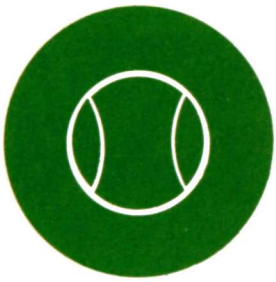
yours to preserve



yours to preserve

On-the-job guidelines
for park conservation

by Albert Manucy

with Nan Rickey, Franklin G. Smith and others

including the anonymous authors of the Antiquities Act

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Hey, Ranger, look at the arrowhead I found!

We have this treasure map, see, and this metal detector, and we thought . . . .

Can I take a tiny piece of the fort for a souvenir?

I'd just love to have that lovely rock for my patio.

Now you just look the other way . . . .

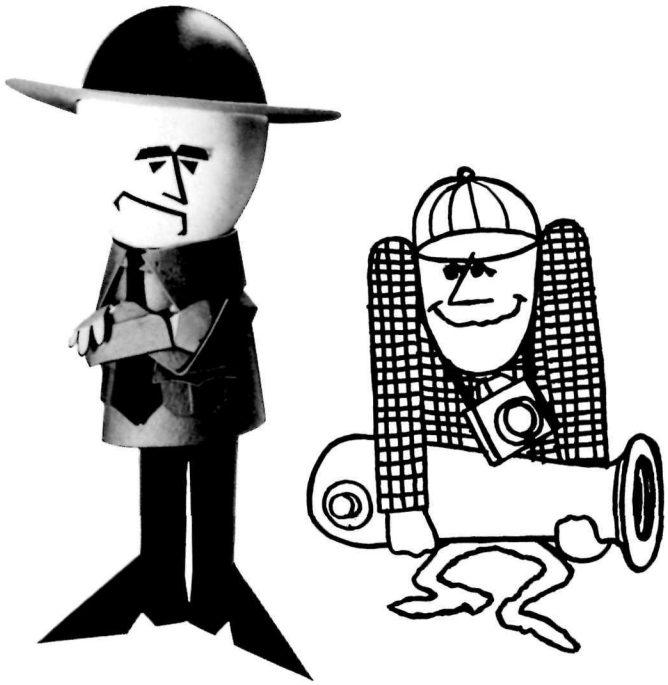
Oh, look at these dainty pink wildflowers my daughter picked for our picnic table . . . .

Each one of these happy visitors is a lawbreaker, or soon will be. What can you do about it?

You can do a lot.

Not that you, in your uniform of forest-green, are Horatio at the bridge, stemming an army come to plunder your park. (With *that* attitude, you can spoil a lot of vacations. Including your own.) Instead, rally your resources! Change prospective pirates into park guardians and conservation crusaders.

How? Well, let's talk about *Environmental Conservation.*



THE WONDERFUL PARADOX

In 1916 the people of the United States, speaking through Congress, gave the National Park Service a tough assignment—to preserve a great treasury of national parks and, at the same time, to see that people use and enjoy them.

To preserve, but to use—what a strange combination!

Preserve means to protect, to keep from change or harm. But *use* means just the opposite—wear and tear, damage, repair. How, then, can you do both?

It's not easy. But it can be done.

The National Park Service philosophy of conservation has evolved over 50 years of caring for our Nation's heritage. At its heart is a high regard for both man and nature. We believe that the beauties and wonders of our land and the endeavors of our forebears command respect. We believe that men today and in times to come will cherish them increasingly. And believing so, we delight in the wonderful paradox

preservation + use = conservation.

Such a simple formula! But it won't work unless people want it to work. They must understand the formula and, by their actions, approve it, if great parks are to survive. And their use of the parks must be *wise* use. The myriad resources in them are very fragile and irreplaceable. Yet the warning signs of danger are all around—tissue "flowers" abloom along the trail; senseless vandalism on a monument; the earth trampled cement-hard around tree roots in the campground—to tell us that many Americans don't understand the values their unthinking "use" is destroying.

Director George Hartzog said in 1968, "The single and abiding purpose of the national parks is to bring man and his environment into closer harmony." The time and place to work at this goal is when man—meaning our visitor—is under the spell of a national park. And you're the guy on the front line. The job is yours.

Don't flinch. True, it's high responsibility, but the payoff goes way beyond the park boundary. Each person you reach with this message will be a better citizen thereafter. First of all, he'll have an increased respect for the park and its resources. With new awareness, he'll see the contrasts on the way home: broad rich farmlands v. auto graveyards; gay flowers in the town square v. a city slum beyond; giant thunderheads mounting a summer sky v. eye-smarting smoke billowing from the factories. Perhaps you can even lead him to *think* about man's use of his environment: about earth and erosion, birds and insects and the chemical war upon them, water and wastes, and the loss of animal species from the earth.

If you fail to reach him, what's the alternative?

Consider the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. Once called the "fertile crescent," they are now the deserts of Iraq. Disaster came not from lack of rain, but from man's abuse of the land. He cleared the upland forests, let livestock overgraze the grassland—and the soil washed away. His vast irrigation systems set the land abloom—until water-concentrated salts poisoned the surface soil. No, man did not understand his environment.

This couldn't happen to us? In our own heartland, winds lift clouds of topsoil forever, leaving a barren countryside scabbed with junk and deserted buildings. Fish float belly-up in streams filthy with refuse and (how ironic!) frothed with cleaning detergents. Wells stop flowing, yet a flood swirls into homes. Grey shrouds hang over big cities. A great lake dies.

FOUR AVENUES OF ACTION

Environmental conservation is the primary mission, but a special theme of these pages is conservation of antiquities.

The American doctrine of using public land for the public good goes back to the days when our country was formed. This principle flowered brilliantly into a new concept when Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872: Congress decreed that every man has a right to enjoy the irreplaceable wonders of his land, and that no one has the right to destroy them. And our Nation gained a great natural heritage.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 is another landmark in the philosophy of conservation. It says, in effect, that fossils, ruins, sherds, projectiles and such—the old things found on public lands—also belong to everyone. It says that no one can dig them up (without a permit), damage them, or take them home. Not even you. Thus, the act extends the basic principle of conservation from the land itself to the roots of life and human tradition; that is, to any objects or structures of scientific, prehistoric, or historic interest which exist on public land.

As you might suspect, Congress passed this law to meet a need. The Wild West (slightly tamed by 1900) was a treasury of prehistoric relics. Looters were selling baskets, pottery, and even stonework from ancient Indian sites. The pot-hunting business boomed, and on-site evidence of early man in America was fast being destroyed.

American archeology was young then. But enough work had been done to show the field was rich. Various groups worked for legislation to protect it. They succeeded better than they knew.

The bill that Congress passed is very simply entitled *An Act For the preservation of American antiquities.* You'll find a reprint at the end of this booklet. This remarkable document has only 400 words, but it is the foundation for all Federal action in the preservation of historic and prehistoric things. As is proper for a democracy, it seeks not the benefit of scholars alone, but the good of all the people.

Part 1 of the act prohibits vandalism.

It bans—☐ appropriation ☐ excavation ☐ injury or ☐ destruction

of any—☐ prehistoric or historic ruin ☐ monument or ☐ other object of antiquity.

Note that it protects *any* significant object or structure *on Federal land.* Note, too, the $500 penalty and 90 days in jail! Congress really meant to stop the pilfering. Five hundred was a real bundle in those days. As for jails, maybe today's are fancier than the 1906 ones, but 90 days still add up to 3 months.

Part 2 gives the President authority to proclaim national monuments.

Eligible items are—☐ prehistoric structures ☐ historic structures ☐ objects or ☐ landmarks ☐ objects of scientific interest.

Again, only things on *Federal* land can be made national monuments. But of course private land can be (and often is) returned to public ownership when it is in the public interest.

Part 3 authorizes study permits.

Qualified institutions may, with written permission from the Secretary of the Interior: ☐ examine ruins ☐ excavate archeological sites ☐ gather antique objects.

Part 4 orders publication of regulations for carrying out the act.

These basic references are in the *Code of Federal Regulations.* On preservation of antiquities, see Title 43 CFR, paragraphs 3.1 to 3.17. Regulations pertaining to other resources are in Title 36 CFR, paragraph 2.20. Your park has copies. Read them.

MORE THAN ARCHEOLOGY

Resources covered by the Antiquities Act—the evidence of life that once was—are only part of what we are bound by law to protect. Later legislation, especially the National Park Service Act of 1916, charges us to care for all park values. Thus has protection been extended to the total environment of each park.

Conservation of biological resources, for example, requires constant watchfulness. Man hasn't yet learned to live in full harmony with other animate things that share his planet. In the natural areas of the National Park System our objective is to maintain, sometimes to recreate, the ecologic conditions that prevailed before man's disruption of them. Hence you will be enforcing regulations against hunting, feeding wildlife, cutting trees, picking flowers, or otherwise disrupting nature.

Nowadays we are concerned even with rocks. In the long, long ago nobody thought to stop a child from taking home a pretty pebble, a pailful of sand, or other sample of geology. Since then, what with the multiplication of the race and mass migration to the parks, the take home is likely to be a mountain of pebbles and a whole beach of sand.

If the mind boggles a bit at the number of pailfuls you tote to deplete a beach, let's go to an easier illustration—a cave. Even vandals might agree that cave formations should be protected. Why? Because production is slow and the supply is limited.

Well, then. Inexhaustible sands? Imperishable mountains? Hardly.

In 1906 the main reason for the Antiquities Act was to curb vandalism of archeological sites. This aspect is perhaps more important than ever today, for collectors have spawned prodigiously. Highly mobile, often equipped with electronic gear, they can despoil a site in minutes. Gentlemen (and ladies too) who look down on ditch digging as a career, nonetheless make the dirt fly in pursuit of an elusive arrowhead or a minie ball.

Well, why shouldn't they? After all, just one little artifact, like one pailful of sand—who'll miss it?

But it's *not* just one little artifact. It's a sociological nugget, to be studied in relation to site, soils, the objects around it, and even the historical action that put it there.

You see, digging a site is like reading a book. Except *that in archeology you tear out each page as you read it.* Archeologists *read and record* what was on the page so it isn't lost, whereas the pot-hunter seldom bothers to record, even if he can read. The page he plucks from the earth is gone. The soil, once disturbed, has destroyed the story. The artifact now has little value for posterity, even if snatched from the vandal's grasp.

That is not to say that all nonprofessionals are pot-hunters. Many amateurs are sincere and qualified. You won't have trouble with *them,* because they know the law and honor it. Often they are valuable allies.

Park resources may also include prehistoric or historic structures, such as Indian mounds, military earthworks, and architecture or engineering of various designs, significance, and condition. Since anything above ground is subject to erosion from both natural and human forces, you need to be doubly alert.

By and large, people pose much more of a problem than the workings of natural forces. To an old landmark or a nature trail, a season of heavy visitation can be as abrasive as a parade of carpenter ants, and calls for eternal vigilance guided by park regulations. The regulations state that neither collectors of posies, rocks, or other souvenirs, nor scientists, nor even park employees, may disturb these resources—unless they are armed with a permit. And the permit must be duly approved by your park superintendent or (in the case of resources specifically mentioned in the Antiquities Act) by the Secretary of the Interior.

YOUR JOB

Unlike poor Horatio, who faced an army of enemies, you deal with a host of friends. Your job is to unveil to them the concept that

preservation + use = conservation

and enlist these friends as allies. Work with your usual smiling tact and intelligence. Beware the clenched-jaw approach which often begets spiteful resentment against the very things you stand for.

You can do the job by

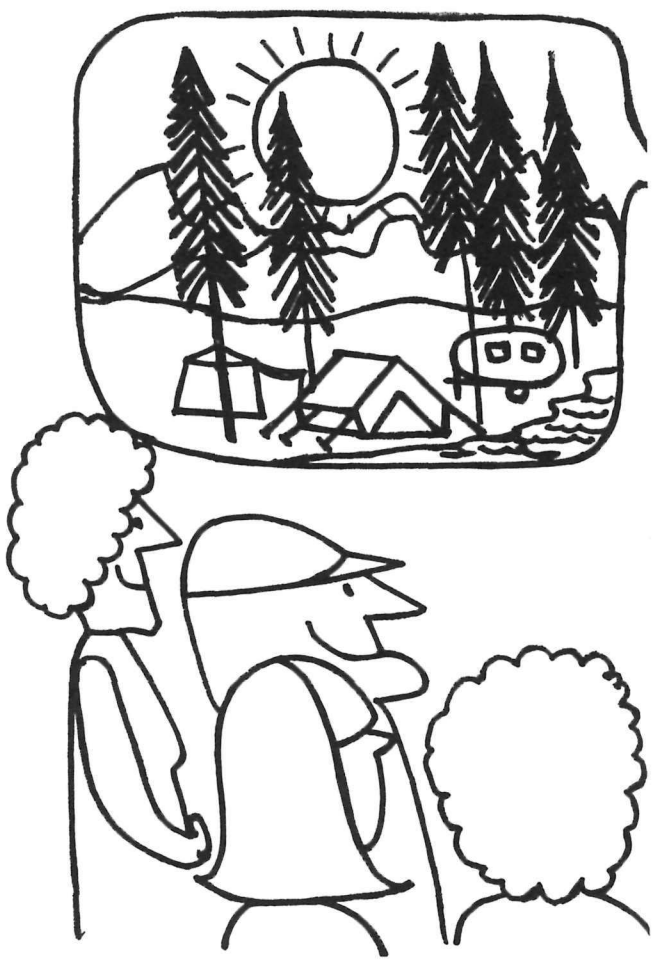
Knowing your park. Know its story and its meaning to Americans. Find its beauty, its changing aspects, its special things—whether plantlife, wildlife, or antiquities. Knowledge brings enthusiasm, and you can communicate both to visitors.

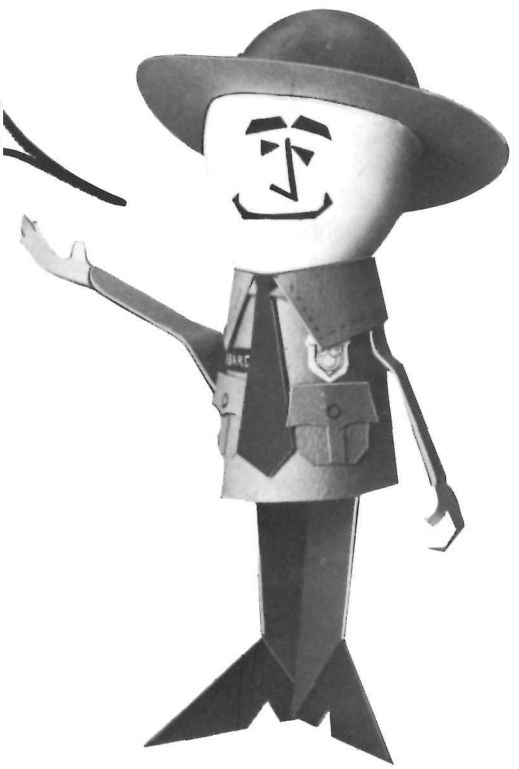
"Selling" the interpretive program. Tell visitors about exhibits, trails, tours, AV programs, good books and the like. These things give pleasure and point out the values of the park.

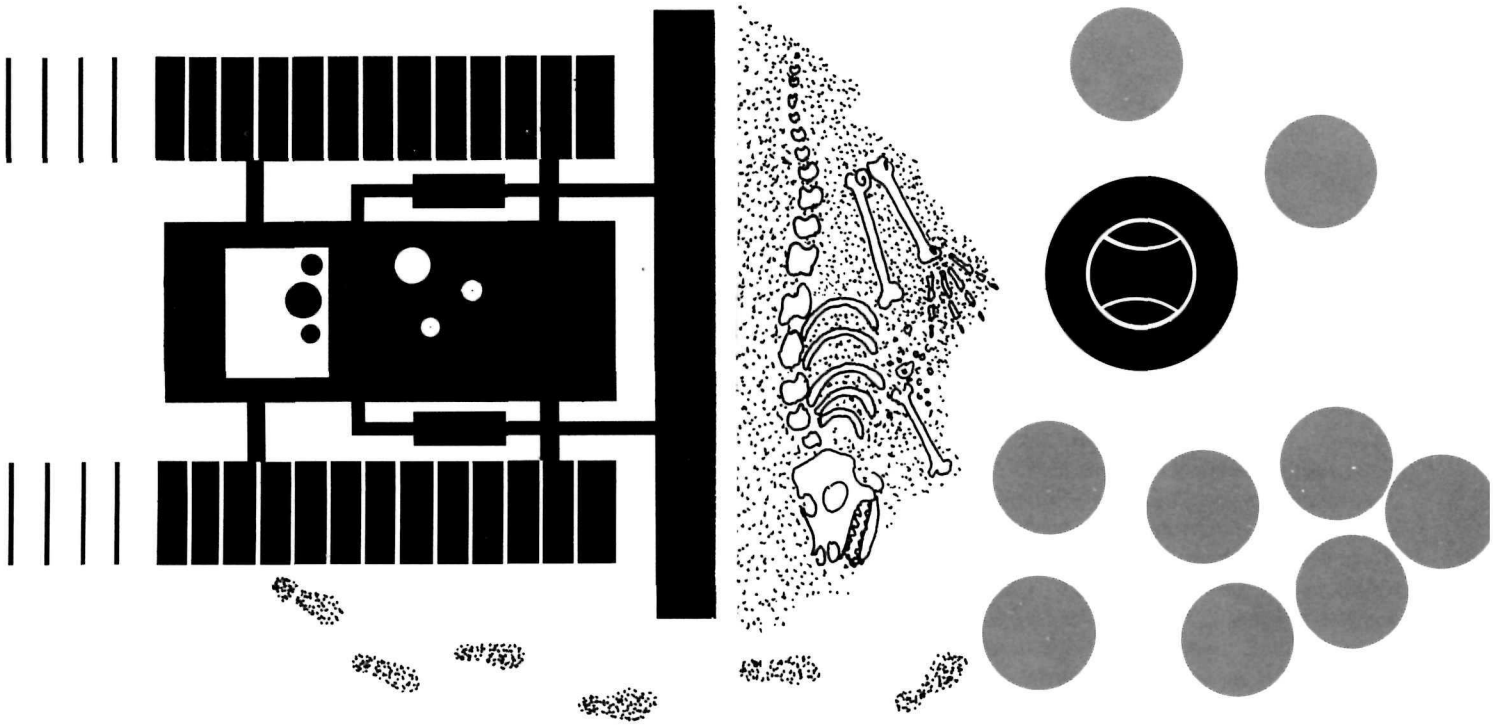
Talking conservation. Every field officer—that's you—should be ready to explain the ideas and principles that are the foundation of the National Park Service. To thousands of visitors, these ideas will be new and exciting (as perhaps they were to you). Maybe you are the first live, front-line conservationist they have ever seen! In any case, speak. Speak about the public lands and their significance to Americans now and in years to come. And speak, too, of man's urgent need to come to terms with his environment.

Knowing the law. The Antiquities Act and National Park Service regulations are, in effect, your orders of the day, to be engraved upon your memory. They guide your decisions and sustain your actions as guardian of the park resources.

Knowing the permit procedures. The ultimate reply to the collector who looks you in the eye and says he and the Secretary are bosom pals is possible only if you are (1) the Secretary or (2) intimately acquainted with the process of issuing permits.







Knowing how to handle violations. Granted, a few among the host of visiting friends will turn out to be *problem* friends —people we just haven't reached with The Message. You deal with them on a firm but amicable basis. After all, the law's on your side. Basic training from your supervisor on handling prickly situations will provide some of the answers—before you have to have them.

Being alert. You are the eyes and ears of the superintendent. A sharp eye often pays off around a construction job. Project designers try to avoid harming park resources, but antiquities still turn up in embarrassing places, such as on a bulldozer blade. Don't hurl your body under the tracks. Just ask the operator to "take five" while you check with a supervisor. If salvage is needed, your park superintendent can arrange it. You will have done your part in preserving another bit of the park fabric for posterity.

And if, in the course of your meanderings, you spot other sites—geological, archeological, historical—make notes so the data can be plotted on the park base map. Who knows? Someday they may name a mountain after you.

Speaking of meandering, keep your eye on the land next door. Especially if it's Federal land. Under the Antiquities Act, remember, you have responsibilities there too.

In historic structures you can't exactly halt the onslaught of decay, but you *can* cope with the obvious: the tree limb that threatens the roof when the storm blows; the insidious tube of the termite; and look at that mold! It just sits there, etching away. After you've seen, sound the alarm.

Standing with dignity. You, wearing Park Service green, stand for a land-use philosophy unique in man's history. The will of the people of the United States brought your park into being so that it may ever be cherished as a heritage. And you are its appointed advocate and guardian.

Love for all life. Have regard for life—regard for the incredibly complex ecology that gives special vitality to the park and for the antiquities that proclaim life as it flourished a long time ago. Above all, have regard for the people who come now to the park; and have come, go away with a new perception of their environment.

And through new awareness, let your own life grow, too. Perception and sensitivity bring understanding. Take joy in them and let this joy touch your visitors. Each person can be a powerful ally against desecration of this land in which we live. Lift the veil for them! Generations yet unborn will bless your work.

AN ACT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES

Public Law 59-209 (June 8, 1906, 34 Stat. 225)

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 the proper care and management of the objects to be protected: *Provided,* That when such objects are situated upon a tract covered by a bona fide 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.

Sec. 3. That permits for the examination of ruins, the excavation of archeological 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 regulations 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.

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