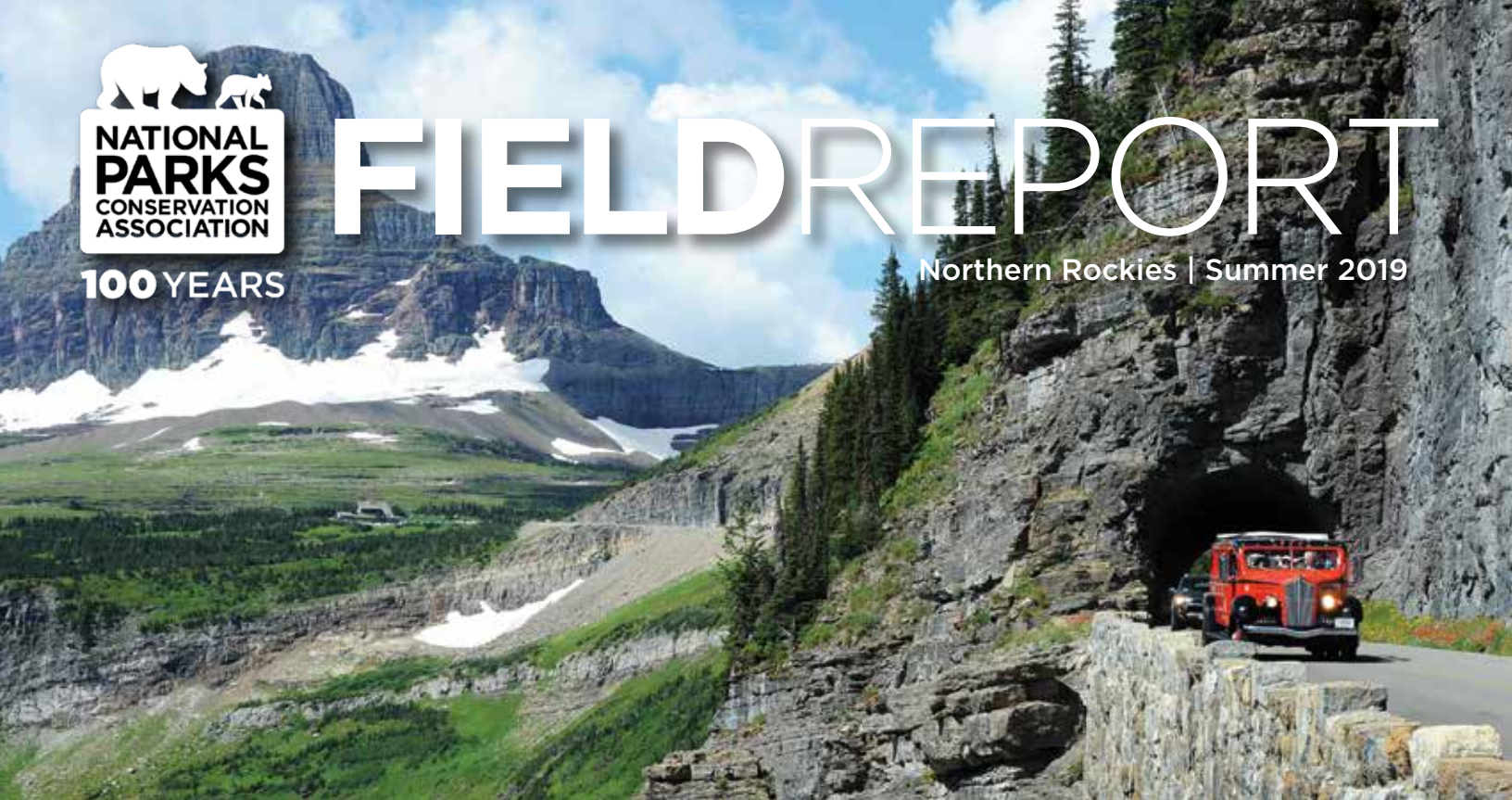




100 YEARS

FIELDREPORT

Northern Rockies | Summer 2019



A CENTURY OF WORK Protecting Our Parks, Connecting Our Future

“There’s an old saying that “if you don’t watch where you’re going, then you’ll end up where you’re headed.”

And generally, when it comes to the plight of the planet, we’re headed down a one-way street toward more people, more pavement, more pollution and a whole lot less wild nature. Think about it: when’s the last time you heard about a plan to tear down a subdivision to make room for more open space?

That’s why, for 100 years now, NPCA has diligently watched where we’re going, working to make sure we don’t end up where we all-too-often seem to be headed. In fact, that’s one of the only things that remains unchanged since our organization’s founding on May 19, 1919.

Back then, we were **protecting**: establishing parks as bandages against the wounds of logging, railroading, mining, trapping, poaching and generally commodifying nature on every front. We put protective borders around pretty places and hoped that would be enough. Of course, it wasn’t.

A century later, we’re **connecting**: linking parks and protected areas with the migration corridors that wildlife will need to survive the coming century. We’re

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IT TAKES A VISION Inspiring Generations of Park Protectors

In the heat of August 1924, three men sat near the scenic saddle of Logan Pass, high in the alpine wilds of Glacier National Park. They were squabbling, trying to settle an argument that would define once and for all the look of America’s national parks.

The veteran road engineer imagined a route to the pass that tracked up 15 switchbacks, a zipper cut deep into rocky cliffs.

The greenhorn landscape architect was dismayed, saying it would “look like miners had been there.” He wanted a lighter touch, a single switchback with the rest of the road pinned delicately to Glacier’s soaring Garden Wall.

Too expensive, the engineer countered. Too difficult. Not practical.

The third man on the mountain pass was Stephen Mather, first-ever director of the National Park Service and founder of our very own National Parks Conservation Association. As the two men bickered, Mather eyed them carefully, glanced at their horses and finally rode off alone.

Two days later, Mather made his decision: efficiency be damned. A park as fine as Glacier



should not be marred by an unsightly road.

It was the first time the landscape architect’s aesthetic had overruled the engineer’s practicality, and it changed forever the way the National Park Service thinks

about highways. No longer were roads simple transportation routes; from that moment on, they were part of the vision.

Vision is a particularly powerful word, and visionaries such as Mather are particularly powerful people. The term conjures an inspired farsightedness, a wisdom coupled with intuition and sage judgement. At its human best, vision is hope and imagination and promise of something better than we are today.

Of course, vision without action is just a dream. The real work is in the doing.

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Top: Historic red bus takes visitors on Glacier’s Going to the Sun Road ©Paul Hennessy | Alamy
Above: Stephen Mather, first director of the National Park Service ©Marian Albright Schenk

FIELD REPORT

Summer 2019

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100 YEARS
npca.org

NEW FACES, OLD FRIENDS Northern Rockies Welcomes New Leadership

NPCA is fortunate to have found an old friend to be our new leader here in the Northern Rockies. **Betsy Buffington**, a longtime conservation partner and ally, is taking the helm as regional director, overseeing our work in Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota and Idaho.



The Wilderness Society, and most recently, Conservation Lands Foundation, where she created and led an integrated training and mentoring program for grassroots leaders and more than 60 small non-profits working to protect and expand the National Conservation Lands.

Betsy is a veteran community organizer with a long history helping organizations and leaders develop their strategic and political power to protect the natural and cultural resources they care about. Over the last 30 years she has lived and worked in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, working on issues such as wolf reintroduction, protection of Idaho's high deserts, creation of the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument and winter use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton. She has worked at the Sierra Club,

Having worked with NPCA's Washington, DC, staff for decades, she is thrilled to become part of the dynamic and creative team that so effectively and passionately defends our national parks.

Betsy lives in Bozeman, Montana, and spends as much time as she can outside exploring the Northern Rockies and beyond.

Above: Northern Rockies Regional Director, Betsy Buffington © Betsy Buffington

Northern Rockies: A Century of Vision



This timeline represents just a small portion of our national park history here in the Northern Rockies. It also provides a glimpse into the way NPCA works, highlighting victories we've achieved through private land purchase, federal legislation, national litigation, local community-driven partnership, and on-the-ground wildlife projects. Depending on the task at hand, we have many tools available to us—the most important of which is you, our partners and supporters, without whom we could not achieve the work of protecting America's finest national treasures.

RIGHT PAGES: 1872: ©William Henry Jackson **1910:** Courtesy of the Library of Congress **1921:** ©Lilyling1982 | **Dreamstime 1932:** ©Creative Edge | **Dreamstime 1947:** ©Benkrut | **Dreamstime 1950:** ©Creative Edge | **Dreamstime 1970:** ©NPS **1975:** ©Daria Rybakova | **Dreamstime 1979:** ©Iakov Filimonov | **Dreamstime 1988:** ©James Mattil | **Dreamstime 1990:** ©Lilija Khuzhakhmetova | **Dreamstime 2001:** Zack Frank | **Shutterstock 2007:** ©Pancaketom | **Dreamstime 2014:** Karin Hildebrand Lau | **Shutterstock 2016:** ©Pichetw | **Dreamstime 2018:** ©Pichetw | **Dreamstime 2019:** ©NPCA

It Takes A Vision: Inspiring Generations of Park Protectors

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At about the time Mather was laying plans for Glacier's stunning Going-to-the-Sun Road, his friend and fellow park-pioneer Horace Albright was doing the work of protecting the Grand Tetons. With world-class granite summits and an American Serengeti of wildlife, who could resist the pull toward protection?

Quite a number of folks as it turns out, including cattle ranchers and land developers and even the U.S. Forest Service. For a decade and more, Albright ran hard into the buzz saw of vested local interests, all the while gathering around him a committed cadre of citizen activists. By 1929 they had protected 96,000 acres, but much was still left to the speculators and profiteers.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.—an inventive and prescient thinker if ever there was one—sparked a 20-year firestorm when he began

quietly buying land for his dream of an expanded park. He persisted despite the controversy and, in 1943, added an additional 221,000 acres to the protected range. Today, six million visitors every year inherit the legacy of Mather and Albright's imagination and tenacity.

Those initial Grand Teton protections, back in '29, came just three years after the National Park Service killed the last wolf in adjacent Yellowstone National Park—proof positive that the work does not end with the creation of a "protected" park.

Aldo Leopold, the "father of ecology," had his own vision for places such as Yellowstone, and it included not just motorways and protected boundaries but also the fundamental integrity of nature's wild web. He was among the first to call for restoring Yellowstone's wolves as a keystone species to the park's ecology.

Leopold died before wolves again roamed Yellowstone, but Bill Mott, director of the National Park Service in the mid-1980s, was inspired by his vision. Mott was a true salesman, printing up *Canis lupus* business cards and pressing palms from coast to coast. In 1988, at an annual meeting of park superintendents, he handed out wolf badges with the logo "The Eyes Have It." After an anti-wolf speaker left the stage, Mott killed the lights and the superintendents turned on their wolf buttons—the room glowed with piercing yellow wolf eyes.

The work of restoring species, such as wolves, that make national parks unique has not been easy and it most surely is not finished. But in 1995 the first wild wolves were relocated into Yellowstone, establishing the origins of packs that now range the whole of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Leopold, who died in 1948, would be pleased to know that the drive and ideas to better



Yellowstone, America's first national park, is established.

National Park Service is created.



NPA achieves its first victory when we stop the creation of a dam on the Yellowstone River.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park is established (first named Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park).



Last of the Yellowstone garbage dumps is closed to protect bears from becoming food conditioned.

1872

1910

1916

1919

1921

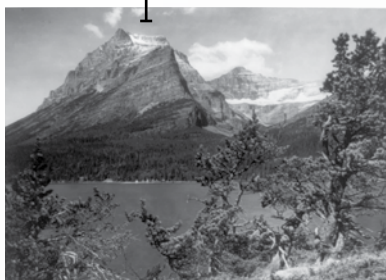
1932

1947

1950

1970

1975



Glacier National Park is established.

National Parks Association (NPA), an independent voice for the parks, is created (later renamed National Parks Conservation Association—NPCA—in 1970).



Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park is established, the first of its kind in the world.



Grand Teton National Park's modern boundaries are established (park first established in 1929).



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists the grizzly bear as threatened in the Lower 48.



conserve our national parks have outlived the individuals, and that a new generation is inspired and working hard on behalf of tomorrow.

So here's the thing about vision: despite the narrow practicalities of engineers, despite the buzz saw of vested interests, despite the controversy of toothy predators, somehow the hopeful beauty of an inspiring idea can

help us imagine our way to a better world.

That's what parks do. That's the legacy we have inherited from Mather and Albright and Mott. And that's the tradition NPCA and our members have worked to model every day for a full century now.

Places such as Glacier, Grand Teton and Yellowstone inspire us. They are cultural

touchstones as much as ecological wonders, places that reflect the core of who we are and what we value. They are a responsibility, yes, but also an endless opportunity.

One thing they are not is an accident. These parks were not created, designed or kept whole by benign neglect. Rather, they are a constant and active choice, a leap of faith, a marriage of imagination and exertion, inspiration and perspiration. And they are worth the work.

Today's challenges—climate change, global energy production, water wars, wildlife extinctions—are mind-bogglingly big. But they are not unsolvable. They are the work of our generation, and our parks and their origin stories provide us a template for getting there. Hopefully, with a powerful vision and many hands, between us we can build an elegant road to the summit that is worthy not just of the destination, but of the generations that will travel it in the century to come.

Left: Gray wolf in Yellowstone National Park ©Jocrebbin | Dreamstime



1979
Researchers identify "Kishinena," the first wolf to naturally recolonize Glacier National Park from Canadian packs.

1988
NPS completes the first winter-use plan and environmental assessment for Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks.



1990
NPCA undertakes its first pronghorn fencing project to enable safe wildlife migration near Grand Teton.



2001
Federal legislation prohibits drilling/mining leases in North Fork Flathead River Valley, near Glacier.

2007
NPCA and allies take to the courts and win a lawsuit to restore federal protections for Yellowstone and Grand Teton grizzlies

1979

1988

1990

2001

2007

2013

2014

2016

2018

2019 ...



Wildfires in Glacier and Yellowstone make world headlines and prompt changes to firefighting policy nationwide.

Japanese-Americans imprisoned at Minidoka War Relocation Center during WWII are commemorated with the establishment of Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho.



"Whitefish Range Partnership" community collaborative establishes more than 160,000 acres of protected lands and waters near Glacier.



NPCA and our partners work to raise \$46 million in federal and private funds to purchase 640 acres of Grand Teton inholdings.

NPCA helps secure passage of federal legislation, the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act, preventing large-scale gold mines on the park's northern border.





800+ Student, veteran and community volunteers who have worked with NPCA to remove or modify more than 35 miles of fencing north and west of Yellowstone to restore historic pronghorn antelope migration routes.

Left: ©NPCA Below: ©Dennis Donohue | Dreamstime



OUR WORK BY THE NUMBERS



©Robert Philip | Dreamstime

330,000

Yellowstone-adjacent acres in Montana where bison can now freely roam on a year-round basis. This marks the first time bison have been tolerated beyond park borders year-round since the creation of Yellowstone.

100 Years of NPCA park-protecting history. To celebrate our centennial, more than 200 volunteers and staff members met with 215 congressional offices in April to voice support for our nation's national treasures!

©Songquan Deng | Dreamstime



150

Length, in miles, of the longest ungulate migration in the Lower 48. The mule deer migration corridor spans Wyoming from the Red Desert to the Hoback. NPCA's goal is to protect the migration corridor, which is used by wildlife in Grand Teton, from oil and gas leasing.



©Pchefshawna | Dreamstime

14

Months it took a diverse community partnership to deliver a unanimous plan for protecting 157,239 acres adjacent to Glacier National Park's western border.

1.4

MILLION acres bordering Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park now protected from mining and drilling operations. This vast moat of protection represents an area greater than the size of the international peace park itself!

640

ACRES forever preserved within Grand Teton National Park through the purchase of state-owned land inside the park borders. NPCA and partners are working to secure funding to purchase the final 640-acre state parcel within the park.

©Franky | Dreamstime



5 Office dogs running NPCA's Northern Rockies region.

Above: ©Sarah Lundstrum



100YEARS

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A Century of Work: Protecting Our Parks, Connecting Our Future

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working with ranchers and public land managers to preserve the paths of the pronghorn of Yellowstone and Grand Teton. We're working with communities to link the genetically-isolated bruins of Yellowstone with their grizzly cousins in Glacier. And we're working with highway engineers to help mule deer, elk, and moose safely cross roads.

Nature is a nomad and she needs to move. Never has that been truer than today, because climate change—like wildlife—does not respect park boundaries. In fact, the old migration routes are feeling more and more like escape routes, as animals journey to beat the heat.

NPCA's first century was rich with success stories of wonders protected; our coming century will be defined by nature connected and wild places restored. We may not be able to stop the warming, but we can absolutely help the wild world adapt by linking landscapes and conserving corridors. The parts won't stand a chance if we don't maintain the integrity of the whole.

Paul Beier, a conservation biologist researching wildlife corridors, was recently quoted in *National Parks Traveler* magazine about this need for connectivity. "You can't manage a national park by itself," Beier warned. "That's increasingly a strategy for failure. Your park is embedded in the landscape, and we have to get smart about managing the entire landscape, because the climate is moving."

To provide a platform for these difficult discussions, NPCA kicked off our centennial



year with a series of exhibits called "*See Change: Climate in National Parks*." In partnership with the European Union, these evenings focus on art that sparks conversation about climate and connectivity. Here in the Northern Rockies, that means coming to grips with some hard facts, including the reality that Wyoming's mule deer population has crashed by 47 percent even as federal officials have opened more than 100,000

acres of deer habitat to new fossil-fuel energy leasing.

Seems fairly clear where that road is headed, which is why—now more than ever—we need to connect to you and find our strength in numbers.

Above: Grizzly bears depend on national parks in the Northern Rockies for habitat.
©Tom Mangelsen

**CONNECT
TO NPCA**

As the coming year (and the coming century) unfolds, track us at NPCA.org where you'll learn about opportunities to lend a hand on NPCA's wildlife friendly fencing projects, and about what you can do personally to help us connect and restore national parks today and tomorrow.