National Park Service
Annual Wilderness Report 2002-2003

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.... An area of Wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements to human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

The Wilderness Act of 1964

Prepared by
National Wilderness Steering Committee
National Park Service
July 2003

Introduction

Wilderness is a special portion of the National Park System that American citizens and the United States Congress have jointly declared will be kept as wild and natural as possible. Wilderness designation is a declaration of people's care and desire to protect special areas in the National Park System. As a result of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and subsequent legislation, 46 national parks contain 44 million acres of designated wilderness—nearly 53 percent of all Park Service lands.

The Wilderness Act

As expressed through the Wilderness Act of 1964, Congress intended that wilderness areas be places where human impacts are largely unnoticed. Natural processes are the primary influences in wilderness, and human activity and management are limited. Congress intended current and future generations of Americans to have the opportunity to experience, study, and enjoy wild places without the intention of disturbing or destroying natural processes.

Although national parks are protected areas, Congress chose to apply the Wilderness Act of 1964 to the National Park Service to augment protection of these areas. It was apparently responding to a trend within the agency to make parks more accessible and more comfortable to visitors through additional development. Because the history of changing patterns of transportation access through national parks put increasing development pressures on the undeveloped portions of the national parks, this response was not surprising. The 1916 Organic Act provides no clear guidance on the question of how wilderness in national parks should be managed and protected. It says that the scenic, natural, and historic objects of the national parks must be conserved while providing the public enjoyment by means that will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. In 1964,

National Park Service Mission Statement

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and intrinsic values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Cover: Olympic National Park, Washington (photo courtesy of Bryan Bell). Opposite page: Death Valley National Park, California. Top right: Shenandoah National Park, Virginia. Bottom: Badlands National Park, Washington.

Congress decided that this left the NPS with too much discretion to choose among a variety of development options affecting the wilderness of parks, and they decided that certain parks should be evaluated for wilderness designation. Consequently, the Wilderness Act supplements the National Park Service's basic statutory authority and requires it to evaluate many of its lands for wilderness designation and to manage those suitable areas to preserve their wilderness character for present and future generations.

A variety of uses, management actions, and even facilities are permitted in wilderness areas under the Wilderness Act and NPS policies. The Wilderness Act declares that wilderness areas will be devoted to the "public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use." These include such things as:

- Non-motorized recreational uses (e.g., hiking, backpacking, camping, picnicking, rafting, climbing, horse packing);
- Hunting and trapping (where permitted in authorizing legislation) and fishing;
- Native American religious activities and other actions recognized under treaty-reserved rights;
- Guided interpretive walks and on-site talks, presentations, and related activities;
- Use of wheelchairs, service animals, and reasonable accommodations for the disabled that are not in conflict with the Wilderness Act (e.g., barrier-free trails, accessible campsites);
- Scientific activities, research, and monitoring programs;
- Management actions taken to correct past mistakes or impacts of human use, including restoration of extirpated species, controlling invasive alien species, endangered species management, and protection of air and water quality;
- Fire management activities (including fire suppression);
- Protection and maintenance of historic properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- Development and maintenance of trails and primitive campsites for visitor use;
- Certain administrative facilities if necessary to carry out wilderness management objectives;
- Signs necessary for visitor safety or to protect wilderness resources;
- Commercial services appropriate to wilderness; and
- Uses and facilities permitted for landowners with valid property rights within a wilderness area.

In addition to adding greater affirmation of the importance of keeping parts of parks in a wild and undeveloped condition, the Wilderness Act specifically has the following legal effects on administrative discretion available under the 1916 Organic Act:

- No permanent roads are allowed (subject to certain exceptions to meet minimum requirements for wilderness administration, to deal with emergencies, and to honor vested private rights).

Gates of the Arctic National Park, Alaska (photo courtesy of A. Halford).

- No commercial enterprise is allowed (subject to the same exceptions as stated above); however, commercial services (e.g., guide services) are permitted to the extent necessary to realize the purposes of wilderness as defined in the Wilderness Act.
- No temporary road is allowed (not subject to the above exceptions, nor are the following restrictions subject to them).
- Generally, with exceptions authorized for emergency or minimal administrative needs, no use can be made of motor vehicles or motorized equipment or motorboats.
- Generally, with exceptions authorized for emergency or minimal administrative needs, no landing of aircraft is permitted.
- No other form of mechanical transport is allowed; and
- Generally, with exceptions authorized for scientific or administrative purposes, no structures or installations are maintained within such areas (tradition does allow trails, footbridges, and some campsite improvements). Treatment of historic properties is often guided by a variety of NPS preservation statutes.

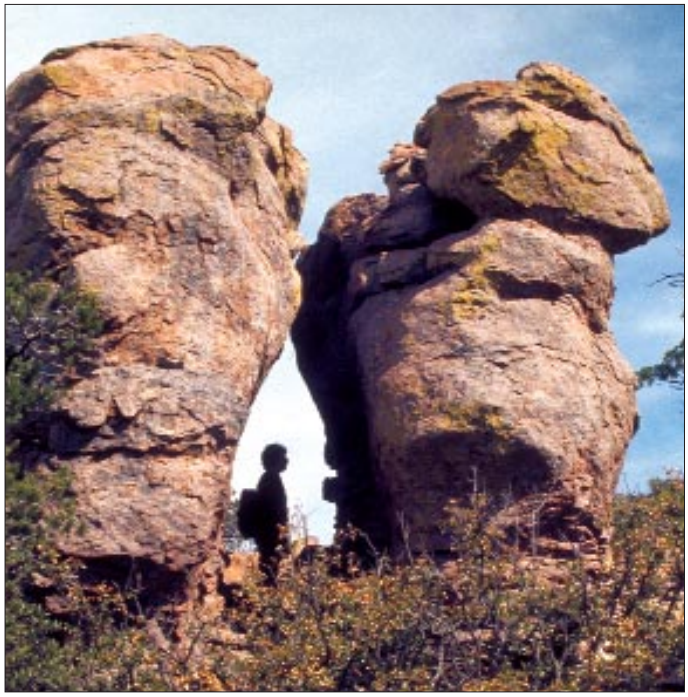
Congress has the discretion to add specific legislative provisions to individual wilderness area enabling legislation. The most notable example is the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) that added eight large wilderness areas—and over 20 modifications to the Wilderness Act for Alaska wilderness. Some of the more obvious modifications include allowing motorized access (motorboats, snowmachines, and airplanes) for traditional activities and for travel between villages and home sites; subsistence activities including hunting, fishing, trapping, and the gathering of firewood and logs for cabins by local, rural residents; sport hunting in preserve units; temporary structures for taking of fish and wildlife in preserve units; provision for reasonable access across wilderness to private and state land including mining claims; and provisions for air and water navigation aids, communications sites, and facilities for weather, climate, and fisheries research and monitoring.

The Significance of Wilderness in the National Park Service

The National Park Service is proud to manage more wilderness than any of the other federal land management agencies in America. Wilderness evokes connections with a large and powerful literature, which can excite the imagination of users. By contrast, "backcountry" is a less evocative term that merely suggests it is back (away) from development and is perhaps even deficient in points of interest. Designation represents a national affirmation of the importance of the wilderness values of these lands—that they are, as a former regional director described them, "the best of the very best." It may surprise many park visitors to realize what National Park Service wilderness is—some of the best remaining examples of an untrammeled natural world.

The concept of wilderness is complex and this is reflected in its significance and value to a wide variety of people:

- Wilderness provides extraordinary and challenging recreational opportunities, allowing present and future



Top left: Everglades National Park, Florida. Bottom right: Chiricahua National Monument, Arizona.

generations the opportunity to experience risk, reward, and self-reliance.

- Wilderness contains exceptional qualities such as scenic beauty, natural sounds, and opportunities for reflection and solitude that are important for human inspiration and rejuvenation.
- Wilderness provides opportunities for the preservation, study, and further understanding of cultures and cultural resources, including those related to indigenous peoples and traditional and sacred places.
- Wilderness provides a unique learning laboratory for scientific activities and lessons that address natural systems and their preservation, ecosystem management, and stewardship.
- Wilderness provides critical habitat for rare and endangered species of plants and animals as well as protection of other vital components of healthy and diverse ecosystems such as air quality, watersheds, and natural soundscapes.
- Wilderness provides the opportunity to explore societal and personal values as they relate to the use and appreciation of wildlands where humans are temporary visitors, not permanent residents.
- The designation and management of wilderness affords opportunities to explore such concepts as preservation, development, history, freedom, interdependence, ingenuity, and land ethics.
- Wilderness provides a sense of wildness, which can be valuable to people whether or not those individuals actually visit wilderness. Just knowing that wilderness exists can produce a sense of curiosity, inspiration, renewal, imagination, hope, and potential.

Wilderness in the 107th Congress

The 107th Congress (2002-2003) designated approximately 188,000 acres of National Park System Lands as Wilderness. The additions were at Pinnacles National Monument, California, and Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Nevada. Lake Mead became the 46th national park system area with designated wilderness, and the first NPS national recreation area with wilderness.

At Pinnacles, Congress designated another 2,715 acres as wilderness adjoining the original wilderness designated in that park in 1976. The new wilderness lands were part of the several thousand acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands that former President William Clinton added to the national monument in 2000 under

Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Texas (photo courtesy of S. Shefte).

an Antiquities Act proclamation. The Pinnacles wilderness provisions are part of the Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002. The Act (Public Law 107-370) was signed into law on December 19, 2002. The Act also designated 54,000 acres of national forest as wilderness.

Congress incorporated wilderness provisions for Lake Mead National Recreation Area into the Clark County Conservation of Public Lands and Natural Resources Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-282) that became law on November 6, 2002.

Because the law dealt only with Clark County, Nevada, only those portions of Lake Mead National Recreation Area proposed for wilderness designation in Clark County were addressed by the legislation. The Act designated nine separate and individually named wilderness subunits within the National Recreation Area. They total approximately 185,000 acres. All lie west and north of the Colorado River. The bill also established over 270,000 acres of national forest and BLM wilderness acres within the County. Four of the new BLM wilderness areas adjoin four of the wilderness areas in Lake Mead. Congress has yet to decide on the designation of an additional 561,300 acres of wilderness suitable roadless areas, depicted in the 1974 and 1978 NPS Wilderness Proposals.

NPS Wilderness Review Process

Wilderness suitability assessments (pre-study inventories) are completed or in process this year for Channel Islands National Park, Big Cypress National Monument, lands added to Guadalupe Mountains National Park, and for the McCauley Ranch addition at Yosemite National Park. A stand-alone wilderness study requested by Congress for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is proceeding, and wilderness is one of the issues being addressed in General Management Planning for Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Director Mainella and Assistant Secretary Manson reviewed them, their approach to public outreach, and their efforts to address the full range of constituent concerns. The Study and the Plan will now be released and distributed for further public review.

These wilderness studies support the notion that the majority of Americans are generally supportive of more wilderness. In fact, more than six in ten Americans do not

Top: Joshua Tree National Park, California (photo courtesy of R. Schendel).
Bottom left: Olympic National Park, Washington (photo courtesy of Bryan Bell).

believe enough wilderness has been protected for future generations, according to a new poll conducted by Zogby International. The poll shows strong support for wilderness protection across political parties, regions, age groups, ethnic and religious backgrounds. More than two-thirds of respondents – 71 percent – believe that 10 percent or more of all lands in the United States should be protected as wilderness. As Americans deal with the continuing threat of terrorism, many unsettled international situations, and a difficult economic period, our special wild places are clearly more important to us than ever.

Interagency Wilderness News

Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Center

The Interagency Carhart Training Center continues to provide training and produce materials in direct response to critical wilderness and wildland area management issues, training needs, and educational outreach needs identified by the four wilderness land management agencies. This fiscal year Carhart was able to provide on-site training for staff from Bandelier National Monument, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Katmai National Park and Preserve, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, Denali National Park and Preserve, and Pinnacles National Monument. Superintendents were unanimous in their praise for park-based training, noting the huge advantage of holding the training locally. It enabled more park staff to attend training which travel costs would have prohibited otherwise. The superintendents noted that this approach facilitated training a large portion of the permanent staff to gain a better understanding of the role of wilderness in their day-to-day management activities.

A variety of other training courses were offered by interagency staffs, including the new *Natural Resources Monitoring in Wilderness Course* that was developed by an interagency committee chaired by Rick Potts, the NPS

Top right: Gulf Islands National Seashore, Florida/Mississippi. Bottom: Isle Royale National Park, Michigan.

representative at the Training Center. It was offered this spring at the Fish and Wildlife Training Center in West Virginia. The very popular National Wilderness Stewardship training course for more senior interagency wilderness managers and staff will be held in Montana the fall of 2003.

Progress also continues to be made in providing information about America's wilderness areas, research, and critical stewardship issues electronically to managers, scientists, educators, and the public via the Wilderness.Net website. The website, a partnership effort between the Carhart Training Center, the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, and the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute, is providing increased access to and uniformity of wilderness information, and is currently working cooperatively to share information with the Rec.Gov website.

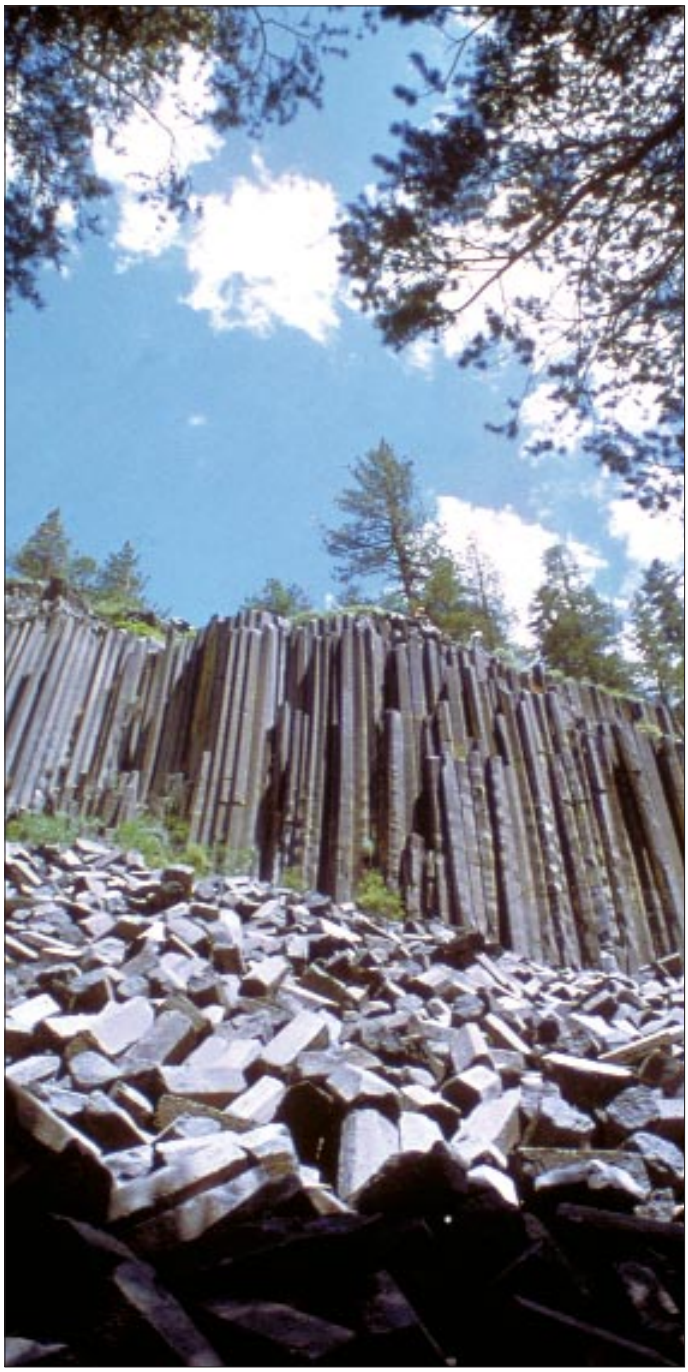
In the educational arena, the Carhart Center recently completed a Wilderness Education and Outreach Plan in partnership with the Student Conservation Association. Among other projects, the Center is currently working to produce the bilingual *American Values: American Wilderness* and *Valores Americanos: Americano Tierras Silvestres*, broadcast quality films that present the benefits of America's wilderness from the perspective of individuals who represent the diversity that is America. Spokespersons represent African-Americans, Alaskan natives, English and Hispanic speakers, disabled Americans, inner city youth, and senior citizens.

Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute

Scientists and staff from the interagency Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute in Missoula, Montana, have provided critical assistance to the National Park Service on a number of planning and management issues. For example:

Staff member David Cole is coordinating efforts to improve recreation simulation modeling technology and apply it to wilderness recreation management. A workshop will be used to bring together prominent recreation simulation modelers to evaluate different modeling techniques. The intent is to develop a report demonstrating modeling options, their utility, as well as data collection needs, and to conduct new applications of modeling for the General Management Planning Process.

Staff member Alan Watson coordinated completion of a project at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve to provide understanding of conflict issues during the fall hunting seasons as input to the park's backcountry planning process. Studies of backcountry visitor experiences, commercial service operator attitudes, and identification of key indicators for establishing standards and monitoring for backcountry recreation were completed at Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.



Devils Postpile National Monument, California.

The Director's Award for Natural Resource Research

Research ecologist David Cole of the interagency Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute was recently recognized by Director Mainella at the bi-annual George Wright Society Conference in San Diego as the recipient of the Director's Award for Natural Resource Research for 2002. Dr. Cole was recognized for his outstanding contributions to recreation ecology research—determining, measuring, and managing impacts to wilderness and wildland resources. His work in national parks and other wildland areas has focused on evaluating visitor experiences; developing guidelines for effective low-impact education messages; visitor impact monitoring; recreation effects on wildlife, meadows, and river corridors; and restoring impacted sites. The Director noted that he has skillfully and enthusiastically communicated scientific information and its value to managers. Scientists and wilderness managers alike recognize Dr. Cole for his leadership both in understanding the effects of human activities on resources and values of wilderness and in applying that understanding to management.

The award is testament to the effect and impact of Dr. Cole and the interagency Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute. ***Congratulations!***

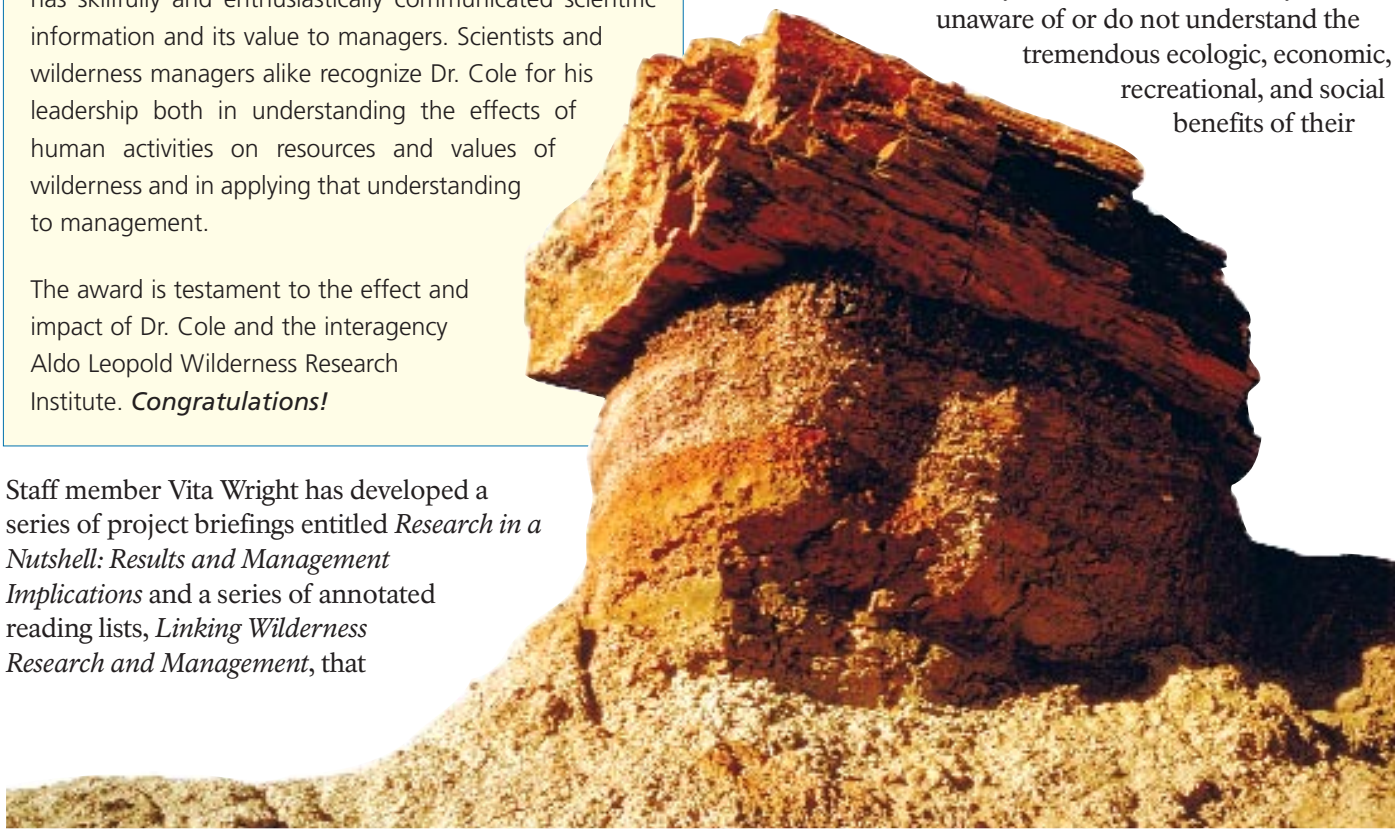
Staff member Vita Wright has developed a series of project briefings entitled *Research in a Nutshell: Results and Management Implications* and a series of annotated reading lists, *Linking Wilderness Research and Management*, that organize relevant publications into a framework for addressing important management issues (http://leopold.wilderness.net).

Along with the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the BLM, the University of Montana, and the National Science Foundation, the Leopold Wilderness Research Institute compiled and published *Wilderness in the Circumpolar North: Searching for Compatibility in Ecological, Traditional and Ecotourism Values*, the results of an international seminar that they sponsored and held in Alaska.

Upcoming Wilderness Events

2004: Fortieth Anniversary of the Wilderness

The year 2004 marks the 40th anniversary of passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act and presents a unique opportunity in history to launch efforts to increase public awareness, understanding, and support of our nation's wilderness heritage. To this end, representatives from the wilderness stewardship agencies, non-governmental organizations, user groups, and funding organizations have come together to advance nationwide wilderness outreach efforts. Many Americans are currently unaware of or do not understand the tremendous ecologic, economic, recreational, and social benefits of their



Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona.

extraordinary legacy. Additionally, by 2015, more than one-third of America's population will be of Hispanic, African American, and Asian descent. If this changing population is unaware of wilderness values, public support for protecting and maintaining wilderness will be diminished and, with it, its legacy of clean water and air, critical habitat for rare and endangered species, and unparalleled venues for recreation, reflection, and solitude.

Wilderness Managers, user groups, educators, and industry are exploring the development of the following package of events and activities: a Wilderness Stewardship Summit to address stewardship issues, completion of the PBS-quality film *American Values: American Wilderness*, which highlights wilderness benefits valued most by Americans. In addition, a partnership between the *Wildlink* Project and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, expanded capabilities of Wilderness.Net in partnership with the University of Montana and the Rec.Gov website with a variety of educational and interpretive tools useful to the partners involved.

2005: 8th World Wilderness Congress in Alaska

The WILD Foundation has announced that it is proposing to hold the 8th World Wilderness Congress in Alaska in 2005 and has begun meeting with Department of Interior representatives. The World Wilderness Congress has met on seven previous occasions over the years: South Africa (1977), Australia (1980), Scotland (1983), USA

(1987), Norway (1993), India (1998), and South Africa (2001). It is the longest-running international public forum on wilderness and the environment. It includes participation from very diverse sectors—senior politicians, leading businessmen, scientists, managers, educators, artists, philosophers, travel professionals, field rangers, and many more. Information on the Congress will be included in these annual reports. For more details on the history of the Congress and many of its specific, practical accomplishments for conservation, please see http://www.worldwilderness.org.

Top right: Fire Island National Seashore, New York. Bottom: Saguaro National Park, Arizona.

Securing an Enduring Wilderness in the National Park System: The Role of the National Wilderness Steering Committee

The National Park Service (NPS) justly takes pride in the fact that it is responsible for the stewardship of more designated wilderness than any other federal land management agency. Since the passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964, 46 separate wilderness areas have been designated in national parks. These areas total 44 million acres, nearly 53 percent of the total National Park System. Most of these areas were established legislatively during the 1970s and 1980s; the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) alone set aside an astounding 33 million acres in eight large park units in 1980. Past Presidents have recommended to Congress that wilderness be designated within an additional 19 national parks, and the NPS has formally proposed wilderness within another 20 parks. By NPS policy no actions that would diminish the wilderness suitability of these proposed or recommended areas will be taken until after the President and Congress have made their decisions on wilderness designation.

The modern era of NPS wilderness stewardship began with the legislative establishment of designated NPS wilderness following the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, although the administrative commitment to wilderness as a supplemental responsibility for managers lagged, and the agency found itself frequently criticized for its shortcomings. Similar criticism continued well into the 1990s.[1] In response, the NPS convened several national task forces beginning in the mid-1980s in an attempt to identify its major wilderness stewardship issues and to recommend solutions.

Central to implementing most of the recommended solutions for the issues identified by these task forces has been the challenge of providing leadership for wilderness stewardship across the National Park System. This is a challenge because National Park Service wilderness is fundamentally different, especially when compared to wilderness managed by agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

[1] Sellars, Richard West. 2000. "The Path Not Taken: National Park Service Wilderness Management." *The George Wright Forum* 17(4) 4-8.

Top right: Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Arizona. Bottom: Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Alaska.

In other agencies, wilderness is the outcome of an allocation decision among largely consumptive uses, whereas wilderness in the National Park System is more about an allocation among largely non-consumptive uses. Moreover, where there is wilderness in a national park, most of the park becomes designated wilderness—which is not correspondingly true of wilderness in a Forest Service Forest or a BLM District. The result of this is that most national park staff members are necessarily involved in some manner in wilderness stewardship, in contrast to the other wilderness management agencies where more limited and specialized staff members are involved. And, although it is possible in the other agencies to do programmatic budgeting for wilderness management, it is more realistic for the National Park Service to budget its resources by park rather than by program.

All of these factors point toward the likelihood of and need for different approaches to providing leadership for wilderness stewardship in these agencies. Centralized program management and budgeting fit wilderness stewardship in the Forest Service and BLM, but are not functional in the National Park Service where a different approach has evolved.

After the passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964, the National Park Service response was to establish a centralized program within the Planning Office to conduct the mandated 10-year study of national parks for the purpose of making recommendations on their suitability for designation as wilderness. The National Park Service had largely completed this planning effort by 1978 when recommended wilderness in over 30 parks was designated, and on-ground assessments and studies were completed in more than 40 other parks where wilderness proposals or wilderness recommendations were developed.

As this wilderness study program wound down, many of the involved staff and resources were channeled into other special studies in Alaska that helped to influence decisions that were made in the Alaska National Interests Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980. But there is no evidence that the National Park Service had yet begun to think about wilderness management in national parks.

And wilderness studies did not entirely disappear even after ANILCA because many pieces of park legislation in the 1980s created new parks with “wilderness study” provisions. Furthermore, some members of Congress viewed

Haleakala National Park, Hawaii.

wilderness as their best means of ensuring that national parks in their states or districts would be kept in their current natural state without further development (e.g., Cumberland Island National Seashore, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, etc.).

But wilderness studies do not address the systemic problems associated with managing wilderness, and this was quickly becoming apparent within and without the agency. In 1986, the Director developed a 12-Point Plan for the National Park Service that, among other things, called in general terms for several activities relating to management of legislated wilderness areas. The Action Plan accompanying the 12-Point Plan specifically called for ensuring that designated, potential, and proposed wilderness areas in the National Park System were managed according to the principles of the Wilderness Act and, for Alaska, of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. It also called for specific steps to improve coordination and consistency in management of all wilderness areas; to monitor human use, air quality, and noise trends in wilderness areas; to develop an initiative on interpretation and public information regarding wilderness areas; and to develop a systematic resource management strategy for such areas.

To implement these action steps, the National Park Service convened a task force comprised of wilderness specialists from eight NPS regions, key headquarters staff, representatives from the other wilderness management agencies, and outside constituent groups. In the process of developing recommendations, the Task Force systematically reviewed management policies, major wilderness management issues, and the intent of the Wilderness Act as applied to the overall National Park Service mission. The Task Force developed six major recommendations together with implementation steps to be completed over five years. These were related to 1) designation of national and regional wilderness coordinators; 2) management techniques appropriate for wilderness; 3) wilderness uses and capacity determination; 4) education training of wilderness management personnel; 5) educating the public; and 6) interagency coordination and consistency. The primary recommendation for addressing the wilderness management leadership in the agency was the establishment of wilderness coordinator positions at the Washington headquarters and at regional offices.

Despite this impressive program management plan and

Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks, California.

agency efforts to implement it, including the naming of regional wilderness coordinators, agency efforts faltered after several years of progress and had largely dissipated by 1989. This happened essentially because critical measures were never institutionalized, and staff and funding commitments were inadequate for significant progress to be made in implementing the five-year Action Plan.

In late 1993, this lack of progress led to the formation of a second task force charged with re-visiting wilderness management issues across the National Park System. The recommendations of this second task force dealt with wilderness leadership, conveying the wilderness message, developing partnerships, investing in NPS employees, improving wilderness planning, improving resource management and understanding, and addressing the backlog in the wilderness review process. Leadership recommendations focused mainly on the establishment of interdisciplinary wilderness steering committees at the national and regional levels, establishment of an interagency wilderness policy council, re-establishment of a strong wilderness coordinator in headquarters, and NPS participation in the interagency Arthur Carhart Wilderness Training Center and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute.

As a result of these recommendations, the NPS established a National Wilderness Steering Committee (NWSC) in 1996 comprised of four superintendents from around the National Park System together with representatives from Alaska, natural resources, cultural resources, maintenance, interpretation/education, and rangers. In addition, the NPS established a collateral duty wilderness coordinator position and funded an NPS training position at the Carhart Training Center. Since that time, the NWSC has evolved into an increasingly effective organizational entity for improving wilderness stewardship in the National Park System. Task Force recommendations continue to be used by the NWSC in development of their ongoing work plans. The effectiveness of the NWSC is evidenced by some of the major actions it has taken:

- Development of Director's Order 41: Wilderness Preservation and Management
- Development of Reference Manual 41: Wilderness Preservation and Management
- Participation in the Carhart Training Center, including inauguration of on-site wilderness training in parks
- Establishment of the Director's Order 41 Survey Database
- Inauguration of the Annual NPS Wilderness Report
- Development of the Wilderness Education Plan for the National Park System
- Completion of the Wilderness Planning Handbook for inclusion in Reference Manual 41
- Development of the Wilderness Resource Book (*CELEBRATE WILDERNESS!*) for NPS Interpreters
- Development of Internet and Intranet NPS Wilderness Websites
- Inauguration of the "White Paper" series on wilderness management issues for inclusion in Reference Manual 41
- Making the new *Wilderness Management* text available on-line for NPS staff
- Development of Servicewide Wilderness Performance Goals

Shenandoah National Park, Virginia.

The reorganization of the NPS that began in 2001 has also led to other opportunities to improve NPS wilderness stewardship. The Program now has a full-time wilderness program manager who reports directly to the new Associate Director for Visitor and Resource Protection (Karen Taylor-Goodrich). Under the reorganization this Associate Director now shares program leadership responsibilities with the Associate Directors for Natural Resources, Science and Stewardship (Mike Soukup) and Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands (Sue Masica) for issues related to wilderness science and planning. And in a promising development, the NWSC now has Committee liaisons from Natural Resources and Science, Park Planning and Special Studies, Cultural Resources, and the Associate Regional Directors for Operations. Further improvements in relationships with Training and Interpretation are being explored. The evolution of the NWSC as an effective force for improving wilderness stewardship in the National Park System has been aided by the commitment of such able leaders as Maureen Finnerty, Dick Ring, Karen Wade, Doug Morris, Ernie Quintana, and Don Neubacher.

The Associate Directors for Visitor and Resource Protection and for Natural Resources, Science and Stewardship also sit as the National Park Service

2002 Wilderness Award

Director Mainella and the National Wilderness Steering Committee joined to congratulate Laurel Boyers, Wilderness Manager at Yosemite National Park, for her being selected as the winner of the NPS Director's Wilderness Management and Stewardship Award for the year 2002. Laurel was honored for her many contributions to the Yosemite Wilderness Program at the November 14-15 meeting of the National Wilderness Steering Committee in Washington, D.C. Director Mainella presented Laurel with an award plaque recognizing her selection as the "NPS Individual Champion of Wilderness," with a corresponding $2000 cash award. The certificate reads:

Congratulations on being selected as the recipient of the National Park Service Director's Wilderness Management and Stewardship Award for the year 2002. I'm honored to recognize your contributions to the wilderness program at Yosemite National Park. These accomplishments include your efforts in integrating wilderness into long-term planning and the day-to-day administration of the park, your work coordinating the park's wilderness program with adjoining federal agencies, your tireless contributions to the park's wilderness education program, and your leadership in establishing the Tuolumne Wilderness Center. Thank you for your efforts in helping us make National Park Service wilderness areas as "the very best of the very best" of America's public lands.

The Director also read a personal letter from First Lady Laura Bush congratulating Laurel for the wilderness award and her many contributions to the NPS wilderness program. The First Lady observed: "Having spent five days exploring Yosemite with you, I know why the National Park Service selected you for this prestigious award. Your enthusiasm for your work and overall excitement in sharing the Park's splendor with its visitors make you the perfect candidate. And your deep commitment to wilderness management ensures that a great many will enjoy our nation's treasures, now and well into the future." (During the summer of 2001, Laurel coordinated an extended trip into the Yosemite wilderness for Mrs. Bush, her entourage, and a group including USFS Forest Supervisors and federal judges. Mrs. Bush had previously made Laurel an "Honorary Midland Girl" for the friendship, professionalism, and skills she demonstrated during the trip.)

Congratulations, Laurel, and thank you for your contribution to the stewardship of NPS wilderness!

Yosemite National Park, California.

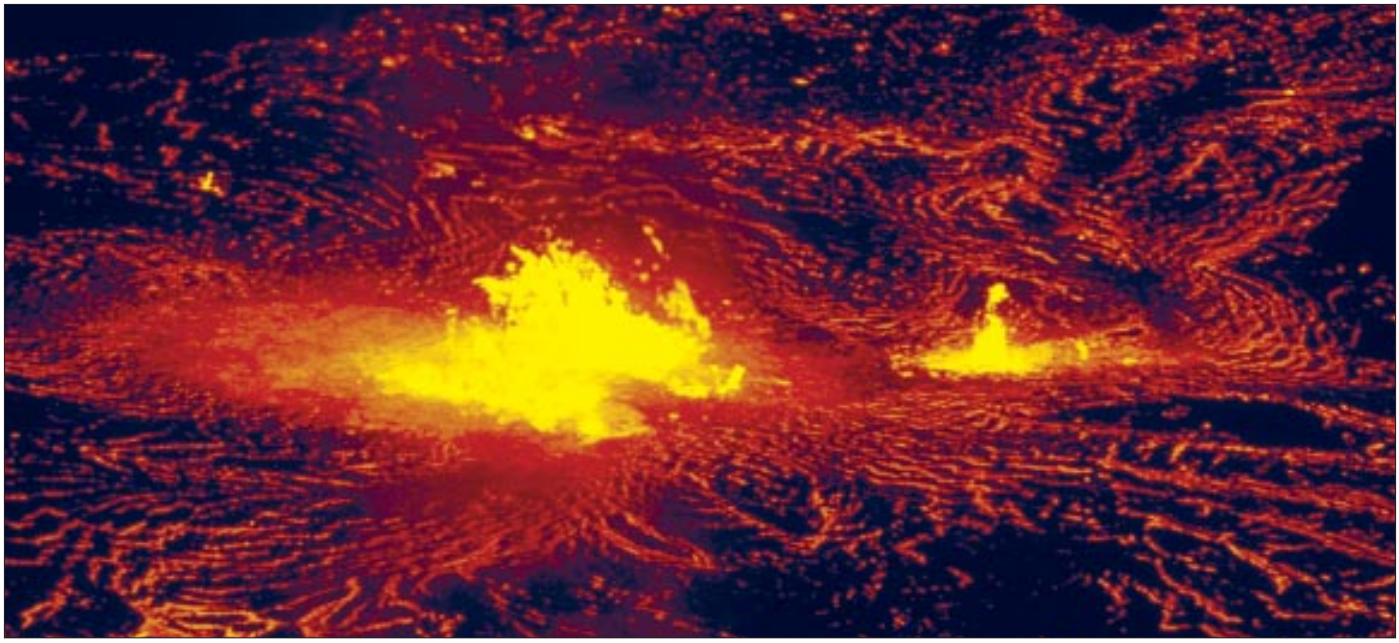
representatives on the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council that was recently established to address the full suite of interagency wilderness issues.

The highest priorities for the NWSC will continue to be to in ensuring that wilderness stewardship training is available to Park Service managers and staff, in making wilderness stewardship information available to park staffs, in aiding in the development of educational materials for park visitors, and in being responsive to field staff on wilderness stewardship issues. The new "White Paper" series may be an excellent way to address critical stewardship issues, and a number of them are now being developed. And finally, at the request of Director Fran Mainella, the NWSC is developing a Wilderness Action Plan to strategically guide the agency's course over the next five years.

National Wilderness Steering Committee News

In keeping with past task force recommendations and in response to field issues, the National Wilderness Steering Committee has continued to make the development of better guidance and field assistance a primary focus of its agenda. Training, information, and education remain the highest priorities, though the Committee remains influenced by 1994 Wilderness Task Force Recommendations and by newly surfacing field issues. Significant efforts that will be completed and distributed to wilderness parks by the end of the year include:

- A "model" interagency minimum requirements process is being developed by the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and will soon be available for national parks with wilderness.
- The NPS "Wilderness Education and Partnership Plan" was distributed to all wilderness parks this last year to assist their education and interpretation efforts. "CELEBRATE WILDERNESS!," the first product from that Plan, is under development and will include a great deal of information to assist interpreters with



Top right: Katmai National Park and Preserve, Alaska. Bottom: Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii.

wilderness education and interpretation in their parks.

- The "Scientific Activities in Wilderness Evaluation Process" is being developed by the interagency Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute and will be available next year to help parks to evaluate scientific activities in terms of appropriateness and use of "light on the land" techniques and tools.
- A "White Paper" for inclusion in Reference Manual 41 on *Cultural Resources Management in Wilderness* has been released, and White Papers on *Ecological Restoration in Wilderness*, *Differences between Wilderness and Backcountry*, *Trail Maintenance in Wilderness*, *Group Size Management in Wilderness*, and *Rock Climbing in Wilderness* are being developed for the purpose of better integrating these important resource stewardship activities in wilderness.

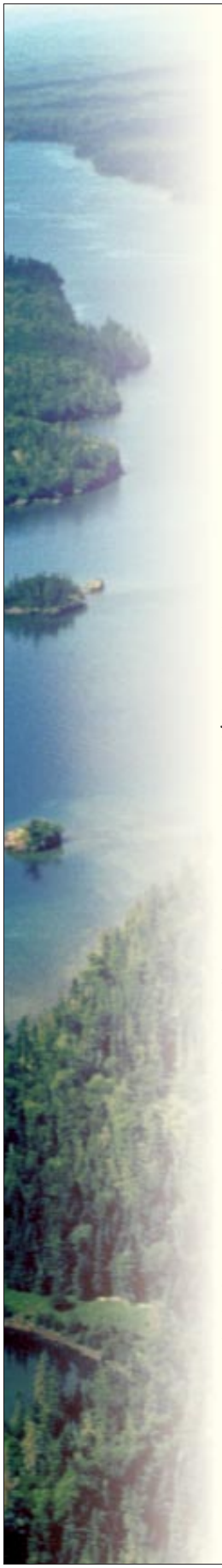
The Challenge Ahead

The challenge ahead is a familiar one—better listening and communicating with field staff and constituent groups to improve wilderness stewardship in the National Park System. Although needs exist to train field staff and to provide educational materials that will help them to do a better job in making Park Service wilderness available to the American public in a sustainable way, the National Park Service can be very proud of the progress being made to enhance wilderness stewardship. ■

We have a profound, a fundamental need for areas of wilderness – a need that is not only recreational but spiritual, educational, scientific, essential to a true understanding of ourselves, our culture, our own natures, and our place in all Nature. It is a need that any modern man may know whether his residence is urban, suburban, or rural.

- Howard Zahniser

North Cascades National Park, Washington. Opposite Page: Isle Royale National Park, Michigan.



NPS Designated Wilderness Areas

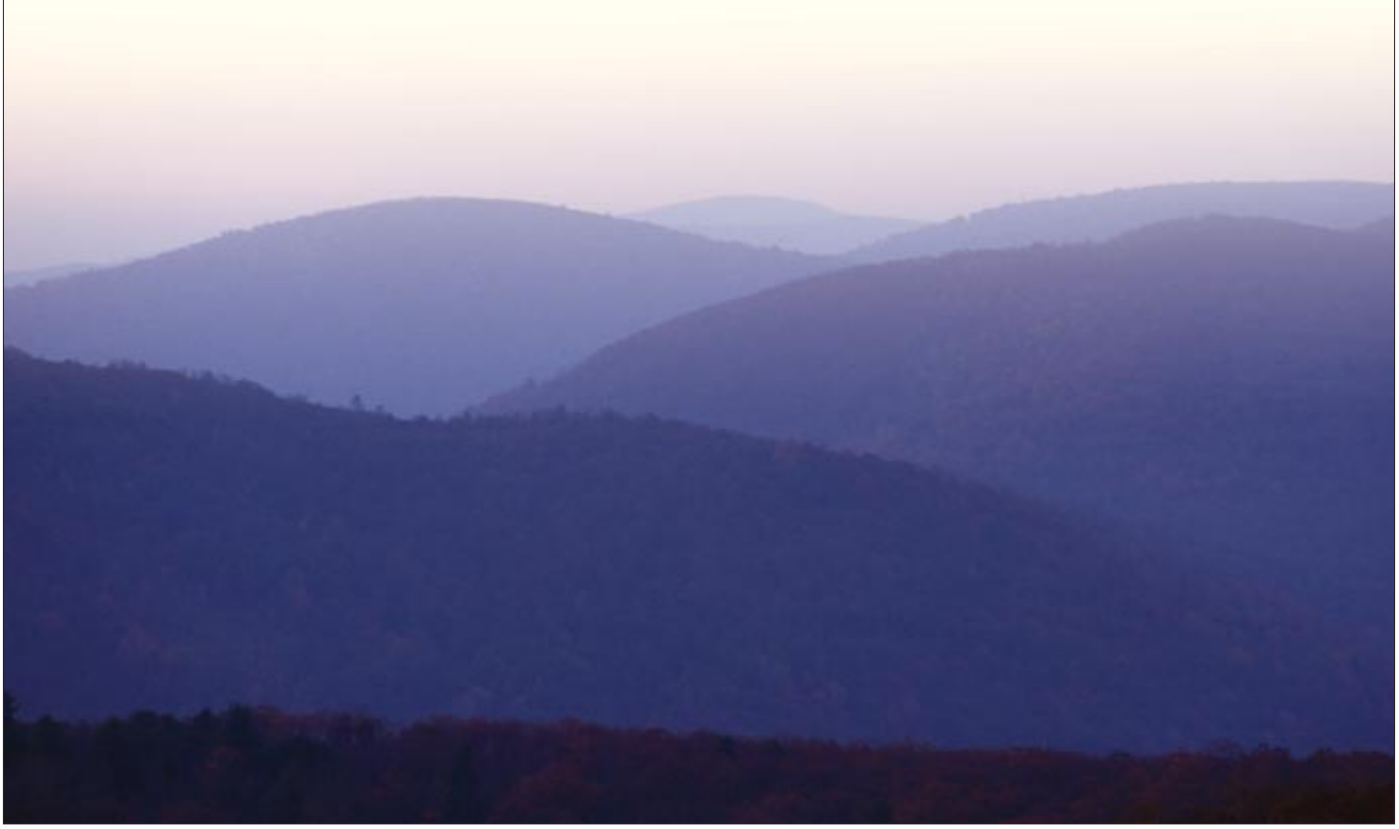
Park Units (46)	Wilderness Name	Size in Acres
Badlands National Park	Badlands	64,144
Bandelier National Monument	Bandelier	23,267
Black Canyon of the Gunnison N.M.	Black Canyon of the Gunnison	15,599
Buffalo National River	Buffalo National River	34,933
Carlsbad Caverns National Park	Carlsbad Caverns	33,125
Chiricahua National Monument	Chiricahua	10,290
Congaree Swamp National Monument	Congaree Swamp	15,010
Craters of the Moon National Monument	Craters of the Moon	43,243
Cumberland Island National Seashore	Cumberland Island	8,840
Death Valley National Park	Death Valley	3,253,028
Denali National Park	Denali	2,146,580
Devils Postpile National Monument	Ansel Adams	747
Everglades National Park	Marjory Stoneman Douglas	1,296,500
Fire Island National Seashore	Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune	1,363
Gates of the Arctic National Preserve	Gates of the Arctic	7,245,600
Glacier Bay National Preserve	Glacier Bay	2,664,876
Great Sand Dunes National Monument	Great Sand Dunes	75,225
Guadalupe Mountains National Park	Guadalupe Mountains	46,850
Gulf Islands National Seashore	Gulf Island	4,080
Haleakala National Park	Haleakala	24,719
Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	Hawaii Volcanoes	130,790
Isle Royale National Park	Isle Royale	132,018
Joshua Tree National Park	Joshua Tree	557,802
Katmai National Park and Preserve	Katmai	3,384,358
Kobuk Valley National Park	Kobuk Valley	174,545
Lake Clark National Park	Lake Clark	2,619,550
Lake Mead National Recreation Area[2]	Lake Mead	184,439
Lava Beds National Monument	Lava Beds	28,460
Lassen Volcanic National Park	Lassen Volcanic	78,982
Mesa Verde National Park	Mesa	8,500
Mojave National Preserve	Mojave	695,200
Mount Rainier National Park	Mount Rainier	228,480
Noatak National Preserve	Noatak	5,765,427
North Cascades National Park	Stephen Mather	634,614
Olympic National Park	Olympic	876,669
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	Organ Pipe Cactus	312,600
Petrified Forest National Park	Petrified Forest	50,260
Pinnacles National Monument	Pinnacles	15,985
Point Reyes National Seashore	Philip Burton	25,952
Rocky Mountain National Park	Indian Peaks	2,917
Saguaro National Park	Saguaro	70,905
Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks	Sequoia-Kings Canyon	723,036
Shenandoah National Park	Shenandoah	79,579
Theodore Roosevelt National Park	Theodore Roosevelt	29,920
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve	Wrangell-St. Elias	9,078,675
Yosemite National Park	Yosemite	704,624
NPS Designated Wilderness	**Total (acres)**	**44,103,184**

[2] Legislation designating wilderness in Lake Mead took the unusual step of defining nine separate subunits of Lake Mead Wilderness within the Clark County portion of the park [Black Canyon (17,220 acres), Bridge Canyon (7,761 acres), El Dorado (26,250 acres), Ireteba (22,299 acres), Jimbilnan (18,879 acres), Muddy Mountains (3,521 acres), Nellis Wash (16,423 acres), Pinto Valley (39,173 acres), and Spirit Mountain (32,913 acres)]. The remainder of the NPS wilderness proposal for Lake Mead has yet to be addressed by Congress.

NPS Wilderness Recommendations Forwarded to Congress

National Park	State	Acreage	Potential	Date[3]
Arches National Park	Utah	61,547	8,461	6/11/78
Assateague Island National Seashore	MD/VA	440	4,760	12/04/74
Big Bend National Park	TX	538,250	44,750	5/11/78
Bryce Canyon National Park	UT	20,810	--	5/11/78
Canyonlands National Park	UT	260,150	18,270	5/23/77
Capitol Reef National Park	UT	179,815	4,050	05/23/77
Cedar Breaks National Monument	UT	4,830	--	01/12/76
Colorado National Monument	CO	13,842	937	05/11/78
Crater Lake National Park	OR	127,058	--	05/11/78
Craters of the Moon National Monument	ID	396,696		11/09/00
Cumberland Gap National Historical Park	KY-VA-TN	12,191	1,900	05/11/78
Dinosaur National Monument	CO-UT	205,672	5,055	5/11/78
El Malpais National Monument	NM	86,267	11,161	04/18/02
Glacier National Park	MT	927,550	3,360	06/13/74
Grand Teton National Park	WY	122,604	20,850	05/11/78
Great Smoky Mtns. National Park	TN/NC	390,500	400	12/04/74
Rocky Mountain National Park	CO	240,030	479	05/11/78
Yellowstone National Park	ID-MT-WY	2,032,721	--	05/11/78
Zion National Park	UT	120,620	10,364	05/11/78
Total		**5,741,593**	**134,602**	

[3] Date of last Presidential message to Congress for that park.



Shenandoah National Park, Virginia.

NPS Study Areas and Proposals for Wilderness

National Park Units	Acreage Suitable For Study[4]	Acreage Proposed For Designation
Aniakchek National Monument and Preserve	590,000	
Apostle Islands National Lake Shore	39,800	
Bering Land Bridge National Preserve	2,690,000	
Big Cypress National Preserve	225,000	
Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area		8,108
Cape Krusenstern National Monument	633,000	
Cape Lookout National Seashore		2,992
Channel Islands National Park	68,600	
Denali National Park	3,726,000	
Gates of the Arctic National Preserve	1,052,000	
Glacier Bay National Preserve	78,000	
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area		637,250
Grand Canyon National Park		1,111,902
Guadalupe Mountains National Park (addition)	10,000	
Katmai National Park	643,000	
Kenai Fjords National Park	668,000	
Kobuk Valley National Park	1,494,000	
Lake Clark National Preserve	1,240,000	
Lake Mead National Recreation Area		561,300
Noatak National Preserve	757,000	
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore	18,400	
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore		30,903
Voyageurs National Park		127,436
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park	3,174,000	
Yosemite National Park (McCauly Ranch)	0	
Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve	2,220,000	
Total	**19,326,800**	**2,479,891**

[4] Alaska acreage numbers represent the total suitable wilderness study acres from Environmental Impact Analyses since decisions on the preferred alternatives were not completed. Although wilderness studies and environmental analysis were completed, the records of decision were not signed by the Director and the final proposals were not forwarded to the Department of Interior. The Grand Canyon Proposal was also not forwarded to the Department.

Gates of the Arctic National Preserve, Alaska (photo courtesy of R. Steele).

National Wilderness Steering Committee 2002-2003

Steering Committee Member	Position
Don Neubacher (Chair)	Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore (CA)
Dave Spirtes (Vice-Chair)	Superintendent, Northwest Areas (AK)
Ernie Quintana	Associate Director., Visitor and Resource Protection (Washington DC)
David Morris	Superintendent, Olympic National Park (WA)
David Graber	Senior Science Adviser, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park (CA)
Gary Somers	Chief of Resource Management, Shenandoah National Park (VA)
Chris Stein	Chief of Interpretation, Great Smokey Mtns. National Park (TN/NC)
Bob Seibert	District Ranger, Yellowstone National Park (WY)
Steve Ulvi	Management Assistant, Gates of the Arctic National Park (AK)
Don Sharlow	Trails Foreman, Big Bend National Park (TX)
Denis Davis	Member At Large, Intermountain Regional Office (CO)
Wes Henry	Wilderness Program Manager (Washington, DC)
David Parsons	Liaison, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (MT)
Connie Myers	Liaison, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center (MT)
Abby Miller	Deputy Associate Director, Natural Resources (Washington, DC)
Dennis Schramm	Liaison, Park Planning and Special Studies Office (Washington, DC)
Bill Schmidt	Liaison, Natural Resources and Science Staff (Washington, DC)
Luci Lawless	Liaison, Natural Center for Cultural Resources (Washington, DC)
Marti Leicester	Liaison, Associates for Operations and Education (Pacific-West Regional Office, Oakland, CA)

Above: Lassen Volcano National Park, California. Opposite page: Shenandoah National Park, Virginia.
Back cover: Mount Rainier National Park, Washington.

"We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope."

- Wallace Stegner

For more information on the whole National Wilderness Preservation System and each of its units, visit www.wilderness.net. This site, the Wilderness Information Network, serves as an "umbrella" site for several wilderness organizations: The Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, and the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute. Wilderness.net is also a forum for current news, original wilderness publications, information on wilderness distance education opportunities, and a searchable wilderness document library. NPS Wilderness Program information for park staff is maintained at the Wilderness Program site on InsideNPS and for visitors at www.wilderness.nps.gov.

www.wilderness.nps.gov
www.mynps.gov/InsideNPS/wilderness

www.wilderness.net