

Conservation Study Institute

1998-1999 ANNUAL REPORT
➤ PROGRAM PLAN for 2000





“Here in Vermont, there is a mandate to invent an entirely new kind of park. It must be one where the human stories and the natural history are intertwined; where the relatively small acreage serves as an educational resource for the entire National Park Service and a seedbed for American environmental thought; and where the legacy of American conservation and its future enter into dialogue, generating a new environmental paradigm for our day.”

— John Elder, Middlebury College Professor of English and Environmental Studies, excerpted from keynote address at the opening ceremony for Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, June 5, 1998.



Conservation Study Institute

Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to share the first annual report of the Conservation Study Institute. Our first year was exciting and productive – filled with workshops, conferences, research projects, and network building. Each of these programs was conducted in cooperation with other organizations and designed to enhance the stewardship of landscapes and communities.

Through collaboration we ensure that our programs examine the most challenging current issues, and draw on contemporary experience and state of the art thinking within the National Park Service and from the broader conservation community. I would like to recognize the contributions of our partners throughout the National Park Service, in particular, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, as well as the University of Vermont, QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, and Shelburne Farms. We look forward to expanding this network of partners in the years ahead.

It is our hope that the Institute will, in the words of John Elder, serve as a “seedbed for American environmental thought ... generating a new environmental paradigm for our day.”

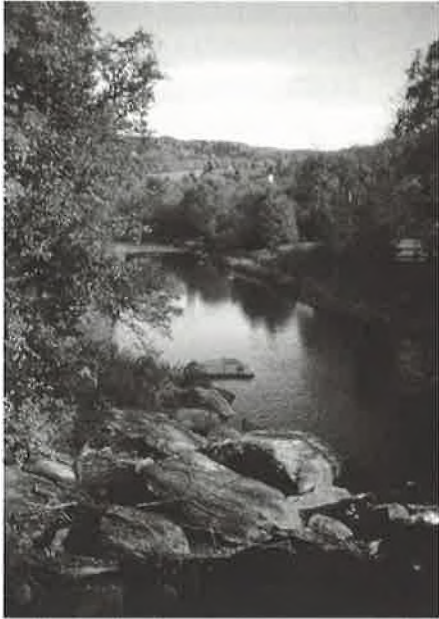
Nora Mitchell
Director
Conservation Study Institute

Stewardship means doing what I can to conserve what does not belong to me alone
holding in trust that which exists before, during, and after my time,
caring for, to the best of my ability, what is beyond and greater than my self.
Because I believe there must always be places that defy human arrogance, I am here.
Because I am learning that there are places where humans and nature are entwined, resonant and harmonious, I am here.
Because there are places where aesthetics are more valuable than money, I am here.
These places must be evoked and nurtured in the consciousness, the soul, the very essence of human being.
These places are the measure of our success—for upon them our continued existence depends.
They are places of hope.
They are places of memories and dreams.
With my mind, I seek to know.
With my words, I conjure connections.
With my camera, I preserve moments in time.
I am on a journey of learning and of wonder on a path with no end.
In my footsteps may the legacy grow and thrive.
I am part of that legacy;
I am its steward and its voice.

*— Poem written by Helen Scully, July 1, 1998,
a participant in the Conservation Study Institute's
first training course on Conservation Leadership:
History and Practice.*



Conservation Study Institute



**The Conservation Study
Institute's mission is to
create opportunities for
dialogue, inquiry, and
lifelong learning to
enhance the stewardship
of landscapes
and communities.**

The Conservation Study Institute (CSI) was established in 1998 by the National Park Service (NPS) to enhance leadership in the field of conservation. In collaboration with the NPS and academic and nonprofit partners, the Institute provides a forum for the conservation community to discuss conservation history, contemporary issues and practice, and future directions for the field.

The Institute's vision of conservation is inclusive and interdisciplinary. Our vision encompasses natural and cultural heritage in defining sense of place, and emphasizes the role of people in stewardship. Reflecting this vision, the Institute's approach is founded on collaborative leadership and community-based conservation involving cooperation and partnerships.

A key role of the Institute is to stay informed of new developments in the field of conservation and promote an active exchange of ideas among the academic community, practitioners, and the general public. Through its programs, the Institute contributes to enhanced understanding, involvement, and commitment from a broad spectrum of people which is critical to the success of conservation today. The Institute's national program also realizes the promise of Laurance S. Rockefeller that "the message and vision of conservation stewardship and its importance for the future will, once again, go out across the nation from the hills of Vermont."

Building Partnerships

A key first step for the Conservation Study Institute was to lay the foundations for long-term partnerships. Collaboration brings varied perspectives on conservation from academic, government and private interests, to shape relevant programs and cultivate a commitment to accomplishing programs with a diverse array of partners. The founding partners include Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, the University of Vermont, QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, and Shelburne Farms. We envision that the Institute's network of partners will expand over time.

MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, in Woodstock, Vermont, is the only national park to tell the story of conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in America. Woodstock-born George Perkins Marsh, in 1864, wrote the book *Man and Nature*, one of the seminal texts of environmental thinking. Generations ahead of his time, Marsh described the global nature of environmental degradation and championed a new ethic of responsible stewardship and civic democracy. Strongly influenced by *Man and Nature*, Frederick Billings began reforesting the denuded and eroding slopes of Woodstock's Mt. Tom in 1874, creating one of the earliest planned and scientifically managed forests in the United States. The 550-acre woodland illustrates much of the history of forest conservation in America and is managed to also reflect best practices in contemporary sustainability and stewardship.

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park was established in 1992, when Frederick Billings' granddaughter, Mary French Rockefeller, and her husband, conservationist Laurance



Dr. Mary Watzin addresses participants in the 1998 NPS Leadership Development Program aboard UVM's research vessel, Melosira, on Lake Champlain.

Megan Camp, Vice President for Programs at Shelburne Farms and Bruce Beeken of Beeken and Parsons Furniture address participants in a Forest Stewardship Workshop, Shelburne Farms.



SHELBURNE FARMS

Shelburne Farms is a nonprofit, environmental education organization whose mission is to cultivate a conservation ethic in Vermont and around the world by teaching and demonstrating the stewardship of natural and agricultural resources. Their educational programs reach students and teachers, conservation professionals and the public. Their stewardship of a national historic landmark property on Lake Champlain serves as a model for sustainable management.

QLF/ATLANTIC CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Quebec Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the rural communities and environment of eastern Canada and New England, and to create models for stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage which can be applied worldwide. Incorporated in the United States and Canada, QLF has over 35 years of experience working in rural communities of the Atlantic Region. Its international programs extend to the countries of Central Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean. QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment has a long history of cooperative work with the National Park Service on projects related to stewardship, public education and leadership development.

S. Rockefeller conveyed their estate's residential and forest lands to the people of the United States. The Rockefellers established the Billings Farm & Museum in 1983 to preserve and interpret the historic farm of the Marsh, Billings and Rockefeller families. Working in partnership, the Farm & Museum and the Park chronicle three generations of stewardship on this land and the emergence of a national conservation ethic. The Park also serves as the headquarters for the National Park Service's Conservation Study Institute.

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

The University of Vermont provides scholarship on conservation history and educational programs in the School of Natural Resources and allied programs on campus. Faculty in the School of Natural Resources teach and conduct research on the planning and management of natural, cultural and recreational resources within the national park and forest systems. This partnership with the state's land grant university has historical roots with both George Perkins Marsh and Frederick Billings, a University of Vermont alumnus.



Three Program Areas

The Conservation Study Institute's mission is to create opportunities for dialogue, inquiry and lifelong learning to enhance the stewardship of landscapes and communities. To accomplish this mission, the Institute has three inter-related programs:

1. *Education and Training*
2. *Research*
3. *Building Networks.*

These three programs inform each other and create an environment continually renewed by current scholarship and practical experience.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education and training programs focus on skills, knowledge, and philosophy for the emerging model of place-based, community conservation. Programs include training and workshops on leadership, conservation history, and contemporary philosophies and practice. The park setting offers opportunities for reflection and articulation of personal and organizational stewardship ethics. Educational programs reach a diverse audience of professionals, lay conservationists, teachers, K-12 and university students, and the general public.



1998 NPS Leadership Development Program at the University of Vermont.



CSI is working with Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and the University of Vermont to document the forest history on the Billings estate, shown here c. 1887-1890.

RESEARCH

The research agenda includes contemporary conservation practice, management of national parks, stewardship ethics, and philosophy. A particular focus is the interface between nature and culture in landscape conservation. Our research program also advances an understanding of conservation history and the role of stewardship and parks in a civil and democratic society.

BUILDING NETWORKS

Through a knowledge network, practitioners are offered opportunities to exchange information on stewardship successes and to discuss current trends and future directions of conservation. This knowledge network extends across the U.S. and includes the conservation community in other countries, providing broader access to the forefront of international conservation. This

network is sustained through working sessions, symposia, conferences, publications and the World Wide Web.

The Conservation Study Institute and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment convened an international working session on Protected Landscapes in June, 1999, at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Program Accomplishments 1998-1999

"We talked about real-world issues with people who were actively dealing with real-world problems. We also had a nice mix of local, regional, national and international topics."

"People of diverse backgrounds want to preserve things where they live ... In an urban area, conservation is survival."

— Participants in NPS Leadership Program

CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP TRAININGS

Working with the University of Vermont and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, the Institute developed a two-week training course, "Conservation Leadership: History and Practice." This course was developed for conservation professionals to expand their knowledge of conservation history and explore innovative examples of practice today. The course also includes a focus on conservation leadership that guides participants in defining their personal and

professional goals. The course was first delivered in June, 1998 to the NPS Leadership Development Program.

The Institute also conducted a Conservation Leadership course for the NPS Northeast Region Management Development Program, August 31 through September 2, 1999.



ABOVE: Moriba McDonald (left) receives his diploma from NPS Deputy Director Denis Galvin.



LEFT: 1998 NPS Leadership Development Program graduates

PANEL DISCUSSIONS AT THE GEORGE WRIGHT SOCIETY CONFERENCE

The Institute moderated three panel discussions at the George Wright Society conference, March 1999, on "Stewardship of Significant Historic Forests: Exploring an Ecotone of Nature and Culture," "Building Commitment to Stewardship: An Evolving Model for Conservation," and "The Natural-Cultural Landscape of Yosemite Valley."

LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOPS

The Institute co-sponsored the University of Vermont's Summer Land Conservation Program, Sense of Place workshop, June 14-15, 1999, and a Public Forum on Stewardship of Protected Landscapes on June 18, 1999.

On September 27-28, 1999, the Institute co-sponsored a workshop "Discovering the Cultural Landscapes of Coastal Communities: Integrating Heritage Tourism and Sense of Place," with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and the Preservation Institute on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and the Conservation Study Institute, in cooperation with The Orion Society and Shelburne Farms, are currently planning a nationwide conservation stewardship education initiative. To launch this initiative, the partners co-sponsored a National Workshop on Conservation Education, November 19-21, 1999. Teachers, representatives from national parks across the country, and writers participated in the workshop and crafted an agenda for this initiative. Follow-up activities in 2000 will focus on developing place-based education programs.



ABOVE: P.H.C. Bing Lucas, Vice Chair for World Heritage, IUCN, at the public forum on Protected Landscapes

BELOW: John Elder facilitates discussion during conservation education workshop.



RESEARCH

Program Accomplishments 1998-1999

STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

The Institute conducted the Stewardship Initiative in partnership with Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and The Woodstock Foundation. The project team for the Stewardship Initiative interviewed 48 individuals and organizations doing innovative conservation work across the United States and abroad to better understand successful conservation today. A report summarizing the findings will be available in 2000.

Members of the Stewardship Initiative Team interview The Nature Conservancy on the Yampa River Project in Colorado.

ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED AS PART OF THE STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

Vermont:

*Atlas Timberlands Partnership
Food Works
Keeping Track
New England Grassroots Environment Fund
Preservation Trust of Vermont
Shelburne Farms
Vermont Family Forests
Vermont Land Trust
Vital Communities of the Upper Valley*

Northeast:

*Champlain Valley Heritage Network
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
EcoVillage at Ithaca
Monadnock Institute for Nature, Place, and Culture
Northern Forest Center
The Orion Society
The Trust for Public Land--Good Life Center*

Southeast:

*Alliance for Sustainable Communities
Tennessee Parks & Greenways Foundation
The Conservation Fund--Scuppernong River Greenway*

The Conservation Fund--Sustainable Everglades Initiative

The Nature Conservancy--Virginia Coast Reserve

Midwest:

*Menominee Tribal Enterprises
Mississippi River Basin Alliance*

Intermountain West:

*AERO--Alternative Energy Resources Organization
Cornerstones Community Partnerships
Forest Trust
Native Seeds/SEARCH
Sierra Business Council
Sonoran Institute
The Murie Center
The Nature Conservancy--Yampa River Project
The Trust for Public Land--Nez Perce Project*

Pacific West:

*Golden Gate National Parks Association
Whatcom County Land Trust*

International:

*A-Projekt (Slovak Republic)
CAMPFIRE (Zimbabwe)
Ecotrust (United States and Canada)
Environmental Partnership for Central Europe (Czech Republic)
Exmoor National Park (England)
Foundation for Development of the Jizerske Hory Mts. (Czech Republic)
Fundación pro Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (Colombia)
International Centre for Protected Landscapes (Wales)
Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment (US & Canada)
South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (Samoa)
The Island Nature Trust (Canada)*

Foundations:

*Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, (New York)
Henry P. Kendall Foundation (Boston)
New England Grassroots Environment Fund (Vermont)
Rockefeller Brothers Fund Inc. (New York)*





Recreational use on Mono Pass trail, Yosemite National Park

RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

In collaboration with the University of Vermont, the Institute prepared a history of the forest at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP as the first phase of a Cultural Landscape Report, providing the historical background for development of the park's forest management program.

The Institute conducted research on the role of Frederick Billings's forest stewardship in the history of conservation through collabora-

tion with the Center for Studies in Landscape History, Pennsylvania State University.

The Institute participated in the initial phase of a UNESCO World Heritage Centre project on development of "Guidelines for Cultural Landscapes." This project will continue in 2000.

In collaboration with the University of Vermont, the Institute has a program of research on management of national parks for public

use with a special focus on carrying capacity. This research program is being conducted on a diversity of sites managed by the NPS including national parks, monuments, cultural sites and trails. Current studies include Acadia, Arches, Yosemite, Denali, and Gates of the Arctic National Parks; Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island National Monuments; Appalachian National Scenic Trail; and Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

BUILDING NETWORKS

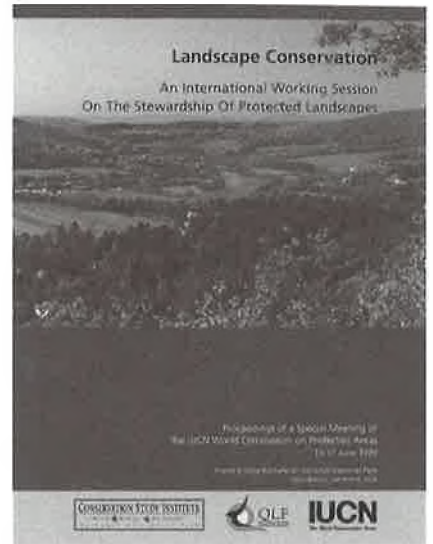
Program Accomplishments 1998-1999

"What has hitherto been lacking is the imagination to see how this approach to the protection of 'working landscapes' can complement and reinforce traditional parks and reserves."

– Adrian Phillips, Chair, IUCN/World Commission on Protected Areas, participant at the working session on Protected Landscapes

"Working with people is at the heart of the [protected landscapes] concept and it is abundantly clear to me that protection of landscapes and the beauty and biodiversity they contain can be achieved only through cooperation and not coercion."

– P.H.C. Bing Lucas, Vice Chair for World Heritage, IUCN, participant at the working session on Protected Landscapes



PROTECTED LANDSCAPES WORKSHOP JUNE 15-17, 1999

The Conservation Study Institute and QLE/Atlantic Center for the Environment convened a working session on Protected Landscapes at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP in cooperation with IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas. Twenty-two participants from the U.S., Canada, Europe, and four countries in the Andean region of South America, examined their experience with protected landscapes and discussed ways to share this concept worldwide.

Proceedings from the working session and public forum will be available in 2000.

The World Commission on Protected Areas established a



Protected Landscape Task Force based at the Conservation Study Institute to help facilitate implementation of the recommendations from this working session.

FALL 1999 LECTURE

With Shelburne Farms, the Institute co-sponsored a fall 1999 lecture, "Vermont: A Special Place, A New Vision for Forest Stewardship in Vermont." This panel discussion on forest stewardship explored recent initiatives in Vermont on sustainable forestry.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The Institute hosted the U.S. Forest Service Leadership Council, November 16-18, 1999, where potential collaboration on leadership training was explored with forest supervisors from across the country.

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS HOSTED

The Institute hosted international fellows from Latin America and the Caribbean, the Baltics, and Central and Eastern Europe. These three fellowship programs were sponsored by QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, the Institute for Sustainable Communities, and the Baltic-American Partnership Fund.

CATALOG OF AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

In cooperation with Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, the Vermont Folklife Center, The Woodstock Foundation, Northern Forest Center, Preservation Trust of Vermont, Shelburne Farms, and Vermont Land Trust, the Institute is participating in the production of "An Annotated Catalog of Vermont and Selected Regional and National Conservation, Environmental, and Historic Preservation Agencies and Organizations."



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP EXHIBIT

The Institute collaborated with Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP on development of an interpretive exhibit: *Conservation Stewardship — People Taking Care of Places*, which opened on August 7, 1999.

QLF Latin American and Caribbean Fellows learn about forest stewardship at the park.



PROGRAM PLAN FOR 2000

During the year 2000 the Conservation Study Institute will continue its work in the areas of Education, Research and Networking through the following programs:

This view of Blake Hill from Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP is protected by a conservation easement.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Together with the Woodstock Foundation and Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, present a public lecture by David Lowenthal based on his revised biography of George Perkins Marsh, May 4, 2000.
- Co-sponsor the University of Vermont's successful Summer Land Conservation Program, May 30-June 16, 2000.
- Initiate planning for a two-day "Reading the Landscape: Cultural Resource Preservation in Context" workshop in collaboration with The Watershed Center.
- Deliver a two-week "Conservation Leadership: History and Practice" training program for NPS Leadership Development (Intake) Program in July 2000.
- With The Conservation Fund, National Conservation Training Center, and NPS Planning Program, plan a four-day course on "Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities" to be offered in November 2000.
- Continue collaboration with Shelburne Farms, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, and The Orion Society to develop place-based conservation education programs.



RESEARCH

- Initiate the development of a *Cultural Landscape Manager's Handbook* in cooperation with QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment funded through a grant from the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology. This research will identify and evaluate innovative, multidisciplinary cultural landscape programs. A variety of case studies from across the country will be used to illustrate successful integration of natural resources into cultural landscape management. This effort will be coordinated with the development of UNESCO World Heritage Centre's "Guidelines for Cultural Landscapes."
- Initiate planning for a symposium on contemporary conservation and environmental philosophy in collaboration with the University of Vermont.
- Explore an oral history project on the development of the National Park Service through a series of interviews with key people involved with the agency over the last 75 years.
- Explore the opportunities of a conservation exchange program with Italy with a focus on George Perkins Marsh, his stewardship observations in Europe and his legacy to conservation and environmental thought.



George Perkins Marsh in his Florence library, 1875

BUILDING NETWORKS

- Co-sponsor, with the George Wright Society and the NPS Northeast Region, a conference, "Resource Stewardship: Meeting the Challenges in 2000 and Beyond," January 19-21, 2000 at Valley Forge NHP.
- Co-edit an issue of *The George Wright Forum* on Protected Landscapes, March 2000.
- Co-sponsor a workshop with the NPS Planning Program and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, "Planning and Collaboration: Lessons Learned in Areas Managed through National Park Service Partnerships," May 2000.
- Participate in the NPS General Conference in September 2000 in St. Louis.
- Plan and implement a Conservation Study Institute website to include program updates and create links to other organizations.

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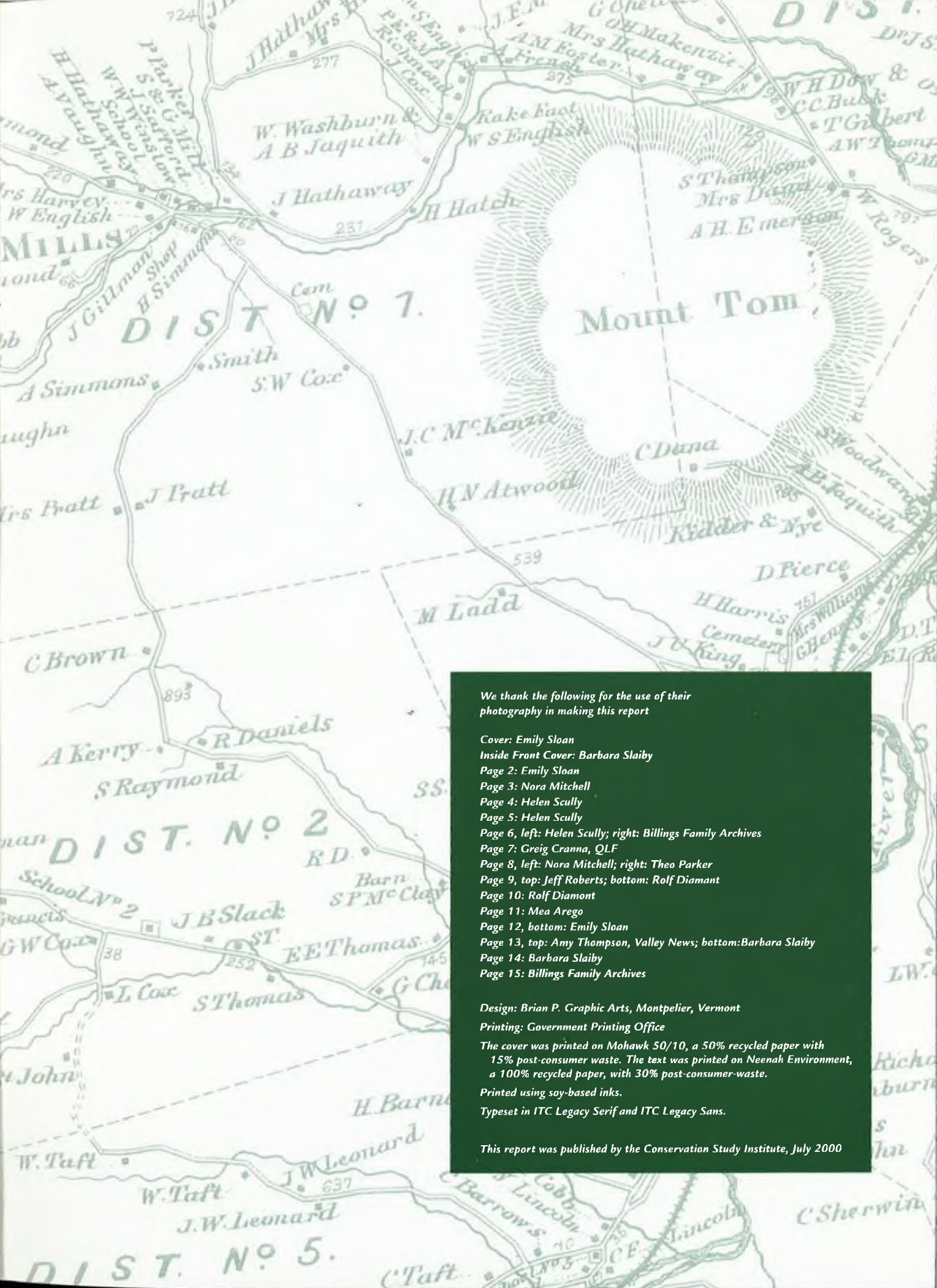
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*Nora Mitchell (NPS),
Jessica Brown (QLF),
and Leslie King (UVM)*



We thank the following for the use of their photography in making this report

- Cover: Emily Sloan
- Inside Front Cover: Barbara Slaiby
- Page 2: Emily Sloan
- Page 3: Nora Mitchell
- Page 4: Helen Scully
- Page 5: Helen Scully
- Page 6, left: Helen Scully; right: Billings Family Archives
- Page 7: Greig Cranna, QLF
- Page 8, left: Nora Mitchell; right: Theo Parker
- Page 9, top: Jeff Roberts; bottom: Rolf Diamant
- Page 10: Rolf Diamant
- Page 11: Mea Arego
- Page 12, bottom: Emily Sloan
- Page 13, top: Amy Thompson, Valley News; bottom: Barbara Slaiby
- Page 14: Barbara Slaiby
- Page 15: Billings Family Archives

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