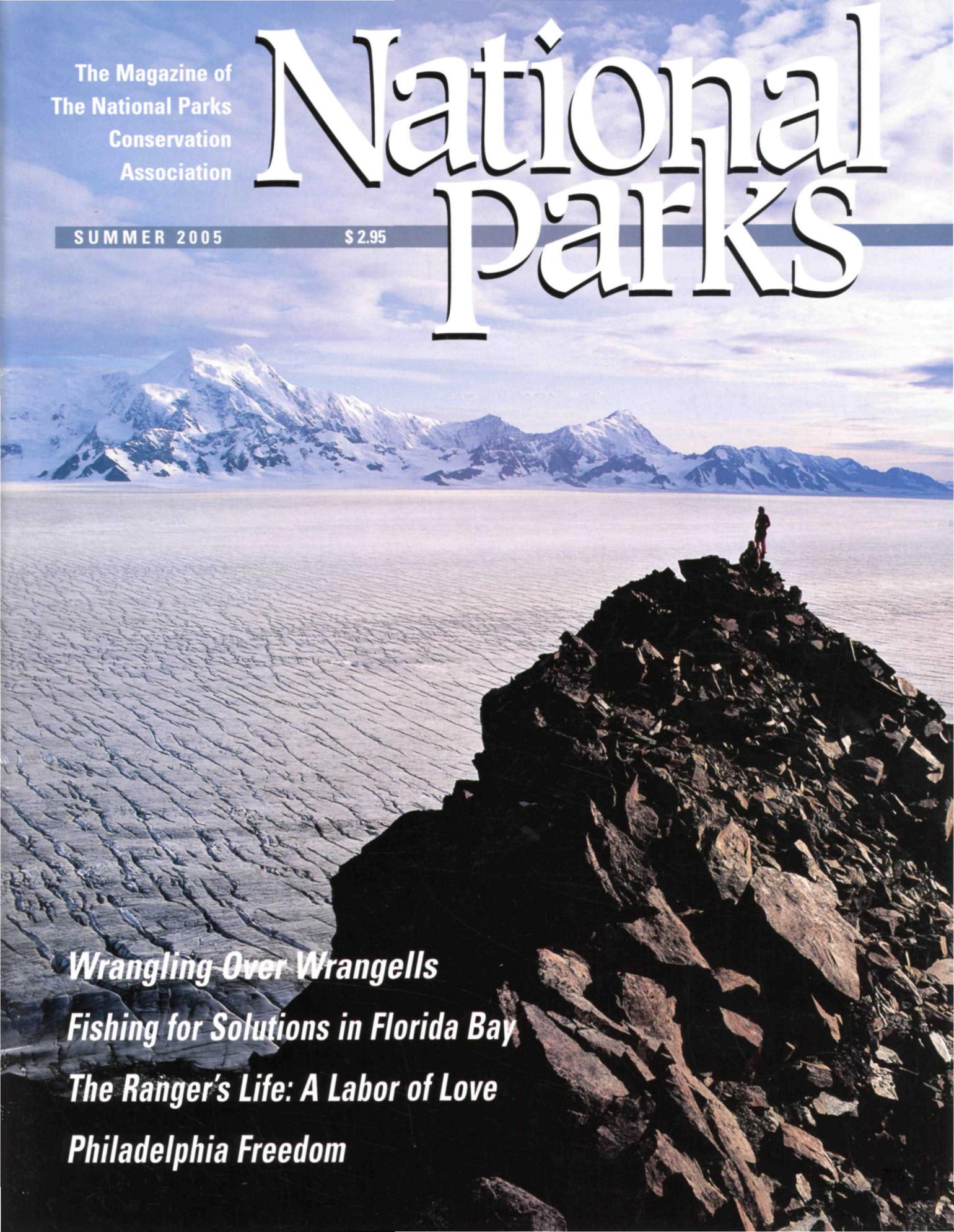


The Magazine of
The National Parks
Conservation
Association

National Parks

SUMMER 2005

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Wrangling Over Wrangells
Fishing for Solutions in Florida Bay
The Ranger's Life: A Labor of Love
Philadelphia Freedom



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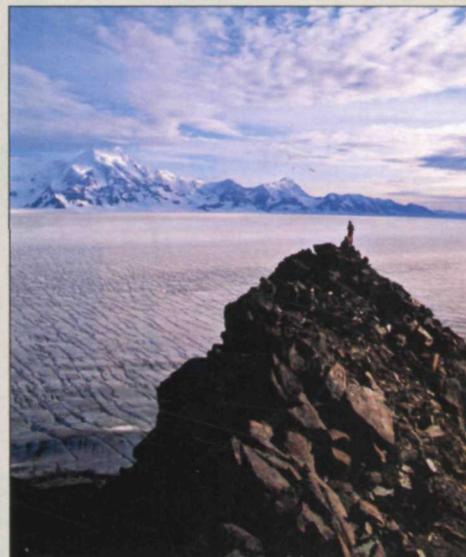


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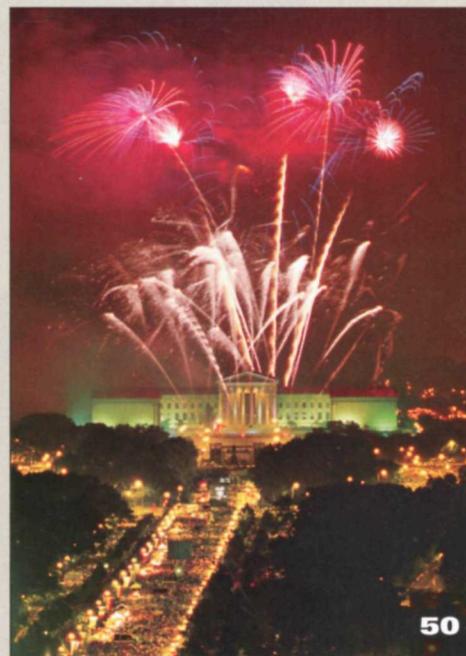
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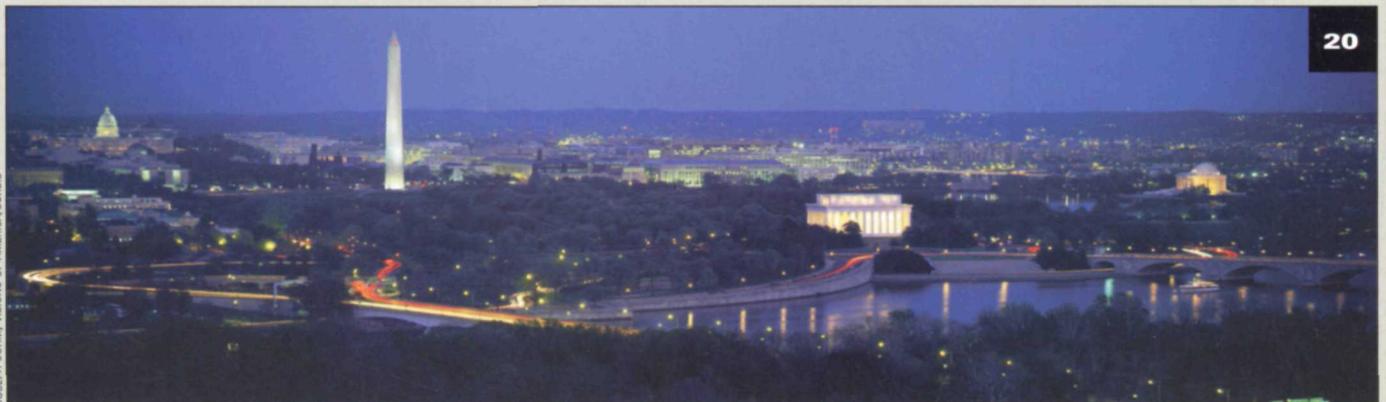
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PRESIDENT'S OUTLOOK

A Salute to the Park Stewards



CHAD EVANS/WATT

Like most of you, I look forward to spending some time in the national parks this summer with my family. We plan to explore new places or revisit well-loved ones throughout the coming months.

And each time we do, we look forward to hearing the stories that the park rangers share. One article in this issue profiles three rangers from around the country.

Although their jobs are very different, they share a love of the rangering life. They belong to an extraordinary corps of about 8,000 employees who proudly wear the ranger uniform.

The park rangers have been charged with preserving the scenery, natural resources, and historic objects unimpaired for current and future generations. That's a tall job as outlined by the 1916 Organic Act that formed the Park Service and institutionalized the system that now encompasses 388 national park units. And recently that tall job has gotten even taller.

Chronic funding shortfalls and an administration whose environmental policies are frequently at odds with the preservation ethic embodied by the Park Service have made the rangers' job even more challenging.

Although it is true that the Park Service has received an increase in operational funding and a pledge from the president to reduce the backlog, the sad truth is that these too-small increases do not go far enough in covering the added expenses from homeland security, mandatory pay increases, and other expenses that have been absorbed at the expense of the rangers and of the parks themselves.

Budget shortfalls are challenges for both the parks and the rangers. Even though the administration says all is well with the national parks, evidence tells a very different story.

Just three years after the Park Service was established in 1916, Stephen T. Mather, its first director, saw a need for an outside voice. He feared that political interference could endanger the National Park System. Mather and some other conservationists and business owners founded the National Parks Conservation Association for that purpose.

Since 1919, NPCA has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. As the only national independent membership organization dedicated to preserving the park system, NPCA protects our land and landmarks by partnering with Americans who understand that preserving our national parks also preserves our heritage as a nation.

In just a few years, the park system will celebrate its centennial anniversary. You can help us ensure that these special places are preserved intact for our future. When you visit the parks this summer, remember to thank the rangers you see for being stewards of our land and our heritage.

Thomas C. Kiernan

When Fun Clashes

For most of us, summer offers a time to head out to the national parks. Whether we hike, bike, fish, boat, or watch birds, most of us have a favorite outdoor activity.



CHAD EVANS WWBT

Sometimes that activity clashes with someone else's or has an unfortunate effect on the national parks.

Our cover story explores the influx of all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs) at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The park is one of Alaska's most popular destinations and the only one to allow ATVs for both recreation and subsistence. Unfortunately, some of those ATV routes have become mud pits that are nearly waist deep.

In Florida, novice boaters and anglers are causing serious damage. Lured by bonefish and tarpon, anglers travel from all over the world to Florida Bay to ply the shallow waters that are key breeding grounds for fish, shellfish, and birds.

The good news is that partnerships are being built to better protect the parks. In Florida Bay, NPCA is working with a generous anonymous donor to launch a program to help the Park Service educate visitors and enforce the rules, and recreational anglers are playing a key role. In Alaska, NPCA is helping the park work with the small local population that lives there to help protect it from the improper use of ATVs.

When you visit the parks this summer, enjoy yourselves, but remember that even the smallest action can have an effect; it's up to us to ensure those actions are positive.

Linda M. Rancourt
Editor-in-Chief

National Parks

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About NPCA



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

The magazine is the only national publication focusing solely on national parks. *National Parks* creates an awareness of the need to protect and properly manage park resources, encourages an appreciation for the natural and historic treasures found in the parks, and informs and inspires individuals to help preserve them.

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 to sign up.

HOW TO DONATE

For more information on Partners for the Parks, contact our Membership Department, extension 213. For information about Trustees for the Parks, bequests, planned gifts, and matching gifts, call our Development Department, extension 145 or 146. You can also donate by shopping online at www.npca.org, where 5 percent of your purchases is donated to NPCA at no extra cost to you.

QUESTIONS?

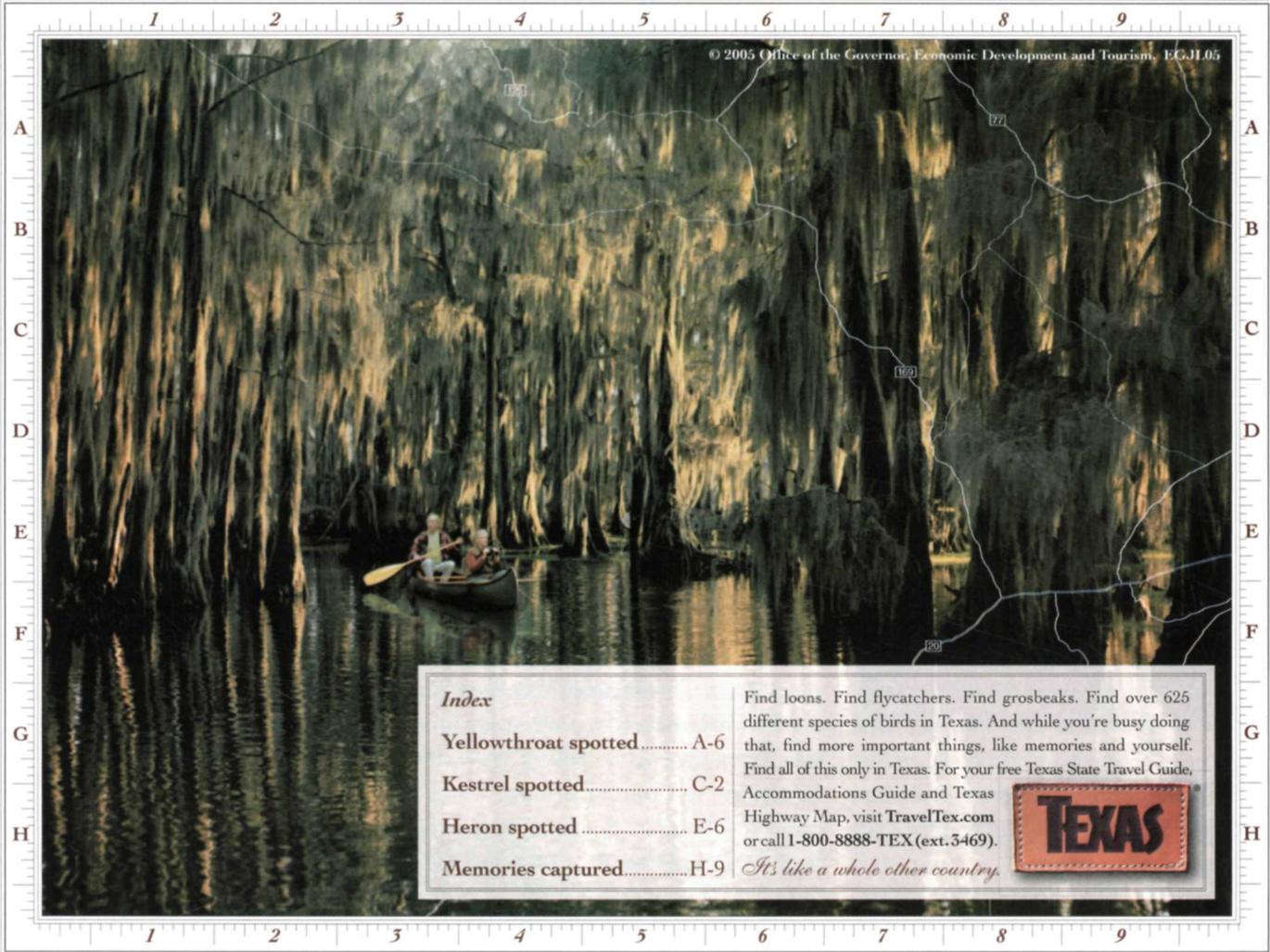
If you have any questions about your membership, call Member Services at 1-800-628-7275. *National Parks* magazine is among a member's chief benefits. Of the \$25 membership dues, \$6 covers a one-year subscription to the magazine.

HOW TO REACH US

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Disappearing Culture, Lifelong Journeys

Fighting for the Gullah

Thank you for writing a piece about the Gullah people of the South Carolina coast [Spring 2005]. I grew up in the Charleston area, which is infused with Gullah culture.

The sweetgrass “basket ladies” are losing habitat for their materials, as more ground is gained in waterfront real estate. I have heard that some are travel-

ing as far as Savannah to gather grasses, as the places they used to harvest are now private property. Realtors tell me that there is no way to stop the population progression in this area. My next adventure is graduate school, to garner the training to fight for the preservation and protection of our country’s precious places.

*Ramsey Mays
Greensboro, NC*

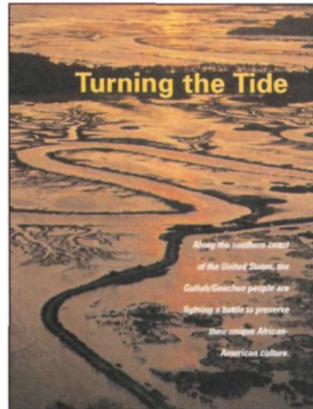
A Lifelong Journey

I enjoyed reading your article in the Spring 2005 issue, “A Complete 388.” It is wonderful that Alan Hogenauer completed 388 units in 50 years. I myself started at 15-years-old (1950) when I saw my first unit, Shenandoah National Park. Since that year, I have completed 168 units of our National Park System. Mr. Hogenauer claims he doesn’t have a favorite park, and I agree that each unit has its own unique beauty.

*Robert J. Badovinac
Las Vegas, NV*

Ambitious Advocates

Your article in the Spring 2005 issue, “A Complete 388,” was very interesting—



By *Stevanole D. Haxell*

In the late 1980s, however, it took us two days to travel from the Charleston College and Middle College area (pop. 17,000) to the marshes that surround the area of marsh and wetlands, including the region that has become known as the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Center of the Charleston area.

Through the marshes, the water is shallow and the mud is soft. The marshes are an important part of the ecosystem. Because of the marsh, water is not too deep, making it easy to walk on the marshes, or to fish in them. The marshes are also important for the Gullah/Geechee people, as they are a source of food and medicine.

The marshes of the Gullah/Geechee people are a source of food and medicine. The marshes are also important for the Gullah/Geechee people, as they are a source of food and medicine.



The members of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Center are a source of food and medicine.



The baskets are a source of food and medicine, and are made of natural materials.

but Alan Hogenauer is not the only person with the goal of visiting every unit of the National Park System. There are members of The National Park Travelers Club who have been to nearly every unit also. Our goal is to collect as many “Passport to Your National Parks” stamps as possible. Some of our members have more than 1,000 passport stamps. We maintain a list of every stamping location available and have a web site that commends anyone who has been to more than 100 units in their lifetime: <http://www.geocities.com/parkpassport/LifetimeMountains.html>. I welcome anyone who loves visiting National Park Service units to join our club or to attend our annual passport stampers convention this year at Mammoth Cave National Park on August 6, 2005. For more information on our club, visit www.parkstamps.org.

*Michael S. Brown
President, National Park Travelers Club
Laurel Springs, NJ*

Editorial Reply: We invite all of you to share your national park experiences through the scrapbook on our web site, www.npca.org.

Privatizing the Parks?

I am extremely frustrated and uncomfortable with the fact that increasingly, the Park Service appears to be replacing park rangers on our public lands with private employees. At first, I was going to take out my resentment on NPCA by not renewing my membership with your organization, because NPCA has obviously not done enough to pre-

vent the undermining of quality, dedication, and sacrifice of our public caregivers who we have trusted and respected for nearly a century.

This issue was brought home for me by the resignation of a young and gifted ranger at an Arizona national monument. Her loss was a corporation’s gain and further exploitation of our national treasures, eroding the assurance that our lands are genuinely protected, preserved, studied, and maintained by loyal and committed public servants.

I reflected much about her, and what our park rangers originally stood for. I felt confident our rangers have accomplished much with integrity and strong values that our nation has attained through much sacrifice. I realized it is far better to affirm “enough of this already!” and commit myself to being part of the movement to stop the self-serving privatization and possible corporate takeovers of our people’s national parks, including our national forests.

Renewing my membership in NPCA was one step. I am determined to do what is right and moral, to voice and act upon my strong convictions to secure

our national parks in the hands and hearts of our people's employees, our park rangers.

*David A. Harbster
Chandler, AZ*

Clarifying Lincoln's Roots

I recently received the Spring 2005 issue of *National Parks* and, as usual, enjoyed its articles and photographs. I was struck, however, by the photograph of Abraham Lincoln's home on page 12. As a student of Lincoln-related buildings, I feel obligated to note that the photograph of the Lincoln cabin depicts not a site managed by NPS, but the Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site managed by the State of Illinois near Lerna. The original Lincoln cabin there was dismantled in 1892 and displayed at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It seems to have gotten lost while in Chicago and was not returned to Lerna. A reconstruction, which still exists, was erected in 1929 by Illinois. The photograph on page 12 is of the original Lincoln cabin in Illinois.

NPS manages four Lincoln home sites: his birthplace, the Knob Creek site, the boyhood home in Indiana (a reconstruction), and the Springfield home. As far as I know, the home in Lerna, Illinois never was a unit of the Park Service. I am certain, however, that Alan Hogenauer has visited all four of these parks and the three Lincoln sites in Washington, DC: the Lincoln Memorial, Ford's Theatre, and the House where Lincoln died.

*Dwight T. Pitcaithley, PhD
Chief Historian, NPS
Washington, DC*

A Virtual DC

After reading the article in the Spring 2005 issue, "A Monumental Challenge," I can only see the efforts of the U.S. government [to protect monuments] as a barrier to keep away a majority of

American citizens and foreign visitors.

Perhaps the National Park Service should gather all of the films of Washington, D.C., from the government's archives, select the best portions that show the national monuments and the Smithsonian and the national government's buildings, and put them all on DVDs, and sell them to the consumer. That way, as fewer and fewer people go to visit our once beautiful and desirable U.S. Capital City, they will at least have a glimpse of what was once there.

I've heard dozens of people say they won't go to D.C. because of the "imprisonment" of our nation's historical monuments and buildings, and the extreme inconvenience that results.

Thankfully we have taken our children to D.C. when it was "accessible," and have wonderful pictures in our albums to look at again and again.

*Donald E. Wilson
Alameda Island, CA*

Corrections

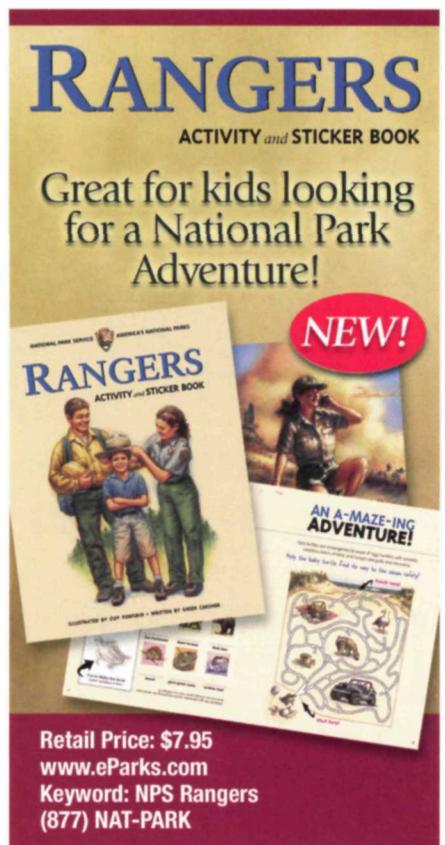
We apologize to Karen Becker of Ventura, CA, for failing to credit her for her campfire tale in the Spring 2005 issue.

ONLINE CONNECTION

What's New at NPCA.org

A FRESH NEW LOOK... Check out our newly redesigned homepage at www.npca.org. We would love to hear your comments on our bold new look! Please write to npca@npca.org.

YOUR MISSION, should you choose to accept it: NPCA needs you to be our eyes and ears when you're out and about in the parks this summer. In addition to sharing your photos and stories at www.npca.org/explore_the_parks/scrapbook/albums/default.asp, we want to hear your own observations on the state of the parks—the good, the bad, and the ugly. Before you go, make sure you stock up at NPCA's new online store. Go to: www.npca.org/shop_online.



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ParkScope

NEWS & NOTES

By Scott Kirkwood

Last fall, a pair of park rangers were busy marking the boundary where Sequoia National Park meets Sequoia National Forest when they came upon two men toting automatic weapons. As soon as the armed men realized they'd been spotted, they dropped their weapons and ran, but the reluctant criminals were soon caught in the nearby village of Wawona. The park rangers on the scene soon realized they'd stumbled upon a crop of more than 6,000 marijuana plants straddling the boundary between these protected public lands.

Although scenes like this one are far from commonplace, recent years have seen a precipitous rise in the growth of illegal substances on national parklands. Last year, rangers in Sequoia captured and removed more than 44,000 marijuana plants with a street value of \$176 million—one-third more than had been removed the year before. Meanwhile, Yosemite rangers discovered another budding operation: 1,400 plants just outside the park's boundary to go along with the crop bordering the Sequoia National Forest. These troubling developments were among the more prominent issues highlighted in NPCA's recent report, *Faded Glory: Top*

A Growing Problem

Criminals are growing marijuana in Sequoia and Yosemite national parks, and the impact is spreading like weeds.



One of thousands of marijuana plants seized from Yosemite National Park.

STEVE SHACKELFORD/NPS

Ten Reasons to Invest in America's National Park Heritage. But the trend doesn't come as a complete surprise to rangers on the frontlines.

"Marijuana grows well in some of California's national parks," says Steve Shackelton, chief ranger at Yosemite National Park. "In the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas, we've got steep cliffs, a warm climate with a long growing season, and very remote areas at the end of logging roads or trails, often near streams which provide access to water."

Based on information obtained during investigations and arrests, the Park Service believes most of the individuals involved in these activities have links to Mexican crime families—many are illegal aliens brought into the country to do their dirty work.

"This trend is an unintended consequence of our endless attempts to tighten the borders since 9/11," says Bill Tweed, chief park naturalist at Sequoia National Park. "Today, the Mexican border is tighter than it has been in ages, so it's harder to bring large bulk crops into the country. Ironically, that brings an increased incentive to [grow marijuana] within the U.S. And further, because our drug laws are written to allow for confiscation of private lands used to grow drugs, it just makes more sense to use public land."

Neither Shackelton nor Tweed have any illusions that the National Park Service is about to bring an end to the country's recreational drug use after millions of dollars and years of law enforcement efforts have failed to do so. But they're quick to point out that the national parks were set aside to provide the highest degree of protection of any lands in the country, and these marijuana farms are destroying natural vegetation, bringing water to areas that were once dry, and spreading pesticides and herbicides, while these homesteaders are

poaching wild animals and introducing the risk of more extreme damage: In Yosemite, growers are cooking food with open fires and using camping stoves with propane tanks, providing plenty of opportunities to start a wildfire in the shadows of 2,800-year-old sequoia trees, which would be difficult for firefighters to reach quickly. Some rival crime families have even been known to intentionally set fire to the crops of competitors, although such sabotage hasn't yet taken place in a national park.

Beyond the threat to the environment is the obvious threat to park visitors. Because most of the areas used for planting are so remote, the odds of hikers encountering armed men are equally remote. But as park rangers are forced to focus on these threats to natural resources and visitor enjoyment, they're being stretched even thinner.

"We have a diminishing ranger force and a proliferating number of visitors, so instead of helping people have an excellent visit to Yosemite, we have to shunt manpower to address this scourge," says Shackelton. In an attempt to make that work a little easier, rangers are closing off certain roads and limiting access to many areas within the park. That makes it difficult for growers to bring in seedlings, fertilizer, and other supplies, but it also limits visitor access.

Because the FBI and other federal law enforcement agencies are generally too busy to offer their manpower and expertise, the Park Service has been forced to train rangers to carry out tasks that are a far cry from their traditional roles of leading hikes and hosting campfire chats.

"Last year some of our rangers were learning military tactics, like how to respond with automatic weapons to hostile fire coming from sources you cannot see—the sort of thing our military teaches soldiers in Iraq," says Tweed. "Because



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Valuable park resources are being devoted to address the scourge of marijuana crops in the shadow of Yosemite's Half-Dome.

the park system isn't generously funded, we have to handle this situation without a lot of extra resources, balancing the attention we devote to these issues given all the other things we need to do in a park that's as big as a New England state, hosts a million visitors a year, and has hundreds of miles of trails and hundreds of campsites."

Just locating a marijuana crop among so many thousands of acres is a huge victory, but it's not the end of the struggle. Removing and destroying thousands of plants is a challenge within itself. Yosemite has used a Huey military helicopter to airlift the plants out, then runs them through a wood chipper to create a packable material, which is finally burned; the destruction of one crop cost the park \$15,000.

But the future may not be so bleak. While working as a ranger in one of Hawaii's national parks, Shackleton was able to lead the charge to end a similar

threat, with the help of local law enforcement and community members. Now similar efforts are under way in California.

"Our U.S. attorney in Sacramento is putting together a coalition under the aegis of his office as a federal prosecutor, inviting the cooperation of county sheriffs, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Naturalization Service all working together," says Shackleton. "We're going to do our best to work with the environmental community, hiking groups, camping interests, ranchers, and local landowners, and we're even hoping that human rights activists will join us to view this as a community problem that needs to be eliminated. These growers are mercenaries—their goal is simply to make money—so we're trying to show them that growing marijuana in the Sierra Nevadas is simply a bad business decision." ❖

News in Brief

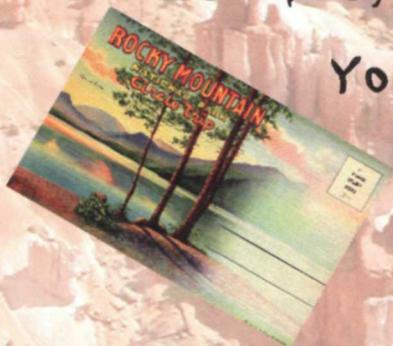
BOULDER, CO—In what many consider a positive development for mountain bikers, the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) recently signed a five-year agreement with the National Park Service to promote access to off-road cyclists. For conservation reasons, both parties agreed that access to hiking trails will still be limited to hiking and backpacking, but NPS's recognition of the health benefits and enjoyment of cycling means there's a good chance more dirt roads will be open to mountain bikes and, eventually, some trails may be opened as well. IMBA and the Park Service will get things rolling by partnering on two pilot projects this year, and discussing future locations suitable for mountain biking.

Dear Grandma and Grandpa,

We are having a great trip through the national parks this summer. We are visiting Bryce Canyon, and have also been to Yellowstone and Rocky Mountain national parks. Luckily, we found everything we needed for our terrific trip at the NPCA Online Store. Check it out: shop.npca.org. We think you would be able to get some cool stuff there too!

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Treading Lightly on the Land

National park concessioners are taking environmental responsibility to the next level with innovative programs that make recycling look like child's play.

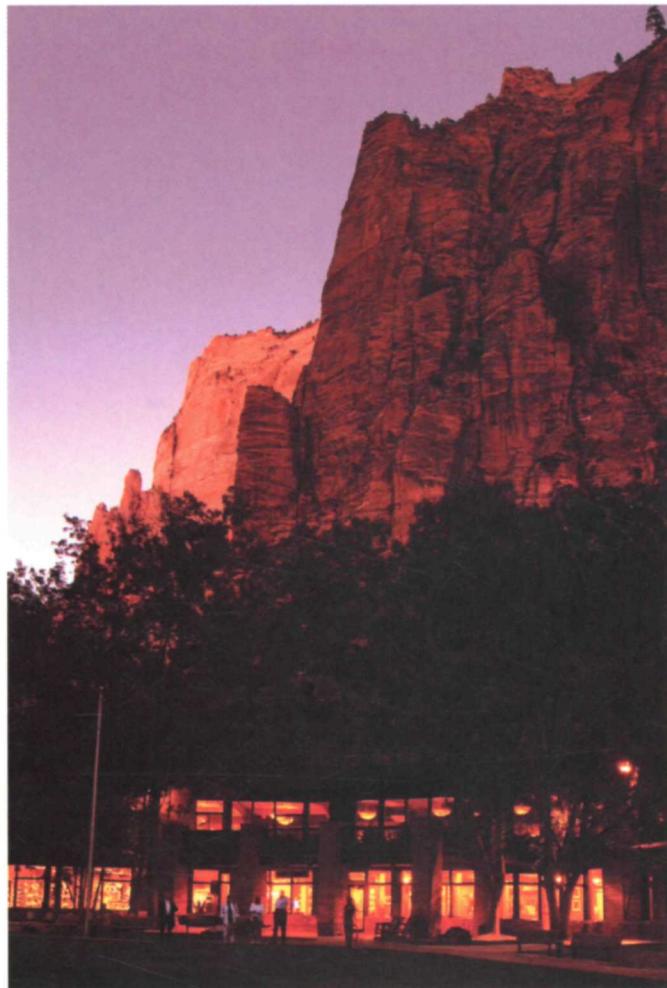
It's a mission wrought with contradictions. The National Park Service is charged with preserving the nation's most beautiful lands in their natural condition while also making them accessible to the public. But how do you leave a small footprint on the land when those footprints number in the millions? Thankfully, the Park Service is getting a little help: Private companies that cater to those visitors are working hard to limit their impact on the planet.

Nearly 600 concessioners operate in our national parks, offering everything from horseback riding, bike rentals, and kayak outfitting to lodging and, of course, food service. The Park Service estimates the number of annual visitors at around 270 million, so it's easy to see the potential impact on natural resources within the parks and far beyond their borders.

To that end, Blue & Gold Fleet, a concessioner that ferries visitors between San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf and Alcatraz Island has recycled more than 100,000 pounds of cardboard, 32,000 pounds of paper, and 5,000 gallons of used oil. But recycling is old news. You might be a little more surprised to know they're using environmentally preferred soy-based inks to print tickets, brochures, and business cards, and they're serving passengers certified shade-grown organic coffee on every trip.

Meanwhile, Zion Lodge in Zion National Park, operated by Xanterra, has reduced solid waste generation by 48 percent by serving beer on tap instead of in bottles, installed photovoltaic arrays to supply power to administrative offices and a dormitory used to house employees, and instituted a composting program.

The Grand Teton Lodge Company purchases renewable energy from the Foote Creek Rim wind project in Wyoming to supply electricity to Jenny Lake Lodge at Grand Teton National Park, and its fleet of buses and trucks are fueled by environmentally friendly biodiesel. Nearby, The Peaks Restaurant within Signal Mountain Lodge, operated by Forever



COURTESY OF XANTERRA

The warm glow of Zion Lodge, illuminated by hundreds of compact, efficient fluorescent lamps

Resorts, now serves USDA-certified organic meals and other natural products. About 90 percent of the menu offerings reflect an environmental slant, from all-natural environmentally raised Oregon beef, organic produce and side dishes to free-range wild game and poultry, reflecting a concern for animal welfare and stewardship of the land.

Just a few years ago, such environmental stewardship wasn't in vogue among concessioners, but a gentle nudge from Congress got things moving in the right direction. In 1998, the National Park Service Omnibus Management Act clarified the bidding process for park concessioners and updated contractual practices, putting an emphasis squarely on environmental responsibility.

“The 1998 law was a big turning point for concessioners because it revamped the way we do business” says Wendy Berhman, head of the Park Service’s Environmental Management Program in Denver, Colorado. “The new bidding process allocates almost a third of the points to resource protection, and that obviously elevates the importance of this issue for concessioners.”

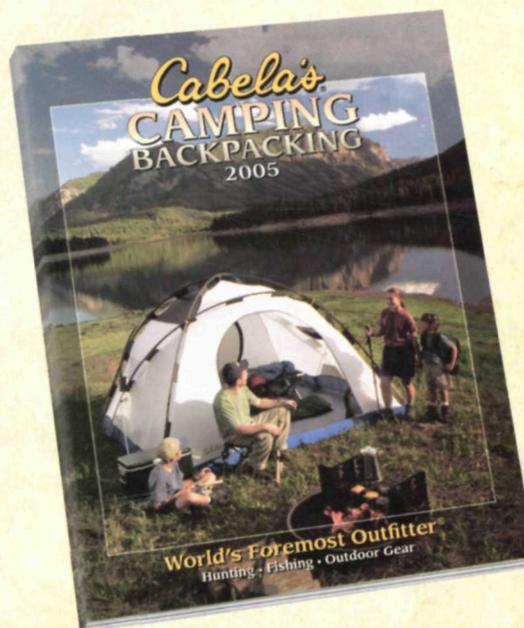
In essence, the legislation said if you want to make money in the parks, you’ve got to do so responsibly. When bidding for a contract within the park, firms are required to produce a business plan of sorts, detailing their effects on the park environment, establishing goals and targets that address those impacts, even identifying the staff responsible for those issues and educating the public. The legislation also shortened the length of most contracts and as a result, nearly half of the agreements between NPS and park concessioners will be renewed in the next three years, each one placing a premium on environmental practices.

Considering the environmental degradation being wrought to parks throughout the country, it makes sense. Phosphorous runoff from Florida sugar farms kills grasses, plants, and wildlife habitat within the Everglades while over-fishing in nearby Biscayne Bay threatens marine life. Parks such as Sequoia & Kings Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, and Shenandoah all suffer from unhealthy air because of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from coal-fired power plants. And the list of parks threatened by oil and gas exploration grows every day.

Because innovative, environmentally friendly approaches often require big investments up front, the larger food and lodging companies such as Aramark, Delaware North, Forever Resorts, and Xanterra are leading the pack, using bulk soap dispensers in hotel rooms, harnessing alternative energy sources to power vehicles and light buildings, and serving organic food and sustainable fish in their restaurants. Fortunately these concessioners aren’t hoarding their solutions—they’re sharing their new ideas and new technologies with one another, with help from the Park Service.

From the beginning, NPS recognized that it’s not enough for government to raise the bar for concessioners—it’s important to help them make the leap. So NPS developed its Concession Environmental Management Program, a sort of clearinghouse for environmental practices. Its *Greenline* newsletter and informative website highlight innovative ideas and award-winning approaches being used by concessioners in the field and offer simple suggestions such as where to buy recycled products and what to do with outdated computers

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and cellular phones, spent aerosol cans, and leftover paint. NPS even sends environmental auditors to the parks on a regular basis to make sure concessioners are holding to their promises.

And all that effort is making a difference.

“Five years ago, if you’d mentioned environmental management to any of our concessioners it would’ve drawn a blank stare,” says Berhman, “but now we’re seeing concessioners come to us to present ideas. A lot of them are being recognized with local, state, and national awards for their work—and that’s exciting.”

More often than not, it’s even in the concessioners’ own interest. Consider, for instance, the efforts of Xanterra, concessioner at Zion, Grand Canyon, and Yellowstone, among others. By introducing hybrid electric vehicles to its fleet,

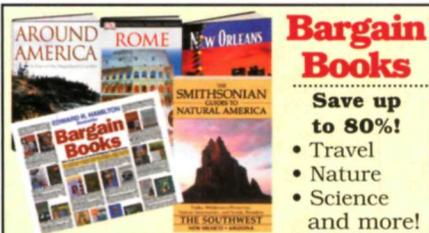


The Foote Creek Rim wind project in Wyoming provides power to Jenny Lake Lodge in Grand Teton National Park.

the company is saving hundreds of gallons of gasoline just as the cost of gas is skyrocketing. In the last five years, Xanterra has replaced 27,000 incandes-

cent lamps with more efficient compact fluorescent lamps, yielding nearly \$300,000 a year in savings. But sometimes, the changes increase costs: In the

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New Film captures the glory and sense of peace of the High Sierra Wilderness.

- The Inyo Register

A video that was 4 years in the making along the John Muir Trail in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California by a National Park Service backcountry ranger.

An inspirational story about people from around the world who have found a way to enrich their lives through a wilderness experience.

Backcountry ranger Bob Kenan's DVD is available online or by calling (888)641-7933
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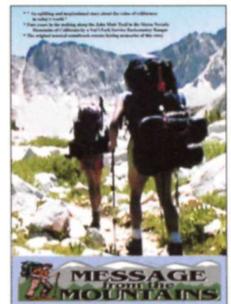
Kenan film captures the High Sierra Wilderness

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks backcountry ranger Bob Kenan spent

four years hiking the High Sierra with a video camera. The result is captured in this 30-year veteran's 54-minute DVD, "Message from the Mountains."

The film appeals to all viewers — friends and family alike — and explains the mystery, adventure and inspiration of the backcountry. Kenan's film allows viewers to vicariously experience the beauty and peace of a mountain journey.

For more information about purchasing Bob Kenan's wilderness DVD, visit www.messagefromthemountains.net or call 1-888-641-7933.



MICHAEL SMITH/GETTY IMAGES

South Rim of the Grand Canyon, the park's recycling is done at Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the canyon, so all the materials brought in need to be hauled back out by mule, all of which requires more staff time and effort.

Visitors sometimes encounter inconveniences, too, and they're not shy about pointing them out. Many hotel guests expect their sheets and towels to be cleaned every day, and some even suspect that concessioners are simply cloaking their penny-pinching in the guise of environmentalism. Other visitors aren't interested in whether or not a certain species of fish is caught using sustainable methods—they simply expect restaurants to cater to their needs. That's why education is so important. Xanterra went so far as to publish 10,000 copies of its sustainability report in guest rooms, to explain their efforts and the

resulting impact on the environment; the response has been largely positive.

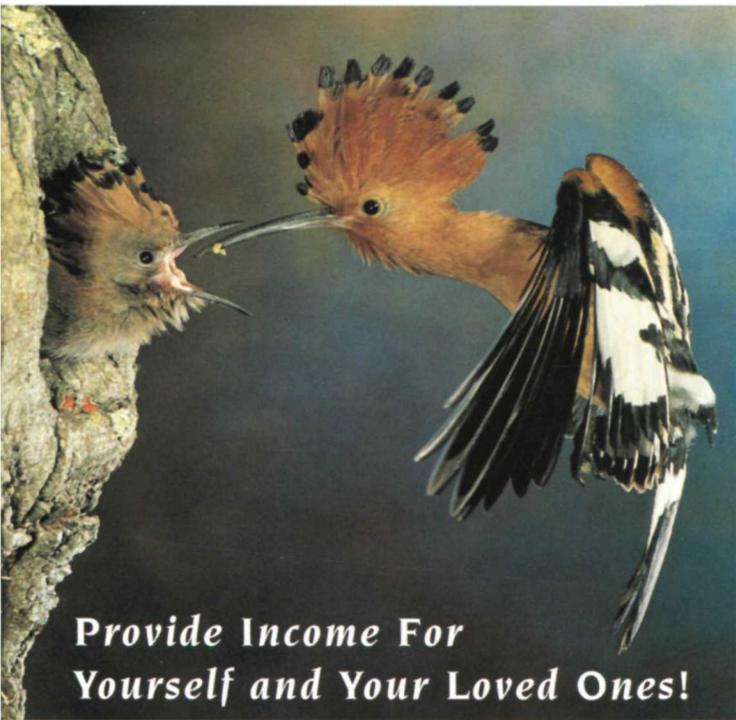
"I get letters and phone calls saying, 'Wow, I'm so excited you're finally telling us about these efforts, and I love that my sheets weren't changed, my lights were more efficient... I had to use bulk dispensers, but I understand that I'm saving soap bottles,'" says Chris Lane, Xanterra's director of Environmental Affairs. "But it's a mixed bag—we also hear, 'If you're so green, why did I get a plastic fork [with my meal]?' But in general, the green things we've done have been more efficient and provided higher-quality products. No one's complained that the salmon doesn't taste as good, because it tastes better. No one's complaining about the napkins being brown and chlorine-free. And no one's complained about the bulk ketchup dispensers, because it just makes sense." ❖

News in Brief

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Although it's difficult to track park visitation figures with any certainty, the National Park Service says that visitation has continued to climb in recent years, following sharp drops immediately after the September 11th terrorist attacks. Last year, the ten most visited sites were:

1. Blue Ridge Parkway
2. Golden Gate National Recreation Area
3. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
4. Gateway National Recreation Area
5. Lake Mead National Recreation Area
6. George Washington Memorial Parkway
7. Natchez Trace Parkway
8. World War II Memorial
9. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
10. Grand Canyon National Park

What's more, the Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore, the Statue of Liberty, and Yellowstone all made the Travel Industry Association of America's list of American treasures people would most like to visit.



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Centennial Action

Senate introduces National Park Centennial Act, moving legislation forward with bipartisan support.

In a significant step forward for the national parks, Sens. John McCain (R-AZ) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) joined other Senate leaders in introducing the National Park Centennial Act, Senate Bill 866, on April 21. This action, taken months after Reps. Mark Souder (R-IN) and Brian Baird (D-WA) introduced the bill in the House of Representatives, helps build momentum for legislation designed to address vital park funding needs.

"Hundreds of millions of families and visitors from all over the world have visited these parks for recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities," said McCain. "Unfortunately, all of this

public enjoyment and use coupled with the lack of adequate financial investment in the parks has left them in a state of disrepair and neglect. A multi-billion dollar maintenance backlog has cast a long shadow over the glory of our national park heritage."

As many of NPCA's members already know, the Centennial Act would use an incentive to solve those funding shortfalls by allowing American taxpayers to contribute a part of their tax refund to support the parks. The goal is to restore the parks to appropriate funding levels in time for their centennial in 2016.

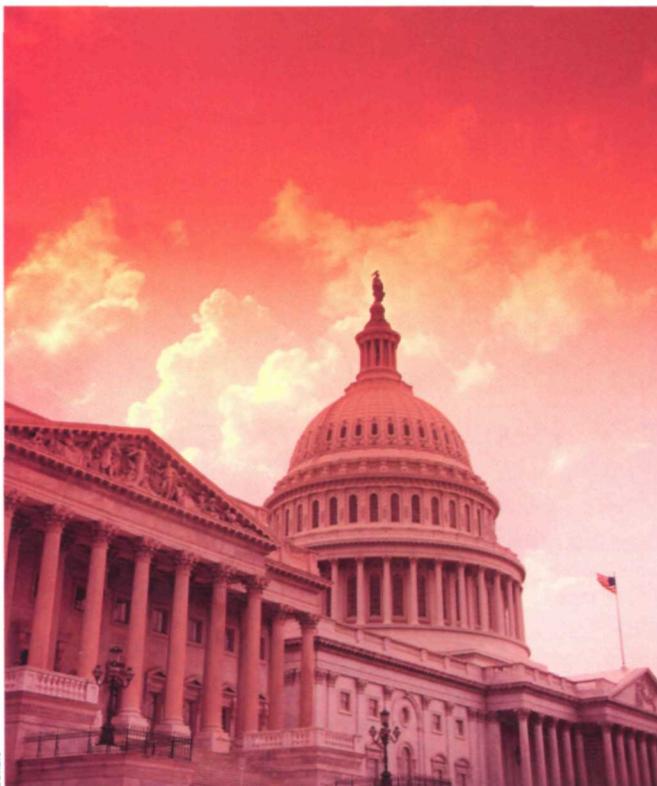
The bill has broad support from both sides of the aisle and across the country, including key players in the Interior appropriations process. The next step is to secure more co-sponsors from both parties in the House and Senate. Once the bill has generated enough interest and momentum, it will be introduced into a formal hearing and subject to wider debate.

The Capitol's occupants are also focusing on this year's budget, and

NPCA is actively engaged in that process as well. Steve Bosak, director of NPCA's National Park Legacy Campaign, and other NPCA staffers accompanied a group of constituents from park gateway communities who told their senators and representatives about the needs of the parks and the financial advantages that the parks bring to surrounding areas. Plans are already in the works for follow-up opportunities to capitalize on this momentum.

The 2006 budget is still a work in progress, but the parks are already seeing small but significant gains as many other government programs are being cut severely. In early May, NPCA worked with key members of Congress to circulate letters to the heads of Interior Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate, asking for \$100 million above the president's budget request so the parks might address "homeland security costs, unbudgeted cost-of-living expenses, and the rising cost of supplies as well as several across-the-board cuts to Interior agencies." Seventy-eight representatives and 37 senators signed on, throwing their support behind the parks.

Fortunately, the administration and the House already have agreed to fund cost-of-living increases for dedicated park staff in their fiscal year 2006 budget. In fact, the House added \$20 million to the administration's proposed budget for park operations. (As this issue went to press, the Senate had not yet offered up a number.) Unfortunately, the proposed budget eliminates or significantly reduces funding for important national recreation and preservation programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This means that lands inside park boundaries or adjacent to parks like Valley Forge, Petrified Forest, and Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail may still be in jeopardy. ❖



The Centennial Act is now being considered by the Senate.

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A Splashy Production

Yosemite Falls undergoes a dramatic restoration just in time for millions of summer visitors.

It's not easy to improve upon nature, but over the last few years, workers at Yosemite National Park have been aiming to do just that. Thanks to a cooperative agreement between the Park Service and the Yosemite Fund, hiking paths and visitor areas in and around Yosemite Falls have undergone a dramatic transformation. New wayside exhibits and log benches adjacent to trails now offer visitors even more ways to take in the park's cultural and natural heritage.

"This is one of the most visited areas in the park, and it's just been hammered over the years," says Scott Gediman, a spokesman for Yosemite National Park. "The trail had crumbled, the rest rooms were old and too small to serve the needs of the people, and there was resource damage on the east side: People had been walking into areas of braided streams, having picnics, leaving litter, all of which interrupted the hydrologic flow and affected the aquatic habitat."

The project was ten years in the making, including more than two years of construction work, all to improve access to 3.5 million visitors each year, while boosting resource protection at the same time. Because rangers recognize how many people come to Yosemite only once in a lifetime, one of the two trails was always open, providing access to the falls, while small segments of the other trail were being upgraded. Bridges were installed over braided streams, completing a hiking loop and making the area accessible to disabled visitors. The park's trail crew built rock walls using no mortar, by simply piecing the rocks together in place. Archaeologists were on site the entire time, to supervise any digging and ensure the use of sifting screens to make sure none of the work led to damage of valuable artifacts just below the surface.



The Yosemite Fund and the Park Service teamed up on a \$13-million effort to increase and improve visitor access to the falls.

In addition to the trail work, workers removed a parking lot, which had previously welcomed visitors with gas fumes and the rumble of idling buses. In its place is now a quiet, picturesque setting featuring native pine and oak trees, a picnic area, and a new shuttle bus stop, where new, quieter hybrid buses drop visitors at the foot of the trail.

There were even some unexpected surprises. A bronze relief statue of Yosemite Falls was designed simply as an artistic way to show people the intricate geology of the falls, which sometimes

seem more like a picture postcard than a three-dimensional wall of flowing water and rock. But seeing-impaired visitors have discovered the statue helps them discover the falls with their fingers.

The entire project was completed at the staggering cost of \$13 million. Although some of the funding came from government coffers, the lion's share was donated by the Yosemite Fund, a friends group that has been supporting the park for nearly 20 years.

A specialized Yosemite license-plate program begun in 1993 put the organi-

zation on the map, and today it generates about a million dollars a year.

“Yosemite itself is what has really allowed us to reach people with a great affection for the park,” says Bob Hansen, president of the Yosemite Fund. “Many of our supporters have had some sort of lifelong association with Yosemite, not unlike the association a lot of people have with their university—it’s a kind of alumni group of sorts.” The Yosemite Fund capitalizes on that commitment by creating a shopping list of specific funding opportunities, then encouraging supporters to sign on, and it’s a formula that’s clearly working. Some of the group’s earlier projects involved installing more than 2,000 bear-proof food lockers in the park to reduce run-ins between visitors and black bears, funding studies of owl habitat and bat habitat, and restoring Glacier Point.

“Our donors love the idea that they can actually go to the park and see something that’s associated with their philanthropic contributions—really feel it and touch it, walk on a trail or sit in an amphitheatre and see a movie they funded,” says Hansen.

Some worry, however, that the more private philanthropy funds big-ticket items like the Yosemite Falls project, the more the federal government will step back and rely on donors to fund more basic operations. Rather than providing the icing on the cake, friends groups and philanthropists might end up baking the cake itself.

“Our donors give to a specific project because it represents that margin of excellence,” says Hansen. “If the government stopped paying for the operational expenses in the park, philanthropy dollars would just blow away like sand. Donors’ contributions shouldn’t be used

to buy squad cars and radio systems, pay for rangers to be patrolling the roads or park maintenance workers to be plowing snow—things the government is responsible for doing. Philanthropists still want to know that the government is doing its part.”

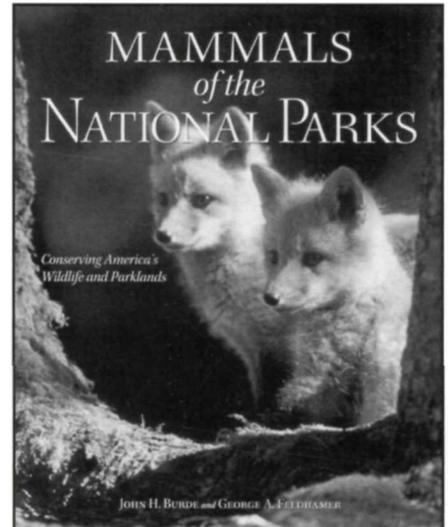
As long as that’s the case, the Yosemite Fund will continue to do its part as well. Some upcoming projects among the list of more than 50 include the restoration of Royal Arches Meadow where Miwok people once gathered tule for basket weaving; reintroduction of the mountain yellow-legged frog, which has all but disappeared from Yosemite’s lakes because of non-native trout; and a survey of rare plants, all of which aim to restore the park’s natural grandeur. ❖

NPCA Notes

THE AIR UP THERE

America’s five most polluted national parks—Acadia, Great Smoky Mountains, Shenandoah, Mammoth Cave, and Sequoia & Kings Canyon—are making headlines again, thanks to an article in the June 2005 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine. Charles Petit’s piece spells out why parks are suffering from air pollution, and just what the federal government plans to do about it. NPCA President Tom Kiernan is quoted in the piece, along with other clean-air advocates from the Park Service and Sierra Club. To read more, visit <http://www.smithsonianmag.si.edu/smithsonian/issues05/jun05/haze.html>

NPCA is putting clean air at the forefront of its advocacy efforts with the help of newly hired clean air specialist Mark Wenzler. With the help of a generous grant from the Turner Foundation, Wenzler is leading NPCA’s charge to enforce the Clean Air Act’s special protections for air quality in our national parks, fighting attempts to weaken these protections by the White House and Congress.



Mammals of the National Parks

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George A. Feldhamer

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A Third Century Mall

A visionary plan would expand the National Mall while preserving its original intent.

By **Judy Scott Feldman**

With the 4th of July only days away, the Park Service is busy preparing the National Mall for the country's most-watched fireworks display. What better time to reflect on the future of our nation's public gathering space?

In 1791, Pierre-Charles L'Enfant's plan set a grand vision for development of this world-renowned symbol of American democracy; years later, the McMillan Plan of 1901–1902 updated that vision for the next century. But now that eight entities hold jurisdiction over parts of the Mall—each confronting pressures for new memorials and museums, security barriers and checkpoints, and burgeoning public use—that vision is blurred. To bring it back into focus, historians, scholars, and concerned citizens have begun advocating a “Third Century” vision.

The original idea came out of an 18-month-long series of public forums and meetings convened by the Third Century Initiative, a project of the nonprofit National Coalition to Save Our Mall. Three main points emerged, each with important implications for the Mall's future.

First, in the 20th cen-

ture the Mall took on new meaning for the public. It became the stage for our democracy—a place of celebration, recreation, demonstration, and healing. But increasingly the Mall is being treated as a theme park, to be experienced by tour bus.

The Park Service regularly fences off wide swaths of green areas, preventing recreation to preserve the grass, rather than simply improving the soil and planting hardier seedlings. Meanwhile, bollards and chains are erected at the Vietnam Memorial and other sites to prevent visitors from gathering and reflecting in natural areas near monuments, aiming instead to shuttle people in and out more efficiently. Some have even suggested that future public demonstrations be held at nearby sports stadiums rather than on the Mall.



An artist's rendering of a Third Century Mall reserves space for new museums and monuments along the Potomac River.

Imagine, for a moment, if the famous 1963 civil rights demonstration had been in a sports stadium, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had made his well-known “I Have a Dream” speech from the pitcher's mound rather than the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. We simply must revisit current policies and create new ones that enhance public use rather than restrict it.

Second, the existing Mall is not visitor friendly. Pedestrians find construction barriers, too few places to sit, lack of convenient restaurants and good food, and long walks to get from place to place. The Mall is an urban park. It needs more visitor amenities and more opportunities for activities.

And third, the Mall is full. Congress recognized this problem and issued a moratorium on memorials and visitor centers in 2003. But history can't be stopped. Already exceptions are being made. Dozens of memorial projects are waiting for sites, along with museums devoted to African-American and Latin-American history. And who would deny the importance of such projects? The Mall needs to expand and evolve, as it did a century ago, to meet civic and cultural needs of the 21st century.

L'Enfant's “First Century” Mall ended at the Washington Monument, and McMillan's “Second Century” Mall transformed malarial landfill west and south of the monument into vast new public parkland and sites for the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials. The Third Century Mall would encompass a three-mile-long waterfront park, largely made up of land already identified for future memorials and museums by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPIC).

This expansion would provide space for new memor-



The Third Century Vision would allow the Mall to return to a cohesive state despite expansion.

ial and museum sites. It would open up exciting opportunities for imaginative redesign of underused federal parkland and public rights-of-way with pedestrian and bicycle paths, fields for recreational sports, and grand open areas to hold mass gatherings and celebrations.

Last century, the Lincoln Memorial added a new chapter of American history to the Mall by connecting the North and the South across Memorial Bridge to Robert E. Lee's former home, now Arlington National Cemetery. This symbolic reconnection created a majestic architectural stage used for demonstrations promoting civil rights for all. Future museums and memorials positioned strategically along the Third Century Mall's major vistas and routes, or at bridge connections, could become the Lincoln Memorial of the future. Bridges crossing the Washington Channel would play a major role, connecting seemingly disparate areas and opening "dead ends" at the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, and South Capitol Street—reintegrating the Mall's public open space into the city's urban neighborhoods.

Progress is coming, slowly but surely. Congress took up the future of the Mall at an April hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on National Parks, where Chairman Craig Thomas (R-WY) and Ranking Member Daniel Akaka (D-HI)

spoke of the need for a "Third Century" plan. Witnesses representing the Park Service, the Commission of Fine Arts, NCPC, and the Third Century Initiative publicly agreed on the need for a new Mall master plan. Although federal government representatives balked at the mention of consolidating Mall management, each wary of relinquishing turf and power, the tone of the discussions made it clear that Congress is seeking solutions beyond the current Mall management structure.

If progress is to be made, the Mall needs a new temporary commission to create a Third Century vision, paired with a permanent Conservancy to implement the plan with the help of the government stakeholders and the public. Urban planners, historians, preservationists, educators, and artists of national stature could guide Congress as it determines the structure and make-up of the Conservancy.

As that Third Century vision takes shape, several interim measures could be established:

- All new and planned construction should be stopped, including two new retail buildings the Park Service plans to build at Tourmobile stops adjacent to the Lincoln Memorial.

- Congress should begin by defining the National Mall as a unified entity. Currently there is no agreement about

where the Mall begins and ends. The National Park Service, for example, has until recently defined the Mall in surprisingly narrow terms as the greensward between 3rd Street and 14th Street, excluding the Washington Monument, the Capitol, Smithsonian museums, and other areas outside its jurisdiction.

- Museums and memorials already in the pipeline could launch the Third Century expansion. All that would be needed is for Congress to designate the areas it identified for future memorials and museums as the Mall's expansion.

A century ago, the McMillan Commission confronted a chaotic Mall and fragmented management. At the time, commissioners saw their task as "a stupendous one...much greater than any one generation can hope to accomplish...that the city which Washington and Jefferson planned with so much care and such prophetic vision will continue to expand, keeping pace with national advancement, until it becomes the visible expression of the power and taste of the people of the United States."

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For more information, visit www.savethemall.org, www.nationalmall.net, and www.ncpc.gov.

Judy Scott Feldman, PhD, chairs the National Coalition to Save Our Mall.



KEITH VAN CLEVE/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Hiding in Plain Sight

The highly adaptable island marble butterfly, believed extinct for nearly a century, flutters to life at San Juan Island National Historical Park.

By Amy M. Leinbach

Several years ago, after a routine day chasing butterflies in San Juan Island National Historical Park, John Fleckenstein, a zoologist with Washington State's natural heritage program, packed up his gear, stashed away his findings, then waited six months to revisit his specimens.

Perhaps it was fate that a laid-back guy like Fleckenstein would rediscover a go-with-the-flow species whose adapta-

tions to an altered northwestern habitat allowed it to survive when scientists had written it off as extinct for nearly 100 years.

The story changed dramatically in October 1998 when the colleague who helped catalogue Fleckenstein's findings, Ann Potter of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, presented them at the Northwest Lepidoptera Society's annual meeting. That's when he got the call.

"You should see the uproar those specimens caused," Potter told him. Of the butterflies Fleckenstein had collected

months before, two were island marbles, a subspecies of Washington's large marble that was last documented in Canada in 1908. Researchers now believe the island marble has always existed on San Juan Island, unnoticed and nearly identical to the much more common cabbage white butterfly.

Even though scientists know relatively little about the island marble, they believe the species' ability to adapt is one of the reasons it has survived. Two of its three preferred host larval plants—which provide a place for the eggs to hatch and food for the larvae—are non-native, weedy species from Europe.

"The island marble has a strategy, encoded with this idea of kind of going with the flow," says Amy Lambert, a University of Washington graduate student with a keen interest in the rediscovered species.

San Juan Island encompasses a diverse range of ecosystems, from semi-arid grasslands to forests dense with Douglas fir, to dry and rocky slopes with stands of Garry oak. Wildflowers decorate grassy knolls and sweeping hillsides, and the beaches offer a mix of sand and gravel and rugged shoreline. Pollinators like the island marble act as the "vital signs" of the park: If they are diverse, healthy, and flourishing, chances are the ecosystems are doing well, too.

"Butterflies are an important component of our environment," write Scott Hoffman Black and Mace Vaughan of the Xerces Society. "Just as the declines of salmon and spotted owls exemplify harmful effects on rivers and old-growth forest, the loss of butterflies is a reminder that grassland ecosystems—and all of the species that depend on them—are in trouble."

Although no one would disagree that the loss of grasslands to development, pesticide use, and other human-caused changes to habitat have had an

Amy M. Leinbach is assistant editor for *National Parks* magazine.

effect on all kinds of flora and fauna, including butterflies, the rediscovery of the island marble underscored the need for an inventory of species at San Juan Island. To aid with the inventory, the Park Service hired Robert Pyle, a renowned butterfly researcher. Thirty-six species were recorded—a staggering number for the 1,752-acre island. Two of these species were new to San Juan county.

“To have rediscovered the island marble and to have done so on Park Service land is really exciting,” Lambert says. “Many island residents and the public have come to find San Juan a really special place, because as of now there are no other known populations of this butterfly. We hope that changes, of course—but right now, that’s the most exciting part, that it’s unique.”

Although scientists and butterfly lovers celebrate the species’ rediscovery, it comes with many questions. Where,

besides San Juan Island, does the butterfly exist? How has it survived, and why on San Juan Island? Will the butterfly larvae develop as successfully on a diet of invasive plants? Pyle’s inventory is a solid first step in the process of answering these questions, and in making science a bigger priority in the parks than it has been historically.

How to sell the discovery to the public also takes thoughtful consideration. Like many rare species, the island marble is vulnerable to poaching, but publicity also helps build community support for a species well suited to ramble outside park boundaries. In 2002, Fleckenstein was leading a group of volunteers in the park when a nearby farm beckoned him with big, open areas that screamed island marble habitat. He approached the farmer in the barn and began his pitch.

Fleckenstein told the farmer that

invasive field mustard—an agricultural pest—was one of the butterfly’s food sources. “He just lit up,” says Fleckenstein. “He said, ‘If you can find a butterfly that eats field mustard and it’s on my land, that’s great news—and if you can’t find it out there but you find it someplace else, bring some over, will you?’”

It is his greatest hope and intention, Fleckenstein says, to do just that. “When I start working with any rare species, my hope is always that I’ll find it at a bunch more sites—that maybe we’ve been looking at the wrong place, or at the wrong times, and there will turn out to be more. Too often we end up with government agencies that are concerned about the species and locals who are concerned about losing their rights. But in this case, we’ve got some local citizens who are concerned about the butterfly and want to help it survive.” ❖



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Little Rock, Arkansas, September 1957. Nine African-American students report to Central High School for the first day of class. They are greeted by an angry mob of white students, parents, and local citizens who make it abundantly clear that these new students are not welcome. Armed soldiers from the Arkansas National Guard, under the direction of Gov. Orval Faubus, halt the nine students at the threshold until President Dwight Eisenhower dispatches 101st Airborne Division paratroopers to Little Rock, placing the National Guard unit under federal command to guarantee the students' safe passage.

Three years after the Supreme Court issued its ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, denouncing the "separate but equal" approach to education in the South, classrooms became the locale for a trial of another sort, and the "Little Rock Nine" spent the next year under the watchful eye of an entire nation. Most emerged from their ordeal quite successful: Ernest Green graduated from Michigan State University and later served as Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Affairs. Terrence Roberts now chairs the Master's in Psychology Program at Antioch University. Melba Pattillo Beals is a published author, Thelma Mothershed Wair, a teacher. The list goes on, but their larger legacy is, no doubt, the diverse group of students who followed in their footsteps and benefitted from a more equitable education. That historic breakthrough for all Americans is now commemorated at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site.

Scott Kirkwood is senior editor for *National Parks* magazine.

Students of History

In 1957, nine courageous African-American students began the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

By **Scott Kirkwood**



The American Institute of Architects named Central High School "America's Most Beautiful High School" shortly after its construction in 1927.

Central High was constructed in 1927 at a cost of \$1.5 million—more than 150,000 square feet spreading over two city blocks. With its gothic architecture and Greco-Roman cast stone figures perched over the main entrance, the building resembles an Ivy League university more than a typical high school in the Deep South.

The school became a park unit in November 1998, but unlike most historic buildings in the Park Service, this one still serves its original purpose: More

than 2,200 teenagers attend classes here every day. Thanks to a unique arrangement between the Park Service and the school's administrators, park rangers lead limited group tours of the school between bells and during summer vacation; other groups and individuals are welcome to see the visitor center, take self-guided tours of the area around the school, or follow ranger-led tours of the surrounding neighborhood.

"When we talk to visitors, we generally try to develop a personal connection

between folks and the story," says Michael Madell, the park's superintendent. "We talk about life in the Jim Crow South and how incredibly courageous it was for these young people to assert these basic rights. We also encourage folks to think about what that may have been like for them when they were at that age. Would they have been able to do what these teens did?" Madell likes to illustrate the fact that many of these battles are far from over: He often shares the story of a young black teen in Georgia who struggled to organize her school's first integrated prom; few visitors guess that story took place in 2002.

The Park Service plans to construct a new visitor center adjacent to the school. But for now the unit has one of the more unusual visitor centers—a quaint Mobil service station across the street from the school, renovated to serve



Elizabeth Eckford is trailed by an angry crowd of white students after being denied entrance to Central High in 1957.

WILL COUNTS/ARKANSAS HISTORY COMMISSION

The school consistently leads the state in the number of national merit finalists and semifinalists, and as if academics weren't enough, the football team has won two consecutive state championships.

Although decades have passed, the legacy of the Little Rock Nine isn't lost on those who walk the school's halls today. "Plenty of people around here still remember those years very clearly," says Principal

Nancy Rousseau. "Teachers and counselors at Central [attended high school in Arkansas during those years], so it's still very much alive. Three of the nine students live in Little Rock now, and they come to the school to visit with students. On the 45th anniversary, three years ago, Minnijean Brown Trickey spoke to the entire student body for over an hour. It was an amazing experience—you could've heard a pin drop." ❖

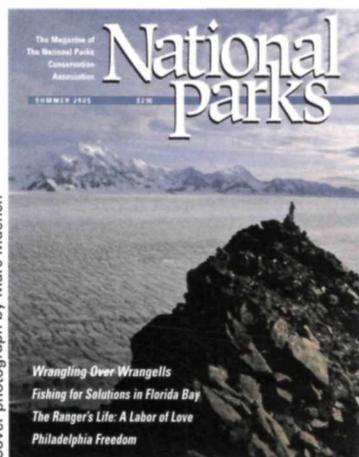
as a private exhibit center before the Park Service took over. The building even played a small role in the drama that unfolded so many years ago: Reporters covering the event often crossed the street to use the station's pay phone and call stories in to their editors.

Today, Central High sets the standard for diversity and excellence in education. The student body is 50 percent white and 50 percent students of color.

National parks

The Magazine of The National Parks Conservation Association

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A Burning Question

Forest fires leave nothing but a cold, charred, lifeless expanse in their wake. Or do they?

By Scott Kirkwood

In 1988, television news anchors gave nightly updates of the damage wrought by the Yellowstone fire, detailing how many firefighters poured how many thousands of gallons of water on how many acres of burning forests. Afterwards, to see the charred black remains seemingly devoid of life, one would think the destruction was irreversible, permanent—a complete loss. But forests recover. Nature fights back.

Visit Yellowstone today and you'll find healthy trees already 6 to 12 feet tall, and areas brimming with wildlife. Sure, it's easy to discern these regions

from adjacent lands not subject to the flames, but the transformation seems miraculous. What's at the heart of this recovery?

"First off, 'recovery' is a word that ecologists no longer use very often, because the word itself implies that something has been damaged or hurt, when in fact, fire is an integral part of the forest ecosystem," says Bill Romme, a professor in the Department of Forest, Rangeland, and Watershed Stewardship at Colorado State University. "It would be like talking about a forest 'recovering' from winter. When you experience your

very first winter, it may seem devastating, but after a while you begin to realize every winter is followed by spring—it's just a natural cycle."

Amazingly enough, even after the most severe fire, life remains. Pine trees like ponderosa found in Grand Canyon National Park and Rocky Mountain National Park feature thick bark, which insulates sensitive internal tissues, protecting them from intense flames. Southeastern pines such as the longleaf actually shed their lower branches as they grow, an adaptation that makes for more efficient photosynthesis, with the added benefit of fire protection.

Even if plants above ground appear to be dead, underground their roots often survive: Aspen in Yellowstone and Glacier are quite easily killed above ground, but their roots sprout prolifically after a fire to create a whole new stand of trees.

The third major source of renewal is found in seeds, which may be buried underground, scattered in the brush, or clinging to tree limbs far above the flames. Although you'd think fire would spell the end for these seeds, some actually prefer the heat. The seeds of a western shrub called buckbrush, found in a number of western parks, can remain dormant for hundreds of years and germinate only when they're subjected to the heat shock from a fire. The cones of the lodgepole pine won't open until they're subjected to high temperatures—once a fire has subsided, the cones gradually open, dropping their seeds onto the ground just after it cools.

Of course, these variations don't come about by coincidence. In regions where fire is prevalent, you'll generally find vegetation that has adapted to withstand the heat; otherwise, there wouldn't



JEFF HENRY/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Firefighter Gillian Bowser battling a small blaze near Yellowstone's Lava Creek in 1988.

Scott Kirkwood is senior editor for *National Parks* magazine.

be any vegetation at all.

Animals manage to adapt to these harsh conditions surprisingly well, too. "A lot of insects, rodents, and even amphibians can survive the passing of a flame front," says Timothy Ingalsbee, executive director of Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology and a former firefighter with the Park Service and Forest Service. "Small animals like rodents will often burrow underground [until the fire has passed] or climb inside downed logs, which can store an immense amount of water, acting like fire shelters." Deer and large carnivores seldom run from fire in a panic, as Disney films might lead us to believe, but rather drift in and out of burning areas, seeking prey that are exposed as fire claims smaller plants and bushes that act as cover.

Regrowth begins immediately. As



Spectacular regrowth quickly sprung from the ashes near Yellowstone's Tower Junction.

more sunlight and rainwater reach the forest ground, grasses and flowers quickly sprout from soil bursting with nutrients, thanks to ash. But those smaller plants will thrive only briefly. Their time in the sun will come to an end as larger trees begin to grow, re-creating the forest canopy and claiming the sunlight and

rainwater as their own once again. And the cycle continues, naturally.

"Everybody who has done detailed studies in Yellowstone has concluded that those fires in 1988 really didn't hurt the park at all," says Romme. "In fact, there were comparable fires in Yellowstone in the early 1700s, so Yellowstone today probably looks a lot like it did in 1750."

That's not to say that all forest fires are harmless. With increased logging changing the nature of our forests, the impact

of global climate change, and construction of homes and other buildings adjacent to forestland, the margin of error has narrowed while the effect of forest fires has increased. But if nature is truly allowed to take its course, forests will always find a way to rise from the ashes. ❖



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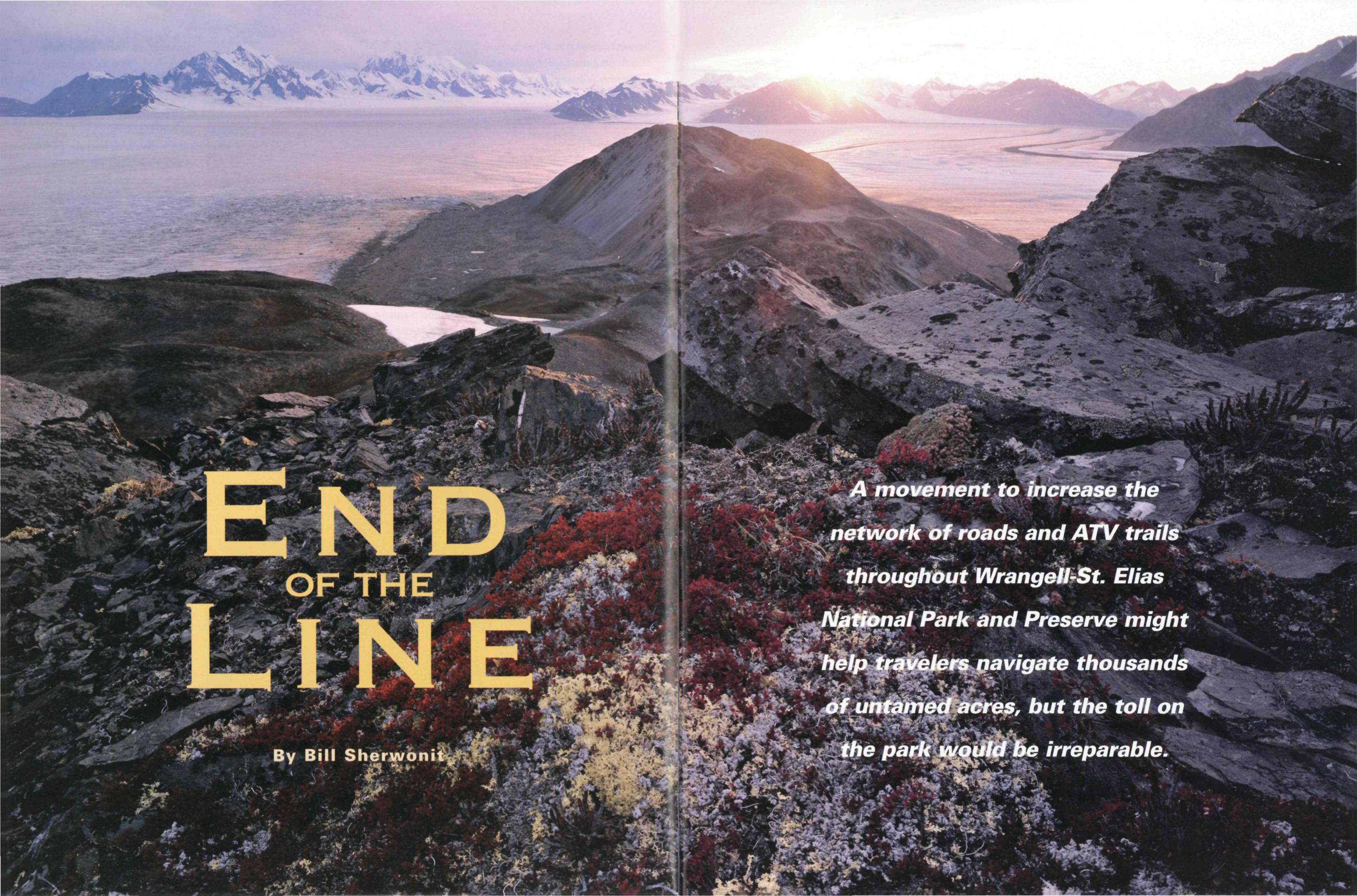
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END OF THE LINE

By Bill Sherwonit

A movement to increase the network of roads and ATV trails throughout Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve might help travelers navigate thousands of untamed acres, but the toll on the park would be irreparable.



McCarthy Road is one of two main roads into the 13-million-acre park.

In the southeast corner of Alaska, tucked tight against the Canadian border and the state's panhandle, is one of our nation's grandest parks: Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Size alone makes this place special: At 13.2 million acres, "The Wrangells" are by far the largest of our nation's parklands, the equivalent of six Yellowstones. Even more impressive is the fact that nearly 10 million acres are officially designated wilderness, more than in all other 49 states combined.

The park encompasses several climates, stretching from the Gulf Coast to Alaska's Interior. Within its borders are all manner of natural wonders. Four major mountain ranges are found here,

along with six of the continent's ten highest peaks. Shaped by the fires of tectonic events and then later chiseled by ice, these mountains are home to North America's largest subpolar icefield, the Bagley, which feeds a system of gigantic glaciers; the largest of those, the Malaspina, is bigger than Rhode Island. The glaciers, in turn, have carved dozens of canyons, some bordered by rock walls thousands of feet high, showcasing silvery necklaces of cascading mountain water.

Yet between many of the ice-gouged mountains are valleys lush with the greenery of forests and tundra. Both hills and basins are home to a surprising bounty of wildlife. The park's interior

mountains are host to one of North America's largest concentrations of snow-white Dall sheep and mountain goats clinging to coastal ridges. Wolves and bears—both grizzlies and blacks—fish for salmon and hunt sheep, caribou, and moose, while smaller carnivores such as wolverines, lynx, and marten scavenge carcasses and hunt hares, rodents, and birds.

Although it hasn't become "another Denali" as some predicted in the early 1990s, Wrangell-St. Elias is among Alaska's most popular destinations. One of the few national parks accessible from Alaska's highway system, it draws a broad spectrum of visitors, from road-bound sightseers to wildlife watchers,

Wrangell-St. Elias is among Alaska's most popular destinations.
One of the few national parks accessible from Alaska's highway system,
it draws a broad spectrum of visitors, from road-bound sightseers
to wildlife watchers, hikers, mountaineers, flightseers, kayakers, anglers,
and, in the preserve only, sport hunters.

hikers, mountaineers, flightseers, kayakers, anglers, and, in the preserve only, sport hunters.

For all its wild grandeur and vast size—and partly because of those qualities—Wrangell-St. Elias ranks among the nation's most threatened parklands, earning a spot on NPCA's 2004 list of America's Ten Most Endangered National Parks. Two management challenges, in particular, concern NPCA: the potential for road development, and intensifying damage to tundra and wetlands from all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Wrangell-St. Elias is the only one of Alaska's parklands to allow ATVs for both recreational and subsistence purposes. Because the park is literally at "the end of the road," it often draws those interested in living off the grid. That means more than a few independent spirits, and it also means ATVs are the preferred mode of transport, if not the only one. The National Park Service (NPS) believes it has little choice but to acknowledge that fact: In the early 1980s, park staff surveyed and mapped more than 600 miles of potential ATV pathways. The Park Service later designated 13 non-wilderness routes as recreational ATV trails; all that's required is a permit.

Most recreational trails branch off Nabesna Road, a 45-mile-long, mostly gravel entryway into the park's northern reaches. Where they intersect moist tundra, muskeg, and other wetlands, the trails have predictably destroyed plant communities and exposed permafrost to melting while becoming ever-enlarging quagmires. The resulting damage affects run-off, fragments wildlife habitat, and turns wildlands into eyesores.

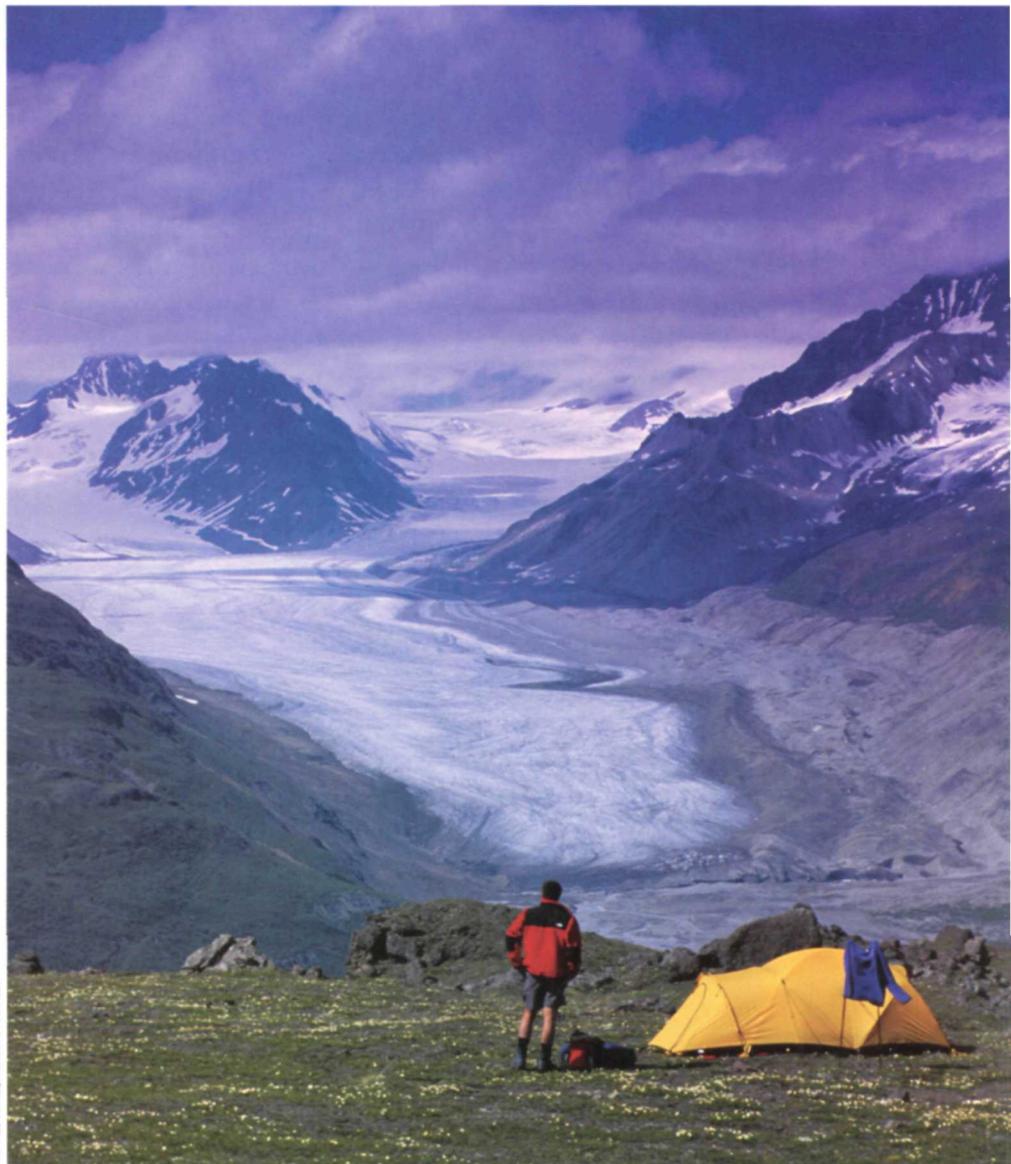
In places, the routes have become spiderwebs of trails—in the worst areas, human-made bogs measure a quarter-mile across, as ATV drivers trying to avoid the muddiest stretches have simply

expanded the mud pits. Some areas have become impassable, with mud nearly waist-deep.

Although park advocates recognize the need for some ATV use for subsistence purposes, they believe that regulations establishing the 13 recreational routes are illegal. "We support appropriate access, but years ago the Park Service bowed to local pressure to authorize these recreational trails," says Jim Stratton, regional director of NPCA's Alaska office. "They made some bad concessions, and those changes need to be corrected—the sooner, the better."

Park managers concede that at least some of the ATV trails have become "abominations." But as one Wrangell-St. Elias staff member puts it, "We're in kind of a bind. We want to protect the park's values, but the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act also requires us to provide access. We recognize that residents have a need for access, and a right to it—this isn't a battle we're ready to take on."

To locals, ATV trails are long established pathways onto both parkland and preserves for recreational and subsistence purposes. Sometimes traveling by ATV



Additional road development may hinder visitors' experience of this vast park.

itself is the recreational use; in other instances, ATVs provide locals with access to subsistence activities such as berry picking, fishing, or hunting as well as hiking and camping; some trails even lead to private property. In one instance,

Though Congress repealed the Mining Act in 1976, a grandfather clause allows for existing right-of-way claims to be honored. The question, of course, is what constitutes an “existing right-of-way”?

a resident attempted to “improve” an ATV trail by bridging the area with wooden pallets, but the Park Service fined him \$500 for failing to obtain a permit. The park’s actions, in turn, created a local furor and deepened already strained relations.

A law passed nearly 140 years ago lies at the heart of yet another long-term threat. One section of the 1866 Mining Act, commonly known as RS2477, was intended to encourage mining and settlement of America’s West following the Civil War by allowing settlers to build roads through federal lands. Though Congress repealed the antiquated statute in 1976, a grandfather clause allows for existing right-of-way claims to be honored. The question, of course, is what constitutes an “existing right-of-way”?

Since the mid-1980s, politicians throughout much of the American West, but most notably in Utah and

Alaska, have been using RS2477 claims to push for the construction of roads through national parks and other public lands. But nowhere has RS2477 been more broadly interpreted than America’s “Last Frontier.” In 1981, state attorneys used an earlier Alaska Supreme Court ruling to argue that this 19th-century law could apply to every one of the “section lines” that criss-cross the state. Given the most liberal interpretation, that could mean claims of more than 1 million miles of roadway.

Even ignoring section-line claims, the state has identified 166 historic routes in Alaska’s national parks totaling 2,831 miles, more than half in Wrangell-St. Elias. The most current count is 1,702 miles of trails along 96 routes—this in a park that currently contains about 100 miles of roads.

“The state sees RS2477 as a way to jam motorized access into parks, refuges, and other wilderness areas, using things



Improper ATV use on delicate areas of the park erodes and threatens a fragile landscape.

RICHARD HAMILTON SMITH/CORBIS

like former sled dog trails, horse trails, foot trails, and winter trails,” says Stratton. “If the courts agreed to such a loose interpretation, there could be roads all over the place.”

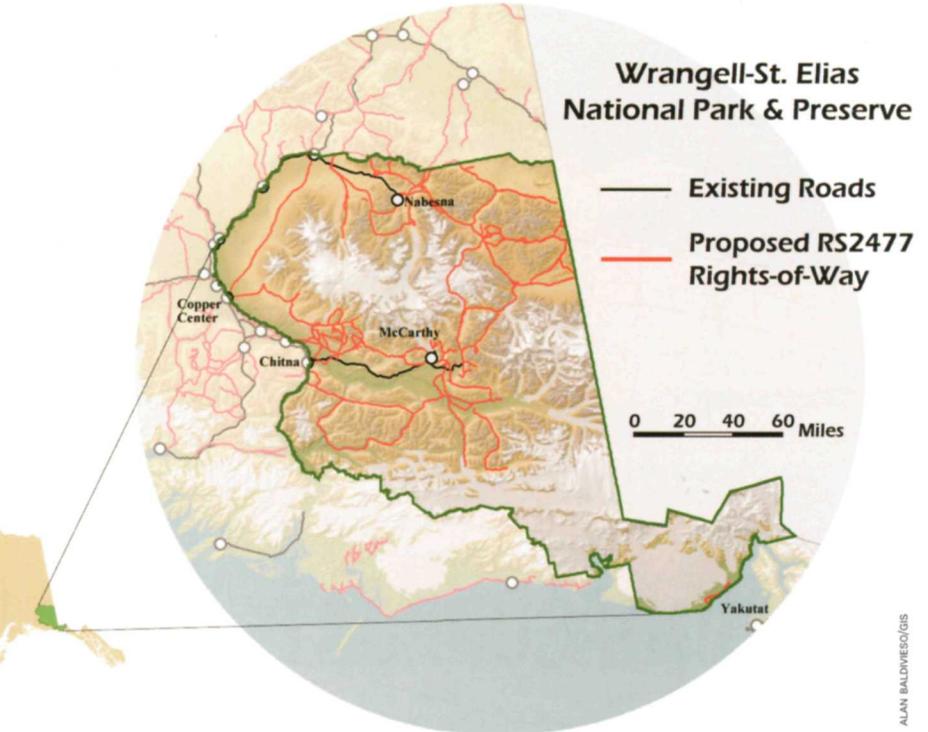
A map of Wrangell-St. Elias with RS2477 claims superimposed on it reveals a spiderweb of potential new highways or motorized trails. Such roadways could fragment critical wildlife habitat; increase poaching; introduce noisy, polluting machines into pristine areas; and destroy cultural treasures, from former gold camps to Native settlements. Roads would also clearly diminish the park’s scenic landscapes, one of the primary reasons it was established. And they could

increase development efforts on private property inholdings inside Wrangell-St. Elias, whether for mining, logging, or subdivisions.

“Valid needs of subsistence users and private property owners can be met by means other than RS2477,” says Stratton. “You don’t need to give away ownership of a trail to allow legitimate uses.”

Local property owners are split on the issue, though a majority likely favor increased access into the park: “RS2477 could produce a spaghetti network of roads around [the gateway community of] McCarthy if historic routes are opened up,” says one longtime resident. “You’d also be opening up a lot of remote wilderness to motorized traffic. That’s not what I want to see.” (Although park personnel and local citizens are all willing to talk about the issue, it’s so contentious that few are willing to attribute their names to their statements.)

But one local group, the Residents of the Wrangells, told the *Wrangell-St.*



Proposed roads would weave a spiderweb of paths across pristine land.

Elias News that “most of these rights-of-way, probably the vast majority, have no potential to become roads or highways. Rather, they serve as important trails that give access to private property or natural resources such as firewood, berry patches, or hunting and fishing areas. For the most part, their use is limited to off-road vehicles (ORVs), snowmachines, and dog sleds.”

NPS has so far refused to act on the state’s claims.

“There’s a process we have to go through and lots of questions still need answering,” says one veteran Wrangell-St. Elias employee. “For instance, has the route been surveyed? Was the original trail really located where the state says it is now? Is the claim supportable? What’s the evidence?”

In recent years a bipartisan effort in Congress has aimed to close the RS2477 loophole, because of its potential to damage public lands. But attempts to permanently protect national parks from the archaic law have so far failed.

At the same time, President George W. Bush has shown a desire to help states “open up” federally owned public lands to development. Already in Utah, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton has agreed to “disclaim interest” in certain RS2477 routes, leaving the Bureau of Land Management to make the decision on state requests but prohibiting any changes to national parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas. According to some reports, Norton may allow the state of Alaska to take the same approach, which would almost certainly mean more roads and greater access. And there are no guarantees that this administration or some future one won’t eventually pass on its claim to historic routes within parklands and other national lands, handing the power to the state.

“This is simply a bad idea,” says Stratton. “It’s a sneak attack on our public lands, and it has to be stopped. The future of Wrangell-St. Elias and other parks is at stake.”



BUILDING SUPPORT FOR WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS

Since the creation of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve in 1980, the media have emphasized tensions and conflicts pitting local residents against the National Park Service and the environmental community. To be sure, they've existed. But beneath a quarter-century characterized by disputes, there's also been an ongoing effort to build bridges. Whereas local critics of government and environmental intrusions have been loud and public, the bridge-building has largely gone on quietly, behind the scenes.

"I truly believe there's much better rapport between the Park Service and locals than what appears on the surface," says Bob Jacobs, a local property owner who recently sold his guide business after a quarter-century in the park. "In the McCarthy-Kennicott area [the park's main gateway community], a majority of people support much of what the Park Service is doing, but you just don't hear about that."

Another longtime local, who preferred anonymity, says pro-park residents tend not to speak out because of fears they will only "get things stirred up, when we're trying to heal wounds and build support within the community."

Occasionally, park managers are their own worst enemies: "They do some things that make themselves easy targets," Jacobs says. "And for some reason, they've just refused to build partnerships with local communities. If the Park Service reaches out, I guarantee you it will be embraced."

Some of that has already happened. When the Park Service announced its search for a new Wrangell-St. Elias

superintendent in 2004, the agency's Alaska regional director, Marcia Blaszak, organized meetings in two communities and asked locals what traits they would like to see in the new superintendent. Last fall, Blaszak announced the appointment of Jed Davis, identifying him as "a clear match for what I heard from local residents—a person who would meet their expectations as well as those of the Park Service."

Residents of the Wrangells, a group highly critical of the previous superintendent, responded with an editorial in the *Wrangell-St. Elias News*: "We look forward to establishing a meaningful and continual dialogue with [Davis] to begin a new era of cooperation and responsiveness . . ." NPCA's Jim Stratton also looks forward to increased cooperation. Like Jacobs, he believes there's plenty of local support for Wrangell-St. Elias, and he's eager to form partnerships with residents. "We want to find those locals who see the good that this park brings to their lives. Our goal is to reach out and build new alliances that will help both the residents and the park."

Anchorage nature writer Bill Sherwonit is the author of ten books about Alaska. He last wrote for *National Parks* about the residents of Seward, Alaska, slowly embracing the establishment of Kenai Fjords National Park.

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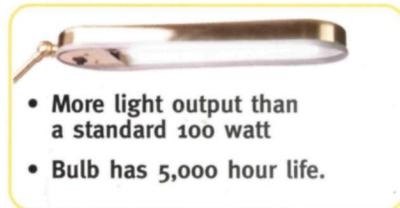
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A new program
in Everglades
National Park is
helping rangers
protect fragile
sea beds and
marine life
in Florida Bay.

By Brian Lavendel

It's another sunny day in paradise, and two Florida retirees—Roland and Jake—are geared up for a day on the water. Decked out in long-sleeved shirts, hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen, the two wait patiently on a pier in Islamorada, Key Largo, anticipating a day in Florida Bay. But unlike most boaters who will be fishing or sightseeing today, Roland and Jake are heading out to help protect Everglades National Park.

Many boaters in the waters north of the Keys don't realize that hundreds of square miles of the waters of Florida Bay lie within the boundaries of Everglades National Park. Roland's and Jake's mission is to clue boaters in to that fact, and to help protect the waters, the sensitive underwater habitat, and the many

An aerial view of a portion of Florida Bay.

Just Skimming the Surface

creatures found here. That's their goal as charter members of Florida Bay Buddies, a group of volunteers working to protect this fragile ecosystem—a key breeding and nursery ground for fish, shellfish, and birds—from the dangers of careless visitors.

The effort began in 2003, when an anonymous donor stepped forward and offered NPCA \$3.3 million over five years to help address the problems in Florida Bay, earmarking part of this money for specific projects in Everglades National Park. The donor had grown increasingly concerned about reports of declining fish catches and deteriorating habitat in Florida Bay and recognized the need for immediate action to protect the bay from further harm. To make the most of this sizable donation, NPCA formed a Coalition of Park Users—

representatives from the angling community, a fishing guides association, local businesses related to the Bay, and the scientific community—who would be able to determine which projects would best benefit Florida Bay.

“When we first approached them, they were skeptical,” says Mary Munson, director of NPCA’s Sun Coast region. “Some fishermen suspected we had a hidden agenda, such as closing the park to fishing. But we got past that by talking with them, building trust, and assuring them that we were looking for their advice. After all, they’re the ones who are out there every day—they know what the problems are and what the Bay needs.”

In the end, coalition members including Tad Burke, commodore of the Florida Keys Fishing Guides Associ-

ation, eventually agreed to team up with Munson and NPCA. Advisors on the Coalition agreed that an influx of novice boaters and anglers unfamiliar with the bay’s unique characteristics was causing serious damage to the sensitive ecosystem. The people most familiar with the waterways believed it was essential to educate new boaters and stop those violating conservation laws. To that end, they identified the need for more enforcement rangers as a top priority, recommending that NPCA use the money to allow the park to purchase enforcement patrol vessels, hire seasonal rangers, purchase boundary markers, and conduct baseline studies of the Bay’s conditions, which would help feed into the park’s general management plan, now being revised, just in time to account for these new challenges.



The Bay's silty bottom supports a lush growth of seagrass, important habitat for a number of species.

TOM & THERESA STACK



NPCA's Cara Dickman, at the helm, and David Szymanski of the Park Service, motor out to Florida Bay to assess seagrass damage.

“Recreational fishing has increased a lot in the past few years,” says Munson. “A huge number of people have migrated to Florida, and the boats themselves have become more affordable.” The result is a huge increase in boating, leading to unsustainable pressure on the region’s marine resources. To make matters worse, the park’s enforcement budget has been trimmed, so fewer staff are available to keep watch over the 500,000-acre bay.

“There aren’t as many fish as there used to be, and there are [a lot more boaters] who don’t know what they’re doing or where they’re going,” confirms world-champion fly fisherman, Billy Pate, who has plied his trade in Florida Bay since the 1960s. “I’ve fished in over 40 countries, and I have looked for

another Everglades National Park, but there is no other place that has the same type and quality of fishing.”

But Pate and others are worried that it may not stay that way. The bay is world-renowned for its fishing. Highly prized species found here include tarpon, snook, and bonefish. The gin-clear, shallow waters make it possible to “sight fish,” or seek out a fish by spying it under water and casting a lure in its path.

Those who have stalked, hooked, played, and released bonefish or tarpon find them to be two of fishing’s supreme



A spiny lobster is part of a large and complex marine ecosystem in the Bay’s shallow waters.

challenges. If you’re fortunate enough to spot a bonefish and get it on the end of a hook, you’ve completed only half the job—bonefish are capable of breaking away at speeds of 22 mph. Tarpon can grow more than five feet long and weigh



A multitude of species, including both flora and fauna, rely on healthy underwater ecosystems to thrive. If the fragile seagrass is damaged, it can take decades to recover, sending shockwaves through the entire marine ecosystem.

more than 200 pounds; nicknamed the “silver king,” it’s also a species that’s easily spooked. Even when it’s taken the bait, the fight is far from over—it can take most of a day to reel in these strong, wild, acrobatic fish.

But to get to that point, you’ve got to find the fish, and just getting to these fishing flats—extremely shallow areas covered with seagrass—takes skill and hard work. Oftentimes, boats must be pushed by pole into some of the more hidden backcountry areas. Unfortunately, some boaters are either unaware of that fact or unwilling to exercise the patience it requires, so they’ll often motor in, tearing up the seabed in the process.

The waters average only about three feet deep, and the silty bottom supports a lush growth of underwater seagrass, says Dave King, district ranger for the park: “The seagrass is important as habitat and for protection from predators for countless species including dozens of species of fish, tulip snails, hermit crabs, stone crabs, mollusks, scallops, and lobsters.” Seagrass forms the base of a marine food chain that extends from the smallest marine life to game fish and marine mammals. In short, it’s a baby nursery for an entire ecosystem of marine life.

Not surprisingly, this fertile habitat is fragile and vulnerable to disturbance. When boaters operate their motors in

shallow areas, their propellers act just like rototillers, chopping up the seagrass and digging up the sea bottom, leaving behind a plume of sediment and a long narrow scar in the seabed. From a low-flying plane, one can see that areas along the Bay’s floor are crisscrossed with deep scars. Because seagrass beds take years to become established, any damage to the existing beds can be devastating.

Of course, most visitors don’t intentionally cause harm, but accidental damage is no less consequential. King recently watched a small boat approach an island to get a closer look at some nesting birds. The nature lovers left a sediment plume of sand and chopped up seagrass in their wake. King caught up

with them but only after they had spooked the birds and damaged the Bay floor. “They were out-of-town visitors and had absolutely no clue they were digging up seagrass; they didn’t look behind them,” he says with a shrug. “I estimate the propeller scar was about a quarter of a mile long.”

Even experienced boaters equipped with nautical charts have been known to run aground in this shallow bay. The area is much more challenging for inexperienced boaters, who can find themselves in an obstacle course of mud flats, narrow channels, shallow banks, and low islands. Some channels have been known to be only 14–18 inches deep when water levels drop in the winter.

Pate says that in the past, he and his fellow anglers honored certain unwritten rules with respect to other fishermen and the fish themselves, but many of these newcomers are violating these rules, whether they know it or not. So Pate and others asked for help. It wasn’t so much that park rules needed to be changed,

they told Munson, but that existing rules needed to be better enforced, and users of the park needed to know how to navigate its tricky waters.

And that brings us back to Roland and Jake, who are heading to North Nest Key—a popular anchoring point northwest of Key Largo—courtesy of NPCA Outreach Coordinator Kristina Trotta and park ranger David Szymanski. Other volunteers will be stationed at “The Boggies,” a channel through which most of the west-bound boat traffic passes.

Once there, they’ll hang a banner advertising “Park Information,” inviting passing boats to stop and learn about the area. Wearing uniforms donated by the park, the Bay Buddies hand out maps and information, direct visitors, and



Stone crabs rely on healthy seagrass for food and protection.

answer questions, according to Trotta. She compares the program to the “campground host” volunteer role at national park campgrounds. Bay Buddies work closely with the park staff. The rangers can’t be everywhere, so the volunteers’ mission is to educate park users, and they hope to contact as many visitors as possible.

NPCA’s Munson says her group is thrilled to have a chance to help out. In addition to sponsoring the Bay Buddies program, NPCA has donated funds to the South Florida National Parks Trust to help the park purchase new patrol boats, hire rangers, place navigational markers on the Bay, and conduct studies of the Bay. NPCA is even hiring off-duty Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officers to go undercover and observe where violations are occurring, so volunteers will be able to focus all their efforts in the right place at the right time.



Brian Lavendel is a freelance writer

living in Madison, Wisconsin.

He last wrote for *National Parks*

about creating a soundscape at

Biscayne National Park.



A flyfisherman casts his line, sight fishing for red drum, snook, and tarpon in the Bay.



KRISTA SCHYLER/WAYFARE PHOTOGRAPHY

A Labor of Love

Visitors to our national parks experience much more than a brush with nature or a quick glimpse of history, thanks to thousands of rangers who consider the job a calling.

Here are three of their stories.

By Connie Toops

North Dakota in the 1960s. A Native American man tells his son about a park ranger he'd recently met—a man in a broad-brimmed hat who cares for the trees and the river. The awestruck child imagines a ranger at least ten feet tall, with the best job in the world.

Meanwhile, in Maryland, an inquisitive boy with a butterfly net pursues insects on the family farm, his curiosity piqued when he can't identify his finds in popular Golden Field Guides.

At the same time, a teenage girl accompanies her neighbor to the Florida Everglades, and her fascination with the lush plants and abundant birds lingers long after she returns home.

Flash forward four decades later. Gerard Baker has since assumed the duties of his childhood idol, working at Mount Rushmore National Monument. Keith Langdon, the Maryland farm boy, can now tell visitors to Great Smoky Mountains National Park that there's a beetle with his name on it: *Anillus langdonii*, to be precise. And the Miami teenager, Sandy Dayhoff, has spent more than 30 years as a ranger, introducing young people to the Everglades ecosystem.

Baker, Langdon, and Dayhoff belong to an extraordinary corps of about 8,000 National Park Service (NPS) employees who proudly wear the ranger uniform. Although rangers in the 388 units in the system dress identically—whether working in immense natural tracts or intimate cultural and historic sites—they're actually diverse specialists in botany, ecology, history, archaeology, and curatorial sciences. The 1916 Organic Act, which created the

Ranger Sandy Dayhoff (opposite) is as much an icon of Everglades National Park as the cypress swamps (right) that dot its landscape.



WILLIAM NEILL/ARND BRONKHORST

National Park Service, pledges employees to “preserve the scenery, natural resources, and historic objects unimpaired for current and future generations,” and these three rangers embody the act’s ideals. Despite worrisome budget cuts that currently provide only two-thirds of the funding needed to operate the National Park System, most rangers consider their careers far more than a 9-to-5 obligation. Rangering is their lifestyle.

Answering the Call

“I feel very fortunate I grew up surrounded by natural resources,” says Baker, recalling his youth on a windswept cattle ranch. “I had the opportunity to listen to elders talk of old days on the Knife River—of clans, families, and their way of life. I did not know it at the time, but those experiences set me up for the path my life has taken.”

In 1973, Baker, a member of the Mandan-Hidatsa Tribe, landed a seasonal job at Theodore Roosevelt National Park doing everything from picking up trash and cleaning bathrooms to law enforcement and back-country patrols. He fell in love with the job, changed his college major to criminology, and became a patrol ranger, diligently working his way up the ranks at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, Knife River Indian Village National Historic Site, and Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site.

By age 39, Baker was superintendent at Custer Battlefield in Montana. The previous superintendent at Custer had laid the groundwork for changing the park’s name to Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument and including the voice of Native Americans in its interpretive story. When Baker enacted the makeover, hardcore Custer

buffs from the United States and Europe rebuked him with angry letters, a petition for removal, and seven confirmed death threats. All the while, Baker patiently brought tribes back to a place they once felt unwelcome.

On his first morning in the position, Baker had the chance to fulfill one of his dreams with the simple act of answering the phone, “Superintendent Baker.” To his surprise, the irate voice on the other end called him “an ignorant, stupid Indian.” At that moment, he had

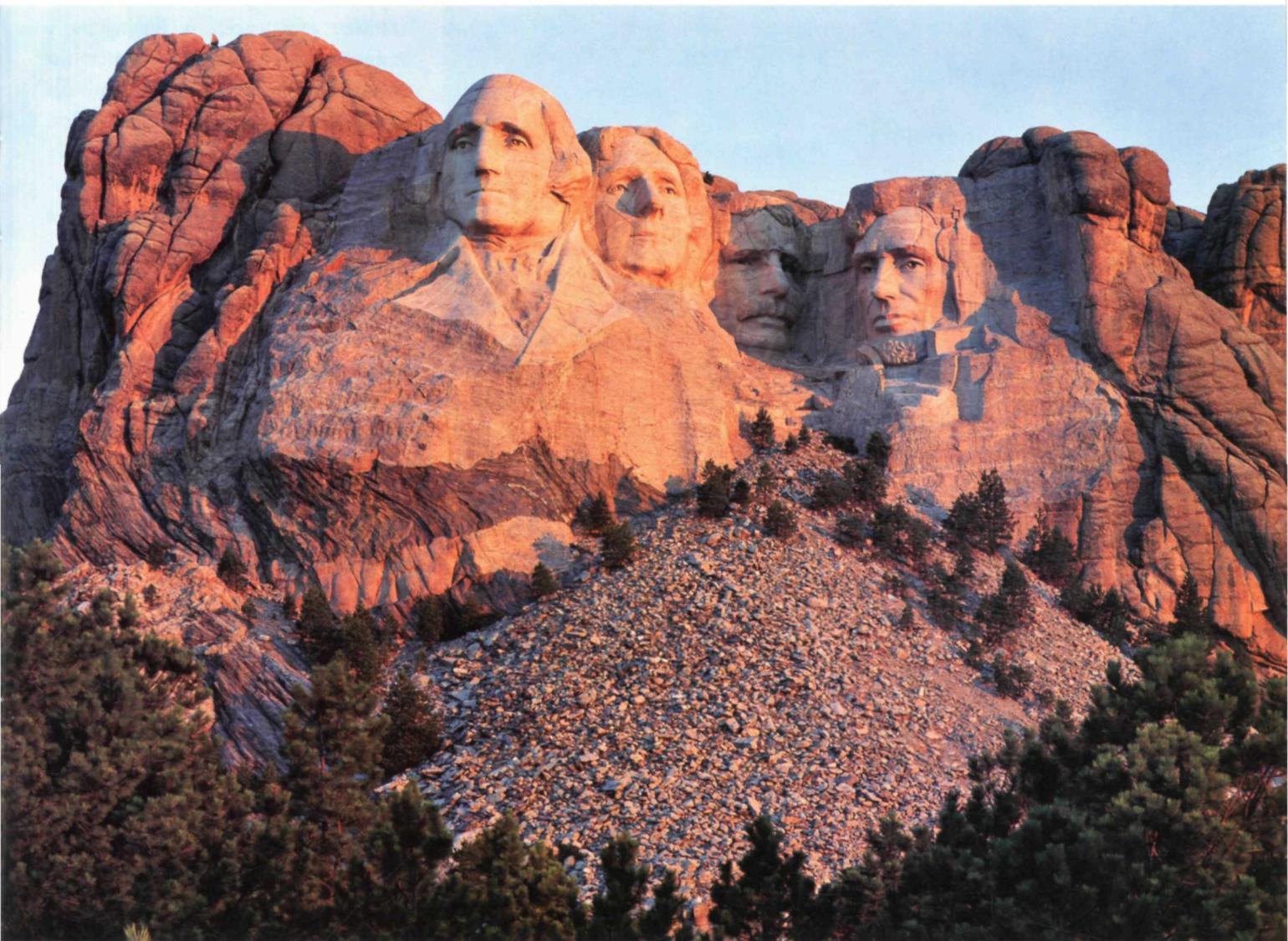
two choices—get mad and hang up, or talk to the man. He chatted with the caller for 15 minutes, mentioning his two college degrees and extensive experience. At the end of the conversation, the caller apologized.

“[The transition] wasn’t a bad experience,” he recalls. “It was educational. It taught me how to work with people, to teach managers how to humanize ourselves by talking about families and children to find common ground.” Baker later became superintendent at Chicka-

Baker, Langdon, and Dayhoff belong to an extraordinary corps of about 8,000 National Park Service employees who proudly wear the ranger uniform.



Gerard Baker speaks to a crowd in celebration of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.



Baker has worked at a number of national parks, the latest being Mount Rushmore National Monument.

saw National Recreation Area, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and now Mount Rushmore National Monument.

“Native Americans are not used to promoting themselves,” he says, but during his career, he’s learned how to balance Indian and NPS perspectives. Baker sees similarities between that balance and the ways his Hidatsa ancestors wondered if they could live peaceably with the Mandan: “The answer was ‘yes’—if they remained close enough to be allies, yet far enough to be friends,” he says. Baker has taken that philosophy to heart as he brings divergent cultures together. “If I

leave any legacy, I would love for Native American young people to be more aware of who they are—and to know that if Gerard Baker can do it, any of them can.”

Making a Name for Himself

Piscataway Park, which protects views from historic Mount Vernon, opened while Keith Langdon was still attending high school in nearby southern Maryland. The budding naturalist landed a summer job doing everything from boundary marking and maintenance to banding birds. He continued seasonal

work during college. After completing a master’s degree in physical geography, Langdon realized the National Park System includes “an eclectic mix of environments” and aimed to work in parks with high biodiversity. His primary interest is biogeography—the study of the physical distributions of life forms and pinpointing where rare species occur.

In his first permanent job as a ranger at Shenandoah National Park, Langdon scrutinized the roadsides for unusual plants while on law enforcement patrols. After stints at Hot Springs National Park and Catoctin Mountain Park, Langdon transferred to Great

“It’s a basic business principle to do an inventory, and that’s [the logic] behind the current emphasis of Parks for Science: It creates an invaluable baseline measurement of the country’s health.”

Smoky Mountains National Park, where he has coordinated the park’s Inventory and Monitoring Program for the last dozen years. Surrounded by maps and detailed field guides, Langdon and his staff issue and oversee 200 scientific research permits annually.

Meetings and computer-based data management keep him in the office during the week, but on weekends he loves to wander the park. With his insatiable curiosity, keen eye, and the mind of a scientist, little escapes Langdon’s scrutiny. Soon after arriving in the Smokies, he discovered dragonflies and moths never before documented in the park. Today he’s enchanted with damselflies, lichens, and snails. Drifting into the

minutiae of science, and loving every minute of it, he will tell you that the snails seem to be suffering from decreased diversity because of calcium loss in soils altered by acid rain.

“When people think of life in parks, they generally visualize small numbers of mammal or tree species,” says Langdon, a hint of regret evident in his voice because too many people overlook the algae, fungi, and tiny insects he studies so closely. In 1998 he and U.S. Geological Survey colleague Chuck Parker estimated that 40,000 to 70,000 species above the microbe level might exist in the Smokies. Partnering with university researchers and volunteers, the park initiated an All Taxa Biodiversity



Showy orchis create a striking ground scene in the Great Smoky Mountains where ranger Keith Langdon observes overlooked species.

Inventory (ATBI). “National parks and other national trust lands have been very slow to identify and quantify resources,” he explains. “It’s a basic business principle to do an inventory, and that’s [the logic] behind the current emphasis of Parks for Science: An ATBI study creates an invaluable baseline measurement of the country’s health.”

By December 2004, 543 species completely new to science and 3,358 new geographical records had been documented in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the totals increase monthly. “The real benefit is that we are sampling thousands of locations in the park systematically,” Langdon continues, “so that over the years, we’ll know when and where species occur and their relative abundance.”

Critics might ask, why expend effort on obscure insects or fungi? As Langdon is happy to point out, the Smokies are a world “hot spot” for slime molds, simple-celled predators that eat bacteria on logs. Researchers have identified a cellular structure in the brains of people with Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases—called a Hirano body—that is also present in a slime mold common in the park. Experiments have revealed that these Hirano bodies kill human cervical cancer cells, but until recently they could be studied only in human cadavers. Now, using slime mold cultures, scientists can study them in living cells. “We can never predict what will be of value to science and medicine,” says Langdon. “The ramifications go way beyond what might be expected.”

And the program is growing beyond the park’s borders: Langdon and his staff have recently hosted observers and traveled to other parks to help replicate the program. At Point Reyes National Seashore, Acadia National Park in Maine, and Yellowstone National Park, researchers are gearing up for what Lang-



Langdon shows a trap used to capture and identify insects near the park’s science center.

don hopes will become “a groundswell of biodiversity discovery and understanding.”

Finding Her Niche

Thirty-five years ago, jobs were scarce in the wilds of south Florida, so Sandy Dayhoff was happy to be hired as a fee collector at Everglades National Park. One day a co-worker in the Shark Valley duty station became ill, so Dayhoff was recruited to lead and narrate a tram trip on short notice. Although she knew the ’Glades intimately from homesteading nearby, she had never spoken before an audience. Evidently, she did quite well: As fate would have it, the superintendent’s wife and child were on the tram. They passed rave reviews on to the superintendent and insisted that Dayhoff should be working with children full-time. Dayhoff had discovered her niche, and she never left the Everglades; today she’s coordinator of the Environmental Education Program.

The program has since expanded from brief tram trips and nature walks to educational day trips for 4th- through 6th-graders, three-day camping experiences for 5th- and 6th-grade students, teacher workshops for college credit, community outreach programs, parent nights, and partnerships with Florida International University, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the South Florida Water Management District. Students come from six county school systems, private schools, and even homeschooling. Typically, 14,000 children participate annually. Since the program began, nearly half a million youth from communities in south Florida have gained an in-depth understanding of Everglades National Park.

Although the statistics are impressive, the story behind those numbers is equally inspiring. The program initially targeted inner-city schools. Teachers were required to attend workshops to plan classes before the children’s visit, a challenge, considering that most of the teachers had never been to the Ever-



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Young Baker gives an interpretive talk at Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site.



CONNIE TOOPS

Dayhoff has put her life's work into furthering education programs in the Everglades.

glades, and many were repulsed by the thought of snakes and alligators. But Dayhoff has delighted these teachers and their students with a perspective that personifies life in the Everglades. She even occasionally sheds her park uniform in favor of costumes, taking on the role of park critters, such as wood storks and swamp rats. Her co-workers have been equally creative and dedicated. Today there are waiting lists to bring students to the park.

Years ago, Dayhoff sought permission from Everglades and Big Cypress superintendents to use a remote five-acre site that was ideal for an environ-

mental education center. They agreed but seemed to doubt the likelihood of success. Funding was lacking in the beginning—without adequate restrooms, visitors were forced to use outhouses early on. But 20 years after the first campers arrived, a code-compliant office and camp headquarters were finally completed.

“We need to look at education as a long-term investment,” Dayhoff says. “NPS employees can only be as good as the support they receive from their park. Everglades has been stellar in making this education program continue.”

One of the final activities at each

overnight camp is a sharing circle in which participants sum up what they have learned. At a recent 5th-grade campout that Dayhoff attended, one of the chaperones choked up while sharing her feelings. Her wish had come true, she said. She had been a camper in the late 1970s and had hoped one day to bring her children back to the same place. Until that day, her daughter had never understood why mom conserved water, recycled, and tried to protect the natural world. But now she believed her daughter would appreciate this environmental ethic.

Dayhoff remembers quietly stepping away from the campfire that night, satisfied that she'd helped deliver a valuable message from one generation to the next. That's all she'd ever set out to do. 

Connie Toops is a nature photo-journalist

based in Marshall, North Carolina. She

worked as a Park Service seasonal

employee in the 1970s and first

contributed to *National Parks*

magazine in 1977.

If you'd like to learn more about working or volunteering in the national parks, to put yourself on the path that these rangers followed, you'll find more information on our web site, at www.npca.org/magazine/2005/summer/rangers.asp.

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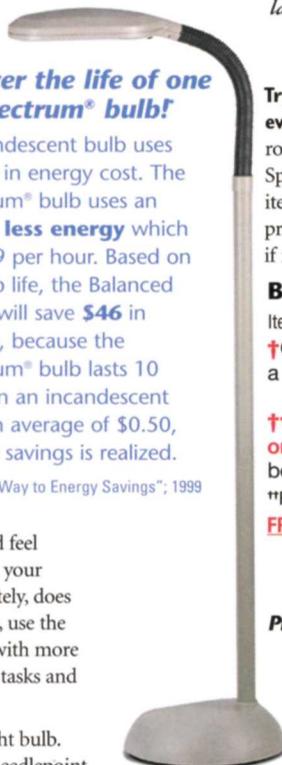
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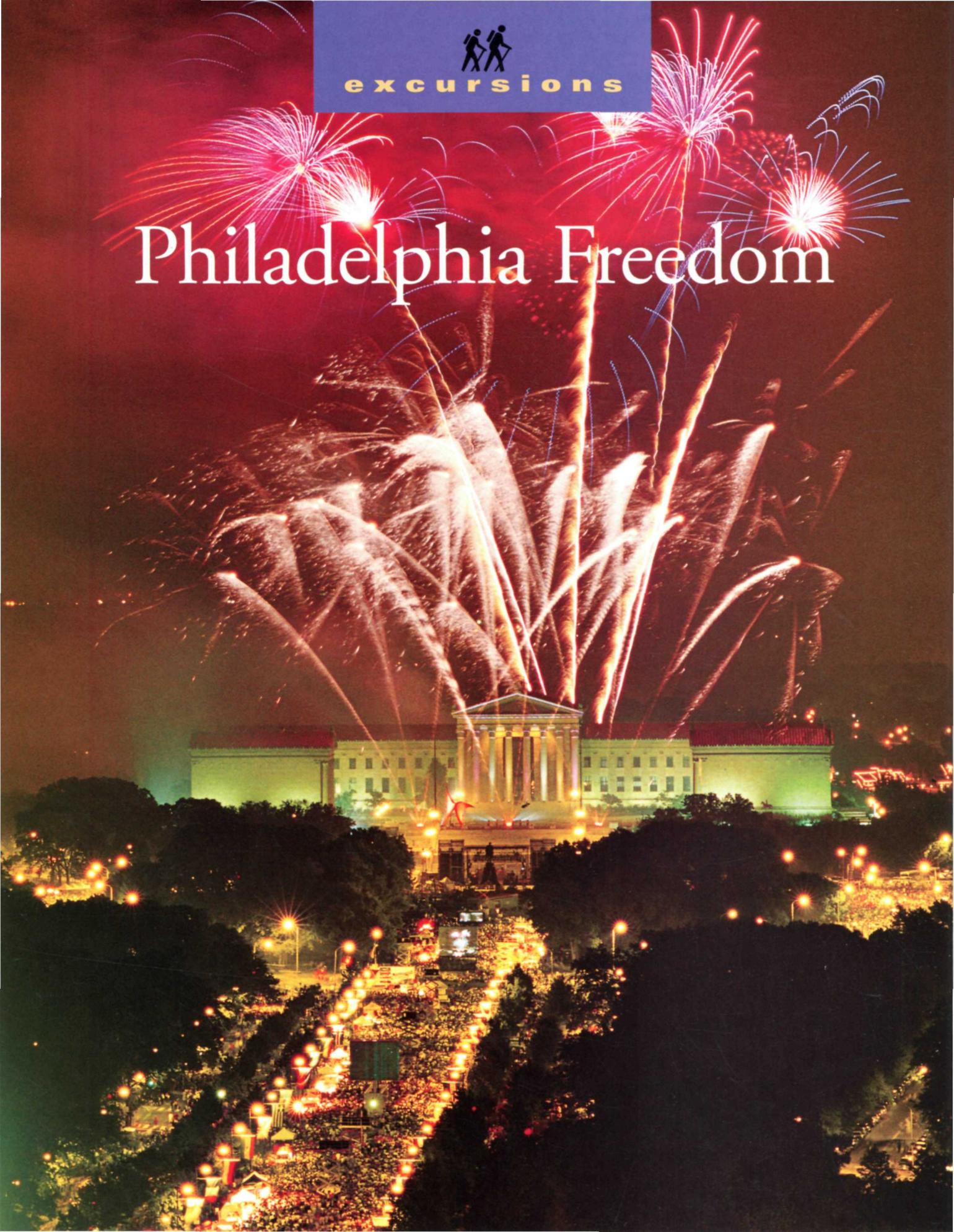
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excursions

Philadelphia Freedom



In the City of Brotherly Love, a handful of park sites tell the story of a revolution that drew the blueprint for America.

By Ryan Dougherty

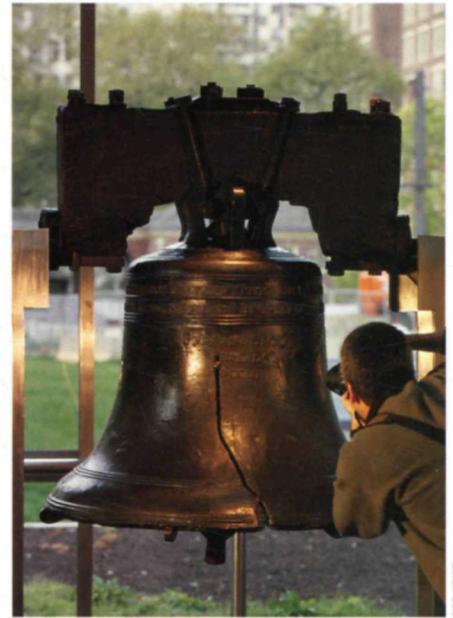
Philadelphia represents a lot of things to a lot of people. Architecture buffs treasure the city's Athens-inspired classical structure and Victorian touches. Residents love its open streets, whose checkerboard style gave rise to the city's intimate neighborhoods bursting with life (all courtesy of planner William Penn). Comfort-food aficionados crave its namesake treats, most notably soft pretzels and gooey, ubiquitous cheese-steaks. But what Philadelphia offers all Americans is its unparalleled commemoration of democracy and freedom.

This is where our nation began its fight for independence, where the Liberty Bell rang out, and where the founding fathers created a government for and by the people. Today, Philadelphia offers a rare blend of old and new, modern and historic. Exploring Penn's "Great Towne" can mean listening to the symphony under the stars or dining in one of the city's world-class restaurants, but it can just as easily entail a horse-and-

buggy ride along the country's oldest residential street. Philadelphia truly does offer something for everyone—especially in summertime. And what better place to celebrate the 4th of July than the birthplace of America?

Independence National Historical Park

No trip to center city is complete without a visit to Independence Hall, where both the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution—the blueprint for America—took shape. In the summer months, you'll need a ticket to get inside the Hall. (Tickets are free, but it's best to get them in advance by visiting <http://reservations.nps.gov> or calling 800-967-2283.) Located right beside the visitor center, the Liberty Bell is another must-see symbol of democracy. The bell—hung in the State House in 1753 and used to summon the Pennsylvania Assembly to debate the Stamp Act, among other uses—was moved to the new Liberty Bell Center two years ago. Visitors can get an up-close look at the bell and even take a picture of its infa-



A tourist captures the infamous crack of the Liberty Bell on film.

amous crack, whose cause remains a mystery even after all these years.

The Park Service recommends devoting half a day or a full day to these attractions, but if you've got more time you should check out sites such as the part of town where Benjamin Franklin once lived, the City Tavern where



July 4th fireworks (opposite) light up the Philadelphia Museum of Art; Democracy first took shape in Independence Hall (above).



America's oldest residential street, Elfreth's Alley, leads to a number of historic sites.

America's earliest delegates dined and boarded, and the Edgar Allen Poe National Historic Site, where the revered poet lived and wrote. This year, the park will also unveil "Once Upon a Nation," a summer-long celebration including storytelling at 13 benches throughout the park and historic area, along with reenactors, evening activities, and special tours.

The Park Service recommends that visitors begin their trips at the visitor center, located at 6th and Market in center city, where park rangers will answer your questions and present a short film titled *Independence*. For more information on the park sites or on special program offerings, visit www.nps.gov/inde or call 215-965-2305.

Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial

A short stroll to Philly's Society Hill area brings us to another park site commemorating the story of freedom and how America came to be. Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial preserves the second-story room occupied by one of the first European volunteers to help America's revolutionary cause in 1776. A Polish military engineer, Kosciuszko (pronounced "Ko-SHOOS-ko")

designed and built the fortifications that helped American soldiers hold off the British, most notably in New York. He later returned to Poland in a failed attempt to free his countrymen from Czarist Russian rule. Although he was badly wounded in the battle and imprisoned in Russia, Kosciuszko returned to the United States a hero.

Kosciuszko sought a "dwelling as small, as remote, and as cheap" as possible, landing him at a boarding house at 3rd and Pine. There he spent the

winter of 1797–98 relaxing, reading, drawing, and greeting distinguished guests such as Vice President Thomas Jefferson, whose personal papers helped the Park Service re-create the look of Kosciuszko's room, right down to an assortment of unique artifacts. The small, cluttered space features items such as the crutch Kosciuszko used after suffering his battle injuries, abolition society papers, and a tomahawk given to him by a visiting Indian chief. An audio-visual program on Kosciuszko's life and ranger talks give visitors a deeper understanding of the freedom fighter.

For more information on the park and its programs, visit www.nps.gov/thko or call 215-965-2305. The park is located at the corner of 3rd and Pine Streets, about ten blocks from the Independence NHP visitor center.

Valley Forge National Historical Park

Our next stop takes us from the bustle of the city to sweeping natural vistas, but the theme of extraordinary effort and determination in the name of our independence and freedom remains the



"The Raven" stands guard outside Edgar Allen Poe's Philadelphia home.

same. More than 2,000 Continental Army soldiers died during a brutal winter encampment at Valley Forge in 1777–78, as the British occupied Philadelphia. Although no major battle was fought here, many historians assert that the arduous encampment fueled much of the inspiration and mettle that led the army to its eventual victory.

Visitors who want to see all they can of the park's more than 3,600 acres can drive or take one of the bus tours offered in the summer, but much can be seen from walks along the park's winding paths. Chief among the historic buildings, museums, memorials, and monuments preserved at the park are the headquarters of Gen. George Washington, which have been returned to their conditions during the revolutionary era. The park's recently renovated visitor center displays artifacts and story boards depicting the army's struggle, and elsewhere visitors can view remnants of the era ranging from log huts to muskets. The park's meadows and hills will soothe those worn out from a long day of sightseeing.

For more information, visit www.nps.gov/vafo or call 610-783-1077. Valley Forge National Park is about 25 miles west of center city Philadelphia, via route 76-West.

Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

Travel one hour northwest of the inner city of Philadelphia to Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, in Elverson, Pennsylvania, and you may think you've gone back in time. Founded in 1771



Valley Forge National Historical Park provides a pastoral escape just 25 miles west of the city.

and operational until 1883, the iron-making village became a park site in 1938, preserving the cultural, historic, and natural qualities of the industrial revolution. While it was operational, Hopewell Furnace's community of men, women, and children manufactured iron goods to satisfy the demands of a quickly expanding nation fueled by the growing industrialization and a rail system that would span the continent.

Among the park's 14 restored structures are an iron master's mansion, a furnace complex with a 30-foot water wheel, workers' homes, a blacksmith shop, and a company store. Throughout the year, visitors can take self-guided tours to get a sense of daily life in this iron-making community. The park's natural resources include hardwood forests, once used to

produce charcoal to fuel the furnace, and an array of animal and plant life that enlivens surrounding Creek State Park. Among the other entertainment and learning opportunities are living history programs offered during the summer that demonstrate iron making, charcoal making, baking, and other domestic skills. Some programs feature employees and volunteers in costume, portraying life in this rural industrial community in the 18th and 19th centuries.

For more information on the park or its summer programs, visit www.nps.gov/hofu or call 610-582-8773. Elverson is 50 miles northwest of Philadelphia, 25 miles west of Valley Forge, via route 76-West to exit 312, then Route 100-North to PA Route 23, and PA Route 345-North to the park. ❖

Sidetrip: Gettysburg National Military Park

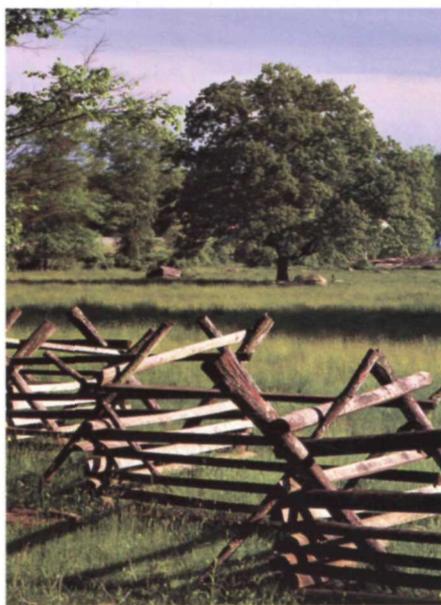


JOHN MCCORMAL

Gettysburg encompasses nearly 6,000 acres, where visitors quietly reflect on one of America's most significant and deadly battles.

A 2.5-hour drive to the southwest of Philadelphia will bring you nearly 90 years further in the story of how America came to be. Gettysburg National Military Park in Adams County, Pennsylvania, marks the spot of the Civil War's largest battle. Waged in the first three days of July 1863, the Battle of Gettysburg was a watershed moment for the Union, which thwarted Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's second invasion.

Today, the park is preserved as both a symbol of America's battle to survive as a nation and as a permanent memorial to the soldiers who gave their lives on its soil. Visitors can easily spend a day or more viewing the artifacts and scenic vistas across the park's nearly 6,000 acres, which hold more than 1,400 memorials, monuments, and markers. Visitors can also tour the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg, which



LAURENCE PARENT

A split rail fence stands peacefully where the Civil War's bloodiest battle took place.

was dedicated on the day of President Lincoln's Gettysburg address. The cemetery contains more than 7,000 internments, half of which are from the

Civil War. Another must-see is the "Gettysburg Cyclorama," a 360-degree, circular oil-on-canvas painting that portrays "Pickett's Charge," the unsuccessful Confederate attack on the Union center on July 3, 1863. Among the park's special events this summer are a series of free ranger-conducted walks from June 11 to August 13, one highlighting the park's many monuments, another examining the battlefield's history; evening campfires are offered nightly at the park amphitheatre.

For more information on Gettysburg, visit www.nps.gov/gett or call 717-334-1124. The park's summer hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For information on lodging and restaurants, visit the Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau web site at www.gettysburgcvb.org or call 800-337-5015. The park is located about 140 miles from Philadelphia, via routes 76-West and 15-South.

Travel Essentials



A street musician colors a city bright with art, creativity, and a vibrant cultural mix.



Rumored to cook up the best cheesesteaks in the city, Geno's sells the icon sandwich from an outdoor stand.

Located in downtown Philly, Independence National Historical Park is a great jumping-off point for visitors to dozens of exciting attractions. The Betsy Ross House, Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site, Elfreth's Alley (America's oldest residential street), and the new National Constitution Center are all within walking distance. For attractions a little farther away, take public transportation (www.septa.org) or hail a cab. For a dollar, visitors can board the Philadelphia Phlash bus (www.phillyplash.com), which runs from the Independence Visitor Center to the Philadelphia Museum of Art—where you're sure to find tourists climbing the stairs, following in the footsteps of Philly's patron saint, boxer Rocky Balboa.

For detailed information on hotels, dining, entertainment, and other attractions in Philadelphia, visit www.gophila.com. The web site offers specials on lodging and information on several guided tours.

Among the city's attractions this July is a grand celebration of America's birthday. "Welcome America!" is a week-long party for the whole family with free events throughout the city, culminating with live music and breathtaking fireworks above the art museum on the 4th. For more information, visit www.americasbirthday.com.

Another popular spot for fireworks throughout the summer is Penn's Landing, the area where Philly's founder, William Penn, first approached his new home. Offering a wonderful view of the city's skyline and the Delaware River, this riverside park offers a soothing nightcap after a full day of sightseeing.

Last but not least, no trip to Philly is complete without a sampling (or devouring) of the city's namesake culinary treat—the cheesesteak. You can find a great one at dozens of shops and stores throughout the city, but a first-timer really ought to visit the corner of 9th and Passyunk, where two of Philly's most revered outdoor stands, Pat's and Geno's, compete. Be prepared to stand in line for a bit on a warm night, but it's well worth the wait. And don't be alarmed if you hear the patron in front of you yell, "Whiz wit!" That's Philly-speak for a steak sandwich dripping with Cheese Whiz and fried onions.

Ryan Dougherty, former news editor for *National Parks*,

grew up in the Philadelphia area and now resides in

King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

The World's Highest Tides.



say awe

Low tide on the Bay of Fundy
The Hopewell Rocks, Hopewell Cape

Walk on the ocean floor in New Brunswick's Bay of Fundy! Here, the World's Highest Tides rise and fall almost 52 feet (16 m), twice a day, every day. That's just the beginning of the wonder waiting next door in New Brunswick, Canada... a place where rivers stretch from breathtaking to beautiful. Where you will be

fascinated by the massive cliffs of Grand Falls Gorge or inspired

by the Appalachians...

some of the oldest mountains on the planet. Go on-line

now and discover

awesome vacation ideas, great values, and a world of Natural Wonder waiting for you next door in New Brunswick, Canada!



Tide times vary daily.

Gorgeous!

Experience the Grand Falls Gorge. Mouths open... witness the pristine carved beauty as you take a pontoon boat tour on the St. John River as it winds between the towering cliffs of the Gorge!



Wonderful!

Tour one of the last great dunes. Explore the wonder of our Dunes and Discovery Beaches! Stroll the boardwalks of the Irving Eco-Centre, La Dune de Boutouche!



Wide Open Spaces!

Visit our National and Provincial Parks. There are dozens of scenic spaces and secret spots around every corner in our National and Provincial Parks!



Cosmopolitan!

Enjoy the sights and sounds of our cities. Discover craft shops or awesome seafood dining! From historic sites to the sounds of our vibrant Acadian culture, that legendary East Coast hospitality greets you down every city street!



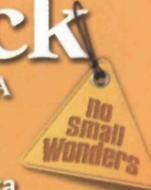
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○ Tour & Accommodations Guide

Dive deep into the heart of Texas

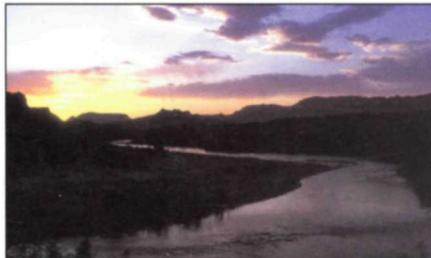
They say Texas is like a whole other country. In fact the 267,000 square-mile Lone Star State is so vast, so packed with things to see and do that it is divided into seven distinct and exciting regions.

Big Bend Country — Prickly pear cacti bloom fuchsia and gold. Tumbleweeds bounce across lonesome prairies and craggy mountain peaks jut at the horizon. Nowhere else in Texas do the stars shine quite so bright at night or the sunsets seem quite so rosy.



Hill Country — From serene valleys tucked between rolling hills, to friendly small towns, to the vibrancy of capital city Austin—a sojourn in the Hill Country can be as active or relaxing as you choose. With dude ranches, vineyards, arts-and-crafts shops and factory-direct stores, these hills brim with delight.

The Gulf Coast — More than 600 miles of beaches, sand dunes and cultural attractions of the Gulf of Mexico weave their spell upon seafarers and landlubbers alike. Peninsulas, islands, cities, towns, and parks all extend their own magical allure.



Panhandle — Sunsets stretch scarlet and gold across a seemingly endless horizon. Rivers course across the rugged earth and carve out their own fascinating landscapes, producing splendid canyons and scenic lakes. Watch cowboys at work, relish a chuck wagon breakfast beside a colorful canyon, and visit exciting old frontier forts.

Piney Woods — Carpeted with fragrant pine needles and brimming with lakes, this inviting area fascinates and captivates with its Antebellum homes, azaleas, and fishing opportunities. Discover early Texas communities that witnessed the founding of Spanish missions and played prominent roles in Texas' independence.



Prairies and Lakes — This region boasts a liberal sprinkling of prairies, farmlands, and lakes, but it also encom-

passes thriving towns, intriguing historical sites, and the energizing Dallas-Fort Worth area, where visitors are greeted with a mix of Southern hospitality, modern sophistication, and endless entertainment opportunities.

South Texas Plains — Where Texas and Mexico come together, experience the excitement of a zesty TexMex blend of languages, music, cuisine, and customs. Take in the history at the Alamo. Soak up some sun in the tropical Rio Grande Valley. Attend a fiesta, admire a Picasso, and savor a salsa-spiced snack.



Showing you all there is to see and do in Texas is no easy task. To get a head start on where to go, what to do, and where to stay, order a FREE Texas State Travel Guide, Texas Accommodations Guide, and Texas Official Travel Map. From the mountains of West Texas to the sandy beaches of the Gulf Coast, these will provide everything you need to plan your perfect Texas vacation. Visit www.TravelTex.com or call 800-8888-TEX ext. 3469.



It's like a whole other country.

Discover the spirit and charm of South Carolina's Olde English District

Get off the interstate and travel the back roads to discover the spirit and charm of the true South—in South Carolina's Olde English District. Come visit and celebrate the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution in the South. Find statewide events at www.southcarolinarevwar.com

Explore the southern roots of patriotism by visiting sites that helped establish America's independence during the

Revolutionary War. The Olde English District, bisected by I-77, is a seven-county region in upper South Carolina between Charlotte and Columbia. In addition to the Revolutionary War history, you'll find a wealth of African-American historical sites, Civil War history, genealogy information, and antique shops.

For travel guides or more information, visit www.sctravel.net or call toll-free at 800-968-5909.



Tour & Accommodations Guide



Maine Windjammer passengers enjoy life at sea

Every week on Penobscot Bay, off Maine's spectacular granite coast, the 14 tall ships in the Maine Windjammer Association provide cruises that transport passengers back to the golden age of sailing where deadlines and itineraries take a back seat to relaxation and beauty. Most of the windjammers are turn-of-the-century wooden cargo schooners that have been retrofitted to carry passengers. Together, they represent the country's largest fleet of historic sailing ships.



Each day, you sail past lighthouses and lobstermen, through narrow channels, and across great bays. Every evening, your windjammer drops anchor in the safe, snug harbor of a quiet fishing village, a bustling waterfront, a cove below the cliffs of Acadia National Park, or an island

inhabited solely by nesting eagles and terns. Guests are invited to participate in all ship-board activities, from taking a turn at the wheel to raising and lowering sails. The 14 ships in the Maine Windjammer Association have a well-earned reputation for outstanding sailing adventures and delicious down-home cooking. One night everyone goes ashore for a traditional island lobster bake.

Prices for three- to six-day cruises range from \$395 to \$915 per person. For more information, call 800-807-WIND or visit www.sailmainecoast.com.

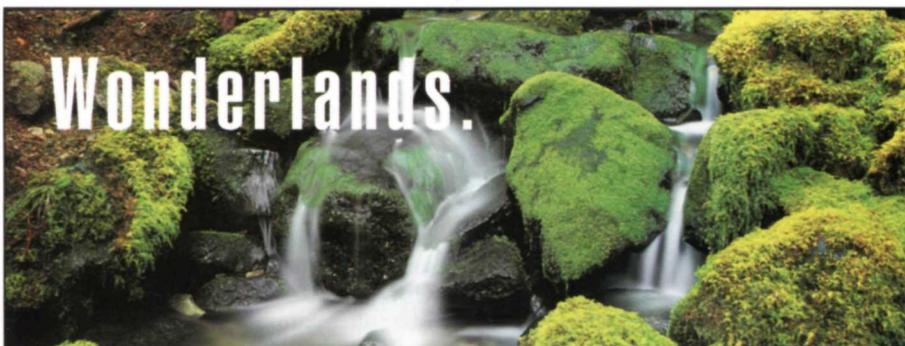
Unique accommodations in unique national parks

Some of the most authentic lodging accommodations remaining in the United States are found—and preserved—in America's national parks. Visitors can still experience the national parks "up close and personal"—the way generations of guests before them have done. From simple historic cabins at Cedar Pass Lodge in Badlands National Park, SD, to a quaint historic lodge and restaurant found tucked in a rain forest at Lake



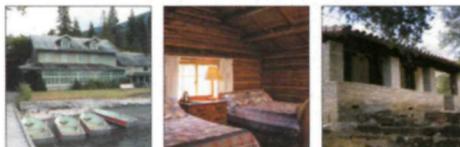
Crescent Lodge in Olympic National Park, WA, Forever Resorts offers one-of-a-kind vacation experiences across the United States.

Visit www.ForeverLodging.com to explore the extraordinary lodging options available to you and your family. In most cases you won't find a pool on site—or an in-room TV or data port. However, you will find a slice of genuine Americana and memories that will remain with you long after your visit has ended. Forever Resorts—bestowing unique lodging in unique national parks to the world.



Slumberland.

This summer, discover yourself in America's undiscovered National Parks. Forever Resorts hosts thousands of visitors each year in remote, pristine wonderlands across America.



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○ Tour & Accommodations Guide

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For information call 800-320-4206 or visit www.americanorientexpress.com.



Activities plentiful at Kennicott Glacier Lodge

Kennicott Glacier Lodge, located in the Kennicott National Historic Landmark ghost town, offers the area's finest accommodations and dining. Built in 1987, the lodge has 35 clean, delightful guest rooms, two living rooms, a spacious dining room, and a 180-foot front porch with a spectacular panoramic view of the Wrangell Mountains, Chugach Mountains, and Kennicott Glacier. The homemade food, served family-style, has been called "wilderness gourmet dining."



Guest activities at this destination resort include glacier trekking, flightseeing, photography, alpine hiking, historical tours throughout the ghost town buildings, nature tours, and river rafting.

For more information call 800-582-5128 or visit www.KennicottLodge.com.

Take a journey of the mind and explore history

Staring down a path and peering into a majestic environment leading into one of America's many beautiful national parks allows the mind to take a journey back through history to see this land during the time of its ancestors. A time in our nation's history before skyscrapers or jet airplanes, when buffalo were found roaming throughout the west, a time before Mt. Rushmore when our forefathers were building the foundation for our constitution.

The College of the Humanities and Sciences provides an opportunity for its students to take a journey of the mind through a collaborative learning environment focused on education programs in natural sciences, imaginative literature, philosophy and religion, and social sciences.

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Tour & Accommodations Guide



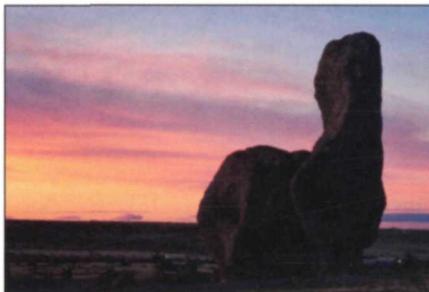
City of Rocks State Park showcases impressive natural sculptures

If you're in love with nature, intrigued by history, and dazzled by the solar system, come and experience the solidity that is the City of Rocks State Park in the Land of Enchantment.

Touted as a volcanic rock "city" because of what resembles streets, alleys, and rooftops, the City of Rocks was formed nearly 35 million years ago and is one of the most unique, awe-inspiring, natural sculptures in the world.



Millions of years of erosion slowly formed the sculptured columns that give the City of Rocks its stature as one of New Mexico's most impressive and unprecedented state parks. The rocks are



so unique that they are only known to exist in six other locations in the world.

During the day, visitors can rock climb, camp, or watch a variety of Chihuahuan Desert wildlife. But the fun is only beginning when, at night, anyone can be among the stars at ongoing "star parties," where viewers gather together to experience the cosmos through the eye of a telescope. Low levels of light pollution at City of Rocks make for ideal star-gazing conditions.

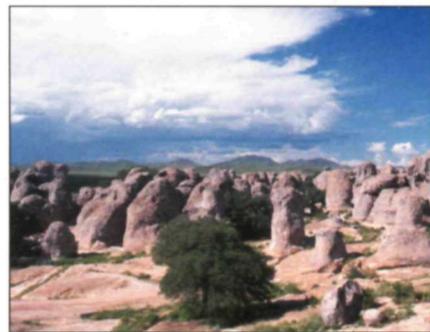
Opening in mid summer, the new City of Rocks Observatory will give visitors an up close and personal view at the "jewels" of the night sky. Visitors will be

able to jointly observe the world above by watching a video monitor outside the observatory.

With agreeable temperatures throughout the year, City of Rocks State Park is located in southern New Mexico between Silver City and Deming.

When it's time for you to get away, the City of Rocks offers that rare combination of "out of the way" and "out of the ordinary."

For more information, call City of Rocks State Park at 505-536-2800, New Mexico State Parks at 888-NMPARKS, or visit www.nmparks.com.



Explore California's wild side all year long at Mammoth Lakes

The town of Mammoth Lakes sits high in the eastern Sierra Nevada mountains of California. Mammoth Lakes is the perfect base from which to explore California's wild side. The rugged beauty of the High Sierras frame ghost towns, pristine national forest and wilderness lands, and crystal-clear lakes and streams.

The ski area of Mammoth Mountain is consistently selected as one of the top winter sports destinations in North America, with a typical season lasting from early November to late May and averaging more



than four hundred inches of snow annually.

With the warmer summer months comes an almost unlimited choice of outdoor activities from trout fishing and hiking to mountain biking and golf. Mammoth Lakes is host to a number of popular music events throughout the year with outdoor jazz and blues concerts attracting a loyal following.

Mammoth Lakes has a full complement of services to make every visit a memorable one. There are a variety of lodging options—from campsites and cabins to hotels and luxury condominiums.

Mammoth Lakes has a number of great bars and restaurants offering something for every taste.

Mammoth Lakes is conveniently located within a half day's drive from Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Death Valley, and San Francisco, and in the summer it's just a 45 minute drive to the eastern entrance to Yosemite National Park.

For more information or to request our vacation planner call 888-GoMammoth or visit www.VisitMammoth.com.



○ Tour & Accommodations Guide

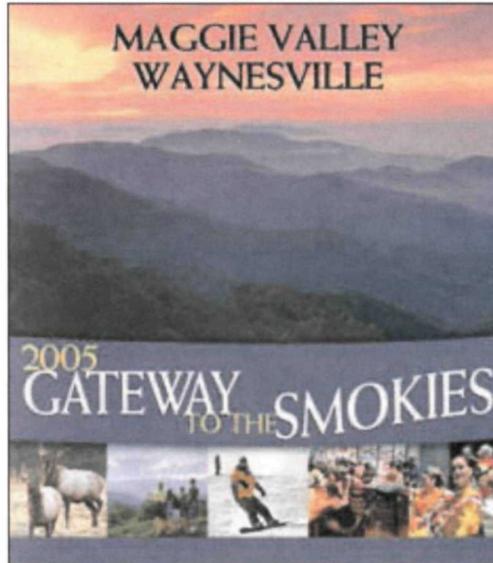
Spend summer in the Great Smoky Mountains

Adventure from soft to extreme is right here, next to America's two most visited national parks. Enjoy scenic drives, wildlife-watching, wildflower hikes, golf, and more at Carolina's gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park next to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The town of Maggie Valley is a perfect place for a vacation. From craft festivals and fishing tournaments to terrific country music, Maggie Valley is ready-made for family vacationing, with lodging options that include cozy rental cabins and charming brookside motels.

Fine arts and crafts are part of this region's history, and the town of Waynesville is at the heart of the arts community. Spend a morning on Main Street, an afternoon in the mountains, and an evening savoring elegant dining and arts—enjoy Waynesville's European village atmosphere.

Whether you're planning a week-end or a retirement—get great information in our free visitors guide, which includes map and lodging info. Call 866-393-4117 or visit www.summerinthesmokies.com.



Eastern Arizona's Roper Lake Awaits You

Situated at the base of Mt. Graham, in an area of eastern Arizona known for its hot-springs and majestic scenery, is Roper Lake State Park, a gem in the state parks system. It's easy to relax and soak up the atmosphere while soaking in the park's natural rock-lined hot tub. When the summer heat catches up, many people cool off with a dip in the lake. At night, the stargazing can't be beat. Being away from the city has its advantages!

Whether you're heading north or south, let Arizona's 27 State Parks introduce you to Arizona's natural wonders. For more information, call 602-542-1993 or visit azstateparks.com.



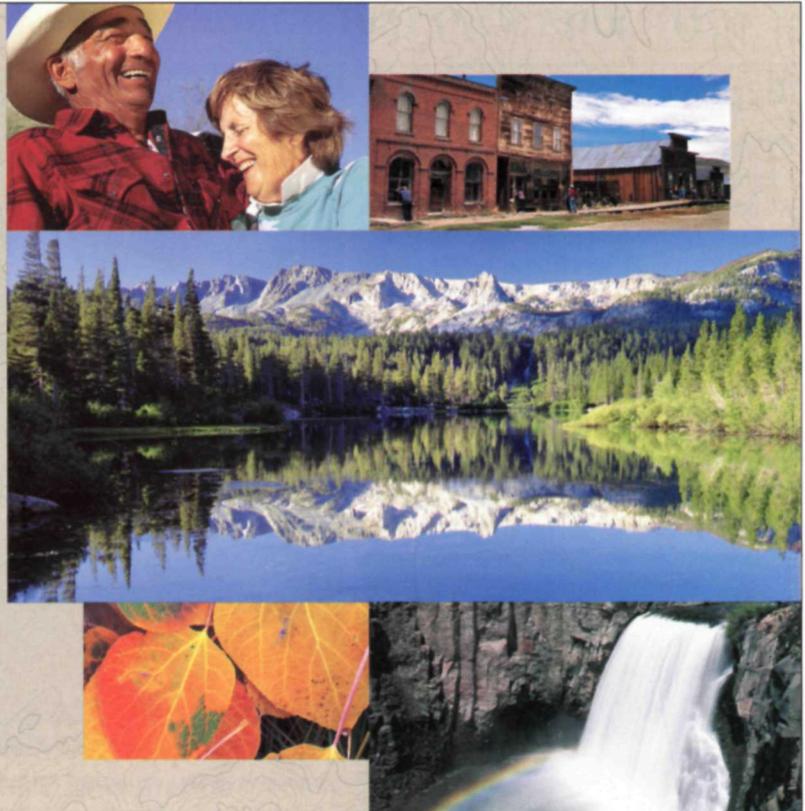
CALIFORNIA'S WILD SIDE

Mammoth Lakes is your base camp for adventure and exploring Yosemite National Park, Devils Postpile National Monument, Mono Lake and Bodie State Historic Park. Cast a line, swing a club, hike a trail, enjoy music under the stars, savor fine cuisine or just relax and renew in the clear mountain air.

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To some, sunglasses are a fashion accessory...

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*Eagle Eyes are patented, officially recognized NASA Spinoff technology and are on display at NASA's Houston Space Visitors Center.

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