surrounding North Dakota landscape except for one thing—its entire surface is dotted with hundreds of tiny craters marking the burrows of black-tailed prairie dogs.

This “dog town,” like other colonies scattered across the short- and mid-grass prairie from Canada to Mexico, is a patch of vibrant life in the otherwise featureless plain. The town’s rotund residents graze, cavort, and scamper from burrow to burrow in a nearly continuous whirlwind of communal animation. The activity attracts a host of other plains wildlife, including bison, burrowing owls, golden eagles, ferruginous hawks, antelope, coyotes, badgers, and

a multitude of other animals. On the Great Plains, the prairie dog town is the center of the animal universe.

Although nearly every visitor stops to watch the prairie dogs, few realize that the park’s dog towns are among just a handful of sites in the entire West where the species is not under threat of eradication. In a recent article on black-tailed prairie dogs in the journal *Conservation Biology*, biologist Brian Miller speculated that the species has declined by 98 to 99 percent across its range.

This decline is reflected in our national parks, where prairie dog colonies are isolated, fragmented, and small.

Today only seven parks harbor any black-tailed prairie dog populations. At four units—Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, Scott’s Bluff National Monument, Devils Tower National Monument, and Fort Laramie National Historic Site—active colonies occupy fewer than 20 acres. The remaining three parks—Badlands, Wind Cave, and Theodore Roosevelt—have larger prairie dog colonies; however, even the biggest, found in Badlands National Park, barely covers 4,200 acres. In fact, the total area occupied by



**ABOVE:** Black-tailed prairie dogs feed primarily on grasses. **LEFT:** Prairie dog towns, which once stretched for miles, can now be found in only a few parks, including Devils Tower.

JOHN W. HERBST

black-tailed prairie dogs within all national park units does not exceed 6,000 acres.

The current plight of the prairie dog is made more poignant by the species' historic occurrence. Biologist Vernon Bailey, on a scientific reconnaissance of the Texas high plains around the turn of the century, reported a single black-tailed prairie dog town complex that measured 100 miles by 250 miles—an area nearly the size of Maine. Bailey estimated the population of this extended town at 400 million animals. In the 1920s, noted naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton calculated that the population of North American prairie dogs may have exceeded 5 billion animals. According to Jon Sharps, former South Dakota Fish and Game Department endangered species biologist and prairie dog authority, as much as 20 percent of the short- and mid-grass plains may have been occupied by these animals.

A number of factors have contributed to the current dire situation. Of all major biomes in North America, the mid-continent grasslands have suffered the greatest biological impoverishment. Millions of acres of former prairie dog habitat on the Great Plains have been plowed for croplands.

Systematic poisoning has taken a toll, and, in many parts of the West, the remaining prairie dogs are used as living targets by "gopher hunters." Public agencies such as state fish and game departments actually promote shooting by providing maps that identify locations of prairie dog towns, while a few rural communities host prairie dog shooting contests with cash prizes for those who kill the most animals in a day. Although shooting probably cannot wipe out most dog towns, when combined with other sources of mortality, such as poisoning, it can be a significant factor, says Sharps.

To add to the prairie dog's woes, a new threat has arrived on the scene—

sylvatic plague. Spread by fleas, this disease has gradually diffused across the West, and prairie dogs appear to have little or no immunity. Once the disease appears in a colony, the entire prairie dog population is often lost.

Says Sharps, "There are no reserve colonies to repopulate towns that are lost due to poisoning, plague, or other natural events. We've got all the ingredients for an ecological disaster here."

Tom Skeeel of the Predator Project agrees: "Prairie dog ecosystems are as

ologists recommended listing, BLF's Jasper Carlton claims the Washington office of the USFWS denied the petition request because of political interference from ranchers and South Dakota's Sen. Thomas Daschle (D). BLF has appealed the decision.

As with many listings under the Endangered Species Act, the effort to protect the black-tailed prairie dog goes beyond concern for a single species. Prairie dogs are a "keystone" species. They are food for a host of predators such as the black-footed ferret and swift fox, and their abandoned burrows are used by other grassland creatures, from burrowing owls to rattlesnakes. Their constant grazing activity creates patches of closely cropped grassland habitat favored by birds such as the mountain plover and horned lark.

Prairie dogs create a unique habitat on the plains, which is often referred to as the "prairie dog ecosystem." Longtime prairie dog researcher Tim Clark and associates have documented more than 170 wildlife species dependent upon, or found near, prairie dog towns. Prairie dog ecosystems support higher numbers of small mammals, more terrestrial predators, and higher densities and greater diversity of bird species than grasslands without the rodents.

Even if black-tailed prairie dogs manage to avoid extinction, unless they persist in large numbers, many dependent species will not survive. For instance, the black-footed ferret is endangered because prairie dogs are so scarce. Ferrets, as predators, exist at far lower densities than their prey and require tens of thousands of acres of prairie dog colonies to sustain breeding populations. Yet, today only a few prairie dog complexes remain in the West large enough to support the ferret.

The tragedy of the prairie dog's decline is made even more calamitous because it cannot be justified. Except for a few localized situations, even the livestock industry's claims that prairie dogs compete with their cattle for for-



threatened as the old-growth forests and salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest, but they don't get the attention from the media they deserve."

As a consequence of the prairie dog's precarious position, Sharps, along with the Biodiversity Legal Foundation (BLF) in Colorado, filed a petition in October 1994 to list the black-tailed prairie dog as a Category 2 species under the Endangered Species Act. Category 2 is less restrictive than either threatened or endangered, but it does alert federal agencies that a species may be in jeopardy unless current trends are reversed. Although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's own bi-



WENDY SHATTILBOB ROZINSKI

**Burrowing owls are among the grassland creatures that use the abandoned burrows of prairie dogs.**

age appear vacuous. Many studies have demonstrated that prairie dogs improve forage quality for livestock. The closely cropped flowers and grasses in and around prairie dog towns are more nutritious and palatable than plants found on surrounding lands. Cattle, as well as other grazing animals such as bison, antelope, and elk, prefer to forage on or near the edges of prairie dog colonies. One study in South Dakota documented that livestock grazing on prairie dog ecosystems suffered neither weight loss nor a reduction in weight gain.

The real irony of the controversy is that heavy grazing—whether by bison or livestock—actually promotes the expansion of prairie dog towns. The short-legged rodents require short grass cover so they can detect predators and readily move from place to place. Studies by Montana biologist Craig Knowles and others have demonstrated that prairie dogs thrive where grazing and trampling by livestock reduce grass height.

Even though competition between livestock and prairie dogs may be based on inaccurate perceptions, those

views have real life consequences for the rodent. Says biologist Jon Sharps, “Ranchers have a stranglehold on public lands. They dictate what kinds of

**The tragedy of the prairie dog’s decline is made even more calamitous because it cannot be justified. Except for a few localized situations, even the livestock industry’s claims that prairie dogs compete with their cattle for forage appear vacuous.**

wildlife are permitted to live on public holdings and the kind of management that occurs on those lands.”

Although occasional prairie dog control occurs around campgrounds in

national parks because of fears of potential plague transmission to humans, the majority of control efforts are conducted as part of what park officials characterize as a “good neighbor policy.” As George Sam-Mogul at Devils Tower National Monument explained, the agency conducts “spot treatments” with poison oats, poison gas, and shooting to reduce prairie dog numbers along borders.

The destruction of prairie dogs to prevent expansion beyond park boundaries is inconsistent with the National Park Service’s philosophy to protect native species, says Skeele. “Why does the Park Service or any other federal agency kill prairie dogs to appease private landowners beyond its borders when it would never consider shooting mountain lions, deer, or elk as a ‘good neighbor gesture’?” asks Skeele.

So ingrained is the notion that prairie dogs must be controlled that poisoning of the rodents continued in Badlands National Park up to 1993, the year before the reintroduction of black-footed ferrets. Says an incredulous Skeele, “Here you have a federal

agency spending millions of dollars attempting to recover an endangered species—the black-footed ferret—while simultaneously spending millions of dollars poisoning the ferret's main food source. It makes absolutely no sense."

On most public lands, as well as many private lands, poisoning campaigns are carried out or assisted by the Animal Damage Control (ADC), a federal agency within the Department of Agriculture. In 1993, ADC used, sold, or distributed 220,000 fumitoxin tablets, 60,000 gas cartridges, and 21,000 pounds of zinc phosphate baits throughout the northern plains states to eradicate prairie dogs. But the full magnitude of poisoning efforts is unknown, since ranchers can buy these poisons from private sources as well.

Zinc phosphide is the preferred poison for prairie dog control, according to a spokesperson at ADC's Pocatello, Idaho, regional supply depot. In order to "improve" effectiveness, ADC recommends "prebaiting" dog towns with untreated oats or other grains to get prairie dogs familiar with the food. Then poison-soaked grains are liberal-

ly sprinkled across the target colony.

If properly administered with sufficient prebaiting, zinc phosphide is "effective" at killing prairie dogs. It does, however, have one major drawback as the poison of choice for high-profile areas such as national parks: death is

**So ingrained is the notion that prairie dogs must be controlled that poisoning of the rodents continued in Badlands National Park up to 1993, the year before the reintroduction of black-footed ferrets.**

slow and painful, taking up to 12 hours, and the sight of prairie dogs writhing in death throes tends to upset park visitors, most of them urban dwellers not familiar with the everyday practices of the rural West. A more discreet method of control involves poi-

son gas canisters. When placed in burrows and ignited, they cause death by a combination of oxygen depletion and poisoning from toxic gases. Recently a more efficient technique has gained popularity among some "pest managers." It can be best described as a backpackable flame thrower that injects a combustible gas into the burrow system, then ignites it, burning alive the burrow's occupants.

A change in attitude toward prairie dogs—at least on federal lands—appears to be gaining momentum. NPS biologist Glen Plumb says the agency is in the process of developing a prairie dog conservation plan. The wording is significant, says Plumb. In the past, such plans were deemed management or control. The change is more than idle talk. Last year, for the first time, the Park Service set up a long-term monitoring system to collect information on prairie dog population trends and colony size. Several other park units where prairie dogs were extirpated, such as Guadalupe Mountains National Park in Texas, are now planning reintroductions. But since the Park Service actually controls a small percentage of the public lands on the plains, changes in agency policy alone will not save the species.

A similar policy transformation may be in the works on other federal lands as well. Clint McCarthy is a wildlife biologist for the Custer National Forest in Montana, which also oversees management of the Little Missouri Grassland in North Dakota adjacent to Theodore Roosevelt National Park. McCarthy says Custer has not conducted prairie dog control measures since 1992. McCarthy says his agency is also revising its policy and management for prairie dogs to place greater emphasis on prairie dog conservation.

Though all these policy changes are good news for prairie dogs, they may not be enough. Merely relegating prairie dog towns to their current locations, even if protected, may not provide long-term preservation for prairie dog ecosystems. In pre-settlement days, Great Plains ecosystems were characterized by a dynamic shifting mosaic of intense disturbance created by heavy bison grazing, wildfire, and



GEORGE WUERTHNER

**Visitors stop to feed a prairie dog, behavior frowned upon by park staff.**

prairie dog colonization, expansion, and decline. Few places exist on the plains today where all three major disturbance factors—bison, wildlife, and prairie dogs—occur on any significant acreage.

“Even if we change our policy and try to conserve some prairie dog towns, we still try to restrict them to the designated areas,” says national grasslands biologist Greg Schenbeck. Schenbeck worries that such rigid boundaries may not provide the prairie dog, and the ecosystems they create, the room needed to shift over time.

Just as large, unfragmented landscapes are necessary for wildfire to maintain an ecologically significant role in forested ecosystems, a number of large—several-million-acre—reserves are needed in the region if prairie dogs are to recover something of their former ecological influence upon the plains. “Simply blocking up already existing public parcels by purchasing private inholdings, or trading other isolated tracts of public lands in exchange for small tracts of private lands that lie within public lands, could go a long way toward improving management options,” says Greg Schenbeck.

As the human population declines in rural areas of the plains states and inexpensive land becomes available, creation of a “buffalo-prairie dog commons” is not an implausible goal. Such a system of reserves could become the foundation for the economic and ecological revitalization of the plains.

As Jon Sharps notes, “We spent 100 years destroying what has taken thousands of years to evolve. Instead of instantly attacking prairie dogs as something undesirable, we should be asking what role they play in prairie ecosystems and providing them the space to act out their evolutionary potential.” Fortunately, it appears that within our national parks such questions are increasingly being asked—perhaps soon enough so that prairie dogs can still provide some answers.

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GEORGE WUERTHNER is a wildlife biologist, freelance writer, and photographer based in Oregon. He last wrote for National Parks about bison in Yellowstone.



WENDY SHATTIL/BOB ROZINSKI

Antelope and other animals prefer to forage near or in prairie dog towns.

National park personnel are increasingly targeted by the Wise Use Movement's campaign of violence.

# OPEN HOSTILITIES



Chuck Cushman, a national leader of the Wise Use Movement, has the ability to create a problem where none had existed.

BY DAVID HELVARG

■ AT CANYONLANDS National Park, where some areas have been closed to off-road vehicles, a ranger opened up a trailhead register to find that someone had written, "Government [expletive deleted] who close off their lands to us ought to be shot."

■ AT GRAND CANYON National Park, employees backed down from plans to remove old mining equipment in the western part of the park after local county commissioners threatened to have them arrested.

■ AT LAKE MEAD National Recreation Area, the Park Service must get permission from the FBI and the U.S. Attorney General to cross Bureau of Land Management (BLM) territory along the park's northern border for fear of setting off an armed confrontation with a rancher who is illegally grazing his cattle on federal lands.

■ IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST,

environmentalists, including members of NPCA and a staff person with Audubon, have received death threats from property rights and militia groups, who see a United Nations plot in a proposal to link the North Cascades with a Canadian provincial park. They believe the United Nations intends to dismember the United States and establish a totalitarian New World Order. The Wise Use Movement, a campaign to roll back environmental protections, also sees further evidence of a U.N. takeover in the World Heritage Committee's designation of Yellowstone as a park in danger as well as President Clinton's plan to restore the Everglades, another World Heritage Site.

To date, National Park Service (NPS) workers and supporters have managed to avoid becoming victims of the assaults, bombings, and armed con-

frontations that employees of other natural resource agencies, such as the Forest Service, BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have experienced. One reason may be that much of the anti-environmental violence linked to Wise Use campaigns in the West has been driven by economic self-interest and public lands industries that are most active outside park boundaries. In one incident, for example, Forest Service Ranger Guy Pence's Nevada office and home were pipe-bombed in March and August of 1995. He had asked an area rancher to remove hundreds of cows from the Toiyabe National Forest and denied a miner's request for a permit to build a road in order to protect and restore the public ranger's ecological integrity.

The miner was a close friend of Nye County Commissioner Dick Carver who, backed by an armed posse, bull-

dozed the road through anyway. Carver later bragged at a Wise Use rally that had one of the two Forest Service rangers who tried to stop him gone for his gun, "50 people with sidearms would have drilled him."

Although Park Service personnel have not yet been involved in that level of confrontation, Special Agent Pat Buccello, who teaches a course on "extremist groups on public lands" for Park Service rangers and employees, worries about what she calls "a blurring of the uniform. Some of these people just see any federal ranger as part of the problem. Sometimes we get chewed out over BLM and Forest Service issues," she explains.

While her course covers extremists of varying ideologies and beliefs, she sees Wise Use groups as the major problem today. "They're merging with Christian Identity [a racist cult linked

to Aryan Nations] and all these other right-wing extremist groups. You see the rhetoric changing, where it is now acceptable for them to say, 'I think you ought to be shot.' I've dealt with groups like [the militant environmental group] Earth First! where you talk to them and agree how many people are going to get arrested, and they show up in their [animal and tree] costumes, and you arrest them. But it's different with Wise Use. I think the Wise Users really want a confrontation."

Wise Use was founded in 1988 by right-wing political activists and oil, timber, and other natural resource industries, who were united in their fear that newly elected President George Bush was "too green." Organizers understood that if they were to "open up" the nation's public lands to further commercial development they would first have to discredit the government's

most popular and successful use of those lands—as national parks. In fact, much of the initial organizing force of the Wise Use Movement came from targeting national parks and the National Park Service.

"They're going to come in and strangle you! You're going to lose your valley! The Park Service wants to get rid of you!" shouted Chuck Cushman more than a decade ago on February 6, 1984, to a school full of nervous residents of New York's Upper Delaware Valley. Hired by canoe outfitters who did not want to become regulated concessioners, Cushman warned local residents that hunting and fishing would be restricted, farms and stores shut down, and ancestral lands seized if the Park Service developed a land use plan based on Congress' declaration of the area as "Wild and Scenic."

A short time later, someone slashed



CURT GIVEN

Property rights and militia groups see a U.N. plot in a proposed plan to link North Cascades with a Canadian park. They think the United Nations plans to dismantle the United States and establish a totalitarian New World Order.

**HOSTILITIES** *Continued*

the tires and painted a swastika on a Park Service vehicle. Still, Cushman, now a national leader of the Wise Use Movement, recalls that evening as “a magic experience.... It wasn’t far from where that big concert took place, Woodstock, and it had some of that electricity.”

Glenn Pointier, editor and publisher of the *River Reporter*, a local paper that exposed inaccuracies in Cushman’s presentation, is not so nostalgic. After Cushman left the area, the local group Upper Delaware Alliance, led by real estate agent Don Rupp, began to harass local environmentalists, elected officials, and Pointier’s newspaper. In 1986, Pointier’s house burned down in a mysterious arson fire.

A similar campaign of harassment, death threats, shootings, and arson took place in the early 1990s in New York’s Adirondack State Park. The

largest park in the continental United States, Adirondack consists of a mix of state-owned and private lands. The Adirondack Solidarity Alliance and other militant “property rights groups” backed by local real-estate developers were at the heart of an anti-environmental campaign that spun off militia-type underground groups. These groups beat up activists, trashed an environmental storefront, shot into an occupied Park Agency vehicle, and burned down the barns of park commissioner and author Anne LaBastille. The Adirondack Alliance, which also warns of a United Nations takeover of the Adirondacks, is part of the Wise Use umbrella group Alliance for America, which has its national headquarters inside the park.

A former Los Angeles insurance man, Cushman first became an anti-environmental activist after investing in a private cabin inside Yosemite National Park in California. In 1977, he re-

ceived a Park Service letter saying cabin owners were prohibited from building out on their property. Early the next year, he helped found the National Inholders Association, for people with property claims inside park boundaries. While the inholders association helped to force the National Park Service to reform some of its more arbitrary rules and regulations, Cushman quickly gained a reputation for creating new conflicts where none had previously existed (a skill that has earned him the moniker “Rent-a-riot” among his supporters).

After President Reagan was elected in 1980, Secretary of the Interior James Watt appointed Cushman to the National Parks System Advisory Board, where he served alongside astronaut Wally Schirra, Lady Bird Johnson, and others. “I was the skunk at the lawn party,” Cushman recalls with glee. It was during this period that he met and became fast friends with Ron Arnold,

who had been commissioned by Paul Weyrich’s Committee for a Free Congress to write Watt’s biography. (Weyrich also co-founded the Moral Majority during this period.) Arnold’s laudatory profile of Watt got him hooked up with conservative direct-mail fund raiser, gun-rights activist, and convicted tax felon Alan Gottlieb on the idea of a movement that would target “runaway environmentalism.”

“It worked out far better than I would have predicted,” Gottlieb later admitted. “I’ve never seen anything pay out as quickly as this whole Wise Use thing has.”

A year before they sponsored the founding conference for Wise Use, Gottlieb and Arnold published a book, *Stealing the National Parks*, written by former concessioner and Yosemite Park & Curry Company president Don Hummel. The 414-page book argues that “it is not some private-sector corporate lobby that is stealing the national parks,

but the environmental lobby,” with their “lock-it-up-and-keep-’em-out” philosophy. Dismissing issues such as

**In fact, much of the initial organizing force of the Wise Use Movement came from targeting national parks and the National Park Service.**

overcrowding, Hummel wrote, “The carrying capacity of the entire park system is immense and barely touched.” He went on to suggest that the most effective way to counter environmental-

ists and Park Service “bureaucrats” would be to open up wilderness areas to new development and sell all government-owned public park facilities to private operators.

The 1988 Wise Use Agenda (written by Ron Arnold and Alan Gottlieb after the 1988 conference) went well beyond the demands of their social base among inholders and concessioners. The agenda called for opening all public lands, “including wilderness and national parks,” to mining and energy development.

“We create parks and refuges and wilderness areas, but they create no dollars for the American worker. Mining creates jobs, trees create jobs, farming creates jobs, and American factories create jobs,” is how Rep. Don Young (R.-Alaska), chairman of the House Resources Committee, justifies incorporating Wise Use demands into the legislative proposals being put forward by the 104th Congress.

Young has appointed some anti-federal firebrands to his committee, which oversees parks and public lands. They include Republican representatives Wes Cooley of Oregon, Barbara Cubin of Wyoming, and Helen Chenoweth of Idaho, a Wise Use activist and militia hero. Her stock speech about the spiritual warfare between environmentalists and true Americans is available for purchase from the Militia of Montana.

Along with Chenoweth speeches, one of the most popular screenings at Wise Use conferences and events is a country-western music video called *Big Park*, performed by Teddy Canady and the Rough Rangers. It begins with a rural family sitting on their ranch house porch. Suddenly a band of Park Service rangers in mirror shades drives up and seizes the house, disarming Pop as he goes for the rifle over the mantle, tying him and Mom up in red tape, eating the food out of the family's refrigerator, and then carting off the whole family, including Grandma and Sissy, in a horse trailer as they convert

the home into a ranger station. "God bless all the animals, the forests, and the streams, and we'll say goodbye to humankind and build a big park of our dreams," the jackbooted rangers sing

**When it first was formed, the Wise Use Movement took environmentalists by surprise. It successfully copied green organizing tactics and infused issues with high emotional content to get attention.**

as the kidnapped family is driven off. Then the chorus kicks in: "We don't answer to the taxpayers or to your congressman, and we don't take no from anyone. We just want to take your land."

*Big Park* is one of more than a dozen

videotapes and "documentaries" on national parks, wetlands, wildlife reserves, and other "threats to private property" distributed by the Elko, Nevada-based Wilderness Impact Research Foundation, an industry-supported group that calls for the privatization of public lands.

Although it may be easy to dismiss the anti-park activists as representing only a tiny fraction of the public, the power of Wise Use and other Astroturf (synthetic grassroots) groups to disrupt the planning and operation of even a "crown jewel" such as Yellowstone was demonstrated in late 1991 when Cushman, People for the West, the Western Environmental Trade Association, and other industry groups were able to disrupt and undermine the "Greater Yellowstone Vision Plan" designed to protect the park's surrounding ecosystem.

Claimed as a "grassroots victory" by Wise Use, the interference in the planning process sparked a 15-month congressional investigation, which produced a report in July 1993. The report found that what really occurred was a "concerted activity" among the min-



**The Wise Use agenda calls for opening all public lands, including national parks, to mining and energy development.**

ing industry, then President Bush's Chief of Staff John Sununu, and other high-ranking Bush Administration officials and Wise Use activists in the West who "artificially manufactured the appearance of negative public opinion" and then excluded the larger public from the review process in order to justify the destruction of the "vision" program.

Ironically, the report on these abuses was itself subject to political pressure. The original draft report referred to a "conspiracy" among the administration and commodity and special-interest groups. In the final report, the milder sounding "concerted activity" replaces "conspiracy."

When it first was formed, the Wise Use Movement took environmentalists by surprise. It successfully copied green organizing tactics and infused issues with high emotional content to get attention. Recently, conservationists have succeeded in fighting back.

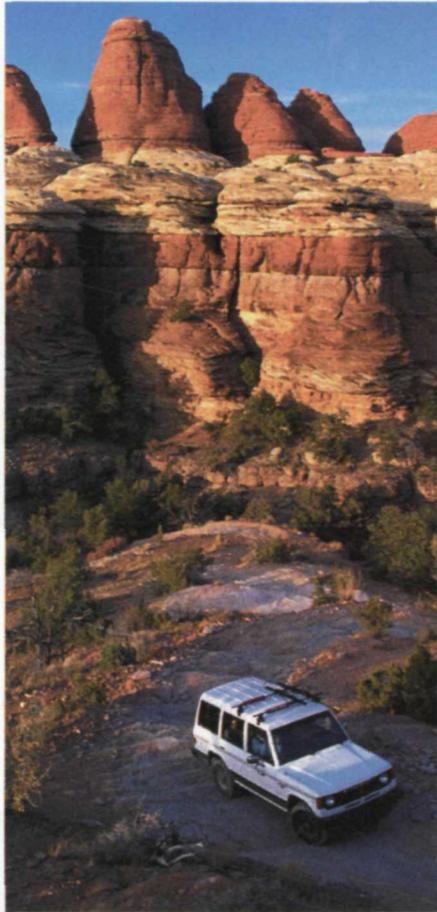
Last year, Rep. Jim Oberstar (D.-Minn) proposed legislation that would allow additional motorized use in Voyageurs National Park. Claiming that the park did not live up to its economic potential, Oberstar wanted to open up more of the park to snowmobiles. Eight local groups, some with connections to Western and Washington, D.C.-based Wise Use organizations, banded together to form the Greater Northland Coalition to support the legislation.

In a historic move, congressional hearings were held in International Falls, Minnesota, the town adjacent to the park. In the months preceding the hearings, the Greater Northland Coalition beat an incessant drum through media advertisements to get its supporters to the hearing.

They claimed that more than 5,000 people would fill the meeting hall. About 1,500 attended the hearing, nearly half of whom opposed the legislation, surprising the congressional committee.

NPCA, Sierra Club, and other conservation groups also pushed for a hearing in the Twin Cities. That hearing was packed with people opposed to the bill. "We were basically able to take the wind out of their sails," says NPCA's Heartland Regional Director

Lori Nelson. "We stood up to the Wise Use Movement and beat them at their own game." Even though the first bill died, Oberstar has not given up. He has introduced another bill to create a locally dominated management council to supersede federal control of the national park. Hearings were held in Washington, D.C., in July. He also in-



JOHN ELK III

**Areas in Canyonlands National Park have been closed to ORVs, an unpopular move with some users.**

roduced separate legislation seeking to open wilderness in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area to more motorized use. The Wise Use group Conservationists with Commonsense supports the proposal.

Like Doctor Frankenstein's monster, many of today's Wise Use activists, with their talk of civil war and armed resistance to federal "thugs" and "the Green Gestapo," have gone far beyond the confrontational pro-industry demonstrations that marked earlier appearances at Yellowstone and elsewhere.

In Kalispell, Montana, for example, a Wise Use opponent of a building per-

mit program recently told a militia meeting, "When the hour strikes, there will be public officials dead in the streets."

In eastern Oregon, the manager of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Forrest Cameron, received death threats after a local rancher was arrested for allowing his cattle to trespass on the refuge. Cameron's wife and five children were also threatened.

And in New Mexico, People for the West activist Skip Price warns that if the federal government tries to fence off "his stream [located on public lands] they're meeting bullets."

While not intending to create a base for anti-government militias, resource industries trying to expand their operations in and around national parks have to take some moral responsibility for the violent extremism they have helped to unleash. For eight years, representatives of the timber industry, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Cattlemen's Association, the American Mining Congress, and others have shared Wise Use platforms, conferences, and strategies with county supremacists and anti-Indian activists, as well as groups such as the John Birch Society and followers of those who promote a hard right agenda including Lyndon LaRouche and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. By lending credibility to these extremist groups, industry has aided their recruitment drive.

Still, America's new politics of terror and intimidation can flourish only in the face of public apathy or indifference. By lending support to our parks, public employees, and fellow citizen's rights of free speech and assembly, we can counter, isolate, and eventually eliminate this threat to the environment and to the democratic process.

DAVID HELVARG is the author of *War Against the Greens*, a book about the Wise Use Movement and attacks against environmentalists, which will appear in paperback early next year.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the Wise Use Movement, see the three-part series by Richard Stapleton that ran in consecutive issues of NATIONAL PARKS beginning with November/December 1992.



# Parks by Paddle

Communing with the birds and other creatures found in national parks is naturally easy from the vantage point of a canoe.

BY KIM A. O'CONNELL

**W**HETHER YOU are pulling a paddle through the glassy waters of a northern river or navigating a grassy slough in a southern backwater, visiting national parks by canoe is an experience altogether different from other recreational pastimes.

The pleasure found in propelling oneself through the water is simple and seems more connected to the natural world and to history. From a canoe, it is difficult not to picture the 18th-century fur traders who paddled through present-day Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota or to imagine a time when only log canoes glided along the waterways of North America. The activity can be quiet enough and slow enough that you do not startle birds, deer, turtles, or other wildlife as you approach; yet a canoe is also an ideal craft for an exhilarating ride over rapids.

Canoeing is low-impact, both to the environment and to the paddler, who can allow the canoe—not the shoulders—to carry backpacks and other gear. In addition, because you can usually canoe farther than you can hike, canoeing may enable you to visit more than one park or natural area during your voyage. Many parks, including the ones described, have campsites along the waterway; backcountry permits may be required.

## Big Bend and Rio Grande

Those who have not seen the desert assume it lacks color, imagining a beige, desolate expanse. A trip to Big Bend Na-

tional Park in southwest Texas would show them otherwise, with its dazzling birds and other wildlife along the Rio Grande, itself an ever-changing ribbon of color. The river forms the southern boundary of Big Bend for 107 miles and is protected as a wild and scenic river for another 127 miles downstream of the park.

As the Rio Grande winds around and beyond the great turn for which the park is named, it passes through three fiercely beautiful canyons: Santa Elena, Mariscal, and Boquillas. The water that sometimes rushes through the canyons—whose sheer walls rise up to 1,500 feet—can be a joy and a terror to the canoeist. Less-experienced paddlers may want to put in at the qui-

eter sections of the river between the canyons. However, adventuresome canoeists may enjoy Santa Elena's Rock Slide rapids or the churning water of Mariscal's Tight Squeeze.

It is in the quieter flat water that the vastness of the fragile world of the Rio Bravo del Norte, as the river is called in Mexico, becomes clear. Moving through calmer waters, paddlers in an aluminum canoe will notice the strange hiss made by billions of grains of sand and silt bombarding the craft, as the canyons continue to be carved. Overhead, summer tanagers, painted buntings, and other colorful birds can be seen. An inquisitive Texas soft-shell turtle may even poke its head out of the water as you paddle by.



KIM A. O'CONNELL is news editor for National Parks.



LAURENCE PARENT

**The Rio Grande at Big Bend National Park in Texas offers adventure for both experienced and novice canoeists.**

A good introductory canoe run is through Hot Springs Canyon, where the water swooshes by 300-foot cliffs, some with Indian pictographs. Explorers of the famed “Lower Canyons” of the Rio Grande can begin their trip at the town of La Linda.

A free river permit, available at park headquarters and ranger stations, is required for paddling. Canoe rentals and guided tours are available from outfitters in nearby Terlingua, Study Butte, and Lajitas. For more information, write to Big Bend National Park, P.O. Box 129, Big Bend National Park, TX 79834, or call 915-477-2251.

**St. Croix and Mississippi**

Protected for 252 miles and forming part of the border between Minnesota and Wisconsin, the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is an internationally renowned mecca for canoeists seeking relaxation and adventure. Canoeists can also re-create, perhaps, the experiences of the Dakota and Chippewa who once lived and traveled along the river.

The waterway includes the Namekagon River, which courses toward the St. Croix from the northern reaches of

Wisconsin. The upper regions of both rivers are the wildest and contain some rapids, but none rough enough to be considered difficult white water. One popular trip—from County K Landing on the Namekagon to the Riverside

Landing on the St. Croix—takes the canoeist through a few rapids and areas of high sandy banks with sharp bends. No development is visible in this area, providing for an unspoiled view of the natural surroundings.



LAYNE KENNEDY

**A canoeist traveling along the St. Croix River stops to consult a chart.**



FRED HIRSCHMANN



WENDY SHALTILIB ROZINSKI/TOM STACK &amp; ASSOCIATES



LARRY LIPSKY/TOM STACK &amp; ASSOCIATES

Canoeists traveling through the marshes of Everglades National Park may see the occasional alligator or purple gallinule.

At the rivers' conflux, the St. Croix widens, deepens, and slows. As it flows south toward Minneapolis-St. Paul, the river becomes increasingly crowded with fishing boats, motorboats, and sailboats, although canoeing still takes place. Downstream from the St. Croix Falls dam (which canoeists must portage), canoeists can paddle past the high cliffs of the Dalles, formed when glacial meltwaters cut a deep gorge. Heavy boat traffic makes the southernmost part of the river, known as Lake St. Croix, unsuitable for canoeing.

If canoeists plan to use the Twin Cities as a base for an Upper Midwest

paddling excursion, an alternative to the St. Croix is Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, which encompasses 72 miles of the river as it flows between the Twin Cities on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Dramatic bluffs line the river, and canoeists in the fall and spring can behold the many migratory birds that use the Mississippi as a flight corridor. Canoeists should be aware, however, that the Mississippi is an urban river through the Twin Cities; motorboats can throw large wakes and barges should be avoided.

Canoe outfitters are located in several places along the St. Croix and Name-

kagon rivers, as well as near the Mississippi in the Twin Cities. For more information, write to St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, P.O. Box 708, Saint Croix Falls, WI 54024, or call 715-483-3284, or write to Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, 175 5th Street East, Suite 418, St. Paul, MN 55101, or call 612-290-4160.

### Everglades and Big Cypress

In another time, *Pa-hay-okee*, the grassy waters known as the Everglades, offered seemingly unlimited canoeing possibilities. Unfortunately, a half-century of development in southern Florida has

damaged the Everglades ecosystem, leading the conservation organization American Rivers to place this once-abundant "River of Grass" on its 1996 list of "highly threatened" rivers. Yet the diversity of species and habitat found in the Everglades is still spectacular, especially when witnessed from a canoe.

Canoe trails abound in Everglades National Park, but the granddaddy of them all is the Wilderness Waterway, a 99-mile route along the Gulf Coast between Everglades City and the Flamingo Visitor Center. The waterway contains every kind of life found in the Caribbean, as canoeists will find as they paddle from marine to estuarine areas, in and out of wide bays, and through the nation's most extensive mangrove forest. The keen eye of a lucky canoeist may spot an iridescent purple gallinule—with its bright blue head and teal feathers—walking on lily pads or even an alligator keeping its distance. The waterway is recommended only for experienced canoeists, however, who should allow seven or eight days to traverse the entire route.

Other good canoeing areas are at Snake Bight and Chokoloskee Bay, where large numbers of wading birds can be seen, as well as the occasional dolphin or manatee, and Nine-Mile Pond, where canoeists can maneuver a five-mile loop trail through freshwater marsh.

Everglades' neighbor, Big Cypress National Preserve, is also a watery wonderland, filled with freshwater marl prairies, cypress, pinelands, and mangrove. During the popular winter season, canoeists can paddle through these varying habitats on ranger-led trips down the preserve's Turner River, ending at Chokoloskee Bay in the Everglades. Canoeists also can make the four-hour trip by themselves.

Canoe rentals are available for both parks in Everglades City and at Nine Mile Pond, the Flamingo Marina, and the Gulf Coast Visitor Center in Everglades National Park. For more information, write to Everglades National Park, P.O. Box 279, Homestead, FL 33030, or call 305-242-7700, or write to Big Cypress National Preserve, HCR 61, Box 11, Ochopee, FL 34141, or call 941-695-4111. 

## Safety Tips

**C**ANOEOING CAN BE rewarding, but only if you take precautions. Do not leave shore without outfitting your canoe with an extra paddle, first-aid kit, insect repellent, and plenty of water. Each paddler should wear a properly fitting, U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device. If you rent a canoe or other gear, examine them for deficiencies. Wear loose, quick-drying clothing and appropriate footwear such as river sandals.

A waterproof waist pouch, hat, and sunglasses are also recommended.

Watch out for overhanging or downed trees, called strainers, that can trap a canoe or canoeist. If you capsize, stay upstream from the canoe. Float feet first through rapids, and do not attempt to stand in strong currents. Hypothermia is a threat even in the summer, so bring extra clothing in a dry bag or waterproof container. Pack out all trash, and conduct all personal hygiene 200 feet from the waterway. Above all, remember that water is powerful; do not take it lightly. —K.A.O.



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**J**oin knowledgeable NPCA representatives for an inspiring journey through the frozen wonder of Yellowstone National Park. Abundant wildlife, unique geysers and a day long study of the recently re-introduced Grey Wolf highlight the trip.

This is a rare opportunity to tour the park with NPCA representatives and local guides who are intimately familiar with current issues like the wolf re-introduction and the proposed New World Mine.

This seven night/eight day trip runs from February 1–8, 1997 and begins and ends in Bozeman, Montana. The trip cost is \$1,995 per person based on double occupancy and includes transportation, meals, lodging, and guide services. For more information, return this coupon or call Dan Gifford at 1-800-628-7275, ext. 136.

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# Marine Mammoth

Even though the manatee population is growing, the animal's future is in jeopardy as long as development in Florida continues at its current pace.

BY LINDA M. RANCOURT

**O**N HIS FIRST VOYAGE to the new world, Columbus reported seeing mermaids—the mythical half woman, half fish. His journal suggested, however, that he was disappointed. They appeared, he wrote, much uglier than legend had led him to believe.

Today, scientists believe Columbus mistook the manatee for a sea maiden. Sometimes called sea cows, manatees move slowly, propelled by two front flippers and a broad paddle-like tail.

The Florida manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*), a subspecies of the West Indian manatee, inhabits Florida's waters.

Adults grow up to 12 feet

been protected since the 1800s. Early laws focused on ensuring ample numbers survived to supply dining tables, although an 1893 law prohibited the killing of manatees in Florida. Laws protecting the animals today, including the Endangered Species Act, make any form of harming them illegal and give the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—the agency charged with the

tion, and the subsequent runoff, and more boats plying the waters, increasing the risk of collision, a leading cause of death for manatees. The Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act, passed in 1978, allows the state to designate sanctuaries, establish speed zones for boats, and restrict access to areas where manatees congregate.

As habitat disappears, the role of national parks and other federal lands becomes more important, although on their own they may not be adequate to support the mam-

A large manatee population is found near Canaveral National Seashore, and the USFWS has used Everglades National Park to release rehabilitated manatees recovered from injuries or illness. Manatees also feed at Biscayne National Park. The animals move with ease among salt, brackish, and fresh water, heading for warm springs—either natural or outflows from power plants—when temperatures dip below 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

While the animals may range north to Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina—one male, dubbed Chessie, traveled to the Chesapeake Bay—most stick to the waters of Florida, a boaters' playground.

Education is a key part of the USFWS recovery plan and includes making boaters aware that they share the waterways. A growing awareness will help to ensure that the manatee survives to intrigue sailors for centuries to come. 🐬

LINDA M. RANCOURT is associate editor of National Parks.



ani-  
mal's re-  
covery—author-  
ity to set aside sanctu-  
aries for the manatee's pro-  
tection.

long, can live to be 55, and weigh 2,200 pounds.

They reach sexual maturity in four to seven years. Females give birth to one calf every three to five years. Manatees feed on aquatic vegetation, such as water hyacinth and sea grasses, near the surface.

Listed as endangered in 1967, the Florida manatee—the largest population of West Indian manatees—has

Originally hunted for their flesh and skins, the manatee population dropped to between 400 and 600 at its lowest ebb. Today, the number stands at 2,639, thanks, in part, to recovery efforts, but the numbers, too, have benefited from better counting techniques.

Even so, as long as development in Florida continues at its current pace, the long-term survival of the manatee will remain in jeopardy. Florida's human population increased an incredible 86 percent from 1970 to 1990.

More people means more construc-

# Trading Park Futures

“Free market environmentalism” promotes privatizing public lands and replacing federal protections with economic incentives—forgetting the lessons of history.

BY CAROL ESTES

IT IS AN OCTOBER morning at the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch near Bozeman, Montana. The cold air smells of pine, and steam rises from a hot tub with a view of snow-covered peaks across the valley. This is an exclusive place, \$2,000 a week per person, where I cannot afford to vacation.

But I am not paying for this trip. This one is on PERC—the Political Economy Research Center—a conservative think tank that works out the economic theory behind the property rights movement. PERC has paid airfare, food, and lodging for most of the 20 journalists attending its New Shades of Green conference to hear about market solutions to environmental problems. The “product” PERC is selling during the next three days is something called “free market environmentalism.” In the past five years, PERC has had more than 100 such conferences, casting a wide net of influence on journalists, academics, and congressional staffers.

What am I, an environmentalist, doing here? Environmentalism has lost its way, and I am here to find out why. I am here to rethink assumptions and to consider new answers; and because I love our public lands, and I am afraid we are losing them.

PERC has played fair in arranging the program. On the left are Kathryn Hohmann, director of environmental

quality for the Sierra Club, and Brock Evans, National Audubon’s vice president for national issues. On the far right is Chuck Cushman, founder of the National Inholder’s Association, which is now the American Property Rights Association. His job at the conference, he tells me, is to “shake things up.”

With the property rights association on the right and Audubon and Sierra on the left, PERC has placed itself strategically in what appears to be the rational middle. Our discussions begin from

in the private property basket? In a way, nothing. I, for one, cherish the rights that go with my own .9 acres of Minnesota hillside—the right to be compensated if the government takes my property, and the right to exclude others. These rights are hard won, fought for since the 10th century, articulated in the Magna Carta, and codified in the Fifth Amendment of our Constitution. Property rights are a cornerstone of the American democratic system.

However, PERC’s arguments reveal an almost mystical faith in the market. Allocate resources to those who will use them wisely by making a profit, and those resources will live forever.

History tells a different story. People act in their own interest—usually the short-term-profit kind. As E.J. Dionne says: “A capitalist society depends on noncapitalist values...to hold together and prosper.” The free market-

teers ignore the fact that a successful market society is “built on an older moral logic that predates capitalism.”

Every enterprise—and everything is an enterprise in free market environmentalism—must pay its own way. Since recreation is the most highly subsidized of all the uses of public lands, recreational users, says PERC’s executive director Terry Anderson, are “the biggest pigs at the trough.” So national parks must be made to support themselves through user fees. If they cannot, then the sound of park gates closing is the sound of the market telling us we have too many parks.



DOUGLAS MACGREGOR

the premise that people are economic entities, motivated by financial self-interest. But the Perkies, as they call themselves, love nature, wildlife, clean water and air. They just claim they have found a way for us to have our environmental cake and eat it too.

PERC would first privatize public land. (All of it? They would not say.) Supposedly, this would be good for the environment because private owners have an economic incentive to take care of their land, which government does not. It would also lead to more efficient use of resources. What is wrong with the Perkies putting most of their eggs

CAROL ESTES is a freelance writer who lives in Minnesota. She last wrote for National Parks about Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve.

As one of the United States' most remote and spectacular national parks, Big Bend comprises some 800,000 acres and draws

over 300,000 visitors each year. John Jameson offers a comprehensive, highly readable history of the park's development from before its founding in 1944 up to the present, painting colorful portraits of the

many individuals involved along the way. For everyone concerned about our national parks, this history makes a persuasive case for continued funding and wise stewardship of parks as they face pressures of skyrocketing attendance and declining budgets. With 52 b&w photos. **\$12.95 paper, \$35.00 cloth**

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## COMING UP

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National  
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They are right about one thing—recreational users should pay more. A visit to a national park costs less than two movie tickets. But they are also mixing apples and pine cones. Recreationists use public lands in a renewable way, as members of a nonexclusive club—U.S. taxpayers. Other subsidized users, miners and ranchers who often pay a fraction of market value for the right to use public land, use public resources for their own profit.

PERC also wants to get rid of “burdensome” environmental laws and regulations. These handcuff the market, halting or slowing economic activity that could create wealth and jobs that would, in turn, protect the environment. And besides, regulations are expensive, and they do not work.

No doubt these charges are true—some of the time. But the property rights folks sidestep the debate by ignoring the undeniable improvement in the environment since laws such as the Clean Air and Clean Water acts were passed 25 years ago. Maybe it is time to look at new approaches; perhaps the market can be an important factor in protecting the environment. But unless we acknowledge the successes of the regulatory approach, along with its shortcomings, we are ignoring hard-won knowledge of what does work. Let's remember that these laws came into existence after our last bout with unregulated industry, because Americans were disgusted by sights such as the Cuyahoga River in flames and human excrement floating in Lake Erie.

PERC advocates the carrot of economic incentives in place of the stick of regulation. Rather than penalize people for violating the Endangered Species Act (ESA), free market environmentalists would pay them to comply. Under the current system, a rancher who finds wolves denning on his property might be tempted to kill them to protect his stock and avoid the federal interference triggered by the ESA. Free market environmentalists would pay him to let the wolves stay. Fair enough—pay to cover legitimate losses—if there are any. But can we really afford to start paying peo-

ple to do the right thing?

Even if I think about free market environmentalism in terms of profit and loss, I find it disturbing. Bottom line, who will profit? The individuals and corporations with the wealth to buy up big tracts of federal land. And when we make that exchange, we trade the rights and privileges of millions of people, including future generations, for the rights of a single individual. After all, the real “little guy” is not a rancher or lumber company. He is someone who owns a home, or maybe no property at all. He will find himself locked out of lands that used to be his. Private Property, No Trespassing. In a country where the growing gulf between rich and poor worries even conservatives such as Pat Buchanan, how can another break for the rich make sense?

Who will profit by relaxing environmental laws? Polluters, certainly. But maybe businesses weighed down by too much paperwork will also be better off. Maybe enough jobs will be created to outweigh the many that will be lost. Even so, despite arguments, I can find no basis for PERC's faith that we will have cleaner air and water and better protection for endangered species if the market runs the show—even if we bid for the landowner's self-interest with our dwindling public funds.

Whether we like it or not, the national environmental discussion is turning in PERC's direction. When we enter these discussions, we cannot forget that the national parks, forests, grasslands, seashores are not “federal land.” They are our land, yours and mine. If we lose them, we will never get them back. We must also remember that government is not bureaucrats. Government is us, and that simple notion is the foundation of democracy.

Let's refuse to base our policy decisions on economics alone. Fifty years ago, Aldo Leopold gave us a better standard: “Quit thinking about decent land-use as solely an economic problem. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” 🐾

BY M. KATHERINE HEINRICH

## Friends are Golden

► A management assessment and multiyear planning effort at Golden Spike National Historic Site in Utah drove home a single point, Superintendent Bruce Powell said: "Our top objective is developing a friends group for the park." Park Service staff and local partners placed a priority on developing a network of volunteers for the park. An organizing committee formed this spring and established the preliminary structure of Friends of the Golden Spike. Other goals for the new group include establishing a funding base, creating a newsletter, and developing interpretive publications for the park. Vera Guise, NPCA's grassroots field representative, has provided technical assistance as Friends of the Golden Spike takes shape.

Golden Spike preserves the site where the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads met in 1869, creating the nation's first transcontinental railroad. The park attracts 60,000 visitors a year; 8,000 of them arrive on May 10, the anniversary of the driving of the golden spike. Volunteers in period costumes stage reenactments of the

historic event.

Friends of the Golden Spike hopes to recruit a team of local volunteers and a national network of park supporters. The group seeks volunteers to help present the anniversary celebration, an annual railroaders festival in August, and docent programs year-round. Those interested in joining Friends of the Golden Spike have two options for membership: volunteering ten hours per quarter or contributing \$25 per year. For more information, write to: Friends of the Golden Spike, P.O. Box 897, Brigham City, UT 84302; or call 801-723-2989.

## Underground Campaign

► NPCA commends the American Cave Conservation Association (ACCA) for its leadership in educating the public about the nation's underground treasures. ACCA is located in Horse Cave, Kentucky, a gateway community to Mammoth Cave National Park. The American Cave and Karst Center is the centerpiece of ACCA's education efforts. The education center reaches 15,000 visitors a year, including 3,000 schoolchildren. A visit to

the center might include a trip through the museum's indoor cave simulation and a dramatic lesson in groundwater system restoration—a glimpse of Hidden River Cave's underground river, which was contaminated with sewage and other pollutants for decades.

ACCA focuses on education as a means of preventing tragedies such as the vandalism of Crystal Cave in Mammoth Cave National Park. In 1995, vandals conducted what ACCA Executive Director David Foster calls "a three-month mining operation" of cave formations. Although Kentucky law prohibits the sale of cave resources, almost 600 pounds of the formations stripped from Crystal Cave were recovered in souvenir shops near the park. About 336 miles of the Mammoth Cave system have been mapped and explored. Crystal Cave was protected by a cave gate, but outdated construction, lack of maintenance, and infrequent monitoring left it vulnerable to a brazen looting campaign. ACCA has also helped to design a bat-friendly cave gate that has been adapted for use in more than 100 locations.

To learn more about ACCA's programs, write to: ACCA, P.O. Box 409, Horse

Cave, KY 42749; or call 502-786-1466.

## National Parks EXCELS

► *National Parks* magazine sustained its award-winning tradition, earning a bronze award in the Society of National Association Publications' 1996 EXCEL awards. NPCA's magazine, one of more than 900 entries in the competition, received the distinction in the Magazines-General Excellence category. The judges—a panel of publications experts—honored *National Parks* for excellence in writing, content, design, timeliness, originality of topics, and overall packaging.

## Glacier Point

► Ambassador L.W. "Bill" Lane, Jr., NPCA's 1994 William Penn Mott Conservationist of the Year, will be honored for his lifelong commitment to Yosemite and other national parks when an amphitheater that will bear his name is completed at Yosemite's Glacier Point in the summer of 1997. The 150-seat granite amphitheater will be used for stargazing and other interpretive programs.

Groundbreaking for the structure, which is part of a \$2.5-million restoration project at Glacier Point, took place this summer.

"The breathtaking view of Yosemite Valley, Half Dome, and High Sierra from Glacier Point is a national treasure," said Bob Hansen, director of The Yosemite Fund, which contributed to the restoration effort. The Glacier Point area has been an eyesore since a historic hotel burned on the site in 1969.

## Winter Wonderland

► NPCA invites members and their friends and family to tour Yellowstone National Park this winter. Yellowstone's spectacular geothermal features, including Mammoth Hot Springs and Old Faithful, provide dramatic contrasts to the frozen landscape. The itinerary also includes wildlife viewing in the Lamar Valley, visits to Norris Geyser Basin and Upper Geyser Basin, a snow coach tour of the Hayden Valley, Yellowstone Lake, the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and more.

Your exploration of the park will be enriched by discussions with park staff, a wildlife biologist, and NPCA representatives. Search for endangered gray wolves and learn more from local experts about the issues affecting the park. Those interested in an active adventure may opt to join a guide for an afternoon of snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.

The tour, scheduled for February 1-8, 1997, fea-

tures stays at the historic Gallatin Gateway Inn, Old Faithful Snow Lodge, and Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel. To learn more about this NPCA travel opportunity, see the ad on page 45.

## Giving at Work

► September 15 marks the kickoff of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), featuring Earth Share and other workplace giving federations. NPCA is a founding member of Earth Share, which allows government, corporate, and institutional employees to donate to NPCA and 42 other environmental groups through payroll deduction. Last year's campaign yielded nearly \$400,000 for NPCA.



### Earth Share<sup>SM</sup>

Federal employees can donate to NPCA through the CFC by designating NPCA (agency #0910) on their pledge forms. Many states, counties, cities, universities, and corporations also sponsor workplace giving campaigns that include Earth Share, as do United Way campaigns in Rhode Island and the National Capital Area.

Contact Diane Clifford at 1-800-NAT-PARK, ext. 131, for a complete listing of Earth Share workplace campaigns or for information on including Earth Share in your employer's workplace giving campaign.

## Working on the Railroad

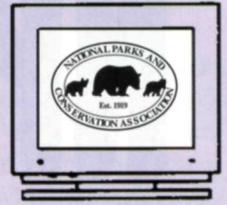
► NPCA and the National Park Service held a reception August 10 to welcome Anthony Cohen home from his 1,000-mile journey along one of the routes taken by slaves on the Underground Railroad. The event was held at Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in Washington, D.C.

Cohen, an author and historian, traveled from Sandy Spring, Maryland, across the U.S.-Canadian border to Amherstburg, Ontario. Limiting himself to roads and modes of transportation that existed in times of slavery, Cohen traveled northward, making overnight stops in towns and homes known to have served as stations on the Underground Railroad.

Cohen's journey focused attention on an NPS study that identifies more than 380 places related to the Underground Railroad—some of which are part of existing national parks. The study outlines alternatives for preserving and interpreting them for the public.

NPCA has worked with NPS to present a workshop on the Underground Railroad and continues to recruit individuals and organizations to serve as part of the "national voice" for this chapter of our history. To join the effort, contact Iantha Gantt-Wright at 1-800-NAT-PARK, ext. 223.

Cohen's travels will be featured in the November/December issue of *National Parks*. A record of his journey can be found on NPCA's World Wide Web page (see NPCA Online).



## NPCA Online

► NPCA's America Online (AOL) site now offers a series of live chat events for park enthusiasts. Upcoming sessions feature renowned landscape photographer David Muench and birding expert, author, and NPCA Board of Trustees member Roland "Ro" Wauer. Grassroots activists participate in weekly chat events at 8 p.m. ET every Thursday.

Join us by subscribing to AOL, entering the keyword PARKS, and selecting "National Park Live Events." This area includes an updated schedule of events and transcripts of past sessions.

Upcoming live chat events, all at 9 p.m. ET:

**Ro Wauer's Birding Series:**

◆ Tues., Sept. 10: Birds of Isle Royale and Grand Portage

◆ Wed., Oct. 2: Birds of Cape Cod and Assateague Island

◆ Tues., Nov. 12: Birds of Saguario and Tonto

**David Muench Photography:**

◆ Wed., Dec. 11: Photographing the National Parks

To receive NPCA's free AOL starter kit, call 1-800-NAT-PARK.

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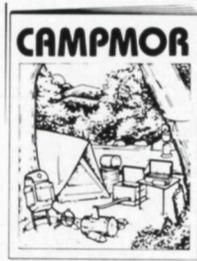
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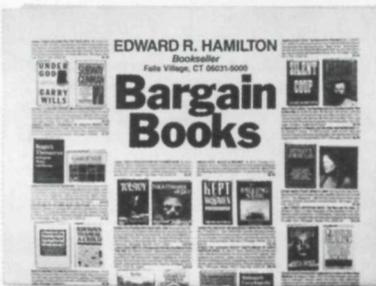
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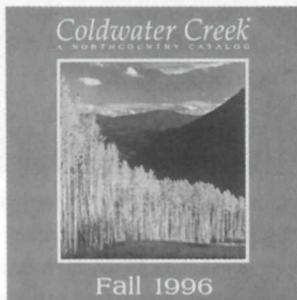
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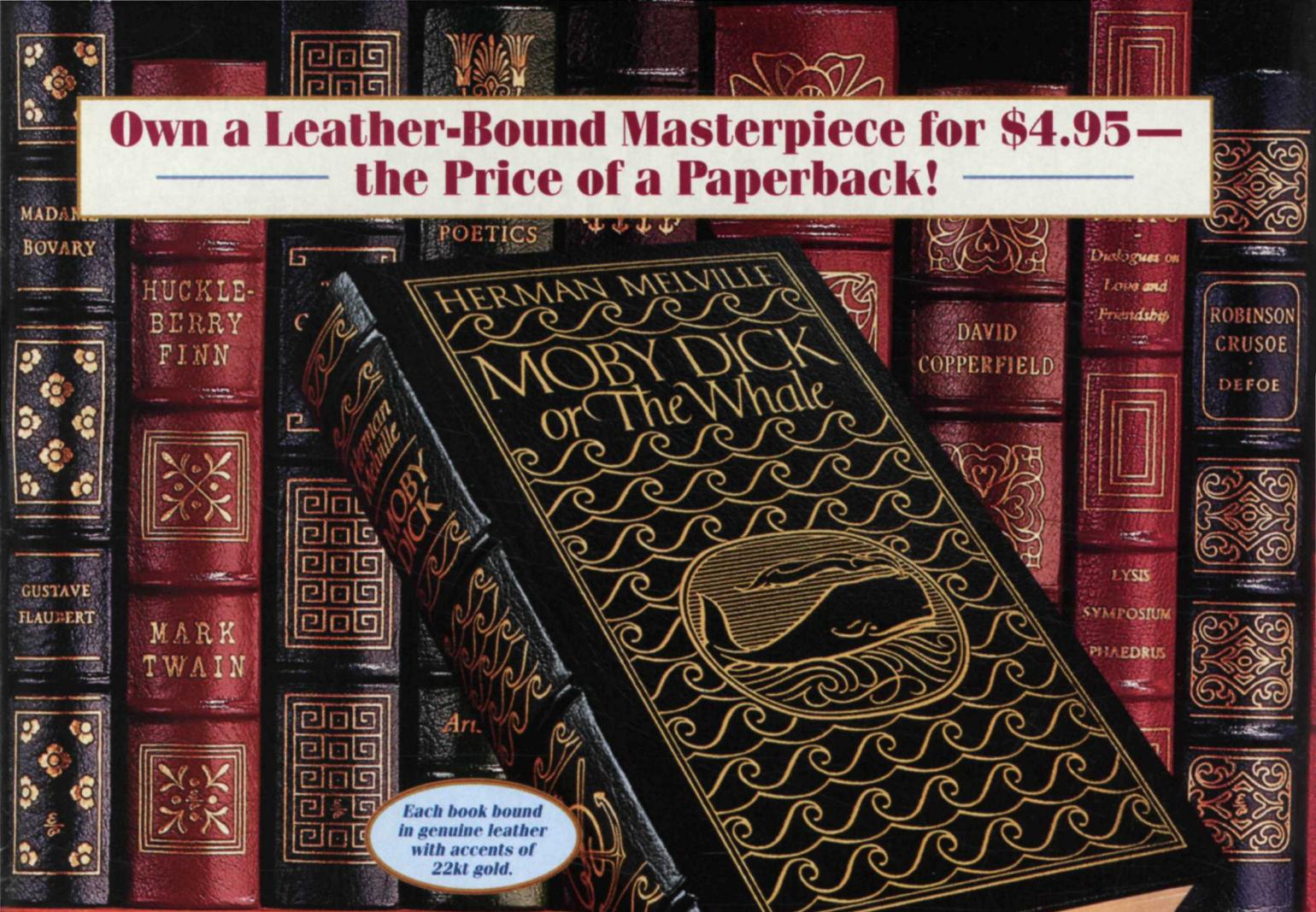
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