



## Professional Report Series – Number 3

### *The Centennial Institute For National Park Studies*

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#### **Abstract**

The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees calls for the establishment and convening of a non-partisan Centennial Institute for National Park Studies providing vital support to the National Park Service, the National Park Centennial Commission and the broader academic community in the form of well-informed, carefully examined, and scholarly studies on issues relevant to the second century. The establishment of the Institute would:

- By August 25, 2016, the centennial of the National Park Service the Institute will have significantly increased public awareness of the need for sustainable behavior globally, nationally, and locally, and of the essential role of National Parks in that cause.
- Beyond 2016, the Institute will continue efforts to increase public awareness of this need, stressing the critical importance of public involvement in meeting it.

#### **The Coalition**

The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees (CNPSR) is an organization comprised of nearly 700 former National Park Service employees who, collectively, have served almost 20,000 years within the agency in every capacity and at all grades, including a substantial number of former Directors and Deputy Directors, former regional Directors or Deputy Regional Directors, former Associate or Assistant Directors at the national or regional office level, former Division Chiefs at the national or regional office level, and former Superintendents or Assistant Superintendents. In our personal lives, we come from the broad spectrum of political affiliations. As park managers, rangers and employees in the National Park Service's many disciplines, however, we devoted our professional lives to a common goal – maintaining and protecting our national parks for the benefit of all Americans, both living and those yet to be born. We remain committed to that goal.

This paper is one of a series on critical issues facing the National Park Service as it enters its second century. A complete listing of all current or planned papers appears at the end of this report.

#### **The Authors**

The first version of this paper was prepared (08/06) by Jerry L. Rogers, National Park Service Associate Director of Cultural Resources (Ret). Mr. Rogers represented the National Park Service in all matters involving cultural and historical resources, a significant job considering the majority of national park areas in the System are cultural or historically themed. The second version of this paper (02/08) was updated and edited by Robert L. Arnberger, National Park Service Regional Director for Alaska (Ret), a 34-year veteran of the National Park Service who retired in August 2003. He served at 10 different parks and in one regional office in a wide variety of positions.

## **Professional Report Series – Number 3**

### ***The Centennial Institute for National Park Studies***

#### **VISION FOR THE CENTENNIAL INSTITUTE**

In the second century of the National Park Service the National Parks are widely appreciated as refuges for natural and cultural resources vital to the earth and the human cultures she has produced, as well as significant public resources for scientific and scholarly research and public education.

The National Park Service is well equipped to manage its resources and to carry out its leadership responsibilities to global, national, and local publics, demonstrating practices needed to sustain life and culture.

The Institute provides vital support to the National Park Service Centennial Commission in the form of well-informed, carefully examined, and scholarly studies on issues relevant to the second century; and after the 2016 centennial continues to serve the National Park Service with similar studies.

#### **PURPOSE**

To initiate, and then to inspire and sustain into the future a rational, responsible, and well-informed discourse about the National Parks of the United States; the international, national, public and private responsibilities of the National Park Service; and the continually changing best means of carrying out these responsibilities. Stimulated initially by the well-informed “Voices of Experience” and later led by scholarly studies of the highest quality, this discourse will involve as many Americans as can be encouraged to participate and will be aimed at enabling their elected representatives to understand the public’s needs and to meet them in the best and most comprehensive ways possible.

#### **GOALS**

- A.** By the August 25, 2016, centennial of the National Park Service the Institute will have significantly increased public awareness of the need for sustainable behavior globally, nationally, and locally, and of the essential role of National Parks in that cause.
- B.** Beyond 2016, the Institute will continue efforts to increase public awareness of this need, stressing the critical importance of public involvement in meeting it.

#### **STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

##### **Phase I**

- By January 2008, the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees has developed a vision of its desired post-2016 National Park Service.
- Since 2005, the Coalition has called for the establishment of the *Centennial Institute for National Park Studies* to provide the focus and organization necessary for the continued “self-examination” of our national park system. Throughout 2008 and beyond the Coalition will continue to press for the establishment of the *Institute* that will analyze and study the issues our national park system faces as it moves into a new century. The *Institute* will provide constructive and thoughtful recommendations that will guide the National Park Service and those who politically oversee our park system in carrying out its mission in the most non-partisan and effective manner possible. The *Institute* might be an independent organization

or may be affiliated with an established academic institution charged with unbiased and unencumbered examination of our national park system. Important to its success will be effective linkage and collaboration with academic institutions across this nation which are interested in pursuing the same goals. The Coalition is working towards this vision and has already forged important connections to several organizations and committed bodies of citizens who are similarly interested in moving this idea forward.

- Throughout 2008, the Coalition will assemble a preliminary list of topics that require thoughtful, accurate, and expert study, analysis, and exposition.
- Throughout 2008, the Coalition will collect further information about the expertise and interest of Coalition members to participate in the accomplishment of “Professional Opinion Papers” on key topics the Coalition believes are priority issues that need resolution as a second century National Park Service commences its work.
- In early 2008, preliminary topics for Professional Opinion studies will be determined and assigned to members who are well-qualified and willing and able to provide analytical papers to be finished by the end of June.
- In mid-2008, these papers will be made available to an established National Park Service Commission, to political candidates running for office, to members of Congress, and finally to the media.

#### **Phase II**

- In early 2009, the Coalition will assemble a small but broad-based group of experts<sup>1</sup> with global perspectives to identify and refine further topics and issues for consideration by the Voices of Experience, by the Centennial Institute, and by a National Park Service Centennial Commission.
- Throughout 2009 these experts will be prevailed upon to offer thoughtful papers on selected topics that can continue to inform the public and political leaders and also serve as the “intellectual foundation” upon which the *Institute* is formed.
- Throughout 2009 the Coalition will make the expertise of the Voices of Experience available to help the National Park Service Centennial Commission with its work in every possible way.
- By the end of 2009 the Coalition, together with others, develops a formally constituted *National Park Service Centennial Institute* to carry on the work of thoughtful, accurate, and expert study, analysis, and exposition.

#### **Phase III (post 2009)**

- The Coalition and others will continue to place the Institute on solid operational footing, including development of institutional collaborative agreements and assisting the *Institute* in acquiring funding necessary for its continuing work.
- As the Institute succeeds in its mission and gains solid operational footing by 2010, the Coalition withdraws as a primary sponsor and the Institute achieves independence and self-governance.

### **THE COMPELLING NEED FOR CHANGE**

Support for National Parks, along with preservation and conservation of the publicly and privately owned environment in general, has suffered in recent decades from a lack of understanding by the American people and their elected representatives. After a high point around 1980 gradual but steady diminution of public comprehension of environmental values and issues has reached a point

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of people who should be invited include: Maya Angelou, James Baca, Stewart Brand, Greg Cajete, Jared Diamond, Annie Dillard, Sylvia Earle, Brian Fagan, Michael Finley, John Hope Franklin, John Lewis Gaddis, Brent Glass, Joseph Jaworski, Charles Jordan, James Judge, Roger Kennedy, Henry Lee, Patricia Nelson Limerick, Shirley Malcolm, Cameron Mann, David McCullough, Larry Rasmussen, Peter Raven, Robert Redford, Karl-Hendrick Rob rt, David Rockefeller, William K. Reilly, Joseph Sax, Peter Senge, Robert Stanton, Gene Sykes, David Hurst Thomas, Robert Utley, Edward O. Wilson, Christine Todd Whitman, Peter Zimmerman.

where much of the public negatively perceives the term “environmentalist.” This largely reflects the success of a number of well-funded organizations - cloaked in mantles of academic respectability - which examine issues and publish a steady stream of reports foreordained to undermine and weaken public support for governmental solutions to national problems. Unfortunately, it also reflects ill-considered actions sometimes taken by people in the name of environmental advocacy. Perhaps worst, it reflects silence and inaction from responsible Americans.

If silence and inaction continue, these entities, supported by donors who benefit financially from unrestricted private exploitation, will slowly but steadily grind away the places of beauty, wildness, and historical depth; the places for serene and restorative recreation; and the places needed for survival of the other species with whom we are interdependent. We will awaken one day and discover that the *commonwealth* that distinguishes this nation from all others will have become *private* wealth from which the public is cut off. Soon afterward we will discover that today’s obsession with immediate profit will have depleted the long-term ability of the world’s natural and cultural ecosystems to sustain life as we have known it, and our own survival will be at risk.

Although we must halt the damage now underway, the American need for national parks and related parts of the *commonwealth* can never be met by defensive measures. It is essential to approach our task from a constructive and progressive point of view.

Across the globe, people and organizations are increasingly recognizing and acting upon this situation. The Natural Step, an initiative that originated in Sweden, arranges for industries to build the total costs of environmental cleanup and ultimate disposal or recycling of their worn-out products into their planned business cycles. The Global Leadership Initiative is an international consortium of businesses and governmental entities demonstrating that sustainability is sound business—the *only* sound business.

Supporters of National Parks, public lands, and the commonwealth of our national heritage must break silence and provide sound, responsible, non-partisan, and truthful information about the value of National Parks and other special places; and restore the United States to leadership in all that the parks represent.

#### **PHASE ONE: PAPERS BY THE VOICES OF EXPERIENCE**

The initial round of papers by the Centennial Institute for National Park Studies will consist of professional opinions, written by selected, well-qualified volunteer members of the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees. They will be focused, editorially consistent, 3,000 to 7,000 words, easily understandable, published as articles and op-eds wherever possible, compiled and posted on the Coalition website, and possibly published as a body. They will stimulate popular interest and discussion, create a sense of possibility for a better National Park Service, and provide a basis for Phase Two studies.

Phase One work will be overseen, supervised, and directed by the Executive Council of the Coalition. This may be done on a volunteer basis or a paid individual may be retained to manage the work and to continue the steps toward an established Institute.

#### **PHASE TWO: STUDIES BY SCHOLARS**

Second round studies will be longer treatises, professionally researched and documented by qualified scholars, focused, peer-reviewed, carefully edited, attractively illustrated, and published as a prestigious series. They will be studied by the members of the National Park Service Centennial Commission and other national leaders.

Initially, the Institute will be overseen by the Executive Council of the Coalition, or by a larger consortium of organizations invited by the Coalition, or by a respected academic institution. The

goal is to evolve the collegiums of scholars who study issues and produce reports into the governing body of a self-directed institute, by which time administration and management must be performed by a paid staff.

### **PHASE THREE: CENTENNIAL INSTITUTE**

The independent and self-governing Centennial Institute will continue research and analysis of important topics by qualified scholars, with focused and peer-reviewed reports, for the benefit of the general public, scholars, scientists, lawmakers, policymakers, and National Park managers and staff. In this phase the Institute may also conduct special educational events such as annually convening meetings of citizens in National Parks to discuss conservation and park issues; or convening leaders of major corporations in National Parks to discuss mutual and voluntary ways of becoming better environmental citizens.

### **POTENTIAL TOPICS FOR ESSAYS AND STUDIES**

#### **Possible Phase I Topics and Authors:**

***Global Warming and Pollution from External Sources***—Possible phase I author: Abigail Miller, Deputy Associate Director for Natural Resources (Ret.). Even with all of their problems, parks receive higher protection than most other special places. They often contain relatively undisturbed biota and may represent extremes of climates and ecosystems. As a result, they can serve as benchmarks against which the condition of resources elsewhere can be studied and measured, although a systematic approach to such study was dismantled when the Service's research function was removed in the mid-1990s. Parks should be more fully utilized for research to understand the impacts of pollution and global warming and for public education to help people understand what is happening and what must be done. It is also vital to use this research to develop strategies for natural and cultural resource preservation in the face of global warming.

***The National Parks as a Popular Metaphor for Environment: Opportunities and Obligations***—Possible phase I author: Jerry L. Rogers, National Park Service Associate Director for Cultural Resources (Ret.). In the sound-bite-oriented minds of many Americans the National Parks have come to stand as metaphor for environment. If the National Parks in their beauty and majesty are safely preserved and open for public enjoyment, people tend to believe the environment upon which all life depends is also safely preserved. It is true that the parks are essential to a healthy environment and that they can validly stand as a partial symbol. It is also true that this perception helps the parks, but in return it gives the parks an obligation to advance and in appropriate ways to lead the comprehensive set of interests that actually are "the environment." This includes other international, Federal, State, local, Tribal, and private lands that are wholly or partially dedicated to preservation of natural and cultural resources and provision of recreation. A second century of work for the National Park Service should begin with a firm understanding of this perception and the obligations it entails.

***Reasserting International Environmental and Park Leadership***—Possible Phase I author: Rick Smith, Associate SWR Regional Director for Resources Management (Ret.). This paper would examine why the NPS has lost its international park leadership standing and what is to be gained through more effective international participation and leadership.

***Improving Agency Standing Through an Examination of Alternate Governance Models***—Possible phase I author: Mary Bradford, Associate Director, Administration (Ret.), and Don Castleberry, Midwest Regional Director (Ret.). Is the present governance model of the national park system model working? If it is, why do we constantly repeat the same basic problems of lack of effective funding, endure the same political swings every two to four years, suffer from a dearth of principled agency leadership, and seemingly never succeed in developing long-term sustainability

strategies for taking care of these resources? Are there different governance and business models that ought to be considered?

***A Contract with the Future***—Possible phase I author: Robert Arnberger, National Park Service Alaska Regional Director (Ret.). Establishing a national park is a fundamental act of faith by one generation in the grand and unknown possibilities of the future. It is a validation of the interests of a present generation and a contract with the future for generations yet to come. This generational contract places an obligation upon the American people and their elected representatives for something more than short-term benefit or gain. Each generation of Americans has chosen its best places for parks because they have felt their best in or about these places. Consciously and deliberately the American people have determined that these are the most special of American places, deserving standards of care and sustainability unique to them and different than other national public lands. In these landscapes and historic shrines we feel wonder, reverence, and respect, taking pride in those things that demonstrate America at its best. This process has continued over a century through a rich tradition of law and public service. Keeping this contract with the future will require us to be constant learners, to be better than we have ever been, and to be the best that we can ever be.

***The Common Wealth of the National Parks: the Dangers of Privatizing It; and the Proper Roles of the Private Sector in the National Heritage***—Possible phase I author: Jerry L. Rogers, National Park Service Associate Director for Cultural Resources (Ret.). The National Parks are the crown jewels of our republic—the inalienable treasures of all of the people of the United States. Over decades of experience, the National Park Service has worked out proper roles for the private sector in providing visitor services and assisting in the responsible management of the National Parks. The private sector has been engaged extensively and positively in preservation of natural and cultural resources outside the parks. Now some extremists advocate handing the entire responsibility over to the private sector. What are proper roles for the private sector in the National Park Service of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, how do we reach the optimum arrangement, and how do we recognize the lines that must not be crossed?

***The State of Park Interpretation***—Possible phase I author: Denny Huffman, Superintendent, Dinosaur National Monument (Ret.). Although the task of educating a nation inevitably requires accommodating millions of students in classrooms, educators know that learning happens in ways and at times that are unique to each individual and that are based upon the individual's motivation to learn. An educational system that can return America to the forefront of the world must combine traditional institutional approaches with innovative media and with the unparalleled opportunities inherent in all museums, historic sites, and parks. The National Parks are visited by 300 million people each year. Each visit is a different, non-institutional, and highly effective opportunity to engage a mind and to stimulate an imagination about who the individual is as an American or citizen of the world and about the relationship of the individual to all other life.

***The Ever-Increasing Need for Scientists and Other Subject Matter Experts***—Possible Phase I author: Abigail Miller, Deputy Associate Director, Natural Resources (Ret.). George Melendez Wright used his personal fortune to insert sound science into National Park management as early as the 1930s. Richard Sellars' 1997 history, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, revealed that after Wright's untimely death the Service quickly reverted to confusing scenic beauty with healthy nature. It was widely assumed that natural and cultural resources somehow take care of themselves if they are "protected" from harm, and that this could be done by a relatively few low-cost generalists. Only gradually did the Service recognize that park resources may change and even be destroyed unwittingly without the trained eye of biologists, archeologists, historical architects, curators, conservators, and other specialists. Even with the improvements of recent decades, the Service remains dangerously unaware of the full scope of park natural and cultural resources and of reliable steps by which they can be preserved. The need for specialized professional expertise inside the Service, and for access to outside expertise, is more acute than ever. A careful study should identify

the kinds and numbers of experts needed and should lay out a multi-year plan to acquire and maintain them.

***Competitive Sourcing, Privatization, and Philanthropy in our National Parks***—Possible phase I authors: Bill Wade, Superintendent, Shenandoah National Park (Ret.), and Becky Mills, Superintendent, Great Basin National Park (Ret.). Outsourcing, privatization and philanthropy are closely related topics and seem to be visceral responses to decreased federal funding. What is the inherent responsibility of the Federal Government to fund its national heritage assets? What is the landscape of the future in terms of finding innovative, collaborative ventures to protect these national heritage assets?

***The Future of Entrance Fees and Its Connection to Visitation***—Possible phase I author: Mary Bradford, Associate Director, Administration (Ret.). This paper would look at the issue of undue reliance on entrance and user fees and its potential to “price publics out of their parks” and to allow Congress to evade its responsibility to provide appropriations for parks as “inherent federal responsibilities.” It will make a connection to and debunk the argument by the recreation industry that the only way to measure success of the national park system is through continuing increasing use and visitation.

***Night Skies***—Possible phase I author: Joe Sovick, Associate Regional Director, Resource Management, Southwest Region (Ret.). From the Pleistocene to the present the night sky has been an important element in cultural heritage. The combination of what appeared to be eternal order in certain night sky patterns with such changeable things as lunar phases, planetary movements, seasonal angles of declination, and annual meteor showers was one of the early great stimuli to curiosity. The discovery of predictable order among the inconstants was important in the development of belief systems and their attendant cultural values—influencing even the idea of what it means to be human. It remains so today. Without conscious action it will be much more difficult for future generations to have the same experiences, or even to imagine them. As urban areas expand and as change without consideration of light pollution continues, places where the night sky can be experienced grow fewer and more difficult to reach. We risk losing a beauty that has been the backdrop to and motivator of human actions since time immemorial. It is also well-known that many species are affected by the intrusion of artificial light into the night sky, but not nearly enough is known about how many species are affected and in what ways. This subject needs many years of intensive research.

***The Rise of Subject Matter Specialists, Its Effects upon Generalists, and the Future of the Ranger Corps***—Possible Phase I author: Douglas Morris, Superintendent, Shenandoah National Park, (Ret.). In the earliest days of “Steve Mather’s Family,” and even before there was a National Park Service, vast amounts of land—sometimes entire parks—were looked after by single individuals. The proud tradition of the National Park Ranger was born in a time when necessity required individuals to do anything and everything that had to be done in a park. But this was also a time when neither the Service nor the public comprehended the complexity and sometimes fragility of the natural and cultural resources that simultaneously were to be enjoyed and preserved for the future. Inevitably, as the Service matured it recognized the need for specialists such as biologists, archeologists, air and water quality experts, architects, landscape architects, historians, ethnographers, interpreters, and many others. As this took place, the Ranger who once did everything evolved more and more into a law enforcement officer. The specialized professional demands of law enforcement can sometimes conflict with traditional values associated with the title “Ranger.” What should the Ranger of the future be like?

## **TOPICS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

***National Parks: Models for Future Living***—National Parks, by operating transparently in an exemplary fashion, can model and interpret to visitors programs, practices, and life ways that everyone should follow at home; for example, recycling materials in the fullest sense, refreshing and

reusing gray water, purchasing carpets that can be melted into new carpet, and demanding green construction of buildings and infrastructure. Parks can widely embrace scientific research, interpret the projects and their outcomes to visitors, and invite the public to conferences in parks on global warming and other major conservation issues.

***A Comprehensive Review of Public Land Management***—Several months ago it was reported that a consortium of seven universities plus Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government might undertake a comprehensive review of public land management in the United States. Such a review could result in sound recommendations for a sensible and coordinated array of land management practices in places carefully chosen for management according to standards that range from National Park-type preservation to National Wildlife Refuge-type management to National Forest- and Bureau of Land Management-type multiple use to intensive and even motorized recreation on carefully selected other lands that have already been irreparably impacted.

***A National System of Parks***—National Parks, State Parks, local parks, National Historic Landmarks, National Natural Landmarks, National Register Properties, State Historic Preservation Programs, State Natural Heritage Programs, State Outdoor Recreation Programs, Tribal and Local counterparts to any or all of these, with private sector partners joining in to support and expand the cause, have long been referred to as a national system of parks. This concept needs to be articulated anew with a positive and comprehensive vision for the future that directly articulates the difference between privatization and a healthy public/private relationship.

***Additional National Parks***—As far back as the early 1980s, Director Russell Dickenson said that the era of creating great natural and scenic National Parks was largely over because most qualifying places had been designated. Future growth of the National Park System would likely be in historic and recreational areas. However, as a growing population brings increased need and as rapid development overwhelms remaining unspoiled places, the nation also modifies its idea of what places are precious enough to be National Parks.

Simultaneously, other agencies sometimes improve their management of outstanding areas as a strategy for keeping them from being transferred to the Park Service. The Maroon Bells and San Juan Mountains in Colorado might fall into this category. National Grasslands that separate the two units of North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park, under unified management, could easily become a Great Plains National Park of a dimension appropriate to the plains. Other potential National Parks are in private ownership: for example the Galisteo Basin and the Lincoln County War area of New Mexico, the Nebraska Sandhills, or Texas' Palo Duro and Tule Canyons and the two important Red River War battlefields they contain. Some National Monuments have been created under the management of the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration rather than transferred to National Park Service management. What should be the nation's intention for continued growth of the National Park System, or for alternative means of preserving and enjoying outstanding places?

***The Unity of All Things***—The dominant culture in the United States is nearing the end of a 4,000-year history of believing that humans have unlimited dominion over the earth and all things in it. This has led to short-sighted and destructive practices which have diminished the earth's ability to support humans and the larger web of life of which we are a part. We can learn from the attitudes and philosophies of indigenous people that the earth and all of its inhabitants are sacred, interconnected, and interdependent. A good beginning point for this topic would be three books, *Look to the Mountain*, and *Native Science*, by Santa Clara Pueblo member and University of New Mexico professor Greg Cajete; and *Earth Community: Earth Ethics*, by Union Theological Seminary professor Larry Rasmussen.

***Parks in a World of Change***—The United States is the primary engine that drives rapid and constant change throughout the world. In *The Clock of the Long Now: Time and Responsibility* (1999), Stewart Brand notes the effect upon individuals and society of the ever-increasing pace of change in

life. “Old people and young people live in completely different time zones. Now that we have progress so rapid that it can be observed from year to year, no one calls it progress. People call it change, and rather than yearn for it, they brace themselves against its force. Technology is treated as something that pushes us around rather than something we create. Life becomes perpetual transition with no resting point in sight.” The National Parks to some degree must change with the times, but if they change too much they will cease to serve as resting points or to give people the anchoring strength to cope with potentially overwhelming change. People who more than ever need quiet sanctuaries may seek to bring the oppressive changes into the sanctuaries. Manifestations of this contradiction include the desire to use Parks to “get away from it all” and yet to bring along motor homes, off-road vehicles, jet skis, snowmobiles, aircraft, cell phones, televisions, and computers. It may be very difficult to maintain enough public comprehension of the true meaning of genuine refuge and also to sustain public support for protecting it.

***Soundscapes/Natural Quiet***—In this highly mechanized society, natural quiet has become so rare that relatively few Americans ever experience it. Noise generated by humans and their machines penetrates even the great National Parks where visitors hope to renew themselves in undisturbed interaction with nature. A highway heavily traveled by large trucks can be heard for more than thirty miles; engines pumping irrigation water in agricultural valleys become a low hum to hikers and campers in distant mountain parks. Airliners seven miles high send a sound like constant thunder to park visitors on the ground. Far worse, however, are the slapping of air tour helicopters, the roar of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles in the wild places where they are increasingly allowed, the putt-putt of power units on motor homes, and increasingly even the annoying voices of other hikers shouting into cell phones about how awesome it is at the top of a mountain. Pervasive noise not only prevents many visitors from fully grasping the sounds of birds and animals or cascading water or wind in trees or from ever experiencing genuine quiet, it has negative effects not yet fully understood on some species. Natural quiet, as a resource to be managed and a value to be interpreted, needs to be better and more widely understood.

***The Best and the Brightest***—From the origin of the National Park concept until the present the idea of devoting one’s career—and life—to preservation of extraordinary places has created a workforce of extraordinary quality. Many people work for the Service because they want to serve a cause they believe vital to the nation and the world. Management systems and attitudes among people in high positions who treat such employees as recalcitrant or who measure them against partisan political standards counteract and waste the creative energy inherent in these altruistic motivations. Over the past several decades, as politics have become more polarized, government more politicized, and the executive branch more centralized, it has become steadily harder for employees to maintain the motivation that attracts the best and the brightest to work for the National Park Service. It is essential to develop Learning Organization systems that can satisfy the valid prerogatives of elected and appointed officials, bring out the best in every employee, replace top-down command-and-control direction, and engage the minds of all employees in participatory leadership and management.

***Easements, Tax Benefits, Subsidies, Land Trusts, and Other Incentives***—Chances are there will always be private inholdings inside National Parks or private property just outside parks that in the public interest should not be developed without restraint. Beyond the immediate neighborhoods of parks, the overwhelming majority of natural beauty, plant and animal habitat, historic and archeological resources, and land suitable for recreation will always be private property. The United States needs a fresh and comprehensive study of ways to reward private owners for being good stewards and interpreters of resources and to motivate them to help meet the ever-increasing need for public access.

***Park Land Protection: A Unique Opportunity***—As technology makes it possible to work from computer stations anywhere in the world, enabling more people to live and work amid unspoiled natural beauty, developable private holdings near National Parks and even inside park boundaries are increasingly likely to be built upon. This will be detrimental to park values, and will make future

acquisition and protection of such holdings either impossible or extremely expensive. Now may be the last great chance to protect vital lands through selective acquisition.

***Our Changing National Energy Availability***—Since the days when Stephen Mather promoted park-to-park highways, National Parks have been planned and developed with the assumption that automobiles would be vital to parks, and that their fuel would be cheap and abundant. It is now generally accepted that conventional oil reserves are finite and will eventually be unable to meet demand. At some time worldwide production will peak and begin an irreversible decline. This has already happened on a national scale in the United States and many other major oil-producing countries. Oil is expected to become increasingly scarce and expensive. Congress will be tempted to eliminate barriers to development of coal, oil, gas and other resources on national conservation lands and to shift support from conservation to other priorities. This will be more likely if private travel becomes so expensive that park visitation drops significantly. In anticipation of such pressures and changes, the parks must find a new niche in the public mind. They must be seen as the wellspring for renewal and hope in a world that will be faced with a difficult transition from an oil-dominated system of life to one that is sustainable and environmentally friendly. This could require rethinking of the mission as set forth in 1916.

***Scenario Planning for the National Park Service***—Global warming, intrusion of exotic species, extinction of indigenous species, oil spills and other forms of pollution, advances in communication and other technologies, wars, extreme political changes, and even the aging of the American public and their changing recreational preferences, all present possibilities for extreme and rapid changes for the National Park Service and for individual parks. As brief examples, global warming threatens to inundate Everglades National Park, pushing its ecosystems hundreds of miles to the north; and to drive northward the forest in Alabama that was an essential part of the battle at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park. In these cases and a great many others, the parks may lose resources that were fundamental to their reasons for being. Do we simply wait for the changes and then try to react to them, or do we anticipate the changes and try to avoid or minimize their effects? Scenario planning processes that anticipate a wide range of worst-case and best-case scenarios, and that prepare strategies ahead of the appearance of the scenarios, have been used with great success by many major companies and by the military. Leaders in the field have been Joseph Jaworski in his work with Royal Dutch Shell, and Stewart Brand with his Global Business Network.

***Parks as Biodiversity and Cultural Landscapes***—In its major 2001 report *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the National Park System Advisory Board recommended that biodiversity conservation become a core purpose of park management and that parks be linked with other natural areas through wildlife migratory corridors and greenways. The need to manage parks as parts of broader natural and cultural landscapes and the need to work collaboratively with other owners and users of those landscapes has been long recognized, but institutional implementation has been elusive. Urgent needs inside park boundaries press for priority, and there is little incentive to work collaboratively except in high-profile cases. Specific recommendations should be developed for a few sample regions, such as the California Desert, Great Lakes, Colorado Plateau, or Hudson River; outlining needs, actions, collaborations, and incentives. From these examples, other regional analyses should be developed.

***Understanding and Measuring Park Resources***—In the wake of Richard Sellars' 1997 history, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, the National Park Service undertook a multi-year effort to improve its capability to manage natural resources in an increasingly complex world. Modest gains were made and a core inventory and monitoring system was put into place, but that system needs to be maintained, strengthened, and broadened to include cultural resources. Without such comprehensive information, it is not possible to know whether the National Park Service Act of 1916 mandate to preserve resources unimpaired is being accomplished, and fierce political debates over preservation versus use take place as abstract questions without genuine understanding of their meaning. A broad and comprehensive study is needed to put natural and cultural resource inventorying, monitoring, and management on the right track for a second century.

**Funding Park Operations: Fixing a Broken System**—Funding to operate parks is appropriated and apportioned in such ways that even when the National Park Service budget shows an increase, the money allocated for operation of individual parks often turns out to be less than the year before. Central offices hold back percentages to cover costs of activities that are more efficiently handled in common than park-by-park. Overall budget increases are frequently dedicated to particular program priorities, or may be earmarked by Congress for such things as the maintenance backlog, construction, communications systems, or studies to determine whether services might be more economically purchased from the private sector. Most parks nowadays have little budget flexibility except in the category of salaries, so they adjust to financial pressures by leaving important positions vacant. This has the effect of producing unintended negative consequences in the parks. It is time to examine the entire complex of planning, budgeting, allocating, and accountability to see whether a better and more effective system can be devised.

**Global Sustainability**—The National Park System has been a model for national park establishment world- wide, and was famously called by Wallace Stegner “the best idea America ever had.” In recent years, however, even as the need for global cooperation has increased, the System has become more and more insular. The National Park Service must recover its role as a leader and an effective participant in partnerships to increase sustainability of resources on a global scale. Cooperative efforts to preserve indigenous languages and neo-tropical migrants, to share best practices for sustainable necessary park developments, and to make wildland preservation compatible with human needs and habitations must be increased in order for the National Park Service to play its proper role in national and international life.

**Parks as the Foundation of American Values**—

**Parks as Learning Laboratories (education beyond interpretation)**—

**Partnerships—Proper Roles of Volunteers, Cooperating Associations, Interns, and Similar Unsalariated Individuals and Groups**—

**Park/Community Cooperation**—

**Gateway Communities**—

**The \$7 to \$9 billion backlog**—

**Strategies for Times of Extreme Financial Constraint**—

**Law Enforcement and Public Safety**—

**External Encroachment**—

**Changing Demographics**—

**Current and Foreseeable Recreation Patterns**—

**Motorized Recreation**—

**Capturing the Lessons of Experience**—

**Closer Interaction with Tribes**—

**A Local, State, Tribal, National, and International Survey and Compendium of Funding Strategies**—

## **This Series Of Papers**

The imminent arrival of the centennial of the National Park Service's birth, which will occur in 2016, has led to reflection on its past, evaluation of its successes and failures, and discussion of its future goals and priorities – both within the agency and among its many friends and supporters.

As an organization containing more professional experience and knowledge than any comparable entity anywhere in the country, we believe that we are uniquely placed to offer our professional perspectives on the array of issues that are and will be discussed over coming months and years.

This series of papers offers our professional evaluation of the key issues that the agency is now facing or will be dealing with in coming years. Current papers in the series, either completed or in development, include the following. Others may be added:

- Report 1            *America's Crown Jewels: The National Park System* – A paper on the philosophic and legislative foundation of the NPS and an evaluation of the need for more effective national engagement in protecting parks.
  
- Report 2            *The National Parks Centennial Commission* – An evaluation of the commission and recommendations on how it should work, what its goals should be, and what issues it should focus on.
  
- Report 3            *The National Park Centennial Institute* – A paper that explores the need and concept for a formalized academic institute to study a wide variety of park-related issues in order to inform and educate agency staff and political leaders and better manage our parks in a new century.
  
- Report 4            *Competitive Sourcing, Privatization, and Philanthropy in our National Parks* – A paper on these key issues and the bearing they have on the agency and its efforts to attain its goals.
  
- Report 5            *The Future of Entrance Fees and Their Connection to Visitation* – An examination of the problem of over reliance on entrance and user fees and the potential fees have to “price publics out of their parks.”
  
- Report 6            *Reasserting International Environmental and Park Leadership* – This paper looks at the reasons why the NPS has lost its standing as an international leader in parks and what needs to be done to become a more effective member of the international parks community.
  
- Report 7            *A Renaissance of Park Interpretation and Education Reaffirms the Mission of the National Park Service* – A paper that looks at the present dire straits of the NPS interpretive and education program and calls for a “renaissance” and a renewal of excellence in our on-site and off-site educational programs.
  
- Report 8            *Toward A Second Century Of Excellence For The National Park System* – This paper presents a ten-point vision of the attributes that the National Park Service needs to have by the time its centennial arrives on August 25, 2016. It also outlines qualities that must be sought and fostered in its leaders for it to retain its integrity, serve the public and meet its goals, and identifies core values that underlie “principled leadership.”
  
- Report 9            *It Is Not A Matter Of Money – It Is A Matter of Priorities* – This paper exposes the budgetary quagmire the National Park Service finds itself in and discusses ways

out of the situation. It also presents a 15 year review and analysis of NPS budgets and compares the Clinton and Bush administration's budgets.

- Report 10      *The Renewal of the Park Ranger Profession* – A review of the present state of the park ranger profession, which is increasingly called upon to specialize in the narrow niche of law enforcement, and how it might be reformed to better serve the agency in the future.
- Report 11      *Global Climate Change Creates New Park Environments and New Organizational Challenges for Park Science Programs* – This paper looks at the coming changes to our national and global ecosystems and impacts upon society and where our national parks can serve as effective barometers of global change.
- Report 12      *Reassessing the Development Footprint in our Parks* – This paper looks at the planning, development and construction process in the parks, examining the lessons learned from the first century of park development and how they need to be reconsidered for the second century.