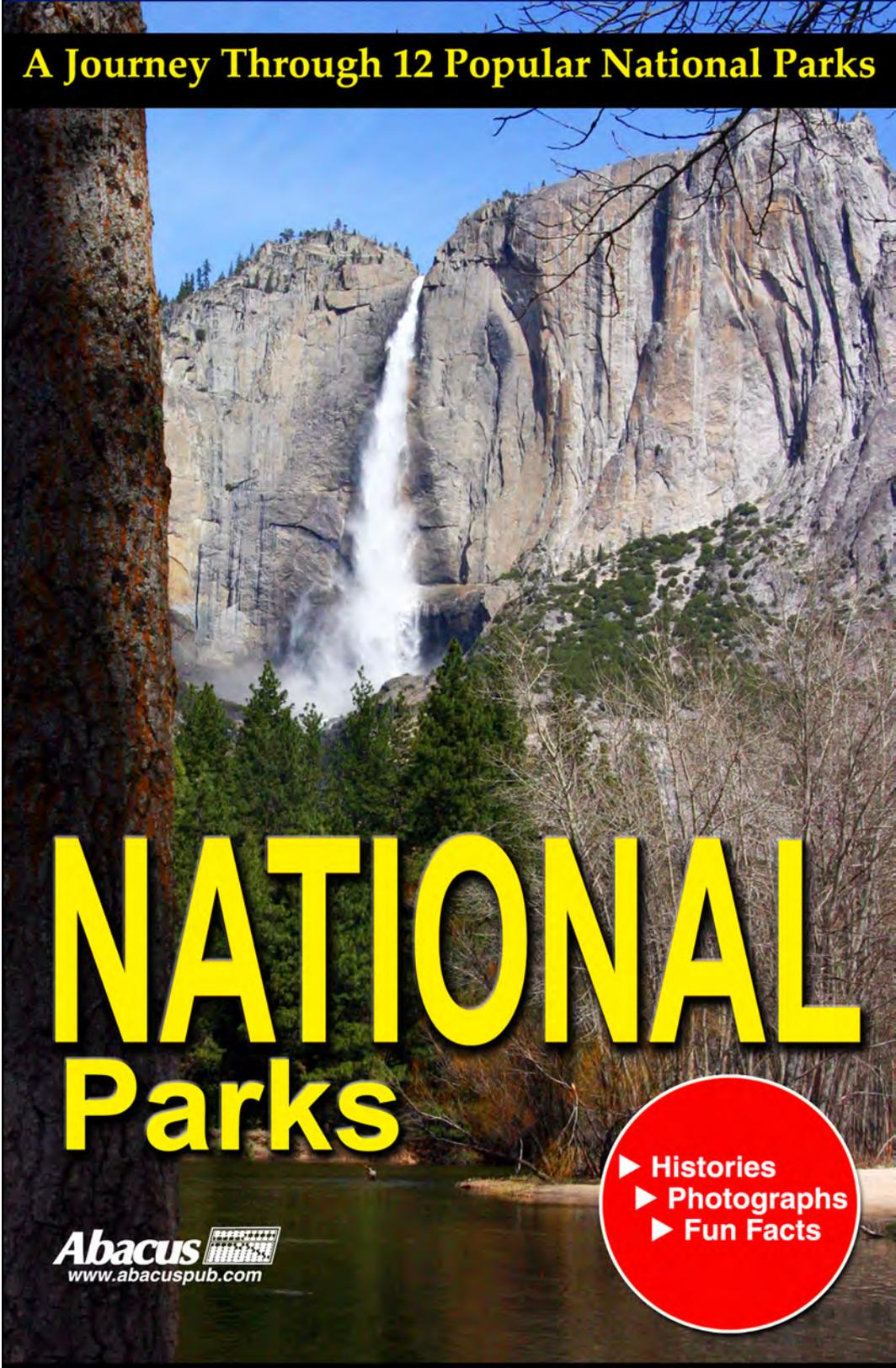


A Journey Through 12 Popular National Parks



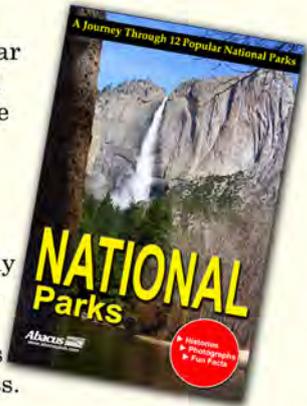
NATIONAL Parks

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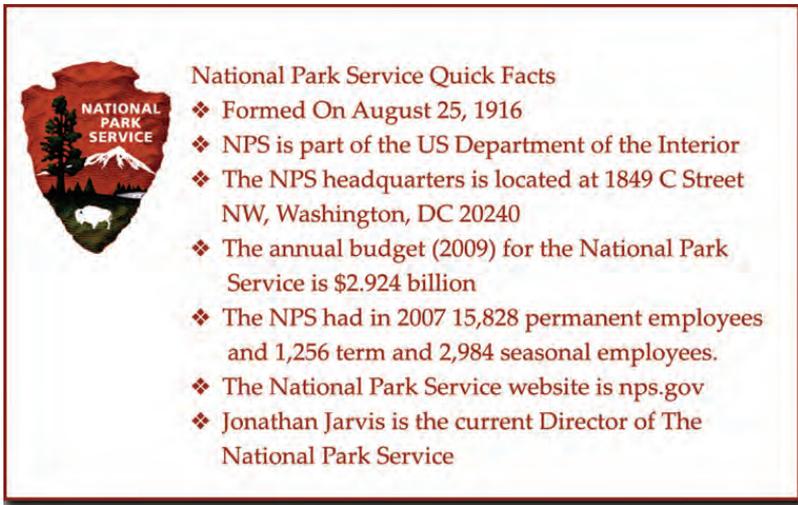
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National Park Service Background

Beginnings

Many credit George Catlin (1796-1872) as the person to first suggest the idea of a national park in the U.S. Although Catlin was born in Pennsylvania, his life was greatly influenced by Native Americans. He was trained as a lawyer but after a Native American delegation passed through Pennsylvania in 1824, it inspired him so much that he decided to spend his life studying Native Americans and their culture. Catlin decided to devote his life to painting Native Americans in their native land and he spent the rest of his life supporting their cause.



The graphic features the National Park Service arrowhead logo on the left, which contains a stylized landscape with a tree, a bison, and mountains. To the right of the logo is the title "National Park Service Quick Facts" followed by a list of seven facts, each preceded by a red diamond symbol.

National Park Service Quick Facts

- ❖ Formed On August 25, 1916
- ❖ NPS is part of the US Department of the Interior
- ❖ The NPS headquarters is located at 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240
- ❖ The annual budget (2009) for the National Park Service is \$2.924 billion
- ❖ The NPS had in 2007 15,828 permanent employees and 1,256 term and 2,984 seasonal employees.
- ❖ The National Park Service website is nps.gov
- ❖ Jonathan Jarvis is the current Director of The National Park Service

Catlin created a Native American gallery by traveling to the Western frontier in the 1820s and 1830s. He met General William Clark in St. Louis in 1831 and sketched and painted Native Americans who visited Clark at his office. Catlin went on a trip with Major Jean Dougherty on the Platte River in Nebraska and created several sketches of the Native Americans in the area during the trip.

He visited the west many times to sketch and paint the Native Americans as well as the landscape. On a trip through the Dakotas in 1832, he worried about the impact of the westward expansion on Native

National Park Service Background

American civilization, wildlife and wilderness. He had an idea that if the government could somehow protect the areas in a “magnificent park...a nation’s park,” that the area would be preserved for future generations.

Late 1800s

Catlin’s idea of protecting certain western areas in parks became reality in 1864 when Congress gave the Yosemite Valley area to California to be preserved as a state park (it was later returned to federal control, see below). Congress continued a few years later when it reserved the Yellowstone area in 1872 “as a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.” Because Wyoming and Montana were not states at the time, no state government was available to manage the Yellowstone country. Therefore, Yellowstone remained under the control of the U.S. Department of the Interior and became the world’s first true national park.

Congress created other national parks — Sequoia, Yosemite (in which California returned Yosemite Valley), Mount Rainier, Crater Lake and Glacier — in the 1890s and early 1900s. However, not all these parks were created only for their scenic wonders because the western railroads lobbied Congress to establish many of these early parks. The railroads, which wanted to increase their passenger business, built impressive rustic hotels nearby after the areas were designated as national parks.



This map shows the location of all the National Parks and their principal railroad connections through 1916. (Courtesy US National Parks Service)

Scenery and natural wonders were not the only reasons Congress established the national parks. In the late 1800s Congress also began preserving prehistoric Native American ruins and artifacts that were located on public lands. Congress created the Casa Grande Ruin in Arizona

National Park Service Background

in 1889 and designated the Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado in 1906. Congress also passed the Antiquities Act that gave presidents the power to declare historic and prehistoric structures in federal control as national monuments.

National Park Service Background

American Antiquities Act of 1906

16 USC 431-433

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That any person who shall appropriate, excavate, injure, or destroy any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity, situated on lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States, without the permission of the Secretary of the Department of the Government having jurisdiction over the lands on which said antiquities are situated, shall, upon conviction, be fined in a sum of not more than five hundred dollars or be imprisoned for a period of not more than ninety days, or shall suffer both fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court.

Sec. 2. That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and may reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected: Provided, That when such objects are situated upon a tract covered by a bona fied unperfected claim or held in private ownership, the tract, or so much thereof as may be necessary for the proper care and management of the object, may be relinquished to the Government, and the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to accept the relinquishment of such tracts in behalf of the Government of the United States.

National Park Service Background

American Antiquities Act of 1906 *(continued)*

Sec. 3. That permits for the examination of ruins, the excavation of archaeological sites, and the gathering of objects of antiquity upon the lands under their respective jurisdictions may be granted by the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and War to institutions which they may deem properly qualified to conduct such examination, excavation, or gathering, subject to such rules and regulation as they may prescribe: Provided, That the examinations, excavations, and gatherings are undertaken for the benefit of reputable museums, universities, colleges, or other recognized scientific or educational institutions, with a view to increasing the knowledge of such objects, and that the gatherings shall be made for permanent preservation in public museums.

Sec. 4. That the Secretaries of the Departments aforesaid shall make and publish from time to time uniform rules and regulations for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Approved, June 8, 1906

National Park Service Background

President Theodore Roosevelt used the Antiquities Act several times to declare areas such as the Petrified Forest and Grand Canyon in Arizona to be national monuments. He also declared areas such as El Morro in New Mexico, site of prehistoric petroglyphs and historic inscriptions, to be national monuments. These areas were not necessarily natural wonders but had significant cultural or historical features. Congress later changed many of these national monuments to national parks, including the Grand Canyon.



*President Theodore Roosevelt used the Antiquities Act several times to declare the Petrified Forest, Grand Canyon and other areas to be national monuments.
(Courtesy US Library of Congress)*

Early 1900s

The U.S. Department of the Interior was responsible by 1916 for 35 national parks and national monuments but it had no effective central administration to manage them. Therefore, the Army was asked to send troops to manage Yellowstone National Park and the national parks in California. Army engineers developed park roads and buildings and the Army cavalry enforced regulations against hunting, grazing, timber cutting and vandalism. Civilian appointees managed the other national

National Park Service Background

parks but the national monuments received little or no supervision. Unfortunately, this meant that there was no coordinated supervision or policy among those managing the park.

Furthermore, competing interests, including some within the growing conservation movement, tried to push their ideas in how the parks should be used. For example, some conservationists favored building dams for water supply, power and irrigation requirements; they favored regulated use instead of strict preservation of natural resources. Other conservationists favored strict preservation of natural resources.

The climax in the power struggle to control the parks occurred in the early 1900s when officials from San Francisco came to Yosemite looking to build a reservoir. Their idea was to dam the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite. Despite the opposition of noted conservationist John Muir and other park supporters, Congress approved the dam in 1913.



A 1911 panoramic photograph of the Hetch - Hetchy Valley in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California (Courtesy US Library of Congress / Photographed by Matt Ashby Wolfskill)

The controversial Hetch Hetchy reservoir highlighted the main problem in the park movement. The one side enjoyed government support from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Forest and Reclamation services. However, no similar group or agency represented the interests of park preservation in Washington. Then Stephen T. Mather, a wealthy and influential Chicago businessman, talked about the mismanagement of the national parks to Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane. Lane soon hired Mather as an assistant for park matters. Horace M. Albright, who later became an important player in developing the national park system, was hired as Mather's top assistant in 1915.

National Park Service Background

Because Mather and Albright emphasized the economic value of parks as tourist areas, they blurred the difference between those who wanted to preserve the park and those who wanted to use the resources of the parks. Mather received money from several western railroads to publish *The National Parks Portfolio*, which was sent to members of Congress and other influential citizens. At the same time, Mather hired a publicist to begin a public relations campaign that eventually was mentioned in *The National Geographic*, *The Saturday Evening Post* and other popular magazines.



A photograph showing Stephen Mather & Horace Albright — note the license plate on the front of the car. (Courtesy US National Park Service)

The most important change occurred on August 25, 1916 when President Woodrow Wilson signed the legislation that created the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior. The law made the National Park Service responsible for existing and planned national parks and monuments.

Stephen Mather (July 4, 1867 – January 22, 1930) was named the first director of the Park Service and Horace Albright as the assistant director. Interior Secretary Lane described dual purpose of the National Park Service as conserving park resources and providing for their enjoyment. The purpose reemphasized the importance of preservation but it also reflected the idea of Mather and Albright that the parks would be successful only if more people could visit. Therefore, concessionaires would provide hotels while museums and other educational activities were encouraged.

National Park Service Background



American industrialist and conservationist Stephen Mather was appointed the first director of the National Park Service in 1917 (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

All national parks except for Acadia National Park in Maine by the 1920s were in the western U.S. because the west had the spectacular natural scenery and federal government owned or controlled most western land. However, the National Park Service realized that if the national parks were to benefit more people and receive more support in Congress, it would need to add parks and monuments in the eastern United States. Therefore, in 1926 Congress created three national parks in the eastern United States: Shenandoah National Park (Virginia), Great Smoky

National Park Service Background

Mountains National Park (Tennessee/North Carolina) and Mammoth Cave National Park (Kentucky). The condition Congress made for these national parks was that the land area had to be donated. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., along with other philanthropists, gradually acquired most of the land needed for these parks. The land was then given to the government over the following years.



A photograph about 1911 of Horace M. Albright who was the assistant director to Mather before succeeding Mather in 1929 as director of the National Park Service. (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

Besides creating and maintaining National Parks, the Park Service also began developing and creating historic sites in the eastern U.S., which the War Department had also been doing since the late 1800s when Congress directed it to preserve several historic battlefields, forts and memorials as national military parks and monuments. The first designated national military parks included the Chickamauga National Military Park (Georgia) and Chattanooga National Military Park (Tennessee).

National Park Service Background

Horace Albright succeeded Mather as director in 1929 and soon convinced Congress to establish Colonial National Monument (Virginia) and Morristown National Historical Park (New Jersey) under Park Service control. This moved the Park Service closer to conflict the War Department.

Depression Era

This was changed shortly after Franklin D. Roosevelt became president. He signed an executive order, effective August 10, 1933, that transferred control over all the military parks to the National Park Service. The executive order also gave the Park Service control of several national monuments previously controlled by the Forest Service as well as the national capital parks, including the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial and the White House.

The Park Service became involved in other areas of recreation, such as scenic recreational motoring routes, in the 1930s. Two popular examples are the Blue Ridge Parkway (from Shenandoah National Park to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park) and the Natchez Trace Parkway (from Nashville, TN to Natchez, MS). Also, a 1936 agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation and the Park Service gave the Park Service responsibility for recreational development and activities at the reservoir created by Hoover Dam near Las Vegas. This area, later called the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, was the first of several reservoir areas in the park system. Recreational development was extended to seashore and lakeshore areas in 1937 when Congress authorized the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

Newton B. Drury became Park Service Director in 1940. A year later when the U.S. entered World War II, Drury had the difficult task of supporting the war effort while at the same time protecting the national parks against interests that wanted to use the resources in the parks in the war effort. For example, the timber interests wanted Sitka spruce in Olympic National Park in building aircraft. Ranchers and mining companies pressed to open other parks to grazing and mineral prospecting. Others even wanted the historic cannons at battlefields and forts managed by the Park Service to be given in various scrap metal drives. Fortunately, more accessible resources were found and Drury was able to overcome most such demands placed on the national parks during the war years.

National Park Service Background

Postwar Problems

However, the pressures on the national parks did not ease during the postwar era. The controversial plan of the Bureau of Reclamation to dam wilderness canyons in Dinosaur National Monument in Colorado and Utah began a fierce conservation battle. Newton Drury resigned in March 1951 to protest the decision of Interior Secretary Oscar L. Chapman to support the project. However, unlike the earlier debate over the Hetch Hetchy area, the park preservationists won because Congress declined to approve the dams in the Dinosaur National Monument.



*Green River Canyon in Dinosaur National Monument.
(Courtesy US Library of Congress)*

Conrad L. Wirth became director in late 1951 and began an ambitious ten-year, billion-dollar program called Mission 66. The program was intended to upgrade facilities, staffing and resource management in time for 50th anniversary of the bureau in 1966. The park visitor center, a multiple-use facility with interpretive exhibits, audiovisual programs and other public services, was an important part of Mission 66. By the end of the 1950s, over fifty visitor centers were open or under construction in the national parks.

Despite the criticism by 1960 that Mission 66 was too much development, it nevertheless did not meet Wirth's goals. One reason was Congress added over fifty parks to the system, from Virgin Islands National Park to Point Reyes National Seashore in California, during the 1950s. Therefore, much needed funds and staff were diverted to manage these new areas.

1960s Expansion continues

Nevertheless, park expansion continued after George B. Hartzog, Jr., became director in 1964. Furthermore, the Park Service began moving in several new directions in the mid-1960s. The Park Service began following the nation's growing environmental awareness. Therefore, the Park Service became involved in environmental interpretation

National Park Service Background

and emphasized ecological relationships. It also started many special environmental education programs for schools. Another example of change was the “living history” programs ranging from frontier military demonstrations at Fort Davis National Historic Site in Texas to period farming at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Indiana. These programs became quite popular with visitors at many historical parks.

The destructive effects of urban renewal, highway construction and other projects during the postwar era helped convince Congress to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It authorized the Park Service to maintain a comprehensive National Register of Historic Places. The places listed on the National Register of Historic Places were both publicly and privately owned and would receive special consideration in federal project planning to encourage their preservation.

Also, several new types of parks joined the park system during the 1960s. Congress authorized the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (Missouri) and two national lakeshores called Pictured Rocks (Michigan) and Indiana Dunes (Indiana). The National Trails System Act of 1968 gave responsibility for Appalachian National Scenic Trail to the Park Service. This 2,000-mile long trail runs from Maine to Georgia.

1970s

However, not all Park Service areas were in the wilderness. In 1972, the Gateway National Recreation Area in New York City and Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco were created. Additional national recreation areas in metropolitan Cleveland, Atlanta and Los Angeles were eventually created.

Two-dozen historical parks commemorating the Revolution benefited from a big development program during the American bicentennial movement of the mid-1970s. The Park Service reconstructed the house at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia where Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence. Also in Philadelphia, exhibits were created at the site of Benjamin Franklin’s house and the Park Service moved the Liberty Bell to a new pavilion outside Independence Hall. Then on July 4, 1976, President Gerald R. Ford, who was a seasonal ranger at Yellowstone, signed legislation that made Valley Forge a national historical park.

National Park Service Background

1980s

It took only one act of Congress to more than double the size of the national park system. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 added over 47 million wilderness acres to the national park system. The new areas included the Wrangell–St. Elias National Park and the nearby Wrangell–St. Elias National Preserve. These two areas, which combined are larger than New Hampshire and Vermont, also feature the largest collection of glaciers and peaks above 16,000 feet in North America. Ten of the new Alaska areas were designated as national preserves so some activities, like sport hunting and trapping, were allowed (these activities were not allowed in national parks).

Russell E. Dickenson became the director of the National Park Service in 1980. His plan to slow park system expansion was the result of budget cutbacks and other funding problems. Therefore, he supported the Park Restoration and Improvement Program, which allocated more than a billion dollars over five years to resources and facilities in existing parks instead of creating more parks.

William Penn Mott, Jr., became director in 1985. He increased the role of the Park Service in educating the public about American history and environmental values. He also restarted a more expansionist plan by supporting additional park areas such as Great Basin National Park in Nevada and Steamtown National Historic Site, a railroad collection in Pennsylvania. (Scranton’s representative pushed Steamtown through Congress for its local economic benefits. However, it remains a costly project even today and one that is criticized as an example of “park barrel” politics.)

1990s and today

James M. Ridenour served as director during the first Bush Administration (1989–1993). He believed Steamtown and other similar proposed parks were driven more by economic development interests than being in the national interest. Therefore, he tried to regain the park expansion initiative from Congress. He also worked to achieve a greater financial return to the Park Service from park concessions.

The Richard King Mellon Foundation made the largest single park donation in 1990 with when it gave \$10.5 million to buy additional lands at the Antietam, Gettysburg, Fredericksburg and Petersburg Civil War battlefields, Pecos National Historical Park and Shenandoah National Park.

National Park Service Background

Roger G. Kennedy served as director of the Park Service during the Clinton Administration. As with William Penn Mott, Jr., Kennedy was especially concerned about expanding the bureau's educational role. He was also the first director to realize how the Internet could be a valuable informational source. When the Republican-controlled Congress in 1995 attempted to downsize the federal bureaucracy in 1995, the Park Service restructured its field operations and began reducing its Washington and regional office staffs by 40 percent.

In 1997 Robert Stanton, an African-American, became the first career Park Service employee since Dickenson to become the director. Stanton was especially interested in increasing the diversity of the Park Service to better serve minority populations.

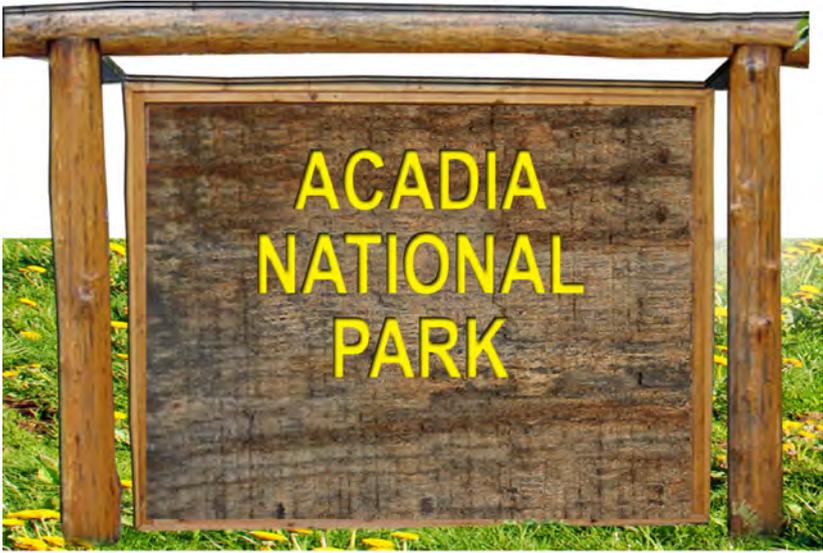
The national park system at the end of the 1900s controlled or managed 379 areas in almost every state and U.S. possession. These areas are range from the wilderness of Denali National Park in Alaska to the White House in Washington, D.C.



Not all the National Parks feature high mountains or canyons (or are even above land). The Dry Tortugas National Park off the coast of Florida is known for its famous marine life, its legends of pirates and sunken treasure and military past. (Courtesy National Park Service | Photo by Brett Seymour)

National Park Service Background

Besides preserving natural and historic places, the Park Service uses different types of grant and technical assistance programs to support and promote outdoor recreation. The idea is to cooperate with different government bodies, foundations, corporations and others to protect the parks and other significant properties and promote Park Service programs.



Location: Maine / Area: 47,452 acres / Established: July 8, 1916

Acadia National Park highlights the beauty of the rugged Maine coast and includes the tallest mountain on the U.S. Atlantic coast. It began as Lafayette National Park and was the first National Park East of the Mississippi River. The park is home to many plants and animals.

Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park, the first national park established east of the Mississippi River, is situated on the rocky shores of Mount Desert Island in Maine. The geography of Acadia National Park ranges from meadows and marshes to dense evergreen forests. It includes 47,633 acres of granite-domed mountains, woodlands, lakes and ocean shoreline (the sight, sound or smell of the Atlantic is always present in Acadia National Park).

The rocky shore of Acadia National Park is bordered by steeply rising slopes. Cadillac Mountain, which at 1,530 feet is the highest point on the U.S. Atlantic coast, is also the first place in the United States where you can see the sun rise (from early October to early March).

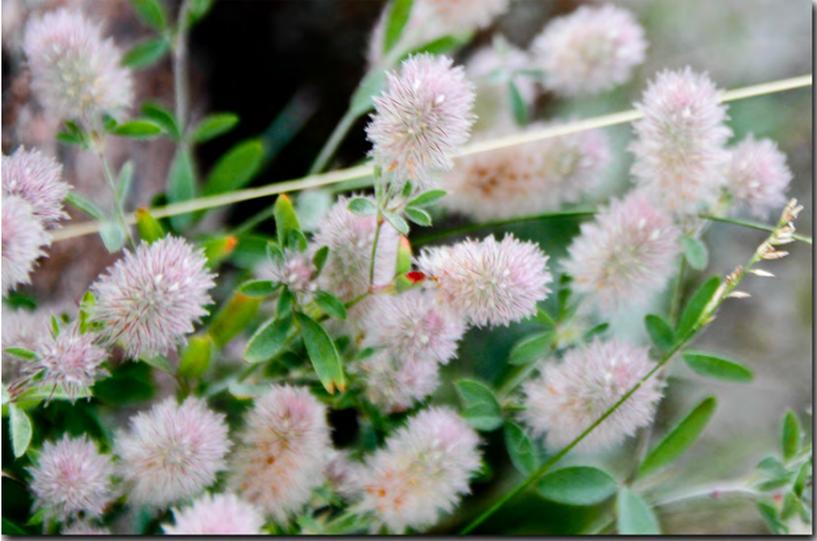


Schoodic Peninsula is the only area of Acadia National Park located on the mainland. Its granite surface shows the results of eons of erosion, waves and flood tides. Although on the mainland, the Schoodic coast is a more secluded area than Mount Desert Island, despite similar geography.

Isle au Haut is another attraction in the park. Although inaccessible to automobile traffic - its only link to the mainland is by a mailboat from Stonington - some limited camping is available from mid-May to mid-October.

Acadia National Park

The 1100 plant species in Acadia National Park represent a diversity of plant life adapted to thrive in acidic, low nutrient bogs and rocky, treeless mountain areas. The park meadows feature grasses and wildflowers and aquatic vegetation thrive in the lakes and ponds of Acadia National Park. About 25 plant species that are on Maine's list of rare plants grow in the national park.



Joseph Pulitzer, William Proctor, Frederick Vanderbilt, George Vanderbilt and other affluent people in the late 1800s built large “cottages” in the area. Although they came to the area to play perhaps without realizing it they also helped to preserve the landscape that we know today. In 1901, George Dorr, a wealthy Boston native, and others created a corporation called the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations to preserve land for the perpetual use of the public. The corporation bought 6,000 acres of land by 1913, which was given to the federal government. President Wilson announced the Sieur de Monts National Monument in 1916.

Acadia National Park



Meanwhile, Dorr, along with Charles W. Elliot and later with John D. Rockefeller Jr., continued to buy property and renewed his efforts to create the area as a new national park. In 1919, President Wilson signed the act establishing Lafayette National Park, the first national park east of the Mississippi, with Dorr as the first park superintendent. The park name was renamed Acadia National Park in 1929.

Evidence suggests native people first lived in the Acadia area at least 5,000 years ago. Subsequent centuries brought explorers from far lands, settlers of European descent, and arising directly from the beauty of the landscape — tourism and preservation.

Acadia National Park



As with many national parks, some roads, facilities and services are closed during the winter months (November -April) so check with the Park Headquarters or the National Parks website for updated information. Weather conditions vary depending on the season. Summer temperatures vary from the mid 40s F to mid 80s F and temperatures in the spring and fall range from 30 F to 70 F. You may encounter rain and fog at any time (keep that in mind if you use the “real weather” feature in Flight Simulator). Temperatures in the winter months vary from mid 30s F to below zero. Average annual snowfall is 60 inches.



Location: Utah / Area: 76,679 acres / Established: April 12, 1929

Arches National Park features more than 2,000 natural stone arches along with hundreds of pinnacles, massive fins and giant balanced rocks. It's an area of contrasting colors, landforms and textures unlike any other in the world - not to mention gorgeous sunsets.

Arches National Park

Arches National Park contains one of the largest concentrations of natural sandstone arches in the world. Over two thousand natural sandstone arches, including the world-famous Delicate Arch, are inside the park boundaries. The rocks have attracted people to the Arches National Park for thousands of years.



Water and ice, extreme temperatures, underground salt movement and millions of years have combined to create the sculptured rock scenery of Arches National Park. The arches range in size from a three-foot opening — the minimum considered an arch — to Landscape Arch, which is the largest arch (306 feet from base to base). Although it's nearly impossible to see it happening, new arches are formed as old ones are destroyed. Erosion and weathering are relatively slow but are relentlessly creating dynamic landforms that gradually change through time. However, changes in the landscape don't always require millions of years. A piece of rock about 60 feet long, 11 feet wide and 4 feet thick fell in 1991 from the underside of Landscape Arch. Delicate Arch, an isolated remnant of a past fin, is on the edge of a canyon, with the dramatic La Sal Mountains for a backdrop.

Arches National Park



Arches National Park sits on top of a salt bed, which is basically responsible for the arches and spires, balanced rocks and sandstone fins. The salt bed, thousands of feet thick in areas, was deposited across the Colorado Plateau 300 million years ago when a sea flowed in the region and eventually evaporated. Over millions of years, the salt bed was covered with residue from floods and winds and the oceans that came and went at intervals. Much of this debris was compressed into rock. At one time this overlying layer of rock may have been more than a mile thick.

Arches National Park



Salt is unstable under pressure and the salt layer under Arches National Park was under tremendous pressure from the thick cover of rock. The pressure caused the salt bed to shift, buckle, liquefy and reposition itself, which moved the rock layers upward into domes. Entire sections fell into the cavities. Also, the surface was made unstable by faults located deep in the Earth. This movement produced vertical cracks that later contributed to the development of arches. As this subsurface movement of salt shaped the landscape, surface erosion stripped away the younger rock layers. Most of the formations visible in the park today are the salmon-colored Entrada Sandstone, in which most of the arches form, and the buff-colored Navajo Sandstone. Water eventually found its way into the superficial cracks, joints and folds of these layers. Ice formed in the fissures, expanding and putting pressure on surrounding rock, breaking into smaller pieces.

Winds later removed the loose particles, which left a series of freestanding fins. Wind and water attacked these fins until chunks of rock fell out of some fins. Many damaged fins collapsed over time but other fins, with the right amount of hardness and balance, survived despite their missing sections. These became the famous arches found in the park today.

Arches National Park



However, it hasn't always been tourism or sightseeing that attracted the people to the rocks. Hunter-gatherers who explored the area about 10,000 years ago at the end of the Ice Age found material that was perfect for making stone tools – in what is now Arches National Park. You might be able to spot the debris piles that were created when the hunter-gatherers chipped these rocks into dart points, knives and scrapers if you visit the park.

As the ancestral Puebloan and Fremont peoples left the area about 700 years ago, nomadic Shoshonean peoples such as the Ute and Paiute entered the area. They were here in 1776 when the first Europeans arrived. The first European settlement of Southern Utah began with the colonizing efforts of the Mormon Church. The Mormons wanted to establish the Elk Mountain Mission in what is now Moab in mid-1855. However, they were forced to abandon the effort. In the 1880s and 1890s, ranchers, prospectors and farmers settled in the Moab area. Loren “Bish” Taylor was one of the earliest settlers to describe the area near Arches. He operated the Moab newspaper in 1911 and wrote for years about the marvels of Moab, and loved exploring and describing the rock wonderland just north of the frontier town.

Alexander Ringhoffer wrote to the Rio Grande Western Railroad in 1923 to publicize the area and gain support for creating a national park. Ringhoffer hoped the railroad would be interested in attracting more rail passengers

Arches National Park

into the area if it was a national park. The railroad was impressed with the idea and the campaign began. In 1929, President Herbert Hoover signed the legislation creating Arches National Monument but it wasn't until 1971 that Congress changed the status of Arches to a National Park, recognizing over 10,000 years of history that flourished in this now famous landscape of sandstone arches and canyons.



Location: Utah / Area: 35,835 acres / Established: September 15, 1928

Bryce Canyon isn't really a canyon but instead is a large natural amphitheater. Erosion, rain and frost have shaped the colorful limestone rocks of Bryce Canyon into unusual shapes, including slot canyons, windows, fins and spires called "hoodoos." The red, orange and white colors of the rocks always provide spectacular views for visitors.

Bryce Canyon National Park

At Bryce Canyon National Park, erosion has shaped colorful Claron limestones, sandstones, and mudstones into thousands of spires, fins, pinnacles, and mazes.



Collectively called “hoodoos,” these colorful and whimsical formations stand in horseshoe-shaped amphitheatres along the eastern edge of the Paunsaugunt Plateau in Southern Utah. Historians know very little about the Native American inhabitants of the park area before Mormon pioneer settlement. There is evidence that the area was used primarily for hunting and most habitation was in the river valleys below. Any trips to the plateau were primarily for wild game or other forest resources.

Bryce Canyon National Park



Bryce Canyon National Park is named for pioneer Ebenezer Bryce, who was sent by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) because his skill as a carpenter would be useful in settling this area. After he settled in the Paria Valley with his family in 1875, Bryce built a road to the plateau top to retrieve firewood and timber. He also built an irrigation canal to raise crops and animals. People living in the area eventually referred to the canyon with the strange rock formations near Ebenezer's home as "Bryce's Canyon." The name remained even after the Bryces moved to Arizona in 1880.

Bryce Canyon National Park



As southern Utah developed, Reuben and Minnie Syrett — who homesteaded just outside the present park boundaries — brought their friends to see the intricately eroded stone formations. By popular demand, they developed sleeping and eating facilities on the canyon rim and called their establishment the “Tourist’s Rest.” The Union Pacific Railroad bought out the Syrett’s interests after the area was set aside as a national monument in 1923. The Syrett’s soon built “Ruby’s Inn” on their own land just north of the park. The railroad began building the Bryce Canyon Lodge with the idea of making the Bryce Canyon area part of their new “Loop Tour” of the southwest.

Bryce Canyon National Park



The northeast corner of the Bryce Canyon Lodge around 1933 (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

Interest in the area continued to grow and efforts were started to set aside these scenic landscape. President Warren G. Harding proclaimed part of the area as Bryce Canyon National Monument in 1923. At the same time, the Union Pacific continued to improved facilities and transportation into Cedar City. It also started a shuttle service from the train depot in Cedar City to Bryce Canyon National Monument. The Bryce Canyon Lodge was completed in 1924, the same year in which legislation was passed to establish the Bryce Canyon National Monument as Utah National Park. (Legislation was passed to change the name of the park to Bryce Canyon National Park in 1928.)

Bryce Canyon National Park



Due to the overwhelming popularity of the new park, the Union Pacific again expanded the Bryce Canyon Lodge in 1925. The Bryce Canyon Lodge still serves park visitors today. This National Historic Landmark has been renovated to provide modern safety and conveniences but still maintaining the character of the 1930s. Over 1.5 million people visit the park each year now. Popular activities include hiking, sightseeing and photography.

Bryce Canyon National Park





Location: Utah / Area: 337,598 acres / Established: September 12, 1964

The powerful Colorado River and the Green River along with their tributaries have carved several canyons and unusually formed buttes into the colorful wilderness of Canyonlands National Park.

Canyonlands National Park

Canyonlands National Park in southeast Utah preserves a colorful landscape of sedimentary sandstones eroded by water and gravity into hundreds of colorful canyons, mesas, buttes, fins, arches and spires.



The Colorado River and the Green River have divided the park into different regions: the Island in the Sky (north), the Needles (east), the Maze (west) and the rivers themselves. Although the areas share many things in common, each also retains its own character and offers different opportunities for exploration and the study.

Canyonlands National Park



The Paleo-Indians entered the region around 10,000 years ago but the Archaic hunter-gatherers were the first people known to inhabit the Canyonlands area for an extended period. They wandered the area 2,000 to 10,000 years ago searching for large game animals and edible plants. They lived in the open or camped under overhangs.



Canyonlands National Park

Since then, few people dared enter the area except for some hardy prehistoric Native Americans, cowboys, river explorers and uranium prospectors. Even when the area was established as a national park in 1964, few people were familiar with these remote lands and rivers. Canyonlands remains virtually untouched even today. Canyonlands is indeed wild America...most of its roads are unpaved and its trails primitive.



Although you may think that time stands still in Canyonlands because the process of erosion is not noticeable, some of the erosive processes are sudden and violent. Because vegetation is sparse and there is an abundance of exposed rock, Canyonlands is especially vulnerable to flash flooding. Thunderstorms are capable of dropping huge amounts of rain quickly, which means runoff is fast because the vegetation cannot hold back the water. The runoff quickly collects in gullies and small washes and becomes stronger as water is funneled into the canyons. The power of the debris also carried by water is tremendous. Therefore, flash floods are continually scouring and deepening the canyons.

Canyonlands National Park



Most of the cliffs you'll see in Canyonlands National Park show classic profiles that are found frequently the southwestern U.S. Some of Canyonlands' rocks, such as Wingate and Cedar Mesa Sandstones, are massive layers of uniform sand that has over time become cemented from the force of gravity. The softer, underlying rock layers erode more quickly. This undercuts the harder upper layers and they break off in huge slabs. The result is often either beautiful arched alcoves or vertical cliffs.

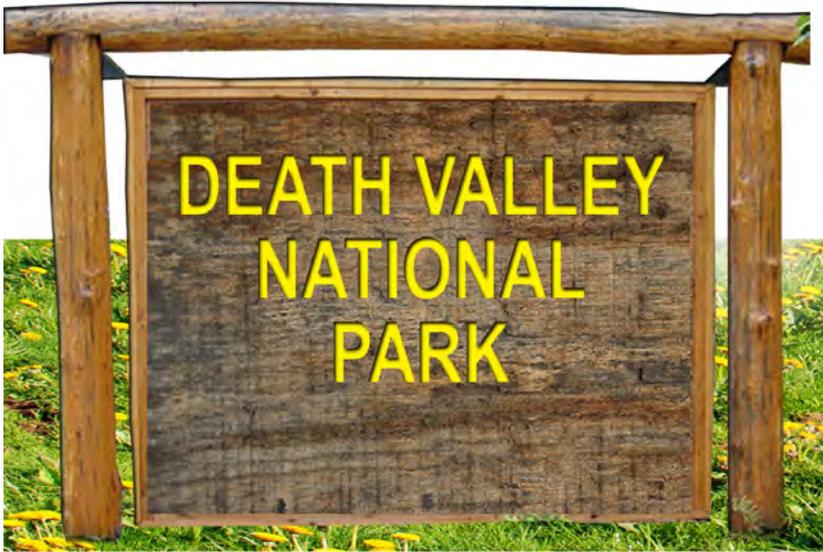


Canyonlands National Park

You might be able to spot desert bighorn sheep, coyotes and other animals when visiting Canyonlands National Park. Some animals, such as the lizards and snakes, are nocturnal and thrive in the cooler nighttime temperatures. Other animals, such as the kangaroo rat, produces water by metabolizing the dry food it eats. The larger animals that are more dependent on water must rely on their mobility to reach water sources. Bighorn sheep and mule deer, for example, sometimes travel several miles to either a river, a rain-filled pothole or a spring.

Most visitors to Canyonlands enjoy camping along its trails, roads and rivers.





Location: California, Nevada / Area: 3,373,063 acres /
Established: October 31, 1994

“Drink plenty of water!” is a phrase to take seriously in Death Valley -- the hottest and driest of the national parks. Despite its morbid name and at times harsh climate, a great diversity of life survives in Death Valley. The park is also home to Badwater Basin, which at 282 feet below sea level is the second-lowest point in the western hemisphere.

Death Valley National Park

Death Valley National Park features over 3.3 million acres of spectacular desert scenery, interesting and rare desert wildlife, complex geology, undisturbed wilderness and sites of historical and cultural interest. Its border to the west is the 11,049-foot Telescope Peak in the Panamint Range and to the east is 5,475-foot Dante's View. Badwater is the lowest point (-282 feet) in the Western Hemisphere.



The National Park Service first noticed Death Valley's outstanding natural beauty and scientific importance in the 1920s. President Hoover designated it a national monument in February 1933. Congress passed the Desert Protection Act of 1994, which not only designated Death Valley as a national park but added over a million acres to its size. This makes Death Valley one of our newest national parks.

Although its name suggests a forbidding and gloomy area, you can find spectacular wildflower displays, snow covered peaks, beautiful sand dunes and abandoned mines. However, most visitors believe Death Valley is named correctly; it's the hottest place in North America and much of it is below sea level.

Death Valley National Park



Borax wagons used in the mines throughout Death Valley. (Original image courtesy US Library of Congress)

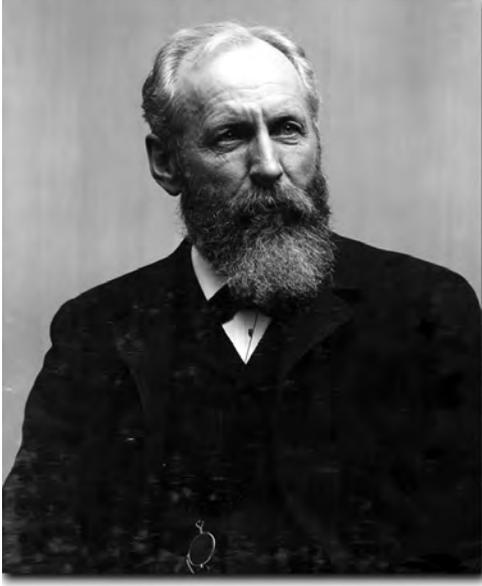
Death Valley is usually sunny, dry and clear year-round. The winters are mild but winter storms are not unusual. However, summers are extremely hot and dry with temperatures commonly running above 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Comfortable clothing providing sun protection and a broad brimmed hat are recommended in summer. Winter requires warmer clothing and light to medium jackets. Sturdy walking shoes are important year round



Two of the original Twenty-mule train Borax Wagons now on display at Furnace Creek Inn.(Courtesy United States National Park Service)

Death Valley National Park

A geologist named Grove Karl Gilbert, who worked in the area in the 1870s, was the first to note the impressive rock formations. These rock layers constitute an almost perfect record of the earth's past except that the record is out of sequence. The reason is that the rock layers forming the mountains are very ancient but only rising in recent geologic time.



Geologist Grove Karl Gilbert, who worked in the area in the 1870s, was the first to note the impressive rock formations in Death Valley.

Erosion began wearing the mountains down even as they rose. Occasional streams, resulting primarily from the infrequent but strong rain storms, rush down the steep canyons and scours boulders, soil and other debris before carrying the debris mass with it. It then deposits it on the valley floor at the mouth of the canyon.

Death Valley National Park



The valley floor usually shimmers silently in the heat. The air is so clear that distances are “telescoped.” The sky is a deep blue except for an occasional light cloud. The main weather feature is heat. Oppressive heat dominates the area for six months of the year and even more brutal heat dominates for the other six months. The mountains protect the area from getting significant rain. Nevertheless, the little rain that does fall in the valley provides enough water for the wildflowers that transform this desert into a vast garden.

Death Valley National Park



Despite the harshness and severity of the environment, over 900 types of plants live within Death Valley National Park. The plants living on the valley floor have obviously adapted well to the desert climate. Some of these plants have roots that extendsixty feet into the ground searching for water. However, not all plants have such deep root systems because the root system of other plants extends several feet horizontally in all directions but just below the surface. Other plants have skins that allow very little water to evaporate. Moisture levels increase with height, too, so that juniper, mountain-mahogany, pinyon and other pines appear on high peaks.

Death Valley National Park



Different types of wildlife have also adapted to the desert heat. These animals are mainly nocturnal. The air is so dry in Death Valley that the air temperature can drop quickly after sunset. Therefore, small animals thrive in the cool dark night air on the desert floor. Larger animals, such as the desert bighorn, live in the cooler, higher elevations.



Death Valley National Park

The higher peaks surrounding Death Valley are often snow-covered.



So, Death Valley is an active world of exciting contrasts and wonders and quite the opposite of its name.



Location: Arizona / Area: 1,217,262 acres / Established: February 26, 1919

The main feature of the Grand Canyon National Park, as its name suggests, is a gorge of the Colorado River. It's often considered to be one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.

Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon National Park includes 277 miles of the Colorado River and adjacent uplands in northern Arizona. Grand Canyon is named correctly because it's one of the grandest examples of erosion anywhere.



The sides of the canyons consist of rocks, cliffs, ridges, hills and valleys. Weather has carved many of the ridges so much that they resemble Chinese temples. However, the Grand Canyon is more than rocks in a canyon because thick forests of blue spruce, fir, oaks and Ponderosa pines cover the canyon rim. The foliage grows sparse and shorter as you descend in the canyon. Pinon pines and juniper growing along the cliffs give way to dry desert scrub on the canyon floor. Most of the 1904 square miles of the park are maintained as wilderness.

Grand Canyon National Park



The Grand Canyon has three distinct sections. Because each section has a different climate, they also feature different vegetation and climate. The North Rim of the Grand Canyon rises about 1200 feet higher than the South Rim. It's the coldest and the wettest of the three sections (it receives about 26 inches of precipitation a year compared to the 16 inches of precipitation a year the South Rim receives in a year). The Inner Canyon more resembles a desert — the lower you descend, the hotter and drier it becomes. The floor of the canyon can be 35 degrees warmer than the temperatures on the North Rim, about a mile higher. The highest points on the rim are about 9000 feet above sea level.



Grand Canyon National Park

The canyon rocks were formed millions of years ago. Their colors change according to the time of day and available sunlight. The constant force of the raging Colorado River has opened many layers of colorful rocks. The first layer of rock through which the Colorado River now runs is black and is called Archean. The second layer, called Algonkian, is brilliant red. The next layer is a lavender-brown color and is called Tapeats sandstone. The fourth layer, the Devonian layer, consists of small deposits of lavender stone. The thick Redwall curves along the canyon above the Devonian layer. Several hundred feet of red sandstone called the Supai formation appear above the Redwall. This layer is covered by another layer of red rock called Hermit shale.

Sand colored Coconino sandstone sits on top of the Hermit shale. It lies 350 feet below the rim of the canyon. The top layer of the canyon consists of cream and gray colored Kaibab limestone. This limestone forms the rim called the Kaibab Plateau on the north side and the Coconino Plateau on the south side of the Canyon.

Although scientists disagree on how the Grand Canyon was created, the one constant has always been the Colorado River. It always was and always will be the catalyst for change in the canyon.



Archaeologists believe that the Desert Archaic people lived within the Grand Canyon about 3,000 to 4,000 years ago, based on pictographs that were applied to rock. Many images are still plainly visible, but time,

Grand Canyon National Park

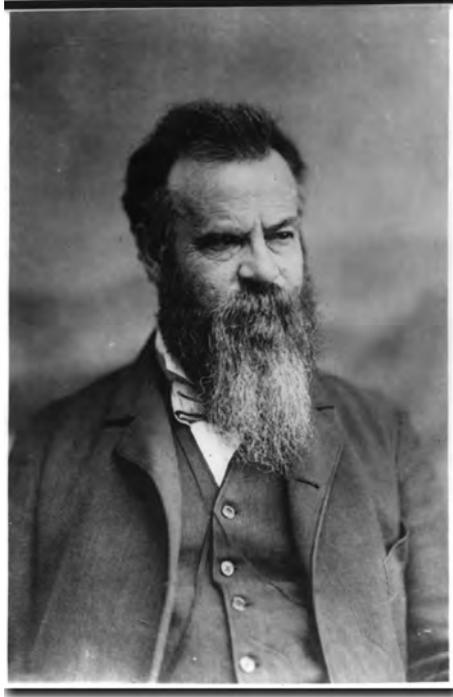
weathering, and erosion will eventually obliterate them. Pictographs from many cultures are widely found in this region. The Desert Archaic vanished from the area about 1000 BC for as yet unknown reasons.

The next known people to occupy the Grand Canyons were the Anasazi. They started to settle the Grand Canyon region by 500 AD. By 800 AD, the Anasazi were entering a phase known as the Pueblo. Ruins of adobe houses in the Grand Canyon shows that Pueblo Indians lived in this area, may be as early as the 1200s. Spaniards from Francisco Vasquez de Coronado's expedition in 1540 were the first white men to discover the canyon. Father Escalante and Father Dominguez mapped the region. Others, mostly trappers and Indians crossed the area in the early 1800s. Settlement along the Utah border didn't occur until the mid-1800s.

Jacob Hamblin, leading a group of Mormon missionaries looking for arable land in the area, discovered crossings of the Colorado River at the lowest end of the canyon (now called Bonelli Landing and Pearce Ferry) by 1860. Hamblin and his men made the first successful crossing in 1864 of the Colorado River upstream at the confluence of the Paria River. Hamblin had now located crossings for the upper and lower ends of the Grand Canyon.

However, the canyon was still virtually unexplored until John Wesley Powell, with ten other men, explored the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon in May, 1869. Powell returned in 1870 to explore the North Rim Plateau and made another expedition through Grand Canyon in 1872.

Grand Canyon National Park



The canyon was virtually unexplored until Major John Wesley Powell, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, and his team explored the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon in May, 1869.

Grand Canyon National Park



A photograph probably from 1872 showing John Wesley Powell's boat with chair attached, on the banks of the Colorado River. (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

Kaibab National Forest, including most of the Kaibab Plateau, was established in 1883 and the Grand Canyon National Preserve was established in 1906. The first tourist facility was built in 1917 on the North Rim. Congress designated the Grand Canyon Preserve as a National Park in 1919 and established its use for future generations to enjoy as a recreational resource as well as recognizing the region's scientific value.

Grand Canyon National Park



A 1906 photograph showing a man and a woman riding mules near an impressive precipice on the Grand View Trail. (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

If you visit the Grand Canyon, anticipate crowds during the vacation months of summer but spring and fall can also be crowded. Reservations for camping and lodging are crucial in these peakmonths. When visiting the South Rim, stop at the Canyon View Information Plaza to help plan your Grand Canyon visit.



Location: Wyoming / Area: 310,044 acres / Established: February 26, 1929

Grand Teton National Park includes over 200 miles of trails as well as the Snake River. The park is home to the major peaks of the 40-mile (64 km) long Teton Range as well as most of the northern sections of the valley known as Jackson Hole.

Grand Teton National Park

Although the most familiar peaks in the park are the Grand Teton, which stand more than a mile above the valley of Jackson Hole and ultimately rise to 13,770 feet above sea level, twelve of the peaks in the Grand Teton National Park are higher than 12,000 feet.



The park also includes twelve mountain glaciers. The original plan, suggested by early pioneers and environmentalists, was to expand nearby Yellowstone National Park to include primitive areas surrounding its borders, including the Grand Teton and Jackson Hole areas. Most of these expansion ideas were defeated except for the Grand Teton and Jackson Hole areas south of Yellowstone. However, Grand Teton National Park was created separately to protect the area's spectacular scenic values of the area and the native plant and animal life.

Grand Teton National Park



Grand Teton National Park was created after years of controversy. Anti-park sentiment in the Jackson Hole area was strong because of bitterness toward expanding governmental control in the area. The original 96,000-acre Grand Teton National Park, created by Congress in 1929, included only the Teton Range and eight glacial lakes at the base of the mountains.

Grand Teton National Park



However, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., toured the area in 1926 and began buying large amounts of land in Jackson Hole.



This photograph shows the dedication of Grand Tetons National Park in 1929. (Courtesy US National Park Service)

Grand Teton National Park

By the mid-1940s he bought over 35,000 acres and intended to use all the land for parks. President Roosevelt issued a proclamation in 1943 that created Jackson Hole National Monument, an area of 210,000 acres that included most federal land in Jackson Hole.

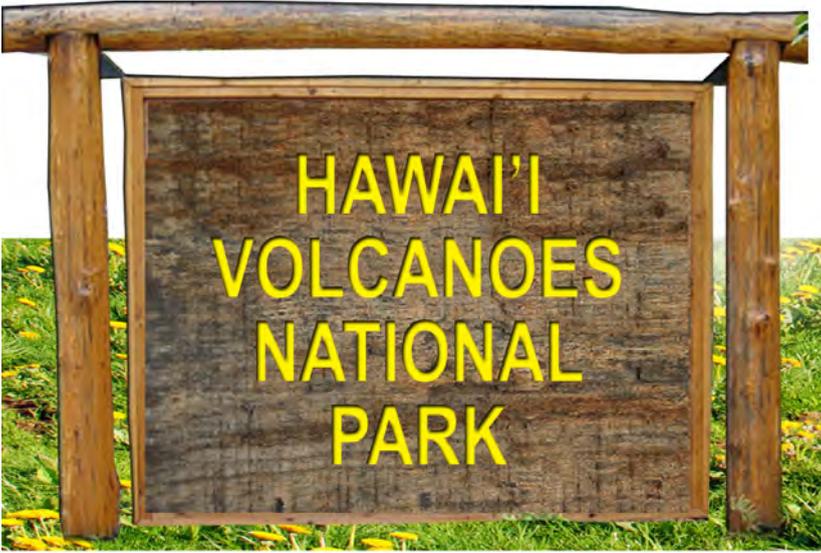


On September 14, 1950, the original 1929 park was combined with the Jackson Hole National Monument, decreed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1943 and with a 35,000-acre donation by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., into a new Grand Teton National Park. Grand Teton National Park now includes almost 310,000 acres and protects the Teton Range, Jackson Hole (mountain valley), a fifty-mile portion of the Snake River, several lakes and a variety of wildlife and plants.

Grand Teton National Park



Visitors today to Grand Teton National Park enjoy beautiful mountain and lake scenery. The more adventurous enjoy, climbing, hiking, and backpacking on mountain trails or rafting on the Snake River. Other visitors enjoy camping, fishing, wildlife and bird watching, horseback riding and boating on Jackson Lake and Jenny Lake.



Location: Hawai'i / Area: 323,431 acres / Established: August 1, 1916

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is named correctly because it features two active and important volcanoes: Kilauea, one of the world's most active volcanoes, and Mauna Loa, the world's most massive volcano.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

About 70 million years of volcanism has created land from the ocean in the area we now call the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Kilauea remains the most active volcano in the world. Although volcanic activity helped create Hawai'i, the eruptions of Hawai'ian volcanoes are gentler than those of most other volcanoes around the world. This allows scientists (and those coming to pay their respects to Pele) to get close to the edges of active vents. Even geologists are surprised that Kilauea Volcano, which erupted on January 3, 1983, would continue to erupt today. It's the longest-lived rift activity in Hawai'ian volcano history. Although beautiful and impressive, the volcano has forever changed the park. The park lost its Waha'ula Visitor Center, temple sites, petroglyph fields and tens of thousands of other archeological features. Kamoamoa Campground and parts of Chain of Craters Road are now buried beneath eighty feet of basalt.



However, the island continues to grow wherever lava meets the sea. Since 1983, more than 550 acres of new land have been added to the "Big Island." Therefore, Hawai'i's Volcanoes National Park is the only national park that increases in size without approval from the Congress.

The volcano isn't very environmentally friendly either because it emits over 2500 tons of sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere each day that it is erupting. This is one reason why you see geologists wearing respirators as they inspect the volcano.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park



Early Hawai'ian traditions mention a time in the mysterious past when the air was surrounded with spiritual beings. A thin veil divided the living from the dead as well as the natural from the supernatural. It was during that time that Pele, goddess of the volcano, came to Hawai'i. Pele was searching for a suitable home for her fire and family and settled in the crater of Halema'uma'u at the summit of Kilauea.

Pele's poetic name is Ka wahine 'ai honua, the woman who devours the land. When her molten body moves, the land shakes and a crimson glow lights the sky. Those present whisper Ae aia la o Pele ("There is Pele"). Hawai'i's native plants and animals, and prehistoric cultural relics add to the mystical feeling of her extraordinary lava landscape.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park



The early Hawai'ians revered her and made offerings to placate her wrath. Two missionaries, William Ellis and Asa Thurston , were the first Westerners to visit the visited the Kilauea area in 1823. Adventurous travelers came to see Pele's fiery lake firsthand after it was mentioned in several articles (including some written by Mark Twain).

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park



Lorrin Thurston, publisher of the Honolulu Pacific Commercial Advertiser at the turn of the century, discovered a giant lava tube, formed when a river of hot lava cooled and crusted over and the still-molten interior continued to flow downhill. The lava eventually drained out and left a cave-like shell. The Thurston Lava Tube (Nahuku) is a major attraction on the Crater Rim Drive.

Thurston began a campaign in 1906 to make the area into a public park. Unfortunately, his efforts were not effective until he was joined in 1912 by Dr. Thomas A. Jaggar, who came to the islands to establish and serve as director of the Hawai'iian Volcano Observatory. They convinced politicians, wrote editorials and promoted the idea of making the volcanoes into a national park in what was then the territory of Hawai'i.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park



Ten years later, President Woodrow Wilson signed legislation creating the area as a new national park. The park initially consisted of only the summits of Kilauea and Mauna Loa on Hawai'i and Haleakala on Maui. Eventually, Kilauea Caldera was added to the park, followed by the forests of Mauna Loa, the Ka'u Desert (the site of ancient warrior footprints set in ash), the rain forest of Ola'a and the Kalapana archaeological area of the Puna/Ka'u Historic District.

In 1961, Haleakala was made a separate national park. Today, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park protects 377 square miles of the island's volcanic wonders and is a refuge for surviving native plants and animals.



Location: Colorado / Area: 52,485 acres / Established: June 29, 1906

Mesa Verde ("green table" in Spanish) shows how the Ancestral Pueblo people lived in the from A.D. 600 to 1300. Mesa Verde National Park protects nearly 5,000 known cliff dwellings and many other important archeological sites.

Mesa Verde National Park

Mesa Verde, Spanish for “green table,” was established as a national park in 1906 to preserve the archeological sites that Pre-Columbian Indians built on the mesa tops and in the alcoves in several of the rugged canyons.



People lived and prospered in communities throughout the area from about 600 to 1300. They eventually built elaborate stone villages in the sheltered alcoves of the canyon walls, now called “cliff dwellings.” However, for reasons that are still unknown, they moved from the area in the late 1200s and early 1300s.

Mesa Verde National Park

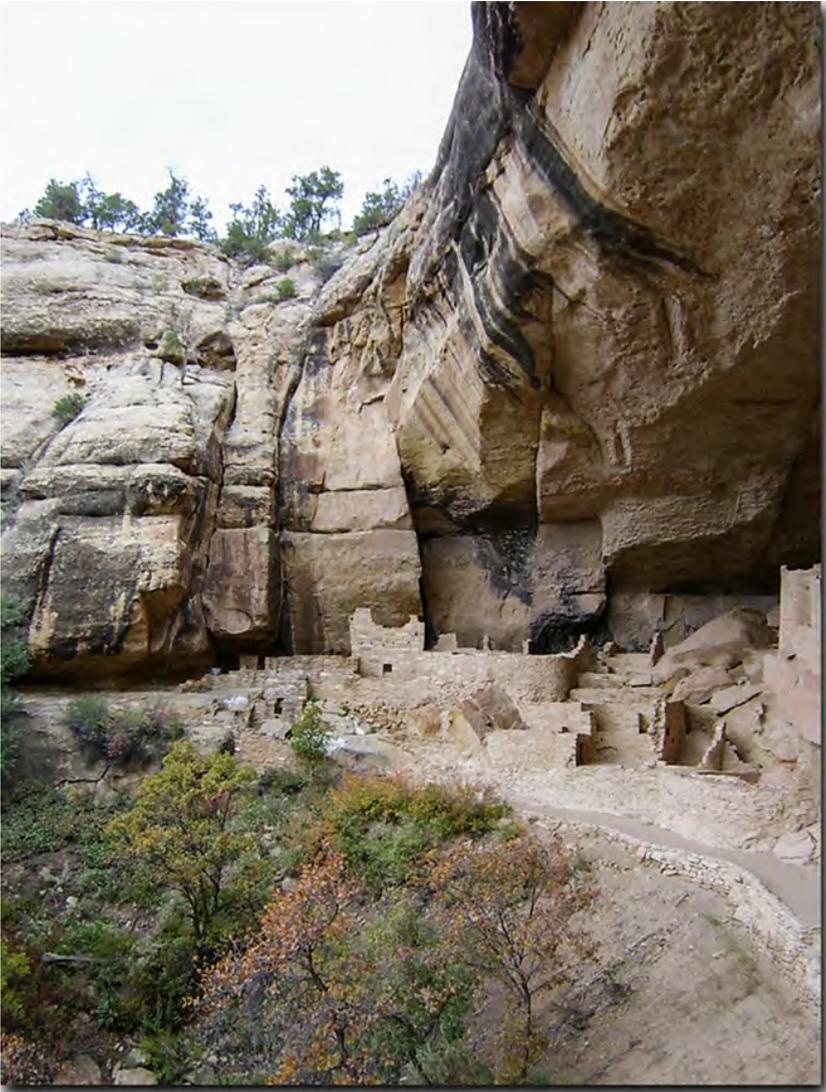


Mesa Verde National Park



The archeological sites that you can visit in the park are among the most respected and best preserved in the United States. Twenty-four Native American tribes in the southwest have an ancestral affiliation with the sites at Mesa Verde. The cultures at Mesa Verde reflect more than 700 years of history.

Mesa Verde National Park



W.H. Jackson, a photographer for the U. S. Geological and Geographical Survey, was the first white man known to enter a cliff dwelling in the Mesa Verde area. He entered the Two-Story Cliff House in Ute Mountain Tribal Park in 1874.

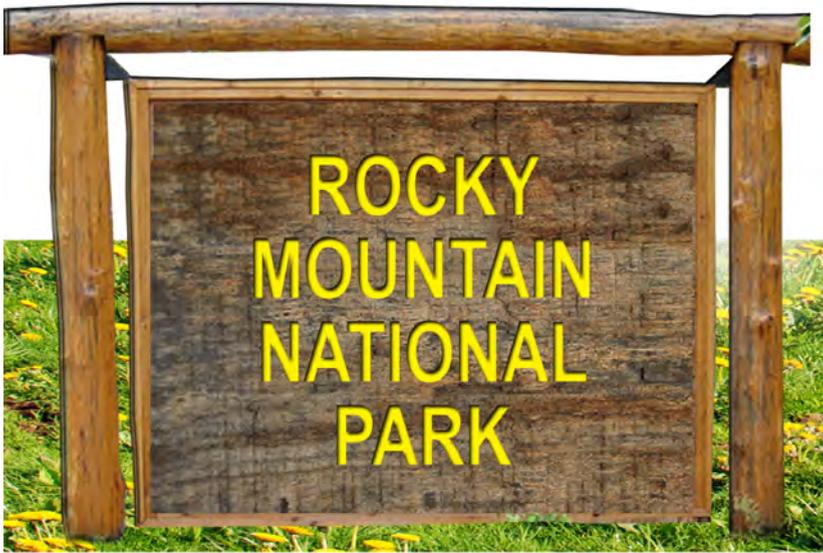
Mesa Verde National Park



The first known suggestion for the area to become a national park was made in 1886 in an editorial in the Denver Tribune Republican newspaper. However, it wasn't until 1906 when President Theodore Roosevelt signed a bill creating the Mesa Verde National Park (although an earlier bill failed to pass that would have created the Colorado Cliff Dwellings National Park).

Mesa Verde National Park



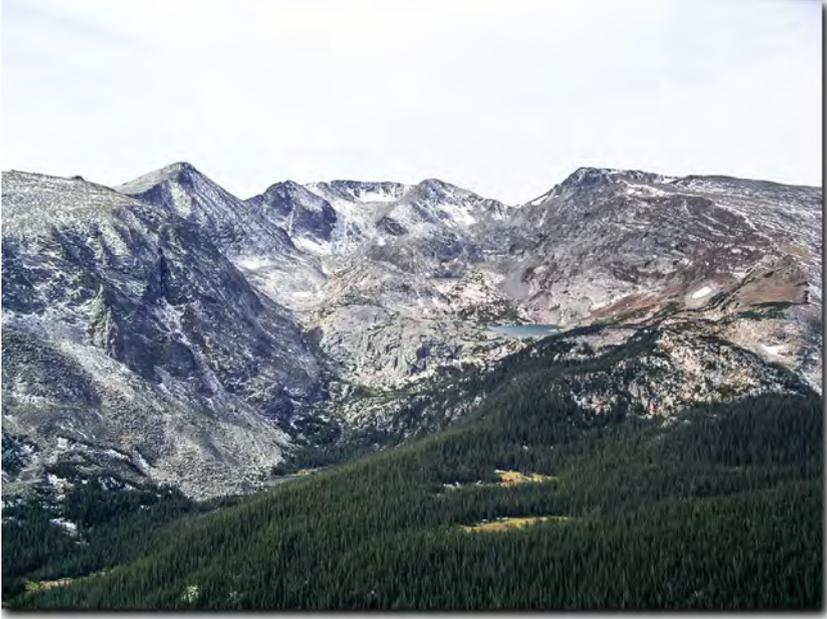


Location: Colorado / Area: 265,761 acres / Established: January 26, 1915

Rocky Mountain National Park will make you feel as if you're on top of the world, especially when you take Trail Ridge Road which crests over 12,000 feet.

Rocky Mountain National Park

Rocky Mountain National Park is appropriately named because it indeed shows the magnificence of the Rocky Mountains.



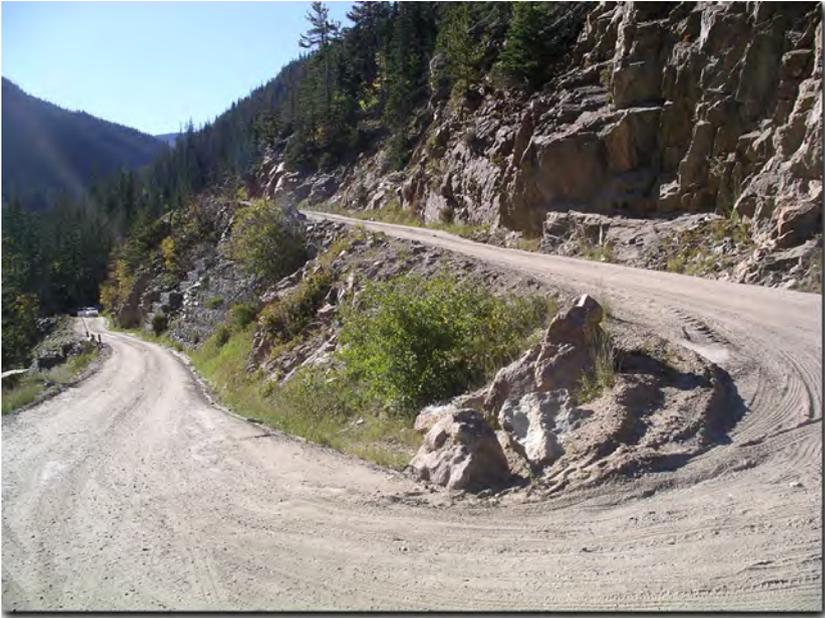
F. O. Stanley, inventor of the Stanley Steamer automobile, came to the area in 1903 for health reasons but became so impressed with the natural beauty of the area that he decided to remain. He and other citizens in the area created the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association to protect not only local wildflowers and wildlife but also to improve roads and trails in the area.

Rocky Mountain National Park



Although Stanley's contributions were very important, the work of Enos Mills may have been even greater. Mills came to the Longs Peak area in 1884 when he was fourteen. He was a dedicated naturalist and wrote books about the natural history of the area. Mills suggested the idea in 1909 to make the area from the Wyoming border south to Pikes Peak - over 1,000 square miles - into a national park. He toured the country over the next few years to promote the idea of a new national park and spent considerable time lobbying Congress to create the new park.

Rocky Mountain National Park



Although many civic leaders and organizations such as the Denver Chamber of Commerce and the Colorado Mountain Club supported the national park idea, others such as mining, logging, and agricultural interests, were against the national park idea. The different sides of the national park idea reached a compromise based on a suggestion from James G. Rogers, the president of the Colorado Mountain Club. His idea was to create a much smaller park (about 358 square miles). This park was designated Rocky Mountain National Park on January 26, 1915 by President Woodrow Wilson. The park has since increased in size to over 415 square miles; the most recent change was in 1990 when Lily Lake was added to the park.

Colorado has more high peaks than any other state in the U.S. and if you visit Rocky Mountain National Park, Trail Ridge Road allows you to see dozens of peaks that are above 13,000 feet high, including the highest peak Longs Peak (14,255-feet). Summits and areas named Isolation, Cirrus, Chiefs Head, Mummy and Storm suggest the appearance of this high landscape.

Because almost 90% of Rocky Mountain National Park is managed as wilderness, it's an excellent area to appreciate the natural beauty of the Rocky Mountains. You'll probably see elk, mule deer, big horn sheep,

Rocky Mountain National Park

moose, coyotes and many smaller animals in Rocky Mountain National Park. Despite what you may think, Rocky Mountain National Park is not just for summertime vacations because visitors enjoy snowshoeing and cross country skiing in the winter months. Also, hiking is popular anytime of the year but June and July are the best months for seeing the wild flowers.



Although historians know the Ute tribe preferred the area for their summer hunting grounds very little else is known about the early inhabitants of the area. The Ute controlled the mountain territories until the late 1700s before being driven beyond the Continental Divide by the Arapaho, who were moving west from the Great Plains searching for bigger game.

The U.S. government acquired the original 358.5 square miles as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. However, early trappers and explorers apparently avoided the park boundaries. Even Major Stephen H. Long avoided these rugged peaks during his exploration of the area in 1820; he never came closer than forty miles to the peak named for him.

Rocky Mountain National Park



Joel Estes was the first known settler in the area. After he and his son climbed a high promontory that gave them a view of a breathtakingly beautiful valley, he moved his family into a new cabin in an area that is called Estes Park today. Unfortunately, the mountain winters proved too severe for cattle, and the Estes family sold their cabin for some oxen.

The Rockies continued to attract the adventurous, including the great explorer John Wesley Powell, who successfully climbed Longs Peak in 1868. Miners considered the area a land of opportunity after large veins of silver and gold were discovered in other areas of the Rockies. This started Colorado's gold rush of the late 1870s. In 1880, Lulu City, in what is now the northwest part of the park, was a booming mining town with a rough reputation. To feed the boom town demand of the miners, commercial hunters went to work. The supply of game such as bear, deer and elk in the area was seemingly endless. However, the good times didn't last long and only three years later, when prospectors realized the mineral riches were less than dreamed, Lulu City became a virtual ghost town.

A homesteading period replaced the gold rush in the area. Ranchers and farmers realized that water, not minerals, provided the true wealth of the Rockies. They built elaborate canal systems to transfer water from

Rocky Mountain National Park

the wetter western slopes to the drier eastern plains. One example is the Grand Ditch in the Never Summer Range, which intercepted the stream source of the Colorado River and diverted it for use for cattle and crops.

Eventually even homesteading didn't provide any more of a financial opportunity than mining. It did, however, provided one new opportunity – the dude ranch. City dwellers looking for an original mountain adventure were attracted to the growing number of dude ranches in the area.

Although the great peaks may be the most recognizable feature in Rocky Mountain National Park, you'll also find alpine flowers, beautiful mountain lakes, rushing streams and impressive forests as well as bighorn sheep, ptarmigan, coyote and beaver.



Whether you're on a scenic drive, a short stroll on a gentle trail or a more ambitious all day hike to vertical mountain climbs, Rocky Mountain National Park offers many ways to experience nature in all its splendor. However, keep in mind that because of the high elevation of the park (8,000-feet to over 14,000-feet) you may need to take time to get accustomed to the high altitude. Therefore, visitors with certain medical conditions are advised to check with their physician before coming to the park.



Location: Wyoming, Montana and Idaho / Area: 2,219,791 acres /
Established: March 1, 1872

Yellowstone is home to Old Faithful and the majority of the world's geysers. This is America's first national park—an idea that spread worldwide. A mountain wildland, home to grizzly bears, wolves, and herds of bison and elk, the park is the core of one of the last, nearly intact, natural ecosystems in the Earth's temperate zone.

Yellowstone National Park

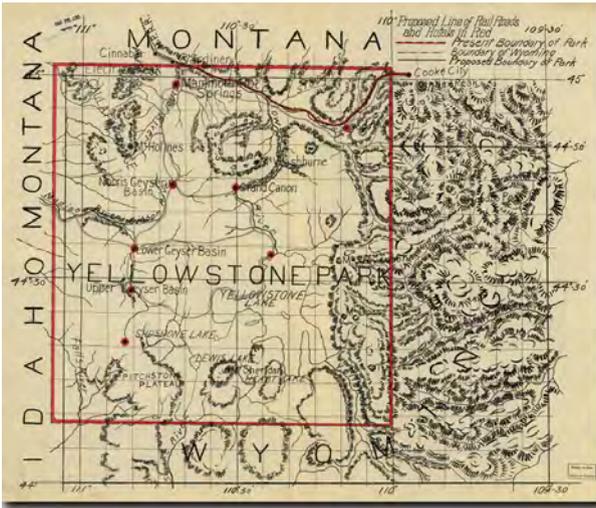
Yellowstone National Park is the first and oldest national park in the world. It typically has over three million visitors yearly. Yellowstone inspires awe in travelers from around the world. Its 10,000 hot springs and geysers (about 250 are active) are features often identified with Yellowstone National Park, particularly Old Faithful Geyser.

Yellowstone National Park



Yellowstone National Park

Most of the geysers in the world are located in Yellowstone National Park and are evidence of a large active volcano. The last time this volcano erupted, it created a crater or caldera that spans almost half of the park.



Proposed line of railroads and hotels in and near Yellowstone National Park drawn up sometime in the early 1900s. / Courtesy US Library of Congress

Wildlife often seen in Yellowstone includes grizzly bears, wolves and herds of bison and elk.

Yellowstone National Park



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Note the people on the stagecoach in the foreground in this 1905 photograph of Jupiter Terrace, Yellowstone National Park. Photo courtesy US Library of Congress / Detroit Photographic Co.

Yellowstone National Park, which is celebrating its 130th anniversary this year, covers 3472 square miles of land in the northwest corner of the Wyoming frontier. This means that it's larger than Delaware and Rhode Island combined.



The "Paint Pot," Yellowstone National Park shown in this photocrom print from 1898 / Photo courtesy US Library of Congress / Photochrom Company.

Yellowstone National Park

Although Old Faithful is the most popular attraction in Yellowstone, it's neither the highest nor the most regular geyser in the Park. Other geysers in the Upper Geyser Basin include Castle, Grotto, Riverside and Daisy. The Lower Basin also features regularly erupting geysers, beautiful thermal pools and a fascinating mud pool that often makes visitors believe they're visiting an alien world.



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Yellowstone is also known for the spectacular Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, which is 1200 feet deep and showcased by the powerful Upper Falls. The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone is not as big as the Grand Canyon in Arizona, but it is still impressive. The Lower Falls of the Grand Canyon, at 308 feet high, is one of the most photographed features in Yellowstone.

Yellowstone National Park



Yellowstone National Park

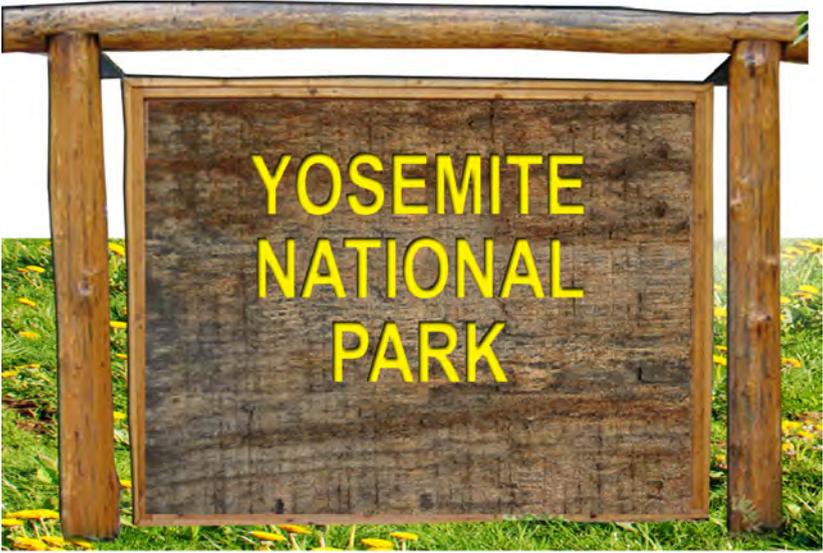
Yellowstone is also pristine mountain-range wilderness and an open refuge for several types of wildlife. This is especially true in Lamar Valley, remotely located in the northeast corner of the Yellowstone National Park. Bison, elk, coyote, grizzly bears and wolves call this wide valley home.



Yellowstone National Park



Yellowstone Lake is the largest high-altitude lake in the continental U.S. Its scenery of snow-capped mountains rising across the lake is impressive, especially on windy days when large waves break onto the shore.



Location: California / Area: 761,268 acres / Established: October 1, 1890

Yosemite is one of the first wilderness parks in the U.S. It's best known for its waterfalls, deep valleys and grand meadows.

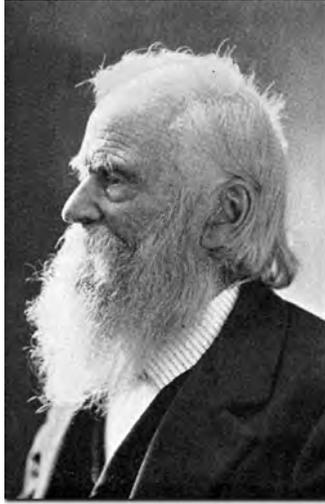
Yosemite National Park

Yosemite National Park in central California showcases spectacular geological features, including the greatest concentration of granite domes in the world and the largest exposed granite monolith in the world. It's the third oldest national park in the U.S.



Yosemite National Park

Although Yellowstone is the first national park, the idea of creating national parks began in Yosemite with the grant of 1864 (Federal land given to California for preservation) signed by Abraham Lincoln.



Galen Clark (March 28, 1814 – March 24, 1910) played an important role not only in pushing for legislation to protect the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoia trees but also for the Yosemite area. He served for 24 years as Guardian of Yosemite National Park. (From his book Indians of the Yosemite Valley and Vicinity (1907))

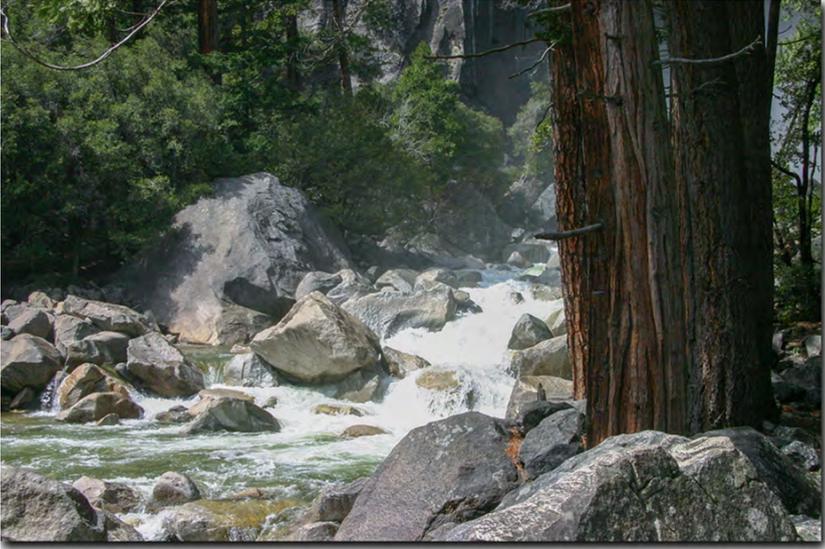
The park was established for the purpose of preservation of the resources that contribute to its uniqueness and attractiveness. Yosemite was the location of the beginnings of the Sierra Club and continues to play an important role in wildlife preservation and preserving biological diversity.

Yosemite National Park

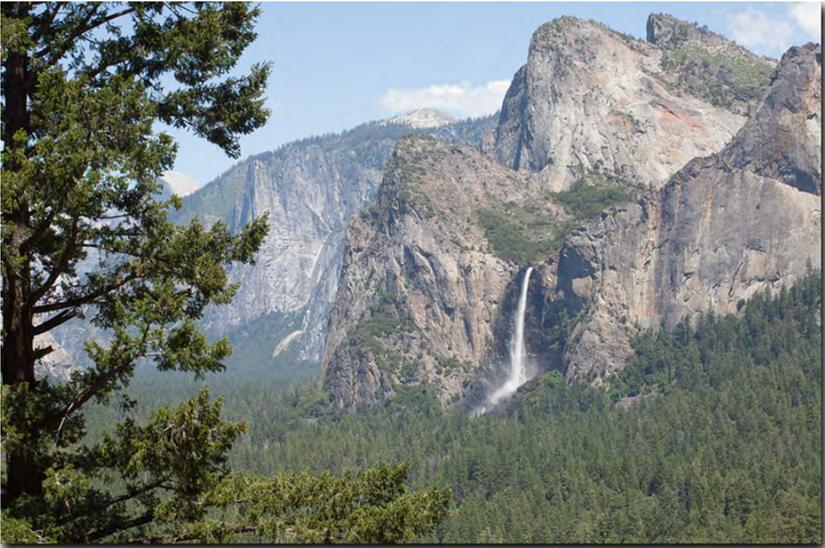


Yosemite National Park includes about 1,200 square miles of scenic areas in the central Sierra Nevada that stretches along California's eastern edge. The altitude in the park ranges from 2,000 feet above sea level to over 13,000 feet.

Yosemite National Park



Although it's not very obvious now, the Yosemite area hundreds of millions of years ago featured gentle rolling hills that were crisscrossed with a maze of streams. Then a gradual series of earth upheavals created the Sierra Nevada range. As the mountains rose, the land tilted and the Merced River began carving deep, v-shaped river canyons.



Yosemite National Park

When colder temperatures eventually prevented the snow from melting, glaciers formed and began to carve through the v-shaped canyons and changed them into more u-shaped valleys. In some cases, glaciers sheared off these canyons leaving them as “hanging valleys.” Tributary creeks, which had once joined the main stream at the same elevation, now fell from the shear cliffs, which created the park’s famed waterfalls.

Yosemite National Park



Yosemite National Park

The most famous of these falls is Bridalveil Fall or what the Ahwahneechee (Yosemite Indians) called Pohono or “spirit of the puffing wind.” The wind swirls so much around the falls that the water from Bridalveil Fall sometimes blows sideways. (Note the official name is singular.) The Ahwahneechee tribe believed that Bridalveil Fall was home to a vengeful spirit named Pohono that guarded the entrance to the valley. Pohono would place a curse on anyone who looked directly into the waterfall as they were leaving the valley. The Ahwahneechee tribe also believed that inhaling the mist of Bridalveil Fall would improve one’s chances of marriage.

Other falls include Yosemite, Vernal, Nevada and Illilouette (some of which have little or no water from mid-August through early fall).



El Capitan, “the sleeping lion,” photographed in 1906. (Courtesy United States Library of Congress)

Other sites to see include El Capitan. At almost 4,000 feet from base to summit, the El Capitan monolith is the largest single granite rock on earth. Rock climbing enthusiasts from all over the world come to challenge their abilities on the face of El Capitan. At Glacier Point on the rim of Yosemite Valley, you’ll look down 3,214 feet to the Valley floor and a commanding view of Yosemite Valley, Half Dome and the High Sierra.

Yosemite National Park



The Hetch Hetchy is taken from a Miwok Indian word for the grass with edible seeds that grew in abundance in the area. In 1913, after a lengthy legal battle, famed Sierra conservationist John Muir lost his fight to save the valley from being dammed. A large hydroelectric dam now holds water for San Francisco although studies are now being made as to whether it's possible to restore Hetch Hetchy to its former wilderness condition by removing the dam.

Yosemite National Park

Yosemite Valley, also called “The Incomparable Valley”, is an excellent example of a glacier-carved canyon. Its leaping waterfalls, towering cliffs, rounded domes and massive monoliths make it an important natural marvel. Sheer walls and a flat floor characterize Yosemite Valley. It was formed when glaciers moved slowly through the canyon of the Merced River. The ice carved through weaker sections of granite plucking and scouring rock but leaving harder, more solid portions—such as El Capitan and Cathedral Rocks—intact and greatly enlarging the canyon that the Merced River had carved through successive uplifts of the Sierra. Finally the glacier began to melt and the terminal moraine left by the last glacial advance into the valley dammed the melting water to form ancient Lake Yosemite, which sat in the newly carved U-shaped valley. Sediment eventually filled in the lake, forming the flat valley floor you see today. This same process is now filling Mirror Lake at the base of Half Dome.



The first residents were Native Americans who inhabited the region about 10,000 years ago. Several tribes lived in the area over the years, the most recent of which were the Ahwahneechee. They survived by harvesting acorns, hunting and fishing. However, their idyllic lifestyle abruptly ended when gold was discovered in the foothills of California. Some tribe members became so angered by the approaching western miners that they attacked a trading post in the Merced River Canyon. The miners retaliated by organizing the state-sanctioned Mariposa

Yosemite National Park

Battalion, which entered Yosemite Valley on March 27, 1851. Tenaya, the Yosemite chief, led his tribe in raids on white settlers in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada before he and his tribe were captured by the Battalion. They were sent to reservations in the foothills and before being allowed to return to the valley that now bears their name.



John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt on Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California, in 1903. (Courtesy US Library of Congress)

Several influential Californians encouraged Abraham Lincoln to sign the Yosemite Grant. It set aside Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias as a state supervised public reserve. Robert Underwood Johnson, editor of Century Magazine, and John Muir, were concerned by 1890 that grazing and timber interests were damaging the high country and watershed for Yosemite Valley. They began a successful campaign to persuade Congress to set aside the high country as a national park. Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove were returned to federal control in 1906.

Yosemite National Park



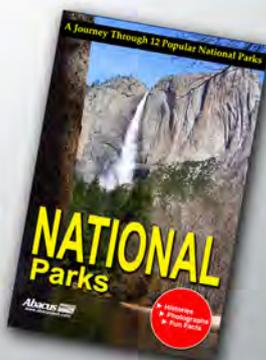
Yosemite National Park

Yosemite National Park is not only a popular national park but it has also made important contributions to California's cultural heritage, to the national park movement and to the 4,000 years of cultural heritage contributed by the Native Americans who have lived in the area.



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