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A **HIKER** navigates the shoreline of Lake McDonald in Glacier National Park, Montana. © IAN SHIVE

COVER PHOTO:  
**RENTAL BOATS** float at a dock on Lake McDonald.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: © COLINE JENKINS; NPS; ANDREW REICHER; JASON SAVAGE

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## Pivotal Moments

How many of us remember our first experience in a national park? Perhaps it was with our parents during a summer vacation to Sequoia National Park, or a class trip to Gettysburg National Military Park to learn about the Civil War. Maybe it was an excursion with our grandparents, who wanted us to experience the enormity of the Grand Canyon. Wherever it was, most of us remember it vividly.

This fall, millions of television viewers will have the opportunity to experience the national parks for the first time through the latest film produced by Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan. In six, two-hour episodes to be aired on PBS stations in September, the film will not only show the majesty of our national parks—one of America's most important contributions to global culture—but will also tell the important story of how the parks were created and the hardships endured along the way. In this issue of our magazine, Burns and Duncan share their thoughts about the making of *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*, a film that includes the extraordinary images you would expect, while demonstrating the important role of individual park advocates in preserving some of our favorite places.

Ever since the national park idea took shape more than 150 years ago with the formation of Yosemite and then Yellowstone, the parks have had neither the staff nor the money they need. Ironically, one of the more financially flush times for our national parks was during the Great Depression, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt set aside millions of federal dollars for the first time in the parks' history to provide jobs to unemployed young men to build lodges and shelters and create scenic roadways.

This February, Congress passed and President Obama signed a stimulus bill that contained more than \$920 billion, including nearly \$1 billion directed to our national parks. I am proud to say that NPCA, with your help and support, played a key role in securing these much-needed funds for our national parks. Much of the money will pay for "shovel-ready" jobs to repair buildings, roadways, and key infrastructure in our national parks. Although the amount seems enormous, it's just one-tenth of what the parks need to eliminate a backlog of more than \$9 billion that has been accumulating for more than a decade.

In addition to addressing some long-standing repairs, the funding will provide a tremendous opportunity for thousands of workers and volunteers to connect with these extraordinary places and gain an appreciation for one of the 20th century's greatest achievements. These place-based experiences along with Ken Burns' film can reignite American's interest in restoring and reinvigorating our national parks in time for their centennial in 2016. This extraordinary amount of money made possible by your support is an important first step toward that goal.



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THOMAS C. KIERNAN

# Moving Pictures



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Ken Burns' cinematographer Buddy Squires in Glacier Bay, Alaska.

I'm a documentary nut. In the last year, I've seen films about the font Helvetica, the bizarre world of competitive video-gamers, a heavy-metal rock band in therapy, and, of course, environmental pieces like *Planet Earth* and *Who Killed the Electric Car?* As much as I love a Summer blockbuster or a quirky comedy, I'm even more drawn to films that reveal unexpected things about the world around me. Watching a compelling documentary combines the smug satisfaction that comes with eating your vegetables and the indulgence of licking cake batter off a spatula.

Documentaries were once confined to the local PBS station and the occasional film festival, but filmmaker Ken Burns helped broaden their appeal. His explorations of baseball, jazz, and of course, the Civil War, rekindled an interest in American history for millions of us who struggled to make it through our high school text books. A few months ago, I was fortunate enough to talk to Burns and his production partner Dayton Duncan about their film, *National Parks: America's Best Idea*, to be aired on PBS stations in September. The result appears on page 14.

Interested in the next generation of documentary filmmakers? Get your hands on a copy of *Red Gold*, a film that focuses on the threats posed by a sprawling open-pit mine near Lake Clark National Park & Preserve in Alaska. The first five minutes of the film were all it took to convince me to include a piece in this issue of the magazine. (More about the flick itself on page 8.) It's a compelling story in any form—ink on paper or moving pictures on a screen.

SCOTT KIRKWOOD  
NPMAG@NPCA.ORG

# National PARKS

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Scott Kirkwood  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Amy Leinbach Marquis  
PRODUCTION MANAGER/DESIGNER: Sarah Rutherford  
SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR  
COMMUNICATIONS: Nicole Yin  
FEATURES DESIGN CONSULTANT: Bates Creative Group

## NATIONAL PARKS

1300 19th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036  
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National Parks Conservation Association®  
Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

### WHO WE ARE

Established in 1919, the National Parks Conservation Association is America's only private, nonprofit advocacy 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 to resolve them.

### WHAT WE STAND FOR

The mission of NPCA is to protect and enhance America's National Park System for present and future generations.

### EDITORIAL MISSION

*National Parks* magazine fosters an appreciation of the natural and historic treasures found in the parks, educates readers about the need to preserve those resources, and illustrates how member contributions drive our organization's park-protection efforts. The magazine uses the power of imagery and language to forge a lasting bond between NPCA and its members, while inspiring new readers to join the cause.

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Members can help defend America's

natural and cultural heritage. 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. Please sign up to receive Park Lines, our biweekly e-mail newsletter. Go to [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org) to sign up.

### HOW TO DONATE

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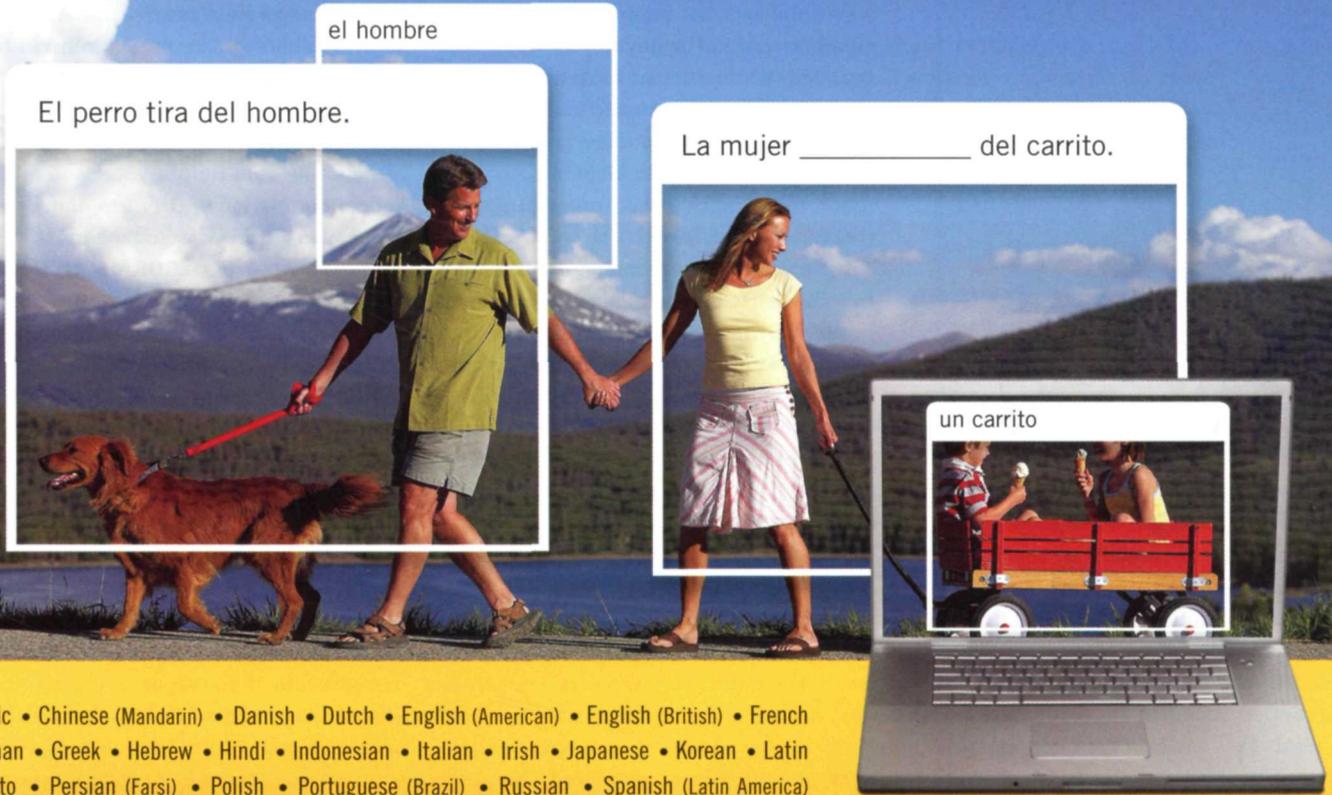
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If you have any questions about your membership, call Member Services at 800.628.7275. *National Parks* magazine is among a member's chief benefits. Of the \$25 membership dues, \$6 covers a one-year subscription to the magazine.

### HOW TO REACH US

National Parks Conservation Association, 1300 19th Street, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036; by phone: 1.800.NAT.PARK (628.7275); by e-mail: [npca@npca.org](mailto:npca@npca.org); and [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org).

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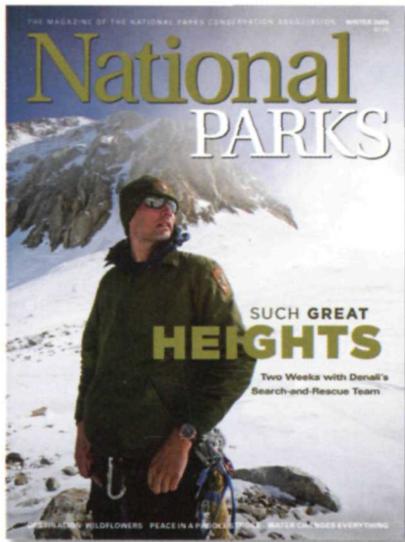
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## HARD WORK IN HARD TIMES

Thomas Kiernan's "Another New Deal?" [President's Outlook, Winter 2009] brought back memories of my six months in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression in the 1930s. We cleared underbrush and thinned tree growth in Chippewa National Forest near Cutfoot Sioux in northern Minnesota to minimize and control forest fires.

The work itself was not strange to me. I came from a small farm, and when I wasn't needed there, I worked in the woods, cutting and peeling cedar telephone poles, railroad ties, and fence posts; cutting birch logs for veneer mills; cutting pulpwood for paper mills; and cutting firewood that we hauled to Deer River on horse-drawn carts.

But the CCC taught me other things, like how to get along with young men whose backgrounds were very different than mine. The army controlled camp life and the Forest Service managed the work, and that was a good combination. We were paid thirty dollars a month—twenty-five of which was sent directly to our parents. That left us five dollars to spend on candy and recreation when we received passes to go to town.

Many of us went on to fight in World War II, and I believe we became an effective fighting force more quickly than if we

hadn't had those CCC experiences.

As millions of dollars are being allocated as part of a government stimulus package, it's important to remember that work done in our parks and forests is very labor intensive. The money spent on the workforce will help stimulate the economy much more quickly than other programs that rely on machines.

At age 94, I tend to become nostalgic—but it's hard to be nostalgic when one can't remember much. Fortunately, your editorial triggered memories of my CCC experience from some deep recesses of my brain.

**KAL MAKELA**

*Lenexa, KS*

## THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE

I am responding to a letter about off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the Winter 2009 issue. For more than 35 years, my family has visited Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina, and we have long been proponents of restricted ORV use, especially during nesting season. But we do not support an all-out ban, because it would forbid enjoyment of the natural area for a significant part of the population: the handicapped. I have both osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis, and am the mother of a disabled son. Neither one of us can walk comfortably in deep sand, so we drive out to a spot via a legal ramp and enjoy our time in the sun. We are not recreational fishermen—we simply like to sit by the surf and watch birds and other wildlife that venture down to the shore. On some evenings, we drive back to watch the moon rise over the ocean. This is a vacation we can afford; a beachfront hotel is not in our budget. A complete ban would make a number of park experiences inaccessible

to the handicapped, and could very well be interpreted as a violation of the Americans With Disabilities Act. I wouldn't mind if I had to pay for some kind of multi-day ORV pass—but rest assured, I would be first in line to protest should access be closed to me and my son. Before you issue a blanket condemnation of ORV use, think about those who will be affected the most.

**DEBORAH BUCHANAN**

*Charlottesville, VA*

## LEAVE NO TRACE

As the daughter of a retired Park Service ranger, I was heartened to know that the National Park Service's motto, "take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints"—is a reality in Denali National Park ["Rescue Under a Midnight Sun," Winter 2009]. I grew up in parks and monuments across the country and was taught to respect the natural environment and to demonstrate that respect by picking up litter. I was truly moved by Ranger John Leonard's efforts to keep Mt. McKinley spotless. He is a model of what it means to be a Park Service ranger, and my 12-year-old daughter and I keep his example alive by picking up litter on our own daily walk to her school. We call ourselves "Mother Nature's little helpers." I'm so happy Mt. McKinley has one too.

**KIMBERLY SIMS**

*Seattle, WA*

## CALL OF THE WILDFLOWERS

My husband and I had been talking about a return visit to Death Valley this spring, but had done nothing about it... until, that is, we got the latest issue of *National Parks* magazine. The article by Jeff Rennie ["And Heaven in a Wild Flower," Winter 2009] on wildflower viewing in the parks—

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Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Death Valley among them—was like a sign from above. We made reservations to stay in the park and will stop to see the Bristlecone pines on the way home. Thanks for getting us off our duffs!

**REBECCA STILLWELL**

*Albany, OR*

## WE'VE GOT ISSUES

I have started to read each issue of *National Parks* cover to cover, and I must say I was particularly impressed with two articles in the Winter 2009 magazine—"Solar Rush" and "Just Add Water." I was impressed not only with the thorough explanation of the issues, but also with the solutions being suggested and pursued. I would have never known about these unexpected conflicts, and I applaud NPCA's staff for their

first-hand involvement. Unlike other organizations that talk the talk (typically only criticizing or lobbying), NPCA walks the walk, and for that I am proud to be a contributing member.

**RONI SILVERBERG**

*Bridgewater, NJ*

## FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

Winter 2009 was another well-orchestrated issue, and "Wolves, Moose, Researchers, and Me" strummed a special chord. Twenty-plus years ago, a friend pulled me into the world of Isle Royale wolves and Rolf Peterson. From there, I joined an Earthwatch expedition in tiny Ovindoli, Italy, high in the Apennine Mountains, dragging my younger son with me. The wolves we studied there soon became our mountain-

side companions, though at a distance, of course. Our trip leader taught us to howl across the valley, and when the wolves answered... well, that moment still resonates whenever I experience a mountain-top high. And with Nevada Barr, I lean my head back and howl.

**PATRICIA KASPAR**

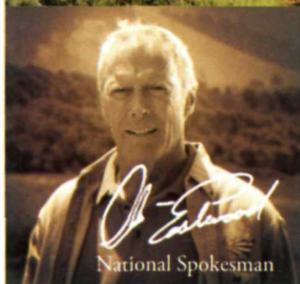
*San Mateo, CA*

## CORRECTIONS:

Gray Davis was governor of California in 2002, not Arnold Schwarzenegger, as noted in "Solar Rush," Winter 2009. The locoweed flowers pictured on page 36 ["And Heaven in a Wild Flower"] were incorrectly labeled as fireweed. The bison image on page 9 should have also been credited to Minden Pictures. We regret the errors.

Photo: Matt Turley @ [www.mathturley.com](http://www.mathturley.com)

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## AFTER MIDNIGHT

A quick look at the current status of President Bush's midnight regulations

As *National Parks'* Winter issue went to press, the Bush Administration was pushing through several last-minute proposals that would have posed serious harm to national parks and adjacent lands. An update on the key proposals:

In December, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) abandoned plans to adjust the methods used to measure power-plant emissions near national parks and other natural areas. The agency had considered shifting from models that analyze pollution levels every three hours or 24 hours to a yearly average, which would have allowed dangerous levels of pollution over smaller intervals. The surprising reversal, which was due in large part to the efforts of NPCA and its members, means visitors to the Great Smokies, Shenandoah, and Zion should breathe easier.

As of January 9, loaded and concealed guns may be carried in national park units in any state with concealed carry laws, which means only three national park units in Wisconsin and Illinois are excluded. NPCA and the Coalition of NPS Retirees are suing the Department of Interior to reverse the move on the grounds that the agency did not conduct an analysis of the rule's environmental effects, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act; the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence has also filed suit.

In December, the Bush Administration amended the Endangered Species Act to allow federal agencies to decide for themselves whether proposed actions on their lands might threaten an endangered species, removing the crucial step of consulting with the Fish & Wildlife Service. Days later, Defenders of Wildlife

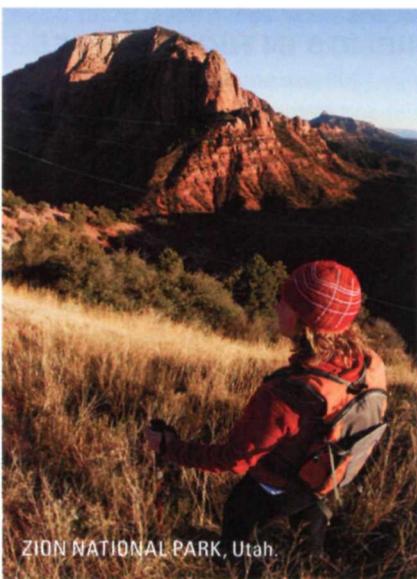
and several other conservation groups sued to reverse the move. Then in March, President Obama signed a memorandum temporarily restoring the original consultation process while asking the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce to review the Bush amendment. As this issue went to press, both houses of Congress were also considering legislation to reverse the amendment as part of an omnibus spending bill.

Last fall, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) expanded an earlier proposal to award new oil and gas leases adjacent to Canyonlands and Arches National Parks and Dinosaur National Monument, based on hastily drafted resource-management plans that largely overlooked impacts on Park Service lands. Weeks after a U.S. District Court judge issued a temporary restraining order against the BLM in response to NPCA and its allies, new Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar withdrew the 77 parcels of public land from the auction block pending further review. NPCA has also challenged the legitimacy of the initial resource-management plans as yet

another way to block the sale of land near sensitive park borders.

Late last year, the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) finalized a rule change that allows for stream destruction and fill during strip-mining operations, posing a threat to the Big South Fork National River, the Gauley River National Recreation Area, and the New River Gorge National River. In January, NPCA filed a complaint and request for injunction against the OSM, Department of Interior, and EPA.

To follow these issues and get involved, visit [www.npc.org/takeaction](http://www.npc.org/takeaction).  
—Scott Kirkwood



© RICH WHEATER/AURORA

ZION NATIONAL PARK, Utah.

### EYE-OPENER



© BEN KNIGHT

**BRISTOL BAY, ALASKA**, is one of our nation's most abundant sources of sockeye salmon, but two mining companies have set their sites on \$300 billion worth of gold, copper, and molybdenum in the ground not far from its source. History and science suggest a sprawling open-pit mine in the region could do irreversible damage to Bristol Bay, Lake Clark National Park & Preserve, and Katmai National Park & Preserve. **Red Gold**, a 54-minute documentary reveals the threats posed by Pebble Mine through the words of native people who rely on the region's salmon for sustenance, the fishing guides who know every inch of the rivers, and the commercial fisheries that have thrived in the region for decades. A favorite at film festivals in Telluride and Banff, *Red Gold* will be screened in several major cities this Spring, and is available on DVD for \$25 via [www.redgoldfilm.com](http://www.redgoldfilm.com). (For more on the threats to Lake Clark, turn to page 24.)

# A RIVER RESTORED

Forty years after the Cuyahoga River fires



THE CUYAHOGA RIVER, 1952.

If you've ever wondered what an ecosystem looks like when it hits rock-bottom, picture Ohio's Cuyahoga River during the industrial revolution. For more than a century, cities and factories along the river's banks dumped waste directly into the water. All wildlife vanished except for two species of fish, which

showed deformities and other signs of stress. By 1868, the river's surface was covered in so much oil, sewage, and debris that a mere flick of a cigarette could set it aflame.

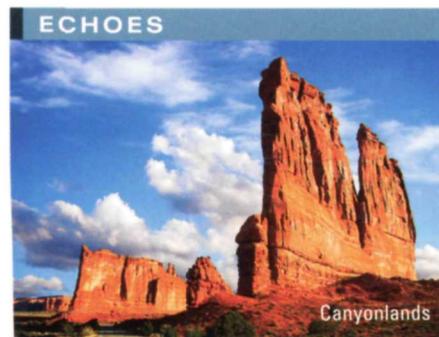
So the Cuyahoga caught on fire—not just once, but again, and again, and again; more than a dozen times, between 1868 and 1969. But it wasn't until the 1969 fire—likely caused by a spark from the broken wheel of a passing train—that the national media tuned in. "Some River!" scolded an article in *Time* magazine's August issue. "Chocolate-brown, oily, bubbling with subsurface gases, it oozes rather than flows."

Thankfully, the negative attention sparked some positive changes: the creation of the Clean Water Act, Environmental Protection Agency, Earth Day, and an official federal list of "areas of environmental concern"—on which Cuyahoga's watershed rose to the top. In response, industries stopped dumping trash into the river, and the region's cities updated their sewage plants. But equally influential was the creation of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which helped bring back a small population of bald eagles, herons, river otters, and more than 70 species of fish.

"People look to the Cuyahoga as evidence that watershed recovery can work," says Jim White, executive director of the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan. "If an old industrial city like Cleveland can do it, anybody can do it." Special commemorative events culminate this June on the 40th anniversary of the 1969 fire. For more information, visit [www.cuyahogariverapp.org/YOTR/yotvents](http://www.cuyahogariverapp.org/YOTR/yotvents). —Amy Leinbach Marquis

# 49.6

**MILLIONS OF DOLLARS** that Fredericksburg Spotsylvania National Military Park generates each year for local economies in eastern Virginia. In 2007, the 8,400-acre park created 594 jobs—the average company in the area supports roughly half that number. The top reason visitors come to Fredericksburg is to see the park, which spans several historical sites throughout the area. More than 1.5 million people visited the park in 2007, including out-of-towners who spent \$25.6 million in places like hotels, restaurants, and gift shops.



*It's like burning Rembrandts to heat the castle. I'm not sure we're that desperate.*

**DAVID NIMKIN**, director of NPCA's Southwest regional office, quoted by the Los Angeles Times, in response to a Bureau of Land Management proposal to auction more than a dozen leases for oil and gas exploration just outside Arches, Canyonlands (above), and Dinosaur National Monument. (For more details, see "After Midnight," opposite.)

*One of the things that makes Yellowstone special is the ability to hear the splash of a geyser... and not have that sound drowned out by somebody having a conversation with their family back in New Jersey.*

**TIM STEVENS**, senior program manager of NPCA's Yellowstone field office, quoted by United Press International in response to the park's efforts to develop a wireless communications plan, which would increase cell-phone towers, altering park scenery and affecting the visitor experience. A final decision is due later this spring.

*It's not a matter of if we have another death, but when.*

**MIKE CIPRA**, manager of NPCA's California desert program, quoted in the Los Angeles Times, detailing the risks posed by thousands of abandoned mines in Death Valley and other desert parks. (For more details, see "Sand Traps," page 10.)



© IRIFAN KHAN/LOS ANGELES TIMES

## SAND TRAPS

There are thousands of abandoned mines in California's desert parks, and balancing visitor safety with conservation poses more challenges than you might expect.

By Seth Shteir

When Bob Bryson saw two large, snowy-white barn owls erupt from the entrance of an old mine shaft in Mojave National Preserve last winter, he was instantly reminded why he treasures his position as the park's chief of natural resource management. But the very same moment reminded him of one of the job's biggest headaches. More than 140 years of mining activity have turned California's desert landscape into a block of Swiss cheese, with mine shafts and tunnel openings dotting the surface. And it's more than just an eyesore. Between 1999 and 2007, 33 people were killed in abandoned mine accidents in the western United States. Hikers have fallen down vertical shafts and off-road vehicles have plunged into open pits. Inside the mines, the hazards multiply:

potential cave-ins, toxic gases, and old, unstable sticks of dynamite make every step perilous. "Anytime you go below ground you're taking a risk," says Bryson.

It's a big problem for the state of California and its relatively young desert parks. Decades of gold, silver, copper, lead, uranium, and mercury exploration have generated approximately 47,000 abandoned mines, including more than 30,000 on federal land. At last count, Mojave had 3,000 abandoned mines, and thousands more can be found in Joshua Tree and Death Valley. A recent Department of Interior report reveals that although the Park Service has taken some positive steps to alleviate the dangers, the agency needs to do more. But that requires more funding and manpower than many of these parks can afford. You

**THE STEEL GRATE** at the entrance of an old gold mine in Death Valley keeps people out while allowing wildlife like bats to pass through.

can't simply plug the entrances with dirt or pave them over with asphalt without causing serious repercussions to the environment and the region's cultural history.

Abandoned mines provide refuge for bats, snakes, desert tortoises, bobcats, mountain lions, songbirds, and even big-horn sheep. Although animals face some of the same dangers that threaten humans (desert tortoises have been known to fall into shafts), these spaces have nonetheless evolved into wildlife habitat. So the Park Service can't just board up entrances—the agency has to rig wildlife-friendly structures, like "bat gates" and "tortoise trots," that allow animals to come and go.

Add to that the cultural value that comes with the region's mining history. "The biggest challenge is finding a balance between protecting cultural resources, wildlife, and people," says Linda Manning, a wildlife biologist at Death Valley, who is tasked with resolving many of the biggest challenges posed by these sites.

Fortunately, Joshua Tree has found ways to build custom mine covers and gates. Volunteers do some of the work, and visitor entrance fees help pay for materials and equipment. As a result, 30 of its 120 hazardous mine sites—the ones that are closest to roads, trails, and highly visible sites—are now secure.

But that formula doesn't work for every park. Mojave, for instance, doesn't collect visitor fees, and Death Valley doesn't have enough trained staff to inventory the 6,000 to 10,000 mines within its borders. Even if staffing weren't an issue, stabilizing complex vertical shafts and mine openings can cost thousands of dollars. (Securing Death Valley's Keane Wonder Mine cost a whopping \$750,000.) In Joshua Tree, crews have to travel to remote wilderness areas where there are no roads and where vehicles are prohibited. Their only option is to move personnel and materials by helicopter, and that's not cheap.

Without dedicated funding, parks are forced to borrow money from other park

programs, which puts more strain on a budget that was underfunded to begin with. But there's potential relief in sight. This February, the nation's highly publicized Economic Stimulus Package could devote as much as \$50 million to close abandoned mines at park units across the country—part of a park funding package that could create up to 35,000 jobs. On another front, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) has introduced legislation to fund the clean-up of abandoned mine sites using royalties and reclamation fees from hard rock mines. It's a much-needed revision of the General Mining Act of 1872—the law that originally authorized mining on public lands, but didn't require mining operations to fund environmental clean-up or mitigate safety hazards.

"When you punch thousands of holes in the earth, there are going to be some serious consequences," says Mike Cipra, NPCA's desert program manager. "Park Service managers have the challenging job of making sure visitors are safe while



**PARK EMPLOYEES** Linda Greene and Linda Manning (right), walk near a mesh-covered mine in Death Valley National Park, California.

protecting wildlife habitat and preserving the historic value of our mining history. No one should have to deal with these complex and intersecting issues on a shoe-string budget, so it's great to see our lead-

ers in Washington, D.C., step to the plate to do something about it."

*Seth Shteir tackles air and climate issues in NPCA's California Desert Office.*

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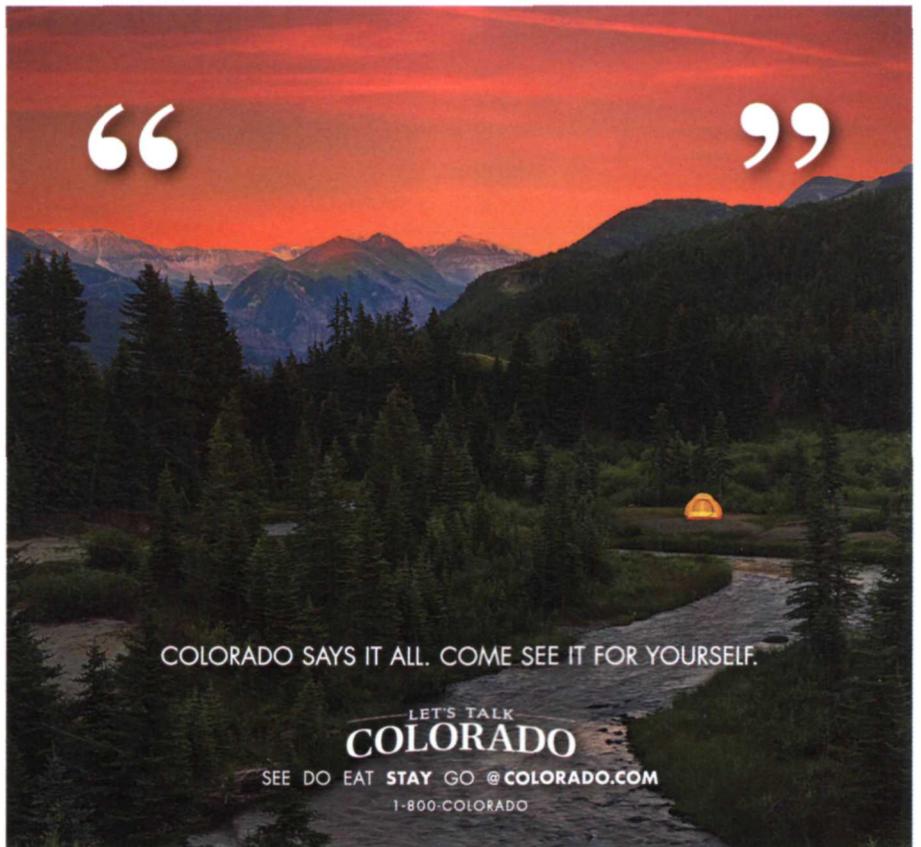


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**PINE BEETLES HAVE KILLED** tens of thousands of trees in Rocky Mountain National Park in the last several years.

## BEETLE BATTLE

Pine beetles are changing the landscape of Rocky Mountain National Park

By Kelly Bastone

Visitors to Rocky Mountain National Park are seeing red. The pine trees that once gave these peaks a velvety green cloak are increasingly taking on a strange, rust-red color as they succumb to an unprecedented onslaught of bark beetles. For most visitors, encountering huge swaths of dead, red trees produces a shock they don't soon forget.

"People are surprised and sometimes even angry to see so many trees dying," says Kyle Patterson, Rocky Mountain's public information officer. Bark beetles have infected 50,000 acres—about 19 percent of the park. Tens of thousands of pines have died since 2002, when the park observed the first indicators of the current beetle outbreak, and more losses are expected. In fact, the park represents just a small portion of a larger beetle epidemic

extending from Canada to New Mexico.

The size of a grain of rice, bark beetles kill mighty conifers by tunneling under their bark and laying eggs, which hatch into larvae that feed off the trees' phloem (an inner bark layer that transports nutrients). One species, the mountain pine beetle, also carries a fungus that stains the sapwood blue as it chokes off water to the upper branches.

But these pests aren't foreigners. All 17 species found in Rocky Mountain National Park are native insects, and like forest fires, they play a valuable role in the ecosystem. Several times a century, beetle populations soar to outbreak proportions, killing large numbers of trees and ultimately improving forest health. This time, though, the beetle epidemic is bigger than anything on record.

One reason is the recent drought, says Brian Verhulst, a supervisory forestry technician at Rocky Mountain. Ten years of below-average precipitation left trees too weak to "pitch out" the invading beetles (strong, healthy trees use sap to keep them out). Another factor is how uniform forests had become after nearly a century of fire suppression: Pure stands of feeble old trees succumb to beetles more readily than diverse forests. Finally, warmer-than-average temperatures in recent years have stimulated beetle reproduction and let larvae thrive throughout the winter. "Cold snaps curtailed previous beetle outbreaks," Verhulst explains, "But the park hasn't experienced the consistently cold temperatures that used to be seen here."

The mercury's effect on bark beetles has prompted some observers, including U.S. Forest Service research entomologist Barbara Bentz, to investigate whether rising temperatures would give beetles a leg up. Bentz has studied temperature's effect on bark beetle populations for more than 15 years, and her research helped build a mathematical model that predicted increasing global averages would produce a big-time beetle outbreak—just like the one now underway.

"I don't think the current outbreak is purely the result of global warming," Bentz says. But she does believe that its staggering proportions—resulting in waves of dead, red trees—indicate something may be out of balance.

Verhulst and other park officials agree that climate likely plays a role in the current beetle bonanza, though the exact influence remains inconclusive. What's certain is that massive numbers of dead and dying trees present new challenges to a park unit that attracts nearly 3 million visitors a year.

Stopping the beetles is practically impossible, so rather than trying to save its trees, park officials are trying to minimize the potential for a messy, dangerous aftermath. Interpretive panels at the Kawuneeche Visitor Center and at various viewpoints help visitors understand the dramatic changes they're witnessing. Similar information is also published in the

park newsletter. And rangers urge visitors to be mindful of dead and dying trees as they hike and camp, particularly during high winds. "It's become part of our basic safety message," says Patterson.

Certain high-value trees are sprayed with carbaryl, an insecticide that must be painstakingly applied to the bark from top to bottom. Even then, such measures don't always protect trees from beetles: The park sprayed Timber Creek Campground's tall, stately lodgepoles every year, but the measures failed to ward off the onslaught, and now, in order to protect campers from toppling timbers, two of the campground's three loops are closed.

Elsewhere, the park is cutting hazard trees near parking lots, trailheads, and other high-traffic areas: Ten thousand trees were felled in 2008, and the park expects to remove 500,000 more over the next five years. The biomass is then incinerated in an air-curtain burner—a portable, enclosed furnace that contains the blazes and emits very little pollution.

The park is also employing open, pre-

scribed fires to help reduce the likelihood of widespread conflagrations—perhaps the beetles' most threatening legacy. Lots of dead, dry trees load forests with fuel, particularly once the needles drop and accumulate on the ground. Campers may even be asked to forego campfires in future years; meanwhile, the park itself expects to execute an increasing number of controlled burns. Says Verhulst, "We're going for a little smoke now, versus a lot of smoke later."

In time, however, Rocky Mountain's forests may actually benefit from the beetle-triggered upheaval. Wildflowers and aspen trees are already sprouting where the pines once grew, beginning a diversification process that Verhulst says is ultimately a good thing. "When fires ripped through Yellowstone National Park twenty years ago, it was perceived as a disaster, but now we see that it promoted a rich diversity of species and habitat," he says. Bark beetles may have a similar effect at Rocky Mountain National Park. "It's a hard pill to swallow," he admits.

"But it's like pressing the reset button on nature."

*Kelly Bastone is a freelance writer who lives in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.*

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**ACRES OF LAND** being donated to California's desert parks, thanks to the Mojave Desert Land Trust's recent purchases of privately-owned homesteads, ranches, and mines within Death Valley, Joshua Tree, and Mojave National Preserve. Before handing the land over to the Park Service, the Trust cleaned it up by recycling more than 15 tons of debris, 36 vehicles, and four trailers that had long been cluttering the area. Species like bighorn sheep and desert tortoise will benefit from the additional acreage.

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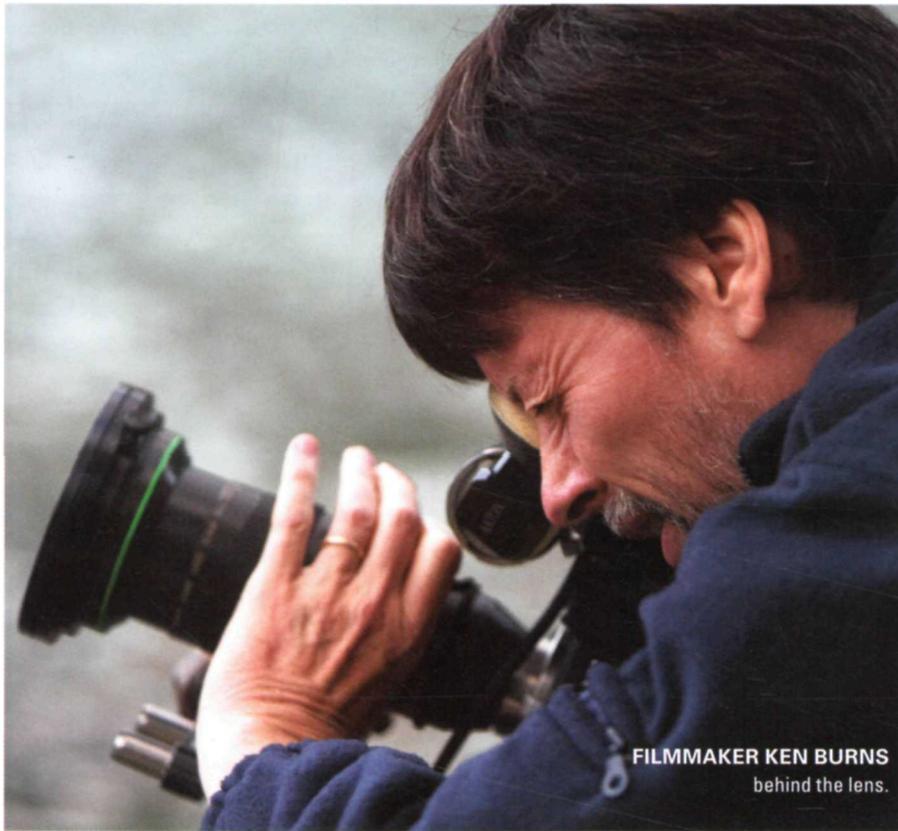
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FILMMAKER KEN BURNS  
behind the lens.

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a great story. We think the best one of all is the story of how a fledgling democracy suddenly decided you could set aside large tracts of natural land, not for the kings and royalty and the very rich who had normally cornered the market on beautiful places, but for everybody for all time—that's a story right in our wheelhouse.

**Dayton Duncan:** My interest in parks started when I was just shy of 10 years old, growing up in Iowa. My family took a trip to the Badlands, Little Bighorn, and Yellowstone, where we arrived a couple days after the great earthquake of 1959. We went to Jenny Lake in the Grand Tetons, Dinosaur National Monument... That trip was the only really big trip my family ever took and it awakened in me a love of travel, and now I spend a lot of time traveling the United States writing books or working on films with Ken. It was very clear to me, given my family's circumstances, that the parks were for everybody—we were part owners and they were essentially free, and that's what made our trip possible. Then ten years ago, I took my son on the same trip when he was about the same age that I was at the time. I didn't realize until then the sort of passing of generational memory that the parks play. When I went to Ken with the idea, it took me somewhere between twenty and thirty seconds to convince him a series on the parks would be a good idea.

**Burns:** I'm reminded of something William Cronin said in our film much better than I can say it, but it was essentially that when you're dealing with parks you're dealing with the immensity and intimacy of time—you see the great works of erosion, the geological time before you in the case of the Grand Canyon, billions of years of time is arrayed there as Muir said, "like a grand geological library, layer upon layer." But you're also very conscious of who you're with, standing on the rim in that moment. And that was our objective, to convey the history of the national parks—our film isn't a travelogue, not just pretty pictures of nature and wildlife, not a recommendation of which lodge to stay at, but

## Q&A

# NATIONAL PARKS: THE FILM

Ken Burns focuses his lens on America's best idea.

**F**ilmmaker Ken Burns made a name for himself with "The Civil War," an 11-hour documentary that originally aired on PBS in 1990, capturing the attention of 40 million viewers. Since then, he's devoted his life to documenting the American experience, turning his eye toward jazz, baseball, and World War II, often with the help of longtime writer and production partner Dayton Duncan. In September, PBS will air the results of their six-year odyssey entitled, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*, which tells the history of our parks through the eyes of those responsible for their creation. National Parks editor-in-chief Scott Kirkwood spoke with Burns and Duncan in New York before a preview of the film.

**NP:** First off, why national parks?

**Ken Burns:** We've been curious about how our country works from more than 30 years, and we have chosen subjects that we think speak to the heart of who we are as a country—our collective national identity and the amazing individual stories that make up that national identity. We've pursued issues of race, which is the great subtheme of the United States, but we've also been aware that the other subtheme is our space—the magnificent landscape that we have. Our European ancestors essentially lived a geographically proscribed life, rarely venturing beyond where they were, and all of a sudden, the combination of land and democracy set in motion one hell of

it's the story of the individuals and ideas and how they evolve, and how their stories get caught up in this intensely personal experience with the people who took us to the parks. It becomes a personal and self-referential story as much as it is an epic sweep of the last 170 years of park history.

**NP: Race plays such a prominent role in all of your other works from the Civil War to Jazz and Baseball—did the story of race play any role in this film?**

**Burns:** It was natural. When you scratch the surface of American history, you can't help running up against this bedeviling and ennobling aspect of our story, our national narrative, which is the guy who articulates the credo that "We hold these truths to be self-evident..." happened to own other human beings while he defined for the ages what human liberty would be, setting in motion this amazing American narrative. You don't have to look hard to find it elsewhere, even in the parks—we weren't digging for it, it was just there.

Certainly you find John Muir and Teddy Roosevelt, but we came across dozens of other people from every other conceivable background, nationality, and race who fell in love with some place and dedicated their lives to saving it. There's George Melendez Wright, who turned the Park Service attention away from just scenery to incorporate wildlife and nature. You've got Japanese Americans who had particularly personal, intimate relationships with parks in the Northwest and George Masa who dedicated his life to photographing the Great Smoky Mountains, helping to create the national park through his photos and advocacy efforts. It's an amazing story and it isn't just extended to race and ethnicity—there was a schoolteacher in Lincoln, Nebraska, who kept a journal as every bit as poetic and meaningful as anything John Muir wrote, who spent her summer months exploring American's national parks each year. She wrote, and her husband took photographs, and their story forms the skeleton of one of our episodes. We talk about "discovering" these places, but the earliest Native Americans made



**KEN BURNS** and Dayton Duncan in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming.

these places their homes for centuries, and understood that they were unique long before Europeans arrived.

**Duncan:** Captain Charles Young, who was the third African American to graduate from West Point, was the acting superintendent of Sequoia at the turn of the last century, with a contingent of Buffalo Soldiers under his direction, which ranger Shelton Johnson discusses in the film. And in the 1960s, Lancelot Jones, who is a grandson of slaves, help save a series of islands that are now part of Biscayne National Park. So on the one hand, as we tell the evolving story of the national parks, we do make note that most of the tourists in the early days were wealthy—which also means they're predominantly white and predominantly from the East Coast—but we trace how over time the park experience became more and more democratized. But there's still a long way to go—the Park Service recognizes it, and everyone who's concerned about the parks recognizes it. As Ken says, our film shows that the parks are for everyone. It doesn't matter who you are, how much money you've got, your race, your ethnicity—they belong to you.

**NP: How can you possibly tackle the challenge of covering 391 national parks in 12 hours?**

**Burns:** We began with the essential truth of storytelling, which is that we aren't creating a telephone book or an encyclopedia. We felt under no obligation to list the 391 park units, or even the 58 natural national parks. We weren't precisely sure where this narrative would go, or how much of it we were going to tell, but we were going to bring in our wake not just most of those national parks—and you do see an image of all of those 58 parks in the film—but as the idea of the national parks evolved, we would bring in themes that were representative of all the others. So we deal with the creation of monuments as we turn our attention to objects of scientific and historical interest. We turn to the purely historical parks in which we're able to gather most of the military sites into the system. We begin to see how the ecological and biological interests or rationale for creating a park changes, so you have places that don't have waterfalls or geysers in them, like Everglades, and as we move along we add more and more things, historic homes, places of shameful parts of our past, Central High School, Andersonville, Sand Creek and more modern sites, like the Vietnam Memorial, Shanksville and Oklahoma City [no longer part of the Park Service].

So although we didn't feel required to list them all, we have covered every category, and that is indeed the better way of storytelling—where some stories stand in for all the stories. We just finished the film about WWII, the biggest manmade event in world history, and we focused solely on people from four towns in America—not Russia, France, England, and Germany, but four American towns. And we were able to find, as the English poet William Blake said, "the universe in a grain of sand." The greatest challenge was deciding which stories to tell—you're heading into this magnificent orchard which is our national parks, and deciding what will fill your apron.

**Duncan:** There are really two casts of characters in our film: One cast is the high-



COURTESY OF PAMELA WRIGHT, LLOYD AND THE GEORGE WRIGHT SOCIETY

**GEORGE M. WRIGHT** in Yosemite Valley.

est thing on the continent, the oldest living things on earth, the deepest lake in the nation with the clearest water in the world, the most massive things on earth, the most majestic landscapes on earth, and we introduce all of these in the very beginning. But after that, we spend the next 11 hours and 45 minutes focusing on the people who walk onto that stage, and how they respond to their surroundings.

We call it the story of the national park idea. We made it clear to the Park Service, from the beginning, this is not a film about a large though storied government bureaucracy—the park idea is bigger than the Park Service itself, and a lot older, I might add. We wanted to investigate how this happened, who was involved, and how it evolved and expanded over time. And by following that chronologically, it leads us to the park idea broadened to include historic sites such as Mesa Verde, which was the first change. It then evolved beyond Western sites that were already public land—it could include Acadia, which was private land that is donated to the nation. It could be a place like Everglades, which is protecting an environment for the sake of the wildlife and plant life that is there versus the dramatic scenery. In the 1930s, after riding in a car with FDR, Horace Albright convinced the President that a relatively new Park Service would do a better job of

interpreting historic sites, so the agency delved into history. And George Melendez Wright says the parks are not just about providing scenery for tourists—we have to preserve the wildlife itself in its natural state. So we link it very much to the whole idea of the Declaration of Independence—ever since Thomas Jefferson penned it, we’ve been arguing the meaning of “all men are created equal.” Every generation is responsible for wrestling with that ideal, and expanding the meaning of that phrase over the years, and keeping that freedom alive. And the national park idea is exactly the same. It’s up to each generation to wrestle with the definition of a national park, and who’s responsible for it, and how to pass it on to the next generation, and with luck and providence and the right people, it keeps encompassing more and more.

**NP: As storytellers, you’re revealing the past, but NPCA obviously cares about the future of the parks, as well. Why is it important to preserve these places?**

**Burns:** The key to the future is, paradoxically, the past. That’s always been true, but now more than ever, because we are so dialectically preoccupied—the environmental issues that are coming up today set off buttons of partisan politics that often make it impossible for people to hear each other. But regardless of the color of your state, as Americans we share a common past and that has had the fuel rod of intensity pulled out of it, so that it is possible to hear a story in the past and realize this is not at all different from our contemporary stories. Our film doesn’t delve into these contemporary arguments—the last major narrative story we tell is the Alaska Natural Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, but every single movement of our film is filled with issues that were equally compelling and sometimes identical to the ones we’re facing today. What you find in the past is a platform in which reasonable people of whatever persuasion can come together because they share that past, and then make decisions that are informed less

by partisanship and by the contemporary rancor that we experience today and more with the sense of community and what makes us all Americans. That’s why the past is such an effective tool in uniting people. We share this past, and while we argue so vociferously and sometimes with great violence, and sometimes talk beyond one another, particularly during election cycles, history is a place where you can have a conversation with people whose politics you don’t necessarily share, for whom the current issue is live-or-die, but suddenly realize that compromise is what resolved that question back then, and you figure out ways to go forward. Harry Truman said it: “You can’t possibly know where you’re going if you don’t know where you’ve been.”

**Duncan:** As Ken said, every issue facing the parks today is a modern permutation of issues that have faced the parks from the very start. A Congress that doesn’t provide enough money—that’s there at the beginning as well. But at different times different people have been able to convince elected leaders not only to set a park aside, but to provide money for it. It wasn’t until FDR, newly sworn-in president in 1933, in the midst of the Great Depression, ponied up the federal money to help buy the last remaining portions of the Great Smokies to create that national park. That was the first time the federal government spent its own money to buy land for a national park. (Yosemite had been created back in 1864 and given to the state of California.) There have been presidential administrations that have done more than others, but too many people crowding in the parks was a big issue right after World War II, and during Mission 66, people started worrying that the Park Service was building too many roads... Issues have always been there, and for parks to thrive and continue into the future, it’s going to require the same type of people we present as examples from our history.

*To learn more, visit: [www.pbs.org/nationalparks](http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks). To read the entire interview with Burns and Duncan visit [www.npca.org/magazine](http://www.npca.org/magazine).*

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**A VIEW OF FORD'S THEATRE** from the stage.

## SETTING THE STAGE

After an 18-month renovation, Ford's Theatre is reincarnated.

John T. Ford arrived in Washington, D.C., from nearby Baltimore, Maryland, in 1861, with his hopes set on running a successful playhouse in the nation's capital. His search for the perfect locale ended at an abandoned Baptist church near the corner of 10th and E Street, a few blocks from the White House. As he laid plans to host thousands of theatre-goers and some of the day's most prominent entertainers, Ford could not have imagined that his own name would one day be connected to one of the most painful events in our nation's history—the first assassination of an American president.

As any fifth-grader can tell you, Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865. John Wilkes Booth, a popular actor of his day, had been hatching a plot to kidnap the president for some time, when he stopped by the theater to pick up his mail and learned that Lincoln would be attending a performance of the comedy "Our American Cousin" that very evening. Weeks after Lincoln had been sworn in for a second term, and only days after the Civil War had come to an end, Booth sought vengeance for Lincoln's role in crimes

committed against the South. With every expectation that he would be embraced as a hero in the days that followed, Booth entered the president's box, shot Lincoln, and fell from the balcony to the stage below, breaking his ankle. He avoided his pursuers for days, but federal troops eventually cornered him in Richard Garrett's barn in Virginia, and shot him shortly after setting fire to the building. Meanwhile, Lincoln had been moved across the street to the home of a tailor named William Petersen, where he passed away two days later. A nation mourned.

These stories and more are told at Petersen House and at a newly reopened Ford's Theatre which now offers improved seating, upgraded lighting and sound systems, and a spacious new lobby with updated concessions, all unveiled on Lincoln's 200th birthday in February. The 18-month renovation was made possible by a \$50-million fundraising campaign led by Ford's Theatre Society, which drew donations from the federal government, District of Columbia, and even the government of Qatar and corporations in Asia, revealing Lincoln's enduring international appeal.

During its reopening ceremonies, the theater welcomed President Barack Obama and honored film legends Sidney Poitier and George Lucas for living out the ideals of our 16th president. Public events in the following weeks included speaking engagements with actor Sam Waterston and historian James McPherson, and a look at Lincoln's humor from comedian and talk-show host Conan O'Brien. A new museum will open this spring. But more importantly, Ford's Theatre is once again host to live performances, a tradition since the theater first re-opened in 1968.

"Lincoln loved the arts," says Paul Tetreault, director of Ford's Theatre Society. "The theater was something he used as a respite to get away from the daily trials and tribulations of his presidency—Lincoln visited Ford's Theatre more than a dozen times. So to be able to make this theater more than just a memorial to Lincoln but a living, breathing playhouse 150 years after his death—that's a pretty extraordinary tribute."

The dual roles of playhouse and historic site can make life complicated for the Park Service, but Superintendent Kym Elders doesn't mind. "The other day, a volunteer told me how difficult it was talking to visitors while a crew is setting props on the stage," says Elders. "I told that young lady, it's the perfect opportunity to point out that unlike a theater that's been closed for 40 years, telling a story in an empty shell, we have ongoing productions. It's a great detail to work into our interpretive talks and educational programs for children."

The new-and-improved theatre could mean longer lines for those talks. But the theatre's reopening has brought a solution to that problem as well: A new timed ticketing system allows people to plan their visit in advance so they can spend more time exploring Washington's many historic sites, rather than waiting in line all day.

*To learn about the theatre or plan a visit, see [www.fordstheatre.org](http://www.fordstheatre.org).*

*—Scott Kirkwood*

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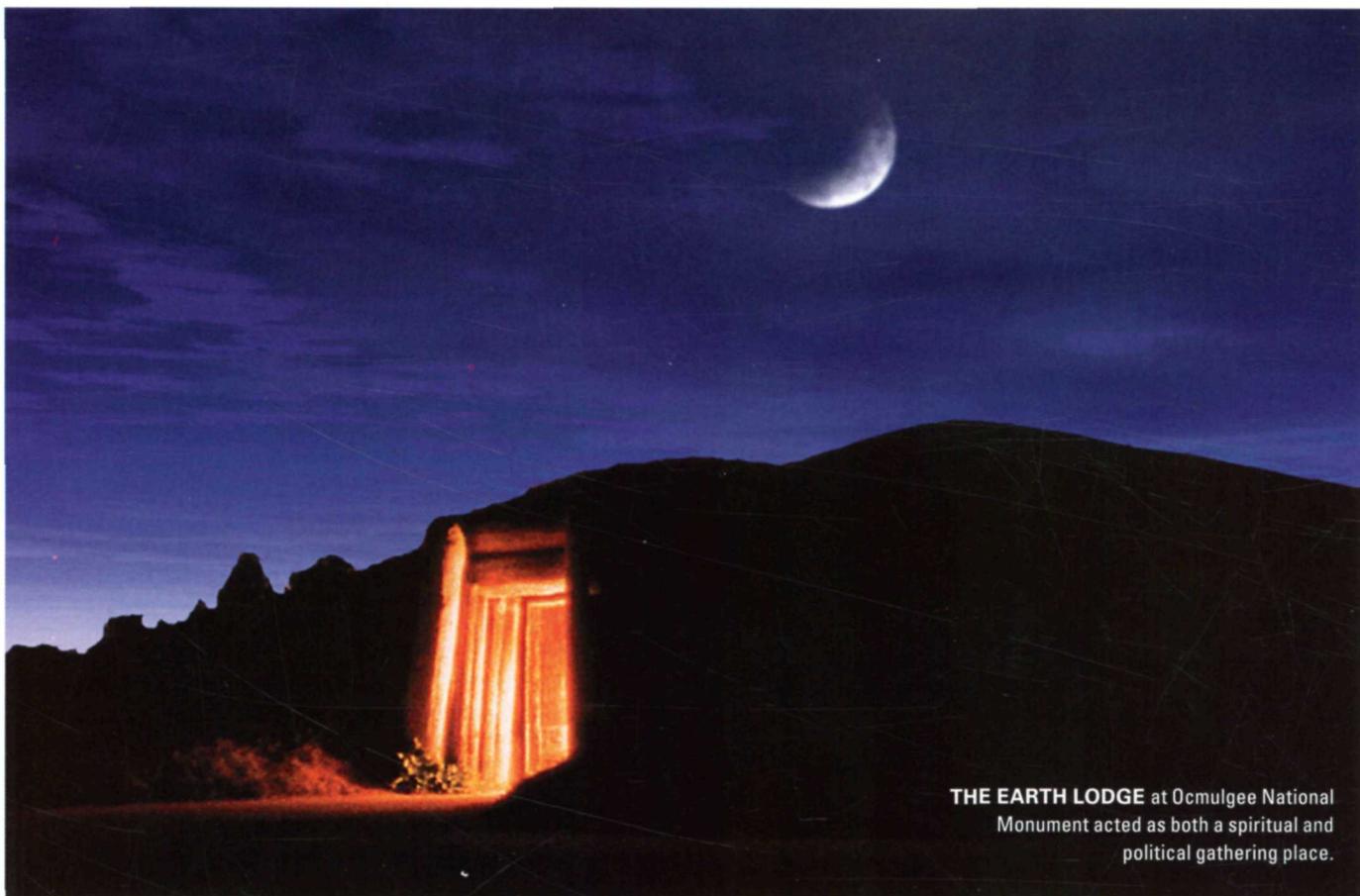


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRAY WARRINER/CAMERA ONE, SEATTLE

**THE EARTH LODGE** at Ocmulgee National Monument acted as both a spiritual and political gathering place.

# Building a Mystery

What do we really know about Ocmulgee's mounds?

If there's one thing humans are good at, it's building stuff. Our cities boast towering office buildings, sprawling museums, and architecturally stunning hotels. Yet we rarely give thought to what these structures say about our culture. What subtle messages do they reveal about who we are?

Wander the grounds at Ocmulgee National Monument in Georgia, and you can think of nothing *but* these questions. The landscape here is mystical: Enormous

mounds dominate a flood plane nestled between forest and wetlands. "When you sit in the park and look out at these impressive earthen features, you wonder about the motivation behind the people who built them," says Guy LaChine, the park's chief ranger. "Maybe they were powerful, and wanted everyone to know it. I'm sure there was a religious connection. Either way, it's a mysterious landscape."

Around 900 AD, a group of Native

Americans arrived on the fertile plateau near Macon, Georgia, and began building mounds: one for burials, another for religious gatherings, another for political meetings. Atop one mound sat rectangular structures that probably functioned as the city center, "like everything in Washington, D.C., crammed together on top of a mound," says Mark Williams, an anthropologist at the University of Georgia. But Mississippian culture was elitist, so the majority of people lived below in wooden houses. They grew corn, beans, and squash; sculpted pottery; and crafted tools.

We know this because of the millions of artifacts that have been unearthed both purposely and accidentally in the last two centuries. But beyond these facts, we know very little. "As much as people like to think archaeology is an exact science," says LaChine, "it only reveals a very small part of the human story."

Archaeologists aren't sure *why* these Mississippians moved here in the first place or

where they came from. Did population pressures force them to leave their homes, or were they following a vision of a leader? Why are so few buried in the Funeral Mound—was it reserved for powerful figures? And given that an entombed woman lies at the very base, what does that say about their culture?

Whatever the reasons, these people didn't stay long. Two hundred years later they abandoned the site, leaving little evidence of where they went or why they left. Two more centuries would pass before the Lamar site—a swampy area four miles away—showed any human activity. But there is no direct evidence connecting the Lamar people to Mississippians from Ocmulgee.

To answer these questions, archaeologists need to do what they do best: dig. But funding is hard to come by, so no one's done much digging since the Great Depression, when the federal government put hundreds of people to work under a single archaeologist, Dr. Arthur Kelly. It was the biggest archaeological undertaking in the history of America,

and ultimately led to the creation of Ocmulgee National Monument in 1936—but even then, the methods were crude at best.

“Think back to that scene in *Indiana Jones* when Harrison Ford is sneaking into the temple, and all those people are digging away like ants,” LaChine says. “That was Ocmulgee.” Artifacts were collected by hand, bagged in paper sacks, and then hauled to a makeshift lab in the Macon Auditorium where women cleaned them, labeled them, and stored them in shoeboxes.

But Ocmulgee had already endured more than a century of abuse, starting with the Americans who marched the last Creek Indians off the land by 1836. Georgia's new residents needed timber, so they cut down ancient oak trees growing on the mounds. They needed bricks, so they mined clay out of a hillside next to the Great Temple Mound. They needed a connection to the outside world, so they built railroad lines that damaged the Funeral Mound, the Lesser Temple Mound, and the prehistoric town.

“A lot of visitors get upset about the railroad construction,” LaChine says. “But these people weren't trying to destroy the mounds; they were trying to improve their transportation system. In that context, our ancestors seem less demonic and more human. That's not to say we can't learn from those past actions—today's progress might be the future's tragedy, and we need to pause from time to time and consider those ramifications.”

Thanks to the Park Service, whatever remains buried in Ocmulgee's mounds is well guarded today. “Nothing is being lost here except opportunities,” Williams says. “But we can't wait forever to go back. Ocmulgee is no different from the pyramids, Stonehenge, or other places that dare us to understand the people that built them.”

*Ocmulgee National Monument will open a new museum later this year. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/locmu](http://www.nps.gov/locmu). NP*

**Amy Leinbach Marquis** is associate editor of *National Parks* magazine.

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AN OZARK HELLBENDER  
prepares to devour a crayfish.

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# Fighting the Current

Can North America's biggest, oldest salamander survive changing times?

In the middle of a dark Missouri night, hellbender #10 slowly works its way upstream, the swift, cold current pressing loose skin against its body in wrinkled waves. The salamander's toes, thick with keratin, grip the pebbled riverbed. Tiny eyes set wide on its broad, flat head are almost useless for navigation, but a rudder-like tail propels the amphibian around slick rocks. A week later, when the hellbender reaches a large boulder, it will crawl underneath, and remain there for the next six months.

Catherine Bodinof knows this because she has been tracking #10—and 35 other Ozark hellbenders—every 32 hours since the radio-tagged animals were first released into the river this summer. Why that particular boulder made appealing hellbender habitat is a mystery that Bodinof, a University of Missouri–Columbia graduate student, would like to solve. The answer may help stave off extinction for this subspecies of North America's largest salamander, and buy time for the dedicated community of scien-

tists now scrambling to save it.

Not even the most ardent hellbender enthusiast would call it an attractive animal; the two-foot-long creature has inspired such nicknames as “old lasagna sides,” “mud devil,” “water dog,” and “snot otter” for a reason. Yet, in part because of its weirdness, herpetologists are loath to let the prehistoric animal slip off the map: Fossils of its Asian ancestors stretch back 160 million years.

Rivers in south-central Missouri and adjacent Arkansas once supported up to 7,000 Ozark hellbenders; today, only about 600 exist in the wild—so few that the amphibian is listed as a candidate for the endangered species list. Nocturnal animals that are entirely aquatic, hellbenders rarely rove into the open, instead preferring to let prey, mostly crayfish, come to them. Canoeists meandering down the Current River in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways—a park unit protecting the northern fork of the river—would never know that 100 of the salamanders still inhabit those waters.

Herpetologists have been surveying the Ozark hellbender for decades, but only recently did a problem emerge: Although researchers have found plenty of animals approaching 35 years old, very few show up in younger age classes. In other words, Ozark hellbenders weren't reproducing. The Missouri population had plunged 70 percent.

In 2001, the Park Service joined the Ozark Hellbender Working Group to help investigate the animal's precipitous decline. The group launched a number of projects, including egg searches, disease sampling, and behavioral studies. But the precise reason for the decline has been difficult to pinpoint—and there's probably more than one. Hellbenders have suffered a myriad of assaults, from invasive predators to habitat alteration like eroding riverbanks that smother eggs and fill spaces where the young hide.

And while Missouri's beautiful mountain streams are crystal clear, says Jeff Briggler, a herpetologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation, clear doesn't mean clean.

Chemicals in the water aren't always obvious to the naked eye.

But the impacts are: Most hellbenders captured recently have been found with abnormalities such as missing limbs. That's because hellbenders are basically living sponges. Capillaries near the surface of their skin absorb oxygen directly from the water—as well as hormones, heavy metals, and pesticides. They are also vulnerable to amphibian chytrid fungus—an exotic disease devastating amphibian species worldwide—and even native pathogens that previous generations had been able to fend off.

Hellbenders' last, best hope may be a stopgap measure: Releasing captive-bred animals until herpetologists can figure out how to help them. The radio-tagged six-year-olds in Bodinof's study were raised in tanks at the St. Louis Zoo from eggs collected in the wild. The zoo also has a 32-foot simulated stream in an environmentally controlled room, where scientists are tinkering with conditions such as temperature and daylight

with the hope of propagating the next generation. This fall, they made a breakthrough: Captive hellbenders produced eggs and viable sperm for the first time.

Unfortunately, time is not something Ozark hellbenders have a lot of. "We have a 15- to 20-year window to reverse this decline," Briggler says. "We don't want this animal disappearing on our watch."

The zoo is constructing two more simulated streams outdoors and doubling the size of its head start facility for young hellbenders. Ozark National Scenic Riverways recently added multimedia programs to teach schoolchildren and park visitors about the unique animal. And researchers elsewhere have stepped up their efforts. Hellbender #10, meanwhile, lurks under his boulder in the cold Missouri river and continues to wait. **NP**

**Jennifer Bogo**, science editor at *Popular Mechanics*, studied biology and environmental science at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania.



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BY ROSANNE PAGANO

**CAMILLE EGDORF**, daughter of a local fishing guide, casts her line on the Nushagak River in Bristol Bay's headwaters, part of the broader ecosystem that could be imperiled by the Pebble Mine.

Lake Clark National Park & Preserve is home to Native people, long-time Alaskans, and thriving salmon runs. But plans for one of the world's biggest gold and copper mines could change all that.

## *A Pebble in the Water*

In black-spruce country better suited to goshawks and grizzlies, Iowa-born Dick Proenneke—rancher, mechanic and master woodworker—constructed a cabin that for thousands the world over symbolizes the majesty, abundance, and solitude of Lake Clark National Park & Preserve, a 4-million-acre outback just 90 miles southwest of Anchorage.

Proenneke chronicled his cabin building and survivalist life in video and journals that reveal a deliberate attempt to live with, not merely off, the land. He first retreated to the base of berry-carpeted Crag Mountain in 1968, one year before man would walk on the moon. The prospect of new frontiers prompted Proenneke, who lived here on his own for 30 years, to doubt the limits of human wants.



**A STREAM MEANDERS** across tundra streaked with caribou trails. An open-pit mine in the region could leak toxins and devastate groundwater-saturated terrain like this.

© ROBERT GLENN KETCHUM

“The best that I can imagine is that the Twin Lakes watershed be made into a sanctuary—camera hunting and foot traffic only on all the mountains and streams feeding the two lakes. Too good to be true.”

**Lake Clark naturalist Richard L. Proenneke, 1916-2003**

“[Folks] keep expanding their needs until they are dependent on too many things and too many other people,” he wrote 36 years ago. Gazing about the 12-foot-by-16-foot log cabin he’d built by hand, Proenneke considered the overstuffed houses in the world beyond serene Twin Lakes: “How many things in the average American home could be eliminated,” he wondered, “if the question were asked, ‘Must I really have this?’”

For Alaska Natives whose heritage is inseparable from pristine lands surrounding Lake Clark National Park & Preserve, for Bristol Bay fishermen dependent on world-renowned runs of wild salmon, and for increasing numbers of visitors who treasure the region’s protected rivers and wildlife, Proenneke’s challenge is more urgent than ever.

Because a valley on state land just 15 miles from the park’s southwest

border—and some 100 miles upriver from the world’s most productive sockeye salmon fishery—sits on an untapped storehouse of gold and copper that may surpass any other deposit on Earth. Although most of the minerals are found in low-grade deposits, the profit to be made from the Pebble Mine is staggering: In months before the global financial crisis, Canadian-based developers were predicting the deposit could eventually produce

\$345–\$500 billion in metals and generate hundreds of top-dollar jobs for 40 or 50 years.

So vast is the potential within the four-square-mile claim, divided into two sites, that in 2007, after two years of exploratory drilling, the outer limits of the Pebble East deposit remained a mystery. But bigger questions loom: How will massive open-pit and underground mining efforts move forward without harming the interdependent, vast network of lakes, rivers, and streams? How will one of the last big runs of wild Pacific salmon and a commercial fishing industry worth up to \$100 million a year continue to thrive while huge earthmovers extract 42 billion pounds of copper and 40 million ounces of gold from a bed of sulfur? As Proenneke said, must we really have this?

### A Quick Escape

In a state where airplanes are nearly as a commonplace as cars, Lake Clark's 4 million acres amount to wilderness within reach. A 90-minute flight from Anchorage through the narrow mountain valleys via small bush plane makes for some of the most spectacular in-flight entertainment anywhere.

The park and preserve take in jagged peaks of the Alaska and Aleutian mountain ranges; a rainforest coast typical of Southeast Alaska; tundra plateau representative of the Arctic; and two active volcanoes—Iliamna and Redoubt. Lake Clark's wildlife ranges from wood frogs to wolves, birds to moose. Herds of migrating caribou roam here, and returns of sockeye salmon run into the tens of millions each season. Flourishing side by side are a tourism industry dating to the 1930s and indigenous cultures in place for nearly 10,000 years.

But the region is much more than a model of multiuse terrain: For millions of consumers around the world, for sport and commercial fishermen alike, Bristol Bay is synonymous with top-quality fish. As early as 1872, the region's abundant salmon were being processed for West Coast markets, earning praise as much superior to Columbia River salmon. Today, Bristol Bay brims with pristine, abundant red salmon issuing from three great rivers—the Naknek, the Nushagak, and the Kvichak, whose headwaters lie within Lake Clark National Park & Preserve. If developed, the Pebble

Mine would occupy land at the center of Nushagak and Kvichak River salmon spawning grounds.

And that worries Lake Clark Superintendent Joel Hard, who believes Bristol Bay salmon are Southwest Alaska's premier renewable resource. "I can't think of a worse place for a mine than the headwaters of Bristol Bay," he says. As a former director of Alaska State Troopers Fish and Wildlife Protection Division, Hard believes that the productive Bristol Bay region surrounding Lake Clark National Park and Preserve represents the pulse of Alaska.

"The Bristol Bay region is a benchmark for understanding the environmental health of the state," Hard says,

**WITH HIS WRITINGS** and his rustic cabin, Dick Proenneke (below, near Twin Lakes) helped put Lake Clark on the map, but Native people have lived off the region's salmon for thousands of years.



COURTESY OF FLORENCE HICKS AND DORIS HAGEDORN



NPS



© MARK EMERY

as he considers potential effects of mining. “If this region of the state is not healthy, it doesn’t bode well for the rest. Bristol Bay is that important.”

Hard says that Anglo American and Northern Dynasty, the primary corporations involved, have been responsive to Park Service concerns. So far, a proposed power transmission corridor through the heart of wilderness in Lake Clark Pass was dropped at the Park Service’s urging. But as exploratory rigs sample hundreds of parcels of land, interest in Pebble has prompted at least eight

other companies to stake claims, increasing pressure for future roads, power, ports, and housing. It’s unclear how development may accommodate an economic cornerstone like fishing, but so far mine developers are saying the right things. John Shively, chief executive of Anchorage-based Pebble Partnership, a consortium of site developers Anglo American and Northern Dynasty, has stressed that if fish can’t be protected, “we don’t have a project.”

A former state commissioner of natural resources, Shively worked with an Alaska Native-owned corporation to develop lead and zinc prospects at Red Dog, the state’s largest mine. In August 2008, he told the *New York Times* that placing Alaska’s two precious commodities—fish and metals—next to each other might be God’s test, “just to see what people would do.”

The answer is starting to take shape at Iliamna, an isolated port less than 10 miles from the park unit’s southwest corner. The community’s economy has long accommodated hunting and gathering pursued by Alaska Native people and upscale lodges that began luring sport anglers and hunters in the 1930s. Only ten years ago, Iliamna’s population was just beyond 100, but over the past year it has turned into

a base camp for preliminary exploration at Pebble, complete with state-approved plans for improvements to mountain road developments underwritten by a \$7-million federal earmark. Although some townspeople are content with company-town perks like service-industry jobs, an upgraded landing strip, and big rents paid for worker housing, others wonder whether changes are actually an improvement. For instance, helicopters now depart Iliamna routinely, ferrying crews and equipment north to Pebble where exploratory drilling and engineering and environmental studies are under way.

“We hear those helicopters every day,” says Jack Hobson, tribal council president of Nondalton, a Dena’ina Athabascan settlement of about 900 people living 14 miles east of the Pebble site, on the border of the park unit. “We were told the helicopters wouldn’t bother us, but you can hear them for miles.” Hobson says active drill rigs and vibration from helicopter propellers are making it harder to hunt caribou, which provide a crucial source of food for Nondalton residents through the winter. And if thousands of mining workers descend upon the Lake Clark region, new residents could apply for the right to subsistence hunt in the park a year later, increasing the competition for big game.



**AT THE END** of a long journey up the Naknek River, a male sockeye salmon finds a mate and prepares to fertilize several thousand eggs.

Even preliminary mining activity may disrupt calving grounds and shift historic migration routes of the famed Mulchatna herd, numbering more than 100,000 animals and ranging the foothill lakes and tundra plains of Lake Clark's western preserve and beyond. Hobson and his neighbors have begun to wonder if recent hunts—requiring three days and a 300-mile round trip on snowmobiles—will replace typical treks of just 20 miles when caribou were more plentiful and the price of gasoline was within reach.

### A Measured Response

Whereas Iliamna has limited traditional ties to Lake Clark's park lands and its residents have generally supported the mine, residents of Nondalton are more reluctant. In 2008, nearly three-quarters of the locals favored a statewide initiative that would have strengthened environmental standards for salmon streams, essentially barring industrial-sized mines like Pebble. Some \$10 million poured into the Measure 4 campaign, the costliest in state history; the mining industry outspent the initiative's supporters by a three-to-one margin.

Critics argued that Measure 4 would have hobbled mining, a storied Alaska activity that evokes the state's gold-panning pioneers and today's large-scale industry worth nearly \$1 billion a year. Yet Alaska's experience with industrial mining remains mixed: In 2001, owners of northwest Alaska's Red Dog mine near remote Kotzebue paid roughly \$830,000 in civil penalties to settle air-quality violations arising from the zinc and lead mine. Alleged violations of water-pollution regulations may prompt the company to invest an additional \$120 million for a wastewater pipeline.

Although some observers try to reduce the Pebble dispute to a stark choice between industry or the environment, those closest to the fish



**THE ALASKAN PENINSULA** is home to a variety of wildlife, including red fox and brown bear.

—Bristol Bay fishermen themselves—believe that protecting salmon is simply the best way to preserve a sustainable regional economy. That puts them on the same side of the fence as jewelers like Tiffany & Company, which publicly pledged not to purchase gold produced at Pebble.

In days before the vote on Measure 4, with the race nearly deadlocked, Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, wife of a lifelong Bristol Bay fisherman, announced she was “taking off her governor’s hat for a moment” and urging Alaskans to defeat the measure. She got her wish. When the ballots were counted in August, Measure 4 earned less than 40 percent of the vote.

But Michelle Ravenmoon believes the battle is not over. A Port Als-

worth resident whose Dena'ina roots go back generations, Ravenmoon coordinates subsistence hunting at Lake Clark, a practice crucial to survival as well as upholding traditional ways. Ravenmoon believes national attention focused on Pebble will heighten interest in diversifying Bristol Bay's economy and deflect mining. Eco-tourism—a niche that attracts travelers seeking unspoiled places—is already gaining ground: In Nondalton, a new tour business owned by a Native Alaskan offers boat rides, berry picking, and fish-camp excursions to places typically visited only by Dena'ina people.

Ravenmoon insists she's not against people earning money. But she's convinced that industrial devel-



A FLOAT PLANE docked in Lake Clark National Park.

© RANDALL LEVENSALER/AURORA

“There aren’t any examples around the world where a large open-pit mine and a vibrant tourism industry coexist,” Oberlatz says. “It’s never been done.”

opment—along with its increase in pollution, roads, and people—will imperil Dena’ina ways and detract from national parks and preserves at Lake Clark and Katmai to the south. According to a study sponsored in part by NPCA and based on figures from 2006, Katmai and Lake Clark account for about 80,000 visitors a year. Estimated contributions to the local economy are nearly \$1.5 million at Lake Clark and \$13.8 million at Katmai, home to peerless grizzly bear viewing and the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, a geologic wonder linked to the 1912 eruption of Novarupta volcano and a key reason Katmai was designated a national park.

Dan Oberlatz, a longtime Lake Clark tour operator based in Anchorage, says what visitors crave is the chance to view untouched wilderness—waves lapping at rocky lakeshores, red salmon drying in the summer sun, fresh wolfprints on a mountain trail. As Oberlatz knows, Lake Clark wilderness leaves deep impressions.

“The first time I saw a grizzly on the Kvichak River was one of the most unbelievable experiences of my life,” says Oberlatz, recalling a 1994 stint working at a Lake Clark lodge with a college friend from California. Taking advantage of some time off, the two went exploring and found themselves on a bluff, gazing out at mountain

peaks, autumn-tinged aspen, and spawning salmon by the thousands.

“Suddenly, galloping right toward us, was a brown bear sow and two cubs. The breeze was blowing downstream, and they had no idea we were there,” Oberlatz says. The two men watched in awe as the sow approached within 40 feet before diving into a deep pool of water as the cubs caught up.

Oberlatz says that 99 percent of his clients are from the Lower 48, and they want to see Alaska, beyond rails and buses and cruise ships. Through guided tours to Lake Clark country—with its turquoise lakes, braided rivers, and tundra studded with heather and

cotton grass—the real Alaska is easy to deliver. If industrial pollution degrades the Lake Clark area's vast watershed, Oberlatz believes a domino effect could claim animals, plants, fish—and the businesses and people that depend on each. "There aren't any examples around the world where a large open-pit mine and a vibrant tourism industry coexist," he says. "It's never been done."

Because ore is found in low concentrations at Pebble, open-pit mining, with its millions of tons of waste rock corralled by giant earthen retaining walls, is a likely option. State regulators have vowed to hold Pebble to the highest standards. But experts like Carol Ann Woody, a former chief fisheries scientist for the U.S. Geological Survey and a past member of a federal group studying Pebble, says permitting standards don't inspire confidence, in part because rules are unclear when it comes to defining and mapping groundwater.

Consider fugitive dust, a common by-product of open-pit mining. Because of sulfur deposits at Pebble, the mine would include a pit two miles wide and a retaining wall four miles long just to hold back tailings and acidic waste. And blasting and grinding the earth to extract ore are likely to generate dust higher in harmful concentrations of copper and zinc. Once it's borne on the region's 100-mph winds, mining dust scatters unpredictably, Woody says, endangering streams and underground water alike.

A collapsed fishery is no idle threat, as much of the West Coast fleet learned in May 2008 when the U.S. Commerce Department issued a disaster declaration after fewer than 60,000 fish returned to the Sacramento River to spawn; numbers typically run into the hundreds of thousands, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The sudden, unprecedented

collapse caused regulators to restrict commercial ocean salmon fishing off Oregon while waters off the entire California coast were closed.

Meanwhile in Bristol Bay, where salmon returns remain healthy, fishermen were heartened in 2008 when Wal-Mart, the world's largest seafood retailer, recognized sustainable fisheries as a cornerstone of local economies. Wal-Mart has agreed to feature wild Bristol Bay sockeye in its stores as part of a pilot project demonstrating commitment to renewable fisheries.

### Something Immeasurable

As Alaska's residents weigh the value of untapped precious metals against the proven worth of wild salmon, NPCA and park-area residents are starting to focus national attention on aspects of Lake Clark that can't be measured in tons or ounces.

"This is one of the most scenic wilderness areas in the world, worth protecting for its own sake," says Anne Coray, a lifelong Alaskan who, with her husband, Steve Kahn, has spent 12 years in a home on the deep-water north shore of Lake Clark, a 40-mile-long, 5-mile-wide lake. From her lupine-filled front yard,

on family property within the preserve, Coray's view takes in a bay at the foot of an officially unnamed peak known locally by its Dena'ina name—*Tits'nadzeni*, or "mountain that comes down to the water."

In autumn, forests blaze gold at the family compound, where Coray was born in a log cabin that still stands and her two brothers keep cabins of their own. In winter, Coray takes to the frozen lake to haul ice blocks for homemade ice cream or cool drinks. Drinking water comes from a nearby mountain stream that doubles as a refrigerator in summer.

"Just knowing that relatively pristine places still exist is important," Coray says. "It's a way of confirming that we humans have the restraint and wisdom to keep a few places off limits to development."

Dick Proenneke would probably agree. A handwritten note, hanging on his cabin wall below two well-worn snowshoes asks, "Is it proper that the wilderness and its creatures should suffer because we came?" NP

**Rosanne Pagano** is a writer and editor who teaches at Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage.

**COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN** at Nushagak Point use an old wooden skiff to transfer their catch.



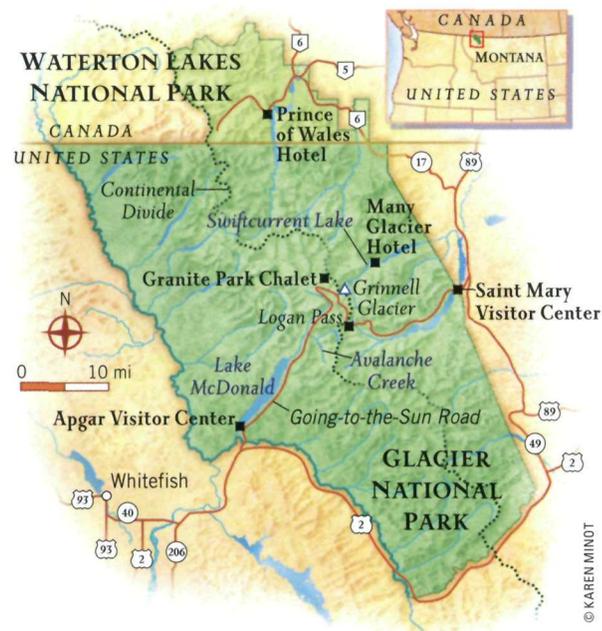
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# GOING TO THE SUN

**GLACIER'S HISTORIC RED BUSES** make their way up Going-to-the-Sun Road.



© KAREN MINOT

**T**HE ROAD INTO MONTANA'S Glacier National Park winds through towering spruce, cedar, and lodgepole pines and follows the shores of Lake McDonald like a child led by curiosity. It's a slow, meandering trip that makes stops along the way—at a waterfall, a peaceful shoreline, and a cold pool of water—perfect for a summer swim. The route, Going-to-the-Sun Road, is a parkway as literal as it sounds, winding its way up mountains and into the sky. From its highest point just above 6,600 feet, the depth and perspective of Glacier's landscape are incomprehensible. Jagged mountains cut sharply through clouds, their peaks encircling the earth like majestic points of a crown fit for a king. It's no wonder they call this place the "Crown of the Continent."

A hike through such landscapes may conjure notions of following in some great

explorer's footsteps—and you wouldn't be far off. Lewis and Clark missed Glacier by a mere 20 miles on their famous westward journey two centuries ago, and that's a shame, because the scenery here stands alone.

Shaped by the melting, refreezing, and sluggish advance of mammoth glaciers millions of years ago, this land is best known for the icy giants that remain. But that scenery is changing. Of the original 150 glaciers documented in the park in 1850, only 26 remain today; scientists estimate that Glacier will be glacier-less by 2030 as a result of accelerated global warming. At the same time, hotter temperatures are forcing mountain goats, hoary marmots, and other high-altitude species farther up mountain peaks with little ground left to go. Such threats of a final cur-

tain call may be driving visitor interest now more than ever before, but don't let the possibility of crowds scare you away. If you time your visit correctly and are willing to explore beyond the beaten path, you'll find a wilderness devoid of the human footprint.

**DAY ONE:** Grinnell Glacier

At Glacier National Park you're operating under the ticking of a geological clock, so be sure to check out Grinnell Glacier before it makes its exit. Located on the northeastern side of the park in the Many Glacier region, the 12-mile trek around the glacier can be slow going, with each new step offering a new



A HIKER on Grinnell Glacier Trail stops to look out at Lower Grinnell Lake.

view for the camera-obsessed. Lower Grinnell Lake is in sight for most of the hike, and its stunning turquoise waters make it hard to keep your eyes on the trail—but that's okay, it's not a technical path. As you approach the Grinnell Glacier overlook, keep your eyes peeled for elusive wolverines. This member of the weasel family is an extremely rare sight, but if you're one of the lucky few, you might just glimpse its bear-like frame padding across the rocky terrain.

Eventually, you'll reach Grinnell Glacier and its vast, sprawling basin. The intense blue color of Upper and Lower Grinnell Lakes is a result of glacial silt, which refracts light through the meltwater, giving it a surreal, unearthly hue. As for the glacier itself, there's just not much left. So take your time, soak it in, and budget at least a full day for this hike (with plenty of water and snacks to keep you going). Because it might not be here when you come back.

**DAY TWO:** Continental Divide

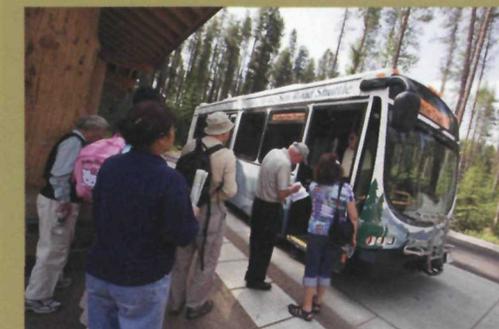
Glacier's landscape rivals some of the wildest terrain in the National Park System, but there is no better way to experience it than on foot, and you don't have to be a seasoned athlete to do so. Try out the Highline Trail, located at

Travel Essentials

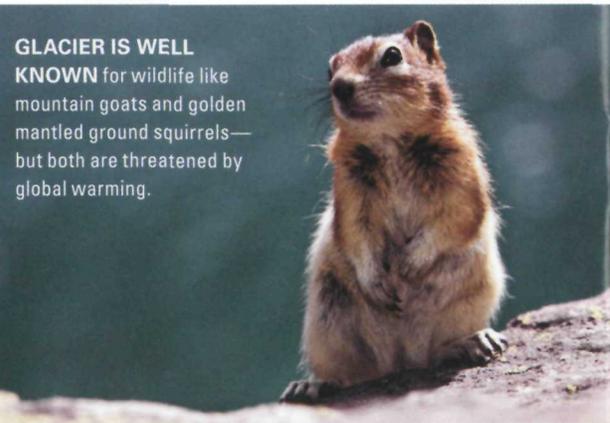
**T**he closest airport to the park is Glacier Park International in Kalispell, and Amtrak offers scenic rides directly into West and East Glacier—but you'll need to rent a car or take a taxi to get to the Apgar Visitor Center. July and August are the park's busiest months, but crowds die down in September. Before you set your travel dates, be sure to check for any road construction that could shut down parts of the park.

An "orientation" drive along Going-to-the-Sun Road is a guaranteed way to see stunning views without leaving your car, but the beauty of Glacier is that you don't even need a car. Park instead at the Apgar Visitor Center and hitch a free ride on the new, environmentally friendly shuttle bus that stops at various locations. Or hop aboard a historic red bus instead—a 25-foot-long coach with a canvas roll-back top that offers views from an entirely new perspective. Each bus—cleaner, greener copies of the original 1930s fleet—carries up to 17 passengers, and can be reserved for private parties (go to [www.glacierpark-inc.com/transportation/reds](http://www.glacierpark-inc.com/transportation/reds)).

The historic Belton Chalet at the west entrance of the park offers classy but casual lodging and dining (888.235.8665; [www.beltonchalet.com](http://www.beltonchalet.com)). Outside the park, the quaint but lively town of Whitefish features the family-owned-and-operated Buf-



falo Café ("The Buff" to locals)—try their Hungarian mushroom soup and salmon-huckleberry tacos (514 3rd Street; 406.862.2833; [www.buffalocafewhitefish.com](http://www.buffalocafewhitefish.com)). Just up the street, the Great Northern Bar & Grill boasts live music, quick eats, and a local brew called "Moose Drool"—don't worry, it tastes better than it sounds (27 Central Avenue; 406.862.2816; [www.greatnorthernbar.com](http://www.greatnorthernbar.com)).



**GLACIER IS WELL KNOWN** for wildlife like mountain goats and golden mantled ground squirrels—but both are threatened by global warming.



**AVALANCHE CREEK** offers a soothing escape. Below, a view of the Highline Trail from Granite Park Chalet.

the center of the park at Logan Pass where the streams all flow east to the Atlantic or west to the Pacific—hence the term “Continental Divide.” If you must drive, park at the Logan Pass parking lot (in summer, arrive by 7:30 a.m. to get a spot)—but the park’s free shuttle bus is a environmentally-friendlier option. Just across the street you can take in sweep-

ing views as you mingle with snowy-white mountain goats. But don’t be fooled by their friendly demeanor; they’re wild animals, and should be respected as such.

In a national park known for its mountains, the Highline Trail is about as flat as a trail can get, making it accessible to visitors of many abilities. End to end the trail stretches

11 miles, and even though it’s called a “loop,” it actually dumps hikers at the lower end of Going-to-the-Sun Road, so you’ll need a shuttle back to Logan Pass. If you power through the whole distance, you’ll be rewarded with glistening snowfields, endearing wildlife (picture plump, furry marmots), and wildflowers so colorful you’ll think you’ve landed in Oz.

One of the brightest gems on this trail isn’t a landscape, however, it’s the Granite Park Chalet. Located 7.6 miles from Logan Pass, the tiny stone lodge was built in the early 1900s by the Great Northern Railway and is the last of Glacier’s two backcountry chalets that remains open to travelers. If you don’t spend the night, at least treat yourself to a drink of fresh, mountain spring water and enough time to enjoy the 360-degree views. After this hike, you deserve it.

**DAY THREE:** Quick Trips

Lake McDonald in West Glacier is the first body of water you encounter when you enter the park. In the early morning and on calm evenings, the surface is a giant mirror, perfectly still except for the ripple of a trout

rising to feed on a summer hatch. The lake has plenty of pullouts right along the road, making it an ideal place to read a book, meditate, or enjoy the view with someone you love.

Nearby at Avalanche Creek, a mellow, paved trail leads you to a waterfall whose sapphire hue is simply mesmerizing. The crisp, clean air blowing off the water feels purer than pure, thanks to the abundance of conifers filtering toxins around you. Water from the falls trickles down into a gorge, and eventually into a lake filled with rocks so brightly colored they beam through the crystal-clear water.

Once you’ve had your fill, consider a trip back to Many Glacier to explore a historic hotel built in 1914. If you think the place has a familiar feel, you’re probably right—Many Glacier Hotel inspired the setting for Steven King’s novel, *The Shining*, and although it wasn’t actually in the movie, it’s often referred to unofficially by the same name. Despite its haunting association, the hotel is a warm and welcoming four-story masterpiece with 240 guest rooms. If you don’t spend the night, at least rent a canoe or kayak and spend the afternoon paddling Swiftcurrent Lake, adjacent to Many Glacier. The cone-like shape of Grinnell Point is a constant backdrop here, and for a moment you may feel more like you’re boating China’s Yangtze River than a lake in Montana.

As you make your way back down Going-to-the-Sun Road and out of the park, lingering images of crystalline waterfalls, rugged ridgelines, and a long, winding road settle into the quiet reserves of your mind. And that’s when you realize that even though you’re leaving Glacier, Glacier will never leave you. **NP**

**Ian Shive’s** book of images entitled *The National Parks: Our American Landscape* will be published by Palace Press this fall. If you’d like to join Shive on a photographic excursion to Olympic and Mt. Rainier National Parks in September, visit [www.npca.org/nwphotog](http://www.npca.org/nwphotog) or call 800.628.7275.

**SIDE TRIP:**  
Waterton Lakes National Park

**C**urious how Canada compares? Take a short drive north of the border to explore Glacier’s sister park, Waterton Lakes National Park. Waterton and Glacier were designated a joint International Peace Park in 1932 and a World Heritage Site in 1995, honoring their dramatic scenery and abundant biodiversity. You could easily spend an entire vacation exploring Waterton’s trail system—but if you’re short on time, top priority should be the Prince of Wales Hotel, an iconic Rocky Mountains structure whose perch on a hilltop makes it an architectural beacon.

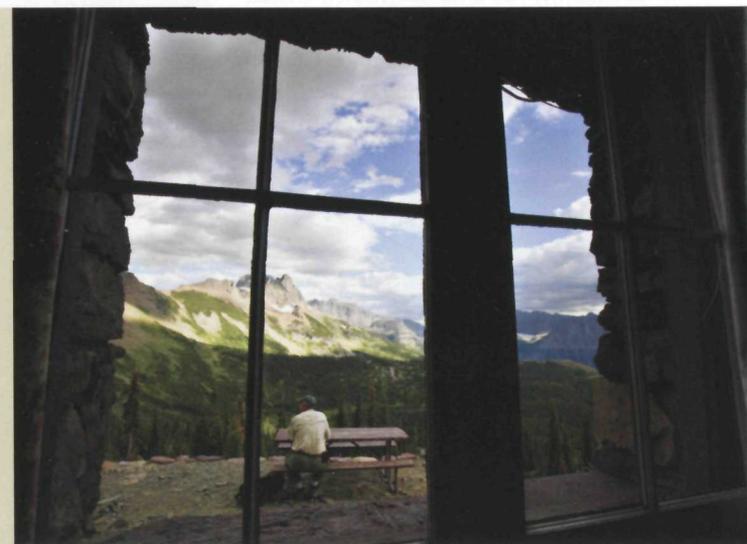
For more information, visit [www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/Waterton](http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/Waterton).

**MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP** rely on the natural corridor that exists between Waterton Lakes and Glacier National Park.



**Bear Country**

**R**angers, visitors, and signs posted all over the park will constantly remind you that when you’re in Glacier, you’re in bear country. But keep a level head about it; the bears aren’t out to eat you. If you visit in August when huckleberries are in their prime, you’re likely to encounter a grizzly or black bear. Simply make noise and let the bear know you are there, but remain calm and enjoy the opportunity to witness one of the most charismatic animals in America. Speak loudly on hikes, especially in the early mornings and evenings when the animals are most active—but avoid ruining other visitors’ solitude with “bear bells.” Most studies have found them ineffective; if you’re looking to protect yourself, bear spray (a potent pepper spray) is available everywhere and much more effective. Respect the animal, and it will respect you.



**Breaking Research News**

# Life is short...or maybe not.

Top Harvard researcher says it's "the Holy Grail of aging research."\*

Don't wait for the drug companies to drive the price through the roof; get the benefits of this breakthrough *natural* extract for pennies a day!

**BOSTON, MA**—Leading medical scientists are learning that resveratrol, a natural substance found in red wine, is rewriting the rules on the science of aging.

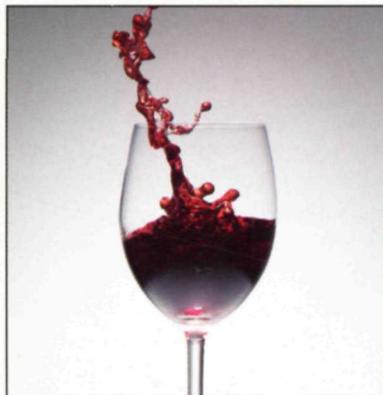
Researchers at the **Harvard Medical School** and the **National Institute on Aging** already discovered that the red wine extract offset the negative effects of a high-calorie diet in mice and significantly extends their life span (*NY Times*, Nov 2, 2006). Now, the latest research indicates that resveratrol may be even more powerful than first anticipated.

At this moment, drug companies are rushing to create prescription drugs that mimic the awesome health benefits of this simple natural extract. A leading pharmaceutical company has already spent \$760,000,000 on purchasing the research and development.

**The powerful secret of tomorrow's anti-aging pill can be yours today.**

You may have thought that an anti-aging pill would only be available far into the future. But the effects of resveratrol have been proven as scientific fact... today. Even better, resveratrol is a naturally-occurring substance found in the skin of grapes and red wine, not manufactured in some laboratory. The key to living longer may be found inside your favorite bottle of red wine.

But don't try to drink yourself healthy, because it would take **50 bottles day!** Now there is a way to take resveratrol without the alcohol, calories and high



"We have something (resveratrol) that **extends the life of every species** it's (been) given to. We're 50 years ahead of where I'd thought we would be 10 years ago," said a leading professor of pathology at Harvard Medical School, reported by the *NY Times*.

cost. Vinotrol™, with 50mg of resveratrol derived from grapes and roots, provides the equivalent of the resveratrol in **278 five ounce glasses of Pinot Noir**.

Such a potent concentrate delivers all of resveratrol's remarkable benefits, promoting circulation, blood flow, immune system, energy and healthy arteries.

**Has the "The French Paradox" finally been explained?**

Resveratrol is conjectured to be a partial explanation for "The French Paradox," the puzzling fact that people in France enjoy a high-fat diet yet suffer less heart disease than Americans and live significantly longer lives (in some cases up to 40%).

Even though French diets are crammed with loads of bread, cheese, rich cream sauces and decadent desserts... the resveratrol in red wine may have acted as their secret weapon. It is thought that the resveratrol protected them against unhealthy triglycerides, high cholesterol and skyrocketing blood pressure.

**Harvard Medical School, Johns Hopkins, Salk Institute and UC Davis Medical Research Proves That Powerful Red Wine Extract Holds the Secret to Living a Longer, Healthier and More Vibrant Life**

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Reduction in cholesterol, body fat and oxidation is believed to help slow the age process considerably. Not only will you feel better, but the powerful antioxidants in Vinotrol™ will help fight the premature signs of aging. Resveratrol will help protect the collagen and elastin in your skin, which can lead to fewer wrinkles and a more youthful appearance.

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What's the point in living longer if you're not going to live better? Resveratrol floods your system with powerful antioxidants and helps flush out lipids and free radicals. Combined with the extra boost to your brain, immune system and everyday energy, you'll wonder how you ever went without this red wine wonder.

Don't wait decades for giant drug conglomerates to figure out a way to charge you a fortune for the same benefits you can get for pennies on your own. Call today!

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The manufacturer and the laboratories of Vinotrol™ are so confident in their anti-aging technology that they are offering a 30-day, risk-free trial offer. You must call immediately to qualify for the limited number of trials that are available. Start your new anti-aging program today with your risk-free supply of Vinotrol™ (50 mg resveratrol) for just a small s&h fee. Call toll-free 888-778-2705.

**Call 888-778-2705 to get your Vinotrol™ 30-Day Risk Free Trial Offer Today!**

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These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not meant to diagnose or treat any disease. Vinotrol is not endorsed, associated or affiliated in any way with Harvard University, Johns Hopkins, Salk Institute or UC Davis Medical. \* CBS News, Nov 1, 2006

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**Why would we do this?** Our real goal is to build a long term client relationship with you. We are sure that most of you will become loyal Stauer clients in the years to come, but for now, in this lousy economy, we will give you these pearls to help with your future gift giving ideas.

We did find a magnificent cache of cultured pearls at the best price that I have ever seen. Our pearl dealer was

stuck. A large luxury department store in financial trouble cancelled a large order at the last minute so we grabbed all of them. He sold us an enormous cache of his roundest, whitest, most iridescent cultured 5 1/2-6mm pearls for only pennies on the dollar.

**But let me get to the point:** his loss is your gain. Many of you may be wondering about your next gift for someone special. In the past, Stauer has made gift giving easier with the absolute lowest prices on fine jewelry and luxury goods. This year, we've really come to the rescue.

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# FROM THE ashes

Should Mount St. Helens become a national park?

**M**ark Smith is a second-generation mountain man. Raised on an alpine resort, tucked high within Washington state's Cascade mountain range, Smith is the progeny of parents who loved the land. His father married a local girl and volunteered clearing forest trails with the Sheriff's Reserve Horseback Posse. In 1973, the family scraped together the funds to purchase Spirit Lake Lodge, a popular destination for tourists and sports enthusiasts alike.

But on a Sunday morning in May of 1980, the clear, blue water of Spirit Lake turned toxic. With the force of 19 atom bombs the size of those that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the adjacent area to the south exploded. The state's fifth-highest peak laterally blasted 1,314 feet from its north face. Mount St. Helens had erupted.

**MARCH 8, 2005**, Mount St. Helens erupts once again, sending a plume of steam and ash 30,000 feet into the atmosphere.



**THE 1980 ERUPTION** destroyed the Spirit Lake Lodge (below), owned by Mark Smith's family. After the region recovered, Smith replaced the lodge with a mountain resort. Here, Spirit Lake as it looks today.

© TYSON FISHER

After seven weeks of some 10,000 lesser precursors, an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale precipitated a massive avalanche that rapidly released volcanic gasses, obliterating 150,000 acres of forest and killing every wild animal that wasn't underground. The blast killed 57 people and destroyed 250 homes, 47 bridges, and miles of rail and road. Hurricane-force winds approached the speed of sound, sear-

ing the landscape at temperatures up to 800 degrees Fahrenheit. A mushroom cloud rose 15 miles into the atmosphere. Daylight turned dark. Within two weeks, the ash would circle the globe.

The nine-hour volcanic eruption unleashed the largest landslide in recorded history, choking the Toutle River Valley and burying the Smith's Spirit Lake Lodge beneath 500 feet of mud, rock, and debris.

But even as "hell and high water" actually came, the mountain and its people were imbued with a natural propensity for regeneration. Less than three decades after the eruption, the lake that had been stripped of oxygen and choked with scorched timber now supports life. And today, Mark Smith owns the Eco Park Resort at Mount St. Helens, a facility featuring overnight accommodations, a café, horseback tours, and nearby hunting, fishing, and helicopter rides on private property 24 miles from the monument. Like his parents before him, Smith feels an intimate connection with the mountain. "It's not just my business, it's my life," he says.

That's why Smith channels much of his time and energy into the Mount St. Helens Citizen Advisory Committee, formed in January 2008 by U.S. Rep. Brian Baird (D-WA) and other federal representatives in Washington state. The group is charged with



© ANDREW BEIGER

COURTESY OF THE SMITH FAMILY



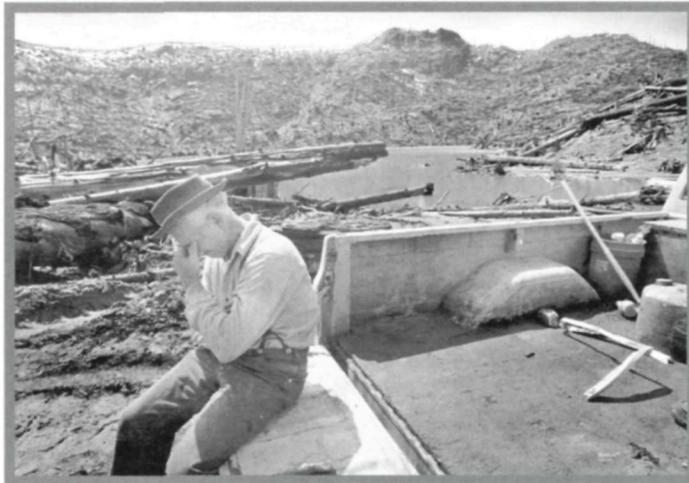
making an informed recommendation about the best course of action to ensure that Mount St. Helens remains a key tourist destination and an economic engine, while preserving its natural resources and ongoing scientific research. The group of business leaders, elected officials, and professors drawn primarily from the three counties nearest the monument is reviewing all the land-management options on the table. But it's clear that the most logical solution is to turn this Forest Service land into a national park unit, a significant move that brings with it significant challenges.

### A Historic Perspective

In 2008, the Gifford Pinchot National Forest celebrated its 100th year. One of the oldest national forests in the country, it is named after the first head of the U.S. Forest Service, which manages the area. In 1982, two years after the eruption, Congress set aside 110,300 acres within the national forest's 1.4 million acres as the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument.

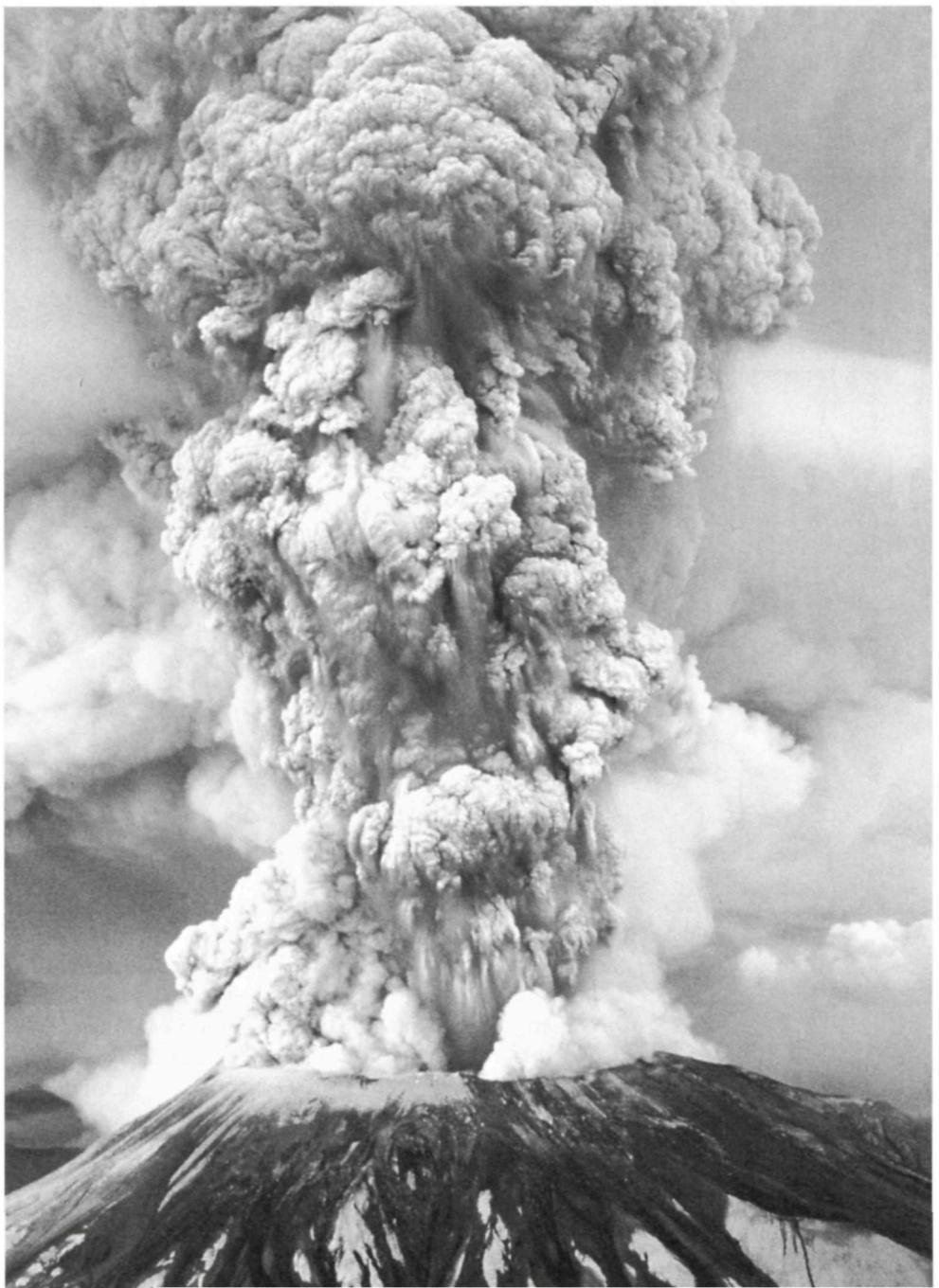
In what some might maintain was overexuberance, five visitor centers were established on 62 miles of State Route 504, the major artery to the forest and monument. Hoffstadt Bluffs is a county facility, and the Forest Learning Center is a joint venture of Weyerhaeuser, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; the three other visitor centers were built by the Forest Service.

But more than 25 years later, the Forest Service can't keep the doors open. The agency ceded its most popular visitor center, near I-5, to Washington state. The Coldwater Ridge Center, once open year-round, is now closed. With the regional Forest Service budget slashed from \$3 million ten years ago to



© CHRIS JOHNS/THE SEATTLE TIMES

**RALPH KILLIAN,** a Lewis County logger, searches the wreckage for signs of his missing son and daughter-in-law. The 1980 eruption (shown below) killed 57 people.



© ROGER WERTH/LONGVIEW DAILY NEWS; WOODFIN CAMP/AUDORA PHOTOS



**MOUNT ST. HELENS** blooms with early summer flowers.

\$1.75 million, the agency can't possibly sustain the two centers. "Nowhere else in the country is there a \$10 million, 15-year-old visitor center that's closed," says Mark Plotkin, an advisory committee member who has a stake in the matter, as director of the Cowlitz County Tourism Bureau.

If the Mount St. Helens Advisory Committee determines that one of

the best solutions is to turn the site over to the National Park Service, it wouldn't be the first time that has happened. National parks such as Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, and Sequoia were once managed by the Forest Service.

Sean Smith, director of NPCA's Northwest regional office, thinks that may be the best approach, and

as a former naturalist at Mount St. Helens, he knows the territory, both literally and figuratively.

"It's obvious that Forest Service funding, which has dropped significantly in the past several years, is at the root of the problem," says Smith. "Visitor numbers are down dramatically causing restaurants, hotels, and other services to close. There are no overnight accommodations in the monument itself. Even Gray Line Bus Tours has abandoned Mount St. Helens due to a lack of services."

Although the Park Service's funding woes are well known, the agency's overall operations budget for 2008 increased by \$122 million, and the proposed 2009 budget already contains a \$161-million increase. Indeed, each national park is guaranteed its own, separate line item in the federal government's annual budget—quite a different arrangement than the lump sum allotted the Forest Service that must be parceled among its various regions.

"Funding is the driver here," says Axel Swanson, Cowlitz County commissioner and Mount St. Helens Advisory Committee member. "I don't think we'd be having this discussion if there weren't a money element involved."

The Forest Service is unable to quantify the amount of money spent for public recreation at Mount St. Helens, which makes it even more difficult to determine the problems and potential solutions. But during congressional testimony before Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), the agency reported that Mount St. Helens had an annual budget of \$1.65 million. "With the president's 2008 request for California's Lassen Volcano at \$4.5 million, they aren't even close," says Swanson.

Two hours north, Mount Rainier National Park, another volcano in the

**THREE LOCAL ADVOCATES** closely involved with the fate of Mount St. Helens (clockwise from right): Jessica Walz, Jim Adams, and Axel Swanson.



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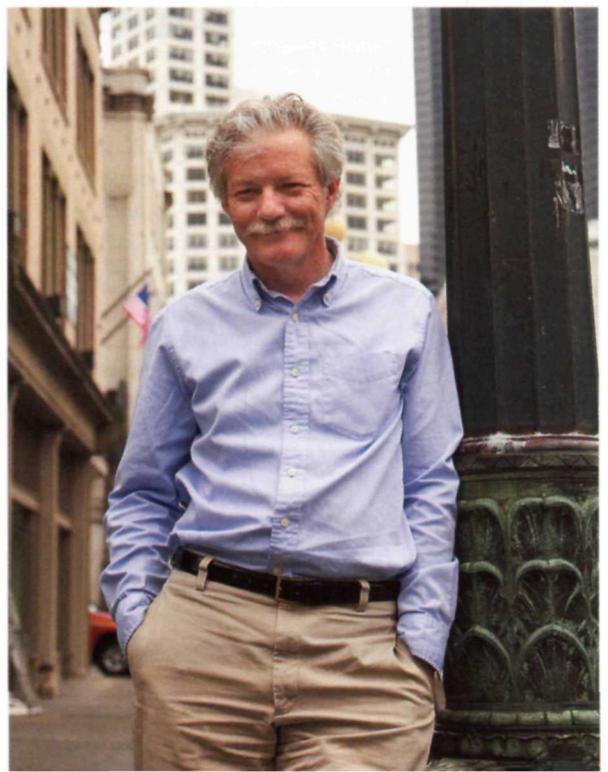
Pacific “Ring of Fire,” has a budget of more than \$12 million. Indeed, the park’s Paradise Inn recently reopened after a two-year \$23-million remodel, indicating the market for tourism in a similar site. The historic lodge’s large, wood-beamed dining room reminiscent of kids and camp, and cozy rooms featured in the PBS special, *Great Lodges of the National Parks*, is just the sort of destination anchor that Mount St. Helens lacks.

### Use or Misuse?

Jim Adams is a member of the Mount St. Helens Advisory Committee and executive director of Discover Your Northwest (formerly the Northwest Interpretive Association), a nonprofit corporation that operates bookstores in most of the national parks and

national forests in the Northwest. Although Adams confirms that funding is the primary issue, there is also a local tug-of-war about the limitations that come with national park status. The added cachet of a national park brings a list of restrictions meant to keep the unit preserved for future generations, including limits on mountain biking and hunting, among others.

“It’s a question of conservation versus mixed use,” Adams says. “Before the eruption, people around here considered Mount St. Helens their own recreational paradise. They remember the hugely popular resorts and hunting and fishing lodges around Spirit Lake, and they want to know, ‘When can we use our mountain again?’ ” A billboard sitting prominently along





**THE VIEW FROM THE LAVA DOME** at the summit of Mount St. Helens offers a unique glimpse of Spirit Lake and Mount Rainier.

© TYSON FISHER

Washington State's primary highway artery reveals one local sentiment in no uncertain terms: "A National Park at St. Helen's Stops Local Use of it. Stop Brian Baird!" To offer a middle ground, some have proposed designating one portion of the monument as a park, and the other as a national preserve, a designation that would allow for hunting and even mineral extrac-

tion, if those activities could be pursued in a manner consistent with the site's natural values. Preserves are quite common in Alaska, where many people live off the land, but are also the designations in place for Big Cypress in Florida and Mojave in the California desert.

and mining interests can cause wind and rain to wash debris into nearby rivers and streams, causing run-off that can ravage salmon and bull trout habitat," she says. "Because it's a regenerating ecosystem, we're trying to safeguard it from destructive use and maintain areas for important scientific study."

Although members of the Mount St. Helens Advisory Committee and the broader community will continue to hash out many of these issues, NPCA's Sean Smith says one point isn't up for debate: Everyone loves Mount St. Helens. Today nearly 400 sites constitute the National Park System, classified under one of 12 titles, including

national preserves, national monuments, national recreation areas, and of course, national historic sites. But national park status is reserved for only 58 of the most worthy destinations. "Mount St. Helens is on par with the best," says Smith.

Yet today, thousands of visitors making national park pilgrimages routinely drive the I-5 corridor, often unaware that the mountain lies just minutes to their east. They'll not marvel at the return of red alder, prairie lupine, and pearly everlasting in the monument itself, or the 45,500 acres of Weyerhaeuser reforestation that has brought back 70-foot Douglas and Noble firs. They will not hike 13,042-foot-long Ape Cave, North America's third longest lava tube, nor will they ever see the country's youngest and fastest growing glacier, Crater Glacier.

But that could all change with national park status, says Sean Smith. "Compare Mount St. Helens' annual 500,000 visitors with Mount Rainier National Park's 1.5 million, or, consider the 60 percent increase in visitation when Congaree Swamp National Monument in South Carolina was designated a national park. An area's profile is immediately elevated."

"Were there broad public support, a change to national park status could come fairly quickly," says Smith. "As American citizens, we need to take a higher, broader view as to the management and use of the land, considering what's best for the nearby gateway communities, the natural resources, and the people who visit."

And though building that consensus may not be easy, bringing about such a change would seem a mountain worth moving. **NP**

**Carol Wissmann** is a freelance writer based in Gig Harbor, Washington.

#### ON THE WEB

The Mount St. Helens Advisory Committee is expected to present its findings and recommendations to Congress later this spring or early summer.

To learn more, visit [www.npca.org/takeaction](http://www.npca.org/takeaction).

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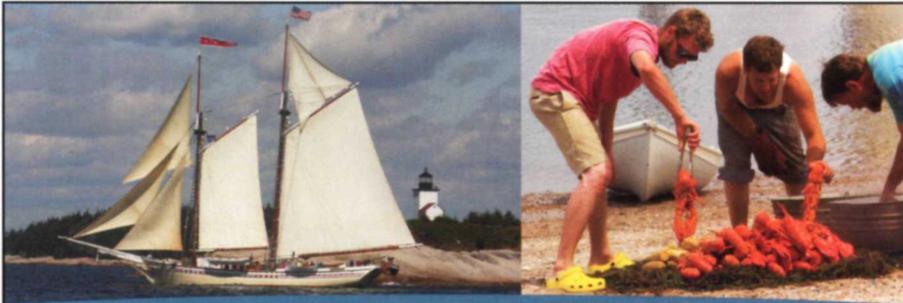
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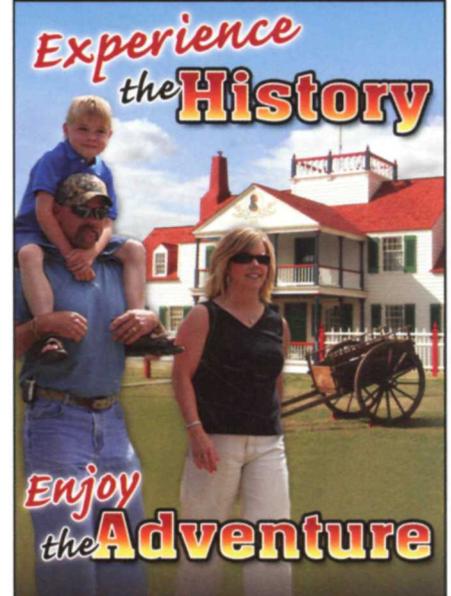
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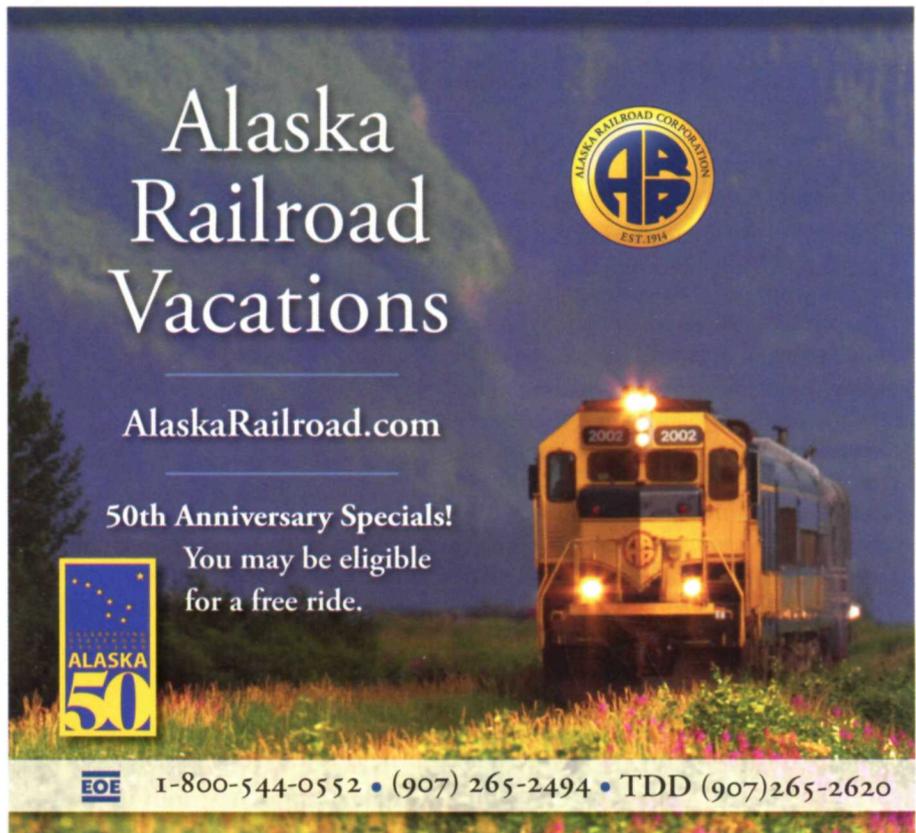
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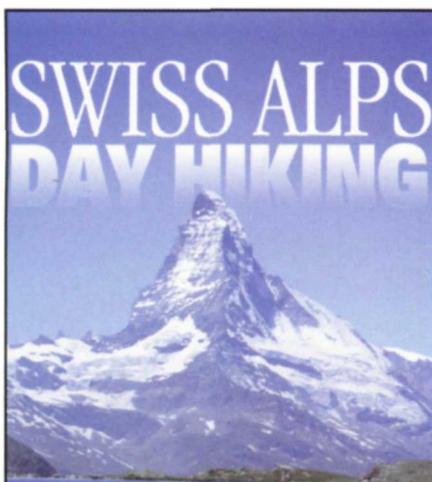
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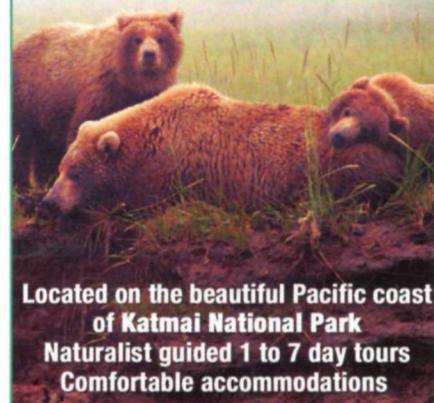
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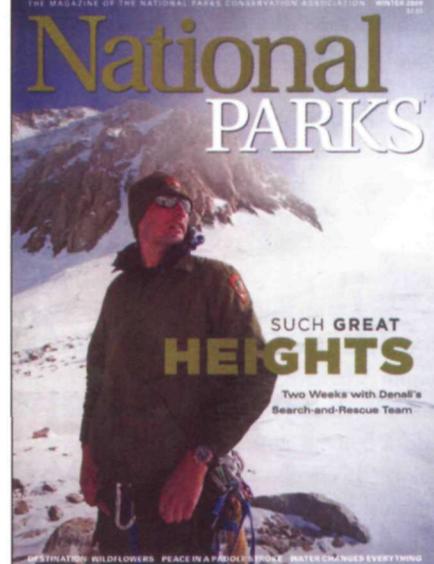


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ELIZABETH CADY STANTON  
with her daughter, Harriot Stanton  
Blatch, and granddaughter Nora,  
the author's grandmother.



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# American Woman

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's great, great granddaughter looks back at the legacy her ancestor left her, and hopes to pass her story on to future generations.

“It’s a wonder the Republic has done as well as it has done, when it has used only half of its resources.” The words of my great, great grandmother Elizabeth Cady Stanton—an early pioneer of women’s rights—speaking of the failure of her coun-

try to recognize women as equals to men. As early as the mid-19th century, her battle cry for gender equality shook the cultural and political foundation of America.

Stanton was born in 1815 into a country founded on freedom—yet women couldn’t

vote. They couldn’t go to college. They couldn’t become doctors, lawyers, engineers, or legislators. They were prohibited from serving on a jury, testifying in their own defense, or claiming any legal ownership of wages, property, or possessions shared in a marriage. In the case of divorce, they were regularly denied rights to their own children.

The circumstances she overcame—the circumstances *all* American women have overcome—came flooding back to me as I stood in her historic home nearly 40 years ago, during a long-overdue trip to Seneca Falls, New York. The house had been secured by a private foundation, and as I wandered rooms that looked surprisingly unchanged considering their age, I could picture Stanton as a young woman in this very house, receiving visits from Susan B. Anthony—a leader of the women’s rights movement—who would insist on stirring the pudding and minding the children so Stanton could focus on writing Anthony’s next speech.

My next destination—the old Wesleyan Chapel on Fall Street, where Stanton helped organize the first Women’s Rights Convention—would prove a stark contrast: The chapel had been converted into a Laundromat. Aside from a small plaque on the side of the building, there was nothing to indicate that this was the birthplace of some of the greatest democratic freedoms in the history of the United States.

It’s nearly impossible to imagine such a fate befalling Independence Hall, where Americans staked their claim for self-government. Or McLean Home at Appomattox Courthouse, where our country’s bloody civil war came to an end, snuffing out the institution of slavery with it. As I stood in that chapel that had somehow become a Laundromat, I couldn’t help wondering when women’s history would stand shoulder to shoulder with men’s. I tried to understand why it was so easy for a nation to overlook women’s incredible contributions in building our democracy.

Thankfully, the chapel has since been restored and is one of four sites that makes up Women’s Rights National Historical Park, which commemorates the women who lobbied, petitioned, marched on New York City’s 5th Avenue, picketed the White

**In 1815, women couldn’t vote, go to college, or become doctors, lawyers, or engineers... In the case of divorce, they were regularly denied rights to their children.**

House, organized national conventions, delivered speeches, convinced their husbands and sons to support women’s rights, and raised their daughters and granddaughters to fight for the cause.

This year, we have a chance to make an even bigger leap, thanks to the National Women’s Rights History Project Act—a bill that would create a commemorative driving route across New York, linking the park unit to properties like Susan B. Anthony’s home,



**WRITER COLINE JENKINS** in the Connecticut home designed by her grandmother.

the Harriet Tubman house, and the courthouse where Anthony was tried and found guilty of voting. The Park Service’s women’s history website would feature travel itineraries to women’s history sites nationwide. And interpretive and educational programs

throughout the Park System would also get a boost. (The bill passed the Senate in January, but was still awaiting approval in the House when this issue went to press.) It’s a story that must be told, and perhaps no one is better suited to tell it than the Park Service, which reaches millions of people and interprets stories in such powerful ways.

**A Modern Vision**

Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s ability to accom-

plish change wasn’t just a matter of luck. She was immersed in law and human rights from the very beginning. Her father, a judge, practiced out of an office attached to their home in upstate New York, and she often accompanied him to the courthouse located just across the street. But some of her keenest observations came from within her own home. Once, young Stanton overheard her father reciting laws to a distraught client whose husband squandered her wages on alcohol while her family starved. But according to law, women didn’t own the money they made—their husbands did. Shocked by this knowledge, Stanton devised a plan to sneak into her father’s office with scissors and cut out the unjust paragraphs from his law books. When he caught wind of it, he challenged her to change the law. She took his advice to heart, and years later in 1857 she was the first woman to testify before the New York State legislature, challenging the very laws her father had made a career of upholding.

Fortunately, Stanton—and the millions of women’s rights activists who followed—never stopped believing in America’s found-



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**HARRIOT STANTON BLATCH** (front row, second from right) marching in the 1912 Suffrage Parade in New York City.

ing principles. She reveled in Thomas Jefferson's ideas, captured so eloquently in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men

are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness..." There was only one thing missing from that statement: the word *women*. So in 1848, at the first Women's Rights Convention, Stanton began her own rewrite by drafting the Declaration of Sentiments—a declaration of independence for women, by women.

## I couldn't help wondering when women's history would stand shoulder to shoulder with men's.

are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness..." There was only one thing missing from that statement: the word *women*. So in 1848, at the first Women's Rights Convention, Stanton began her own rewrite by drafting the Declaration of Sentiments—a declaration of independence for women, by women.

Sadly, my great, great grandmother died in 1902, eighteen years before the passage of

the 19th Amendment. But if it hadn't been for her radical vision—controversial to even her most ardent supporters at the time—the declaration wouldn't have contained a

### In Her Footsteps

Where Stanton grew up in a world of law, I grew up in a world of strong, career-focused women: My father and two grandfathers had died by the time I was four years old, so my primary role models were my mother—an architect—and my grandmother—a civil engineer, who actually lived with Stanton in her New York City apartment for a short

time. It was not unusual for me to skip school to attend a local civil rights trial, to join my mother as she picketed the nearby Texaco headquarters to support female employees facing sexual harassment and job discrimination. My grandmother's stories of testifying before Congress enlivened our Sunday dinners. One Thanksgiving, she went so far as to slam her high-heeled shoe on the mahogany table to quiet the guests and make a political point.

Last summer, 87 years after Congress granted women the right to vote, my mother died. Her life was a measurement of women's rights progress: She was born into a nation where women weren't allowed to run for President, much less vote for one, and died during a time when women all over the country were casting votes for a woman and an African-American man.

My mother's death leaves a terrible hush. But she lives on within me—as does my grandmother, my great grandmother, and my great, great grandmother. I hear their voices and I know how hard they worked to give women—to give me—more freedom and equal opportunity.

Women in America did not start out as equal citizens, but thanks to a government that guarantees the right of free speech, assembly, and the right to petition, women eventually gained the rights they were entitled to. It has enabled each generation to stand upon the shoulders of those women who came before them. But we can't forget the path we traveled to get here. **NP**

### ON THE WEB

For more information about Women's Rights National Historical Park call 315.568.2991 or visit [www.nps.gov/wori](http://www.nps.gov/wori). To learn more, visit the Park Service's website, "Places Where Women Made History," at [www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/pwwmh](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/pwwmh).

**Coline Jenkins**, a mother and a legislator in Greenwich, Connecticut, owns a house on Long Island Sound originally designed by her mother and grandmother.

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# An Industrial Revolution

In Lowell, Massachusetts, one revolution plants the seeds for yet another.

It was to become a workers' utopia. That was one of the hopes of a group of businessmen from Boston, who built a system of canals on the Merrimack River north of the city that came to supply the biggest water-powered textile mills the world had ever known. They christened the town Lowell and began to recruit a workforce—one, they boasted, that would not toil amid the revolting conditions found in the sweatshops of 19th-century Britain.

The cradle of the American Industrial Revolution, Lowell put America on the man-

ufacturing map by the early 1830s. But its rise also marked the beginning of a new day for the women of New England who, up until this time, lived on farms at the mercy of their fathers or husbands, without the ability to earn a wage. They had no property rights, and were even barred from the inheritance that might accompany a husband's death. In fact, a widow was considered an "encumbrance" to the husband's estate, a burden to relatives. But the Lowell "mill girls," as they became known, began to change all that as part of the "Lowell experiment."

These women formed the workforce that the mill town's founding fathers sought from the beginning, as they would accept wages that most men would not. But with wages ranging from \$1.85 to \$3.00 a week, they earned more than most women in America, which prompted farmers' daughters to flock to the site. By 1840, 90 percent of the 8,000 workers in Lowell's 32 cotton mills were women.

But they weren't exactly footloose and fancy free. To strike out on their own, these women—most of them in their late teens—needed the approval of their parents, who had heard of the horrid sweatshop conditions found overseas. Wrote Lowell mill girl Harriet Robinson in her autobiography: "In England and in France, particularly, great injustice had been done to [a worker's] real character... In the eyes of her overseer she was but a brute, a slave, to be beaten, pinched and pushed about."

To allay family fears, the corporations in Lowell created boardinghouses with tightly controlled environments presided over by "respectable" women who enforced strict

rules—such as mandatory church attendance and a 10 o'clock bedtime—to protect the virtue of the young women and the reputation of the Lowell factories.

"In a typical boarding house, one 'keeper' watched over 25 to 35 young women," says Jack Herlihy, museum specialist at Lowell National Historical Park. "But if she could squeeze another one into a trundle bed, that meant more money for her." The keeper—usually a widow—collected three dollars a month from each resident. With it, she took care of their meals and personal needs, such as beds and linens.

On a typical day, workers woke to the sound of factory bells at 4:30 a.m., and headed straight to their stations. A 6:30 bell signaled their communal half-hour breakfast. At 11:30, a bell rang for lunch, and a final bell signaled the workday's end at 7 p.m.

Although the days were long, mill girls were pleased to have a few hours of free time to attend evening lectures and libraries, a luxury not allowed on the farm.

But some women, like Sarah Bagley, who arrived in Lowell in 1837, realized working conditions were far from ideal. One mill worker described the noise of the machines as "frightful and infernal." The air in the closed rooms was hot and filled with particles of thread and cloth. "The cotton dust would get in the lungs, trapping bacteria and causing tuberculosis," says Herlihy. "There were no vacuum cleaners back then so they only cleaned if the looms were impacted. A worker's comfort was not considered."

Mill girls twice went on strike for higher wages and better working conditions, but to no avail. A Bagley-led protest in 1845 also led nowhere, despite a petition with 2,000 signatures demanding a 10-hour workday. Still, these women left their mark on history: For the first time, a state legislature investigated labor conditions, 30 years before the 10-hour workday was signed into law.

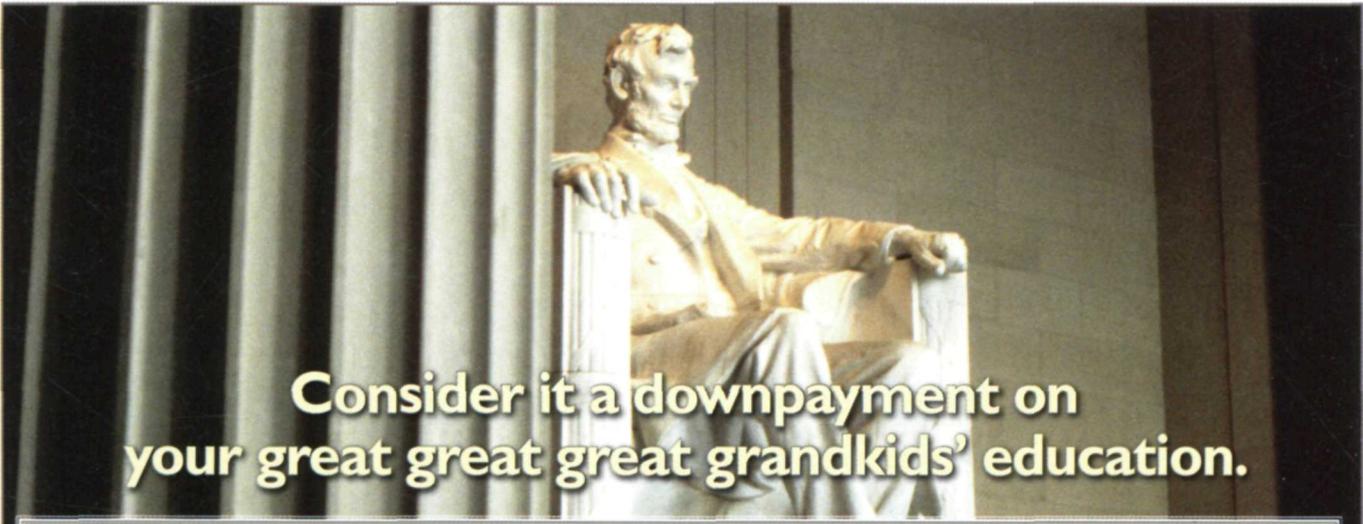
By then Bagley had disappeared from history. "While she didn't have the political impact that she wanted at the time," says

park ranger MaryBeth Clark, "Bagley did change the way women thought about their role. She encouraged women to speak up for themselves and to take an active role in their future."

Today, what's left of this historic factory town is open to the public. Established as the first urban national park in 1978, it contains a working dam and about a mile of traversable canals along the Merrimack. Boott Cotton Mills, the most complete of these historic mills, sits ready for the loom workers to begin their day. And although the factory bells no longer signal when it's time to head back to the boardinghouse, one of the original buildings still stands. To get to it, tourists can walk in the footsteps of early labor leaders like Bagley and be thankful for their efforts to bring future Americans some time off from work—so that they might enjoy a day's stroll through history. **NP**

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**Camden Seymour's** last piece for the magazine focused on San Francisco's national park units.



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### Alaska

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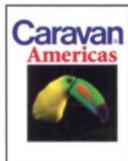
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