



Wilderness Stewardship Program

2012 Wilderness Report



The mission of the National Park Service (NPS) Wilderness Stewardship Program is to identify and advance park lands to become part of the National Wilderness Preservation System and to steward those lands at the highest level of wilderness protection. The Program trains NPS staff and educates the public about wilderness character, values, and ethics. Further, the Program works closely with its sister agencies and external partners to enhance capacity and engage stakeholders in becoming global stewards of our remaining wild landscapes.

ON THE COVER

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Wilderness,
Everglades National Park. NPS photo.

CENTER

Kobuk Valley Wilderness, Kobuk Valley National
Park. NPS photo.



Save wild places.

Inspire generations.

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Foster stewardship.
Offer hope.

2012 WES HENRY AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Director's Wes Henry National Excellence in Wilderness Stewardship Award recognizes excellence in the Service's wilderness stewardship. Since 1993, this award has celebrated the efforts of an individual NPS employee, group of employees, and/or park or central office organization. Award recipients embody the commitment and vision of progressive wilderness stewards by embracing the interdisciplinary dimensions of wilderness through conscientious stewardship, management, and planning.

Individual Award: Suzy Stutzman



Suzy Stutzman, former Intermountain Region (IMR) Wilderness Coordinator. For nearly a decade, Suzy inspired NPS staff - both in her region and throughout the country - to realize that wilderness stewardship is a part of everyone's job. Among her many accomplishments, Suzy chaired the IMR Wilderness Executive Committee, helped develop the Ambassadors for Wilderness Program at Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, and co-developed the Wilderness Junior Ranger Program and booklet. Suzy retired in December 2012, and we wish her well as she takes on new adventures!



Ambassadors for Wilderness participants.



Group Award: Wilderness Character Integration Team

The Wilderness Character Integration Team (WCIT), a national interdisciplinary team of over 20 NPS staff, devoted extensive energy and time toward a common vision of inspiring a new direction for NPS wilderness preservation through the inclusion of wilderness character considerations. The work of WCIT over the last two years has and will play a critical role in achieving greater understanding of, and a deeper commitment to, preserving wilderness character throughout the NPS. This has been accomplished through the development of two key products: (1) *Keeping it Wild in the National Park Service: A user guide to integrating wilderness character into park planning, management, and monitoring*; and (2) the newly revised *NPS Wilderness Stewardship Plan Handbook*.

WCIT Members:

- Mike Bilecki, Fire Island National Seashore
- Carol Cook, Washington Office
- Sarah Craighead, Death Valley National Park
- Jeremy Curtis, Chiricahua National Monument/Ft. Bowie National Historic Site
- Tim Devine, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center
- Sandee Dingman, Lake Mead National Recreation Area
- Michael Haynie, Guadalupe Mountains National Park
- Chris Holbeck, Midwest Regional Office
- Chip Jenkins, Pacific West Regional Office
- Peter Landres, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (USDA Forest Service)
- Adrienne Lindholm, Alaska Regional Office
- Melissa Memory, Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks
- Christina Mills, Washington Office
- Ray O'Neil, Zion National Park
- Ruth Scott, Olympic National Park
- Miki Steube, Washington Office
- Suzy Stutzman, Intermountain Regional Office
- Karen Trevino, Washington Office
- Frank Turina, Washington Office
- Wade Vagias, Washington Office

2012 WILDERNESS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2012 saw the start of planning for the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, the conversion of potential to designated wilderness in two parks, and concluded the efforts of the Wilderness Character Integration Team. The following are highlights from the past year.

Capacity Building Accomplishments



2012 Interagency Wilderness Fellows

IMR Fosters Growth in Interagency Wilderness Fellows Program

Building on the 2010 NPS Wilderness Fellows Program, the NPS Intermountain Region, US Forest Service, and US Fish and Wildlife Service collaborated to advance wilderness stewardship through the work of college students and recent graduates. Five parks in Colorado, Arizona, and Montana (as well as many refuges and national forests) hosted fellows for up to six months. During this time, fellows developed baseline assessments of wilderness character, entered data into an interagency database, and wrote wilderness character narratives for parks.



Filming "Wilderness Hike: Death Valley"

Wilderness Film Fellows Develop America's Wilderness Webisode Series

The Wilderness Stewardship Division and Harpers Ferry Center partnered with three MFA film students at American University to develop a webisode series called *America's Wilderness*. The three film fellows are: Sylvia Johnson, Sarah Gulick, and Erin Finicane. Together, they have produced over ten short videos that feature unique wilderness experiences in a collection of parks across the country, including a family hiking trip in Zion National Park and the inspiration of wilderness to musicians in Shenandoah National Park.

Erin Drake Joins Division as Communications and Outreach Specialist



Erin Drake joined the Wilderness Stewardship Division after completing her Masters in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources from Colorado State University in 2012. Erin interned for the Division in the summer of 2010 and will be building from this internship as she focuses on coordinating communications between parks, regions, and the Division. Erin will also be leading the NPS planning efforts for the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act (2014) and serving as the Washington, DC liaison between other divisions/directorates and the wilderness program.



Saguaro Wilderness, Saguaro National Park. NPS photo.

Wilderness Stewardship Accomplishments

City of Rocks National Monument Completes Wilderness Eligibility Assessment

In March, staff at City of Rocks National Monument and Reserve assessed the lands for their wilderness eligibility. Portions of the reserve were eliminated from consideration due to incompatible General Management Plan zones, inconsequential size, private ownership, development, and/or areas of heavy visitor use. The remaining least-developed tracts of land, known as the Graham Peak Study Area (2,361 acres), were examined closely and assessed for its wilderness eligibility. Upon assessment, staff determined that the lands within the Graham Peak Study failed to meet the requirements necessary for wilderness eligibility. However, staff did conclude that the area could contribute to a larger area of potential wilderness if the Sawtooth National Forest reconsidered its management plan prescription of inventoried roadless areas immediately north of the reserve.

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Completes Wilderness Eligibility Assessment for Kahuku Unit

In April, staff at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park reviewed the Kahuku Unit (150,865 acres) of the park for its wilderness eligibility. An area of 29,848 acres was eliminated from consideration due to landscape changes caused by past cattle ranching activities, the presence of past development (roads, buildings, fences, etc.), and invasive/non-native species. The park anticipates that eligibility of portions of these lands is possible after forest restoration activities are completed. The remaining lands (121,015 acres) were assessed and determined to meet the eligibility criteria necessary for future steps in the designation process.

North Cascades National Park Converts Potential Wilderness to Designated Wilderness

In September, North Cascades National Park converted 3,559 acres of potential wilderness in Lower Thunder Creek Valley to designated wilderness. This conversion was added to the 634,614 acres of designated wilderness within the Stephen Mather Wilderness. The conversion occurred following Seattle City Light's rescindence of a longstanding proposal to construct a diversion dam within the lower Thunder Creek Valley (to augment operations on Ross Lake), thereby removing the only potential non-conforming use in the area.

Point Reyes National Seashore Converts Potential Wilderness to Designated Wilderness

In December, Point Reyes National Seashore converted 1,363 acres of potential wilderness in Drakes Estero to designated wilderness. With this conversion, the total designated wilderness within the Phillip Burton Wilderness encompasses 27,315 acres. The



conversion occurred following the expiration of authorizations for a commercial shellfish business operating in Drakes Estero, thereby removing this particular non-conforming use. Additional potential wilderness still remains within the national seashore (5,415 acres) due to other non-conforming uses.

Death Valley and Petrified Forest National Parks Complete Wilderness and Backcountry Stewardship Plans

Two parks released wilderness/backcountry stewardship plans this year: Death Valley National Park and Petrified Forest National Park. Death Valley included both designated wilderness and backcountry lands within their plan, while Petrified Forest focused exclusively on their two wilderness units. The stewardship plans are intended to guide each park in making decisions regarding the future uses and protection of lands encompassed in the scope of the plan. Public comment was solicited and received for both plans.

Education and Outreach Accomplishments

Director Receives Briefing on Eastern Wilderness

Presented with current statuses of eligible, recommended, designated, and potential wilderness park lands in the East, the Director spoke with Chris Holbeck (on a summer detail to the division) and Erin Drake about the importance of a wilderness network in the East. This briefing helped raise leadership awareness about the opportunities for future wilderness preservation in this large “region” and identified strategic steps to be taken at the park, region, and WASO levels. Following this briefing, Holbeck and Drake briefed the division and regional wilderness coordinators on this discussion. Increasing awareness and presence of eastern wilderness is timely topic for the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

NPS Signs Interagency MOU for 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act



The celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act (2014) kicked off with a signing ceremony for the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) between the NPS, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, and the Society for Wilderness

Stewardship (SWS). SWS serves as the lead non-governmental organization that represents over 20 similar groups who will collaborate with the federal agencies in planning and implementing commemorative activities throughout the country in 2014.

NPS Forms Planning Teams for 50th Anniversary

The Wilderness50, a growing group of organizations and government agencies that formally cohered through the MOU (referenced



Trail maintenance on Thunder Creek Trail, North Cascades National Park. NPS/David Snyder.

above), developed six committees to organize and carry out planning efforts at the local, regional, and national levels. These committees include:

- National Conference
- Local Events
- Media and Publicity
- Youth/Education Outreach
- Government Affairs
- Funding/Fiscal

In addition, the NPS developed two agency-specific national teams and several regional teams. These teams help ensure a cohesive and communicative approach to the anniversary's planning and development while highlighting the role of the NPS in the National Wilderness Preservation System.



Garry Oye meets with community members in Everglades.

Division Chief Visits Everglades National Park

Everglades National Park Superintendent Dan Kimball and Division Chief Garry Oye joined interested government officials, tribal managers, and stakeholders on a field trip in south Florida. The water flow from Water Conservation Area 3A is restricted by the Tamiami Trail, one of the park's most popular trails. Increased nutrients and vegetation growth continue to make the problem worse. The group toured the area, which includes park lands and lands managed by the Miccosukee Tribe (known as the Miccosukee Reserved Area). Opportunities for treatments to address the issue outside of wilderness, including restoring flows and treating vegetation on both park and tribal lands were identified.

Division Chief Visits Alaska Region Parks

Garry Oye - Chief of the Wilderness Stewardship Division - visited the regional office and several wilderness parks in Alaska. Meeting with wilderness staff, planners, and regional leadership, the group visited lands determined eligible for wilderness designation in some parks, discussed the implications of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act on wilderness stewardship, and addressed site-specific challenges for wilderness management in Alaska.



Wilderness Stewardship Division staff and German journalists.

Division Meets with International Visitors

Division Chief Garry Oye met with a delegation of protected area managers from Russia during their visit to the Public Lands Institute at the University of Nevada. The visit included a field trip to the Bureau of Land Management's Red Rocks National Conservation Area, just 17 miles outside of Las Vegas. Later, during a division-wide meeting at the university, division staff met with a group of German journalists who were participating in the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program to better understand the American political process and how government agencies engage with the public. The division described community involvement and public input in processes like wilderness designation, management practices, and place-based environmental education.

Training Accomplishments

The [Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center](#) (Carhart) provides a variety of interagency wilderness trainings, including face-to-face classroom instruction, online courses, blended learning opportunities, and webinars. Nearly 50 percent of people taking advantage of Carhart offerings are NPS staff. All Carhart training opportunities are posted on [wilderness.net](#).

Interagency Wilderness Training/Workshops

Five Carhart classroom interagency/workshop opportunities were conducted in 2012: one Interpretation and Education Workshop (Washington), three Regional Wilderness Stewardship Trainings (Tennessee, Nevada, Michigan), and one National Wilderness Stewardship Training (Montana).

Park-Specific Wilderness Workshops

Five park-specific wilderness workshops were conducted in 2012: Point Reyes National Seashore, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Glacier National Park, and Lassen Volcanic National Park. Attendees appreciated the place-based focus of the trainings and the opportunity for interdisciplinary training that considers the perspectives of many different park program areas.

Online Training Courses, Blended Learning Opportunities, and the Webinar Series

In 2012, Carhart developed and launched one new online course bringing the total available online wilderness course offerings to 25. NPS staff completed 2,853 courses in 2012 - a 157 percent increase from 2011 to 2012. The development of several additional online courses were also initiated in 2012. NPS staff also participated in a Minimum Requirements Analysis-Live blended learning course and a variety of [Wilderness Management Distance Education Program](#) courses offered by the University of Montana in partnership with Carhart. A four-part webinar series entitled “*Wilderness Character and Its Application to Wilderness Stewardship*” was also available through a partnership with the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute. Recordings of the webinar series are posted on [wilderness.net](#).

Wilderness Connect Continues to Grow its Membership

[Wilderness Connect](#), the professional social media site for wilderness practitioners continues to be a valuable tool in connecting wilderness professionals from federal agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations.

Wilderness Training Opportunities	NPS staff trained in 2012
Interagency Wilderness Stewardship Training/Workshops	54
Park-specific Wilderness Workshops	272
Wilderness Management Distance Education Courses	26
Minimum Requirements Analysis-Live Blended Learning	5
Online Training Courses	2,853
TOTAL	3,210



Staff at Point Reyes National Seashore participate in a wilderness workshop.

APPENDIX A: 2012 WILDERNESS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Council Role	Name and Unit
Superintendent	Fred Boyles, Cumberland Island NS
Superintendent	Jock Whitworth, Zion NP
Superintendent (Vice-Chair)	Sarah Creachbaum, Olympic NP
Superintendent	Darlene Koontz, Lassen Volcanic NP
Superintendent	Kayci Cook Collins, El Mal Pais and El Morro NPs
Superintendent	Sarah Craighead, Mammoth Cave NP
Superintendent - Alaska	Frank Hays, Western Arctic NPs
Law Enforcement (Chair)	Kevin Hendricks, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs
Cultural Resources	Laura Kirn, Yosemite NP
Natural Resources	Kelly Fuhmann, Death Valley NP
Alaska Region/Park Representative	Carin Farley, Sitka NHP
Interpretation and Education	Sandy Snell-Dobert, Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP and Curecanti NRA
Park Wilderness Manager	Kelly Bush, North Cascades NP
Facilities Management	Vacant
Regional Wilderness Coordinator	Chris Holbeck
<i>Liaison/Program</i>	
Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center	Tim Devine
Aldo Leopold National Wilderness Research Institute	Susan Fox
Fire and Aviation	Jeff Manley
Natural Sounds	Karen Trevino
Park Planning and Special Studies	Patrick Gregerson
<i>Washington Office Program</i>	
Visitor and Resource Protection Directorate	Cam Sholly
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate	Bert Frost
Cultural Resources Directorate	Stephanie Toothman
Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands Directorate	Vic Knox
Wilderness Stewardship Division	Garry Oye

APPENDIX B: 2012 REGIONAL WILDERNESS COORDINATORS

Region	Name and Position
Alaska	Adrienne Lindholm, Regional Wilderness Coordinator
Pacific West	Alan Schmierer, Regional Environmental Coordinator
Intermountain	Suzy Stutzman, Regional Wilderness Coordinator
Midwest	Chris Holbeck, Regional Natural Resource Program Manager
Northeast	Mike Bilecki, Chief of Resource Management, Fire Island NP
Southeast	Mark Kinzer, Regional Environmental Protection Specialist

APPENDIX C: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DESIGNATED WILDERNESS

Wilderness Name	Park Unit	Designated Acreage
Ansel Adams Wilderness	Devils Postpile National Monument	747
Badlands Wilderness	Badlands National Park	64,144*
Bandelier Wilderness	Bandelier National Monument	23,267
Beaver Basin Wilderness	Picture Rocks National Lakeshore	11,740
Black Canyon of the Gunnison	Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park	15,599
Black Canyon Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	17,220
Bridge Canyon Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	7,761
Buffalo National River Wilderness	Buffalo National River	34,933*
Carlsbad Caverns Wilderness	Carlsbad Caverns National Park	33,125*
Chiricahua National Monument Wilderness	Chiricahua National Monument	10,290*
Congaree National Park Wilderness	Congaree National Park	15,010*
Craters of the Moon National Wilderness Area	Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve	43,243
Cumberland Island Wilderness	Cumberland Island National Seashore	9,886*
Death Valley Wilderness	Death Valley National Park	3,102,456*
Denali Wilderness	Denali National Park & Preserve	2,124,783*
El Dorado Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	26,250
Gates of the Arctic Wilderness	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve	7,167,192*
Gaylord Nelson Wilderness	Apostle Island National Lakeshore	33,500
Glacier Bay Wilderness	Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve	2,664,876*
Great Sand Dunes Wilderness	Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve	32,643*
Guadalupe Mountains Wilderness	Guadalupe Mountains National Park	46,850
Gulf Islands Wilderness	Gulf Islands National Seashore	4,080*
Haleakala Wilderness	Haleakala National Park	24,719*
Hawaii Volcanoes Wilderness	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	130,790*
Indian Peaks Wilderness	Rocky Mountain National Park	2,959*
Ireteba Peaks Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	29,299
Isle Royale Wilderness	Isle Royale National Park	132,018
Jimbilnan Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	18,879
John Krebs Wilderness	Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks	39,740*
Joshua Tree Wilderness	Joshua Tree National Park	594,502*
Katmai Wilderness	Katmai National Park & Preserve	3,384,358*
Kobuk Valley Wilderness	Kobuk Valley National Park	174,545*
Lake Clark Wilderness	Lake Clark National Park & Preserve	2,619,550
Lassen Volcanic Wilderness	Lassen Volcanic National Park	78,982

APPENDIX C: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DESIGNATED WILDERNESS (continued)

Wilderness Name	Park Unit	Designated Acreage
Lava Beds Wilderness	Lava Beds National Monument	28,460
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Wilderness	Everglades National Park	1,296,500
Mesa Verde Wilderness	Mesa Verde National Park	8,500
Mojave Wilderness	Mojave National Preserve	695,200
Mount Rainier Wilderness	Mount Rainier National Park	228,480
Muddy Mountains Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	3,521
Nellis Wash Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	16,423
Noatak Wilderness	Noatak National Preserve	5,765,427
Olympic Wilderness	Olympic National Park	876,447*
Organ Pipe Cactus Wilderness	Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	312,600*
Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness	Fire Island National Seashore	1,380
Petrified Forest National Wilderness Area	Petrified Forest National Park	50,260
Phillip Burton Wilderness	Point Reyes National Seashore	27,315**
Pinnacles Wilderness	Pinnacles National Monument	15,985
Pinto Valley Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	39,173
Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness	Rocky Mountain National Park	249,126*
Saguaro Wilderness	Saguaro National Park	70,905
Sangre de Cristo Wilderness	Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve	40,595*
Sequoia-Kings Canyon Wilderness	Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks	768,222*
Shenandoah Wilderness	Shenandoah National Park	79,579
Spirit Mountain Wilderness	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	32,913
Stephen Mather Wilderness	North Cascades National Park	638,173**
Theodore Roosevelt Wilderness	Theodore Roosevelt National Park	29,920
Wrangell-Saint Elias Wilderness	Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park & Preserve	9,078,675
Yosemite Wilderness	Yosemite National Park	704,624
Zion Wilderness	Zion National Park	124,462*
TOTAL DESIGNATED WILDERNESS ACRES		43,902,801

For all acreage numbers listed above, the number reflects the most accurate estimate available based on the data source type. Data sources include: 1) Official designation legislation, 2) GIS-based boundary descriptions, and 3) Federal Register Notices .

* Acreage number has changed from 2010-2011 Wilderness Report due to updated data sources

** Acreage number has changed due to potential wilderness conversion

APPENDIX D: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS

Park Unit	Recommended Acreage	Recommended Potential Acreage
Arches National Park	70,008	9,050
Assateague Island National Seashore	5,200	4,760
Big Bend National Park	583,000	44,750
Bryce Canyon National Park	20,810	---
Canyonlands National Park	278,420	18,270
Capitol Reef National Park	183,865	4,050
Cedar Breaks National Monument	4,830	
Colorado National Monument	14,779	937
Crater Lake National Park	127,058	---
Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve	396,696	---
Cumberland Gap National Historical Park	14,091	1,900
Dinosaur National Monument	210,727	10,274
El Malpais National Monument	97,428	11,161
Glacier National Park	930,910	3,360
Grand Teton National Park	143,454	20,850
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	390,900	52,286
Yellowstone National Park	2,032,731	---
Zion National Park	9,067	---