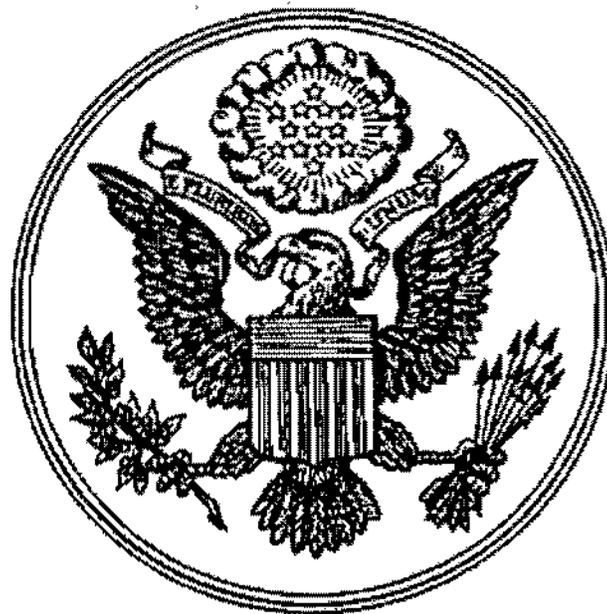


A History of  
the U.S. Department of the Interior  
During the Clinton Administration  
1993-2001

Box #1



Prepared for the Clinton Administration History Project  
Washington, DC  
2000

This box (Box #1) contains:

1. Two (2) copies of the Narrative History of the Department of the Interior during the Clinton Administration (1993-2001).
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The actual Documentary Supplement is contained in Boxes #2 and #3. The location of each document in the Documentary Supplement is indicated in the master list included in this box.

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# INTRODUCTION

## BRUCE BABBITT'S DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### *Historical Context*

For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, polar visions competed at the Department of the Interior: the older vision, of America's vast resources as commodities to be exploited, competed with the newer vision, of an America with a deep ethical obligation to preserve and care for its natural heritage. During the Clinton Administration, Bruce Babbitt sought to reconcile this dichotomy, to nurture an American passage into a holistic way of looking at, caring for and using the American landscape, and to rally support for a new era of partnerships across old boundaries that would make the merger of competing visions possible.

"Everything's related," he insisted. He dismissed seeming contradictions, including the central one at work in Interior's history—economy versus environment—as anachronistic and self-defeating, a lack of imagination as well as a failure to embrace good science.

Babbitt's experience as geologist, politician and conservation advocate, and his on-the-job training as Interior's executive led him to a vision of America's future that defied yet incorporated Interior's history: "We can't segment nature into a few preserves and then proceed to decimate the rest of the landscape. At the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we've come to understand that the natural world cannot survive that way. We're on the verge of a new movement, an integrated view of the American landscape."

Bruce Babbitt's Department of the Interior identified and accelerated a third wave in conservation history, the American Restoration. This new American era, Babbitt proposed, is economic *and* ecological, temporal *and* spiritual, mainstream *and* unconventional. In several momentous Interior-led projects, the concept of restoring an ecosystem to its natural balance has had the power, the magic, to encompass these apparent opposites.

As environmental laws passed in the 1970s succeeded in rescuing species and cleaning air and water, Americans came to believe in the possibility of restoring the balance between life's material and existential needs. New attitudes, based on better understanding of the interdependence of the quality of American life and health of the environment, have created new partnerships, and fresh ways for the Department of the Interior to add value to those partnerships, enabling it to move beyond conservation and preservation to the far more complex challenges of restoration.

### *DOI Before 1993*

In 1789, Congress created three Executive Departments—State, Treasury and War—and provided for an Attorney General and Postmaster General. Domestic matters were apportioned among these departments.

The idea of setting up a separate department to handle domestic matters was put forward many times but it wasn't until March 3, 1849, that Congress rounded up the Department of Treasury's General Land Office, the State Department's Patent Office, the War Department's Indian Affairs Office, and the pension divisions of the War and Navy Departments, and deposited them into one new department, the Department of the Interior.

Informally it was known as the "Department of Everything Else" because of its extraordinary array of concerns including the decennial census, exploration of western wilderness, oversight of the District of Columbia jail, regulation of territorial governments, management of hospitals, universities and public parks, patents and pensions.

Over time, the rationalization of Interior's responsibilities and the streamlining and clarification of its missions ended *ad hoc* functions and spun off peripheral duties, often giving birth to new Cabinet agencies such as the departments of Agriculture, Labor, Commerce, Veterans Affairs, Education and Energy. This process won Interior its other sobriquet, "The Mother of Departments."

Interior's continuing responsibilities have focused on managing the public domain in the West and carrying out the nation's trust relationship with American Indians. That focus has steadily sharpened during the past century and a half, from encouraging the settlement and development of the West to conserving federally managed natural resources and restoring endangered wildlife and damaged ecosystems across the country. American Indian policy also has evolved—from early, disasterous attempts to control Native Americans and force their integration into the nation's Euro-American mainstream to current policies of self-determination and self-government.

Social and political movements that helped to shape today's Department of the Interior include the national park initiative of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the conservation crusade of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the environmental movement of the past four decades.

The history of Interior is a reflection of the passage of American perception and policy from Manifest Destiny to sustainable development and stewardship. Bruce Babbitt's history is also about reflection, perception and passage, and learning to shape public policy to enhance the unique relationship of Americans to the land and water they call their own.

### ***Bruce Babbitt Before 1993***

Uniquely equipped for leadership of the Department of the Interior at the bridge between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, Bruce Babbitt did not seek the job. He had been offered and accepted the position of U.S. Trade Representative in the Clinton Administration, but environmentalists successfully lobbied President Clinton to make him the 47<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Interior instead.

Babbitt's roots are in the West, in generations of Arizona merchants and ranchers. A childhood fascination with fossils and rocks led him to study geology at Notre Dame and the emerging field of plate tectonics at England's University of Newcastle. Work in Bolivian Indian Villages during a graduate school internship encouraged him to abandon the "pure abstraction" of geology for VISTA volunteer work in Caracas slums and work camps in the Andes.

After obtaining a law degree from Harvard he worked in the civil rights movement before returning to Arizona to practice natural resource law. In 1974 Babbitt was elected state Attorney General, where his pursuit of organized crime for land fraud earned him death threats. While he was thinking over a run for Congress, the incumbent Governor of Arizona left office to become Ambassador to Argentina. Four months later his successor died, catapulting Attorney General Babbitt into the Arizona governorship.

In Babbitt's nine years as Governor, he carried out reforms in education, environmental policy and health care. He brought environmentalists and industry together in order to solve Arizona's water supply problems, then persuaded the GOP-controlled state legislature to pass sweeping water reform legislation. He disarmed people by listening to them, and earned their support by crafting consensus solutions.

Babbitt campaigned for clean air. He gave Arizona a foreign policy by lobbying Mexico to cut sulfur dioxide emissions from smelters across the border. He successfully pressured the Navajo Power Plant to install scrubbers to prevent air pollution over the Grand Canyon.

Babbitt ran for President in 1988 in a crowded field, dropping out after the New Hampshire primary. He traded politics for law at a Washington, D.C. firm, then led the League of Conservation Voters. There he learned the needs and tactics of environmental groups, which has allowed him to keep their criticism of him as Interior Secretary in perspective. While acutely aware of advocacy groups and their positions, Babbitt spent more of his time forging better relationships and consensus for change among local constituencies and state, federal and Congressional leaders.

#### **MOVING FROM CONSERVATION TO RESTORATION: AN ACTIVIST'S AGENDA**

Babbitt credits on-the-job training for teaching him the ropes, setting his goals and deepening his understanding of what was imperative as well as possible as Secretary of the Interior. But he brought his own arsenal of knowledge, belief and skills from many disciplines. No talent would prove more helpful to the department than his knack for reading the public mood and using opportunity, opposition and controversy to frame issues, alter perceptions and press for creative solutions.

He began by listening to career and political staff, learning more about the issues that concerned them, observing public attitudes about those issues, and allowing his own thinking to evolve. He spent more time out in the country on public land than he spent in Washington, D.C. He held more meetings with field staff, local and state leaders and constituent groups in the West than in his own conference room. He spent more time fishing and hiking with constituents and reporters than on Capitol Hill.

On his Natural Heritage Tour to cities across the country, and on many other less formal trips, he observed first hand grassroots restoration efforts made possible by the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts of the 1970s, and the bond that had been created between good laws, good science and good citizenship. He began to articulate what the American people had achieved through those public policies in their own communities and what they felt and believed about the future. He

called what was happening the “American Restoration.” He described it as the third movement in the country’s progression away from exploitation, first to conservation, then preservation, and today to restoration.

To capture and capitalize on this American will for restoration, he accepted invitations and chose meetings, interviews, and public appearances strategically, grabbing public attention through the media, transmitting optimism and urgency, highlighting successes, articulating goals, advocating action. Whenever the politics in Washington, D.C. ran counter to the public mood, he would appear in the opposition’s back yard to explain the argument for local cameras and reporters.

Babbitt’s independent streak was perhaps most surprising when he reached out to America’s religious community, honoring the connection between the natural and spiritual worlds, sharing his own belief that resource stewardship is a devotion and a recognition of man’s obligation to protect God’s creation.

For eight years, in plaid shirt, khakis, and sneakers, he would fish, hike, climb, ruminate, and fulminate across hundreds of American landscapes, sifting this experience for the images and words that resonate with the American public, sharing his awe and attachment for what he saw as God’s creation and America’s birthright, urging a more spiritual, more creative and more muscular stewardship ethic, and applauding the grassroots intergenerational partnerships with government that are restoring as well as protecting America’s resource treasury.

## **ALIGNING THE MISSION TO THE ORGANIZATION**

The Clinton Administration presented its Cabinet with an imperative: make government smaller and more efficient. For Interior, that meant reducing overhead and headquarters employees while increasing field program staffing. From 1993 to 1999, Interior staffing was reduced by 9,911 full-time equivalent staff years (FTEs). Closing the Bureau of Mines in 1995 accounted for 20 percent of the reduction, or 2,100 FTEs. Buy-outs of employees near retirement from 1994 through 1998 reduced the workforce by 7,670. This dislocation and rebalancing of the workload would be painful but productive.

Among the problems that greeted the Administration at Interior in January, 1993, were underfunded national park and national refuge systems; overgrazed public lands; large scale ecosystems in collapse; an underused and under-appreciated Endangered Species Act; a largely ignored internal biological science capability; unsettled and unsettling water claims, compacts, and conflicts; a bereft land acquisition fund; an untrustworthy Indian trust management system; a deteriorated Indian school infrastructure; and a grossly outdated hard rock mining law.

The arrival of the Clinton Administration signaled a sharp change in direction to correct these deficiencies and set Interior on a different course. The FY 1994 budget laid out major goals: boost operations at national parks, refuges and seashores; accelerate species recovery; raise revenues; improve riparian areas; invest in science; repair reservation dams; settle Indian water rights claims; improve Indian schools; streamline management, and reduce costs.

The Administration’s FY 1994 budget proposed substantial investments in parks and refuge infrastructure and restoration of American range lands. It supported the principle that use of the

public's natural resources should be supported by fees moving toward market rates, and proposed to establish a National Biological Survey, a bureau to assist the land management agencies in upgrading their biological science capabilities. Overall, reaction in the Democrat-controlled Congress was favorable, though the President received only half his requested increase for Interior that year.

### *The National Heritage Tours*

The FY 1995 Administration budget, which proposed to continue restoration progress, received a hostile reception by the new Republican-controlled Congress. In April of 1995, Babbitt "left Washington" to tour sixty-seven cities in 100 days to ask the public if they agreed with the new Congress about dismantling the framework of restoration progress. In a speech at the National Press Club at the end of 1995, Babbitt related why he embarked on his National Heritage Tours:

I left because the House leadership told the Wall Street Journal that DDT "was not harmful" and "should not be banned." I left because a new Congressman opposed our reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park and asked me "Why don't you just open it up for hunting?" I left because the House attached 17 riders—legislative Post-its—to the EPA budget that would, among other things, restrict regulation of lead in the air, weaken standards that keep radon and arsenic out of tap water, and exempt industrial plants from water-pollution controls. I left because the Alaska delegation had introduced a bill to drill (for oil in ) the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

I stayed on the road because I read in the Denver Post that the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Public Lands estimated that his committee might "have to close more than 100 of the National Park Service's 360 units." I stayed because another Congressman sponsored legislation to abolish the newly created Mojave National Preserve in California. I stayed out there because the Senate passed a moratorium on listing endangered species. I stayed out there because the House passed a "Clean Water" bill that repeals storm water treatment, repeals nonpoint pollution controls, and defines 80 percent of all wetlands as nonexistent.

I left because all these changes were about to happen, with no discussion, no debate, and working Americans were not informed of the sweeping changes that would alter their communities and diminish the future of their children.

On his tours, Babbitt visited the cities, rivers, waterfronts, historic battlefields and beaches that had been transformed by the conservation laws of the 1970s, and the people who had used the laws to restore them. Canoeing, fishing, boating, hiking—he staged media events with local people to highlight their restoration progress and raise the alarm that Congress was poised to destroy it.

The budget passed by Congress was studded with anti-environmental riders and the resulting stalemate with the Administration became a showdown by late September of 1995, when the President vetoed the budget, shut the federal government down, and entered into a series of protracted and newsworthy negotiations with the majority leaders in Congress. The negotiations eliminated egregious riders and provided Interior modest budget increases. One of the triggers

for settlement was the public pressure brought to bear on Congress from the shut down of national parks and other public facilities. Babbitt explains:

... when Americans learned that their hard won gains might be taken away, at that very moment, by politicians in Washington, they awoke like a sleeping giant. They awoke, and got on the phone, and wrote letters to the editor, to their Congressmen, and soon the pressure began to build. Soon there were stories in the press about a public backlash against the Republican agenda. Suddenly reporters were writing about the rise of a cadre of "green" and "moderate" Republicans. And by last month there were stories about how Americans have handed the Republican agenda an embarrassing string of setbacks.

Though appropriations battles would continue through the end of the second term in less dramatic if equally contentious circumstances, the consistent policy of proposing healthier budgets for the land management bureaus resulted in steady increases over the years. By FY 2000, the operational budget of Fish and Wildlife Service had increased 35 percent; National Parks Service had increased 25 percent; and the Bureau of Land Management had increased 19 percent.

### *Beyond Budgets*

Babbitt employed a combination of increased operational funds, increased efficiency of their use, and policy and program innovations to correct deficiencies and achieve new goals. Working with the Administration, Interior redefined its missions and identified new objectives and performance measures through a comprehensive strategic plan.

With the Secretary setting the example and encouraging it at every turn, Interior increased collaboration with other federal agencies as well as state and local agencies and landowners, encouraged and leveraged partnerships with the non-profit and private sectors, proposed revenue increases and improved procurement practices.

Babbitt's other special contributions to Interior's operations were his engagement of key Congressional committee members, strategic use of the bully pulpit, openness to recommendations from subject experts on his staff, compassion for the workforce, creativity in problem-solving and a mutually respectful relationship with White House leadership.

## **HISTORIC RESTORATION LEADERSHIP**

### *Thinking Like a Watershed*

Babbitt credits Interior participation in the President's Northwest Forest Plan with educating him about the importance and urgency of integrated, holistic ecosystem management. The President convened the Forest Conference in April of 1993 to address the long-standing, unresolved crisis of northern spotted owl protection and timber policy in the forests in the Pacific Northwest. The Administration's response was to appoint an interagency Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team (FEMAT) of interdisciplinary scientists to analyze and catalog more than

1700 species and components of the forest. FEMAT laid out for the first time a general ecological basis for the coordinated management of 24 million acres of public land.

Babbitt said he was surprised to discover that the forest plan was equally a fish plan and a watershed restoration, and that rivers are our most neglected and degraded ecosystems, with roughly one third of all fish, two thirds of all crayfish, and three quarters of the bivalve freshwater mussels in America rare or threatened with extinction

To replenish trout, coho, chinook and sockeye salmon, the Northwest Forest Plan had to look past the water's edge to restore large connective forested buffers along banks of streams and tributaries in 14 million acres.

In 1993, Interior assumed co-leadership of another unprecedented ecosystem restoration project in the South Florida Everglades. Through the Everglades restoration, Babbitt said, we learned some important watershed restoration rules that can apply across the country:

The most basic lesson is about the nature of water. It is always in motion, from sky to land, across and through land, out to sea, back to sky in an endless cycle. And that means that you can't efficiently restore just one piece of a river; to fix any one part, you have to consider the whole watershed.

Next, the only way you can fix a watershed is by creating partnerships—between governments, between landowners large and small, among all the stakeholders on that watershed. Finally, watershed restoration must be a visible process that captures and holds public attention. Every community values its native heritage and believes in its future. And they are ready to support bold restoration plans.

## **HISTORIC RESTORATION PARTNERSHIPS**

### ***SOUTH FLORIDA***

Everglades, 1992: 90 percent of wading birds had departed, sixty-eight species were listed as endangered or threatened, Biscayne Bay and Florida Bay fisheries were suffering, the top five feet of organic topsoil in the Everglades Agricultural Area had eroded, the inland and coastal water quality was degraded, invasive exotic plants had invaded 1.5 million acres, pollutants had damaged the estuaries, wetlands and tree island habitats had disappeared.

By the end of 2000, the Everglades were on their way to restoration. The historic South Florida Ecosystem Restoration is one of the most important environmental partnership initiatives of this or any other Administration. Secretary Babbitt has called support for this kind of project "the quiet revolution to restore our aquatic ecosystems." In a speech to The Nature Conservancy, he explained the restoration's origin:

The Clinton administration began in South Florida because it was the most visible and urgent of many impending watershed disasters. Everglades National Park was subsisting on life support in urgent need of attention. That life support system, consisting of a few

small projects designed to pump more water through the desiccated hydrologic arteries of the park, was barely keeping the patient alive. With each passing year the natural monitors of the patient's health—great flocks of wading birds, egrets, anhingas, storks, and herons—had begun to flatline.

The Everglades were quite simply the victim of a long campaign to “drain the swamps”—swamps that once poured their overflow waters south into the Everglades and Florida Bay. Draining the swamps was the engineering equivalent to the medieval practice of treating patients by bleeding them. And in the process of severing and bleeding these hydrologic arteries, they were draining the very life out of the Everglades.

Our strategy, to restore the Everglades ecosystem by reconnecting those hydrologic arteries, began by bringing all the Federal agencies together behind a common restoration plan. Our able co-leader was the Corps of Engineers, ironically a pioneer in the early efforts to de-water these same landscapes of South Florida. We soon learned, however, that for effective watershed restoration, we need state and local partners. In 1994 the Florida legislature at the urging of Governor Chiles passed the Everglades Forever Act which created a billion dollar fund to clean up the contaminated agricultural run-off which was causing much of the problem. The Florida commitment, backed by an outpouring of public support, prompted Congress to legislate support for the largest watershed restoration plan every undertaken.

The Administration formed the federal agencies into a South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in 1993, co-led by Interior and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In 1996 the Task Force was expanded by statute to include state, local and tribal governments. The goals of the Task Force are get the water right (restore a more natural flow while providing adequate water supplies, water quality and flood control); restore, preserve and protect natural habitats and species; and, foster compatibility of the built and natural systems.

Real momentum in the initiative came in 1996 with a Farm Bill appropriation for \$200 million to acquire key lands for restoration and an Interior land exchange with the Collier Corporation: land in downtown Phoenix went to Collier in exchange for 100,000 acres for Big Cypress National Preserve, Florida Panther Wildlife Refuge and Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Interior also acquired 40,000 acres within the restoration zone and funding for a facility to eradicate the invasive exotic, melaleuca.

Since 1996, Interior and the Clinton Administration have acquired an additional 567,000 acres for restoration, issued the largest and most comprehensive multi-species conservation plan in history for the recovery of sixty-eight threatened and endangered species, and persuaded Congress and the state of Florida to fund the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, sixty-eight projects to modify the water delivery system and improve the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water to the natural systems.

## ***CALIFORNIA BAY DELTA***

In 1993 the Administration was also working out the complexities of establishing another historic restoration partnership, one that would eventually re-write the future of a huge swath of California known as the Bay Delta.

When asked what a newcomer should know about California, Wallace Stegner answered: "Water. It's about water." In California today, it's also about restoring a beleaguered watershed to stave off extinction for threatened wildlife and balancing economic needs and environmental health into the next century.

The delta is the heart of the state's water system and the major focus of California's water controversy. Giant pumps send its water to two out of every three residents in the state and irrigate seven million acres of the nation's most productive farmland. The delta also provides habitat for more than 450 species of wildlife and plants and once teemed with salmon, smelt, splittail, and other fish. Blocked spawning runs, altered stream habitats, increased water diversions, and degraded water quality have brought several fish species to the brink of extinction. During droughts, saltwater incursion into delta channels further damages agriculture and wildlife.

The struggle over delta water among agriculture, urban and environmental interests intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Drought and Endangered Species Act restrictions to protect salmon and smelt disrupted the delivery of water to the Silicon Valley, San Joaquin Valley farms, and Southern California cities. The EPA also increased its pressure on state water agencies to adopt stricter water quality standards or face new federal rules.

Farmers and urban users demanded more water diversions and greater surface storage—new dams and reservoirs—to guarantee a reliable water supply and environmentalists countered that dams had already overburdened the state's ecosystems, reducing river flows and damaging fisheries. After the drought of 1987-92 and the listing of endangered fish, however, the warring interests saw that no one would win if water policy continued to be shaped by lawsuits and politics. A comprehensive, collaborative, balanced solution was needed.

In December 1994, Interior brokered the historic Bay-Delta Accord with other state and federal interests, establishing the basis for a near-term truce and long-term solutions. The pact pledged that the federal government would stop wresting water from farmers and cities for the sake of endangered species by finding ways to protect the delta while assuring reliable water supplies. Under the accord, the Central Valley Project and State Water Project coordinate operations to meet new water quality standards adopted in 1995.

The accord established the CALFED Bay-Delta Program—a consortium of fourteen state and federal agencies with management and regulatory responsibilities in the Bay Delta—to develop a long-term comprehensive plan. Through a committee appointed by Secretary Babbitt and then-Governor Pete Wilson, representatives of the major agricultural, environmental, fisheries, and urban communities participate in the process. While the state and the federal governments have been carrying out this intensive five-year study, CALFED has also approved 195 projects worth

\$228 million to restore both upstream and delta ecosystems. The projects include installing fish screens, removing small dams, restoring streamside habitat, and improving water quality.

Secretary Babbitt, Governor Gray Davis and Senator Dianne Feinstein released CALFED's Action Plan in June, *California's Water Future: A Framework for Action*, calling for a \$1 billion investment in ecological restoration. The proposal offers new water conservation and recycling incentives, proposes spending nearly \$1 billion for water quality improvements and promotes water marketing initiatives so that users with excess water, such as irrigation districts, can sell water to municipal water agencies. "As the largest comprehensive ecosystem restoration effort ever undertaken in the world, the CALFED action plan will generate significant economic and ecosystem benefits for the State of California," Babbitt said, "it is the culmination of several years of federal-state and stakeholder cooperation and is a significant milestone for one of the Administration's top priorities."

The Action Plan broke new ground. By not proposing new dams or reservoirs, it signaled the end of an era. An Environmental Water Account will help to recover declining species of fish. State and federal governments will purchase about 380,000 acre-feet of water a year from willing sellers to increase fisheries in the Central Valley rivers, delta, and bay.

The Action Plan will improve long- and short-term water supply reliability through a number of projects, including integration of storage, conveyance, operational flexibility, water use efficiency, conservation, water quality, land retirement, and water transfers. The plan will require an investment of \$8.5 billion in the first seven years. Funding will come from state and federal appropriations, California Propositions 204 and 13 (authorizing state revenue bonds for the project) local contributions, and a state water user fee.

Secretary Babbitt and the Clinton Administration made solving the California water riddle a priority, and when the action plan is implemented, the Bay Delta restoration will rival the other two historic restorations in the Pacific Northwest and South Florida. Secretary Babbitt gives the credit for Interior's role in moving the Bay Delta agenda forward to the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to his point man for western water issues in the first term and key negotiator in the Bay Delta Accord, Deputy Secretary John Garamendi, and his point man in the second term and key negotiator in the CALFED Action Plan, Deputy Secretary David Hayes.

Many other restoration partnerships involving Interior have been established during the Clinton Administration. Secretary Babbitt often cited four other examples:

In Chesapeake Bay, to stop fish kills from a bacteria called pfiesteria, the state and federal partners are offering incentives to landowners to return the borders of their farms to buffers of native trees and vegetation that sop up fertilizers and animal waste before they can drain into river estuaries.

In the Sierra, Rockies and Appalachians, to replenish native aquatic species in a quarter of a million miles of streams, federal funds and land management experts are matched with local private and nonprofit projects to restore mine-damaged mountains that bleed into them.

In Western rangelands, to bring back rare native trout and to protect the endangered willow flycatcher, BLM has joined cooperative range partnerships to modify livestock grazing rotations, build riparian fences, and replant willows and aspen.

In California's Central Valley, to restore fish and wildlife habitat to the Trinity River Basin, the Hoopa Valley and Yurok tribes have joined with Interior agencies to return a significant amount of water to the river and perform projects to repair and restore the river channel to benefit fisheries.

## **INNOVATIONS IN SPECIES RECOVERY**

Secretary Babbitt directed a series of innovations under the Endangered Species Act which strengthened scientific peer review in the endangered and threatened species listing process and in the development of recovery plans, widened involvement of state and local governments, and increased regulatory certainty for landowners and resource users in conservation programs.

When Babbitt entered office in 1993, the ESA had recently expired, but he didn't push for reauthorization, though his thinking ran counter to many constituencies. Babbitt explains:

I advised Congress that the time was not ripe for reauthorization. The reason was that our predecessors had never really tried to make the Act work, choosing instead to abandon the affected parties to litigate their differences and then citing the litigation as evidence that the Act was unworkable.

I testified that the ESA was a good visionary piece of legislation, and within its brief statutory confines there was much flexibility and unexplored potential for innovation. Give us a chance to show how the Act can work. Give us some time to get out onto the land and bring the citizens, including private landowners, together to seek solutions and resolve conflicts.

The first wave of innovation came with the northern spotted owl plan ordered by Judge Dwyer in the Pacific Northwest in 1993. Although not legally required, the Administration chose to cast a wide scientific net to craft the plan, assessing the needs of more than a thousand terrestrial species, as well as salmon stocks.

That began the process that is now widely known as "multi-species habitat planning." In the President's Northwest Forest Plan, nine million acres of old growth and streams were reserved from timber production in national forests and other federal lands. Watershed analysis and new forestry concepts were pioneered, including patch dynamics and stand structure. The plan was prepared, submitted and approved by the court in eighteen months. Soon after, Interior entered into a series of habitat conservation plans (HCPs) on state and private land: a one-million-acre multi-species HCP with the state of Washington; a comprehensive all-species agreement with Murray Pacific Corporation; and an agreement with Simpson Timber on Washington's Olympic Peninsula that incorporates both ESA and Clean Water Act regulatory requirements.

Next the Secretary and the Fish and Wildlife Service turned to the long leaf pine forests of the South, extending from East Texas to the Carolina Tidewater, where the red-cockaded

woodpecker is the endangered species trigger. Babbitt relates: "In 1994, as another train wreck appeared imminent, the President of Georgia Pacific came to my office and suggested that we could work together to find something better than more litigation." Out of that initial encounter came a series of new ESA approaches, beginning with 'no take' agreements to provide common sense guidelines for Act compliance and 'candidate conservation agreements with assurances,' a pre-listing agreement that gives landowners incentives to protect habitat before a species is listed."

A golf course under construction in Pinehurst, North Carolina, provided the next opportunity for innovation. Developers noticed that new course layouts were attracting woodpeckers where there had been none before. Biologists soon identified the attraction. By clearing the oak understory beneath the pine forests beside the fairways, they were restoring natural conditions once maintained by natural wildlife, and making the forest friendlier for foraging.

That presented the developers with a dilemma: why continue to modify the forest and attract woodpeckers only to get caught in the regulatory net of the ESA? To resolve the dilemma and to encourage this form of habitat improvement, Interior created a policy called "Safe Harbor." If a landowner manages habitat to support listed species, Safe Harbor will protect the landowner from additional legal liability.

Yet another bird—the California gnatcatcher—precipitated the next wave of innovation. The gnatcatcher, a resident of the Mediterranean coastal sage scrub habitat that extends along the coastal plain between Los Angeles and San Diego, was listed as endangered, triggering a "developmental moratorium" and a sometimes heated dialogue between developers, Interior, the state of California, county and municipal governments and environmental groups. The resulting innovations included delegation of authority to California pursuant to its Endangered Species Act; planning partnerships with county and municipal governments; federal land acquisitions and the use of mitigation banks, density transfers, development fees and state and local bond issues to finance preserves designated in habitat conservation plans.

The southern California process also gave rise to "No Surprises," the basic principle that once a comprehensive scientifically grounded habitat conservation plan is in place, participating landowners should have a high degree of assurance that they will not be required to make more concessions in the near future.

The Administration has made the states partners in all key aspects of the ESA. In addition to sharing authority with California, Secretary Babbitt and former Colorado governor Roy Romer signed a statewide accord which aligns state and federal wildlife conservation efforts to avoid listing of declining species.

Secretary Babbitt has also put in place new procedures to ensure that ESA decisions are objective and based on the best available scientific information. Since July of 1994, all ESA listing proposals and dozens of draft recovery plans have been subjected to peer review by at least three independent scientists.

When Babbitt entered office, his predecessors had completed just fourteen small HCPs in eleven years. As of November 2000, the Clinton Administration had completed 300 HCPs covering

nearly 20 million acres of forests, coastal plains, the Sonoran and Mojave deserts, and other imperiled landscapes.

Given these improvements in the Act's implementation, in 1997 Babbitt suggested to Congress that it was time to reauthorize the Act. The late Senator John Chafee, Chairman of the committee of jurisdiction, responded by asking Senators Kempthorne and Baucus to help him draft legislation. Babbitt joined in the process, negotiating for months to produce a bipartisan reauthorization bill. The bill passed out of committee by a vote of 13 to 3. Babbitt relates what happened from then up through the end of the Clinton Administration:

After the committee vote, silence. The Majority leader refused to calendar the bill for floor debate. Behind the scenes, on the right, the diehards were still demanding amendments that would eviscerate the Act. And of the other side, the left was lying in wait, suspicious of our administrative reforms, holding to the notion that the best ESA would be one that prevented any development at all.

Then in 1999, after a promising colloquy with Senator Stevens and Senator Domenici in the Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, we tried a more surgical approach, working with Senator Chafee to improve the critical habitat provisions of the Act. This bill, S-1100, like its predecessor, went nowhere. Which brings us to the present.

We will have a new President and a new Congress in January. We will have the most evenly divided government in American history. And it is my feeling that this gridlock is exactly what the voters wanted. . . . The predictable outcome for our concerns is that radical change of the ESA, whether from the right or the left, is thankfully out of the question. And, correspondingly, there will be a fine opportunity to build a true bipartisan reauthorization movement from the center outward.

In November 2000, before the National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition, Babbitt outlined what the reauthorization should do: give legislative form to the Administrative reforms; give states and tribes a stronger role; provide landowner incentives; forget the "takings" issue; fix the critical habitat designation provision; and, unite all ESA functions under the Fish and Wildlife Service.

## **BROKER IN THE WATER WARS**

A tradition of government subsidy for roads, harbors, canals and railroads was well established by 1866, when Congress passed legislation investing directly in irrigation projects—also known as reclamation—for the arid West. To populate and accelerate development in the West, President Theodore Roosevelt lobbied for and signed a Reclamation Act in 1902. The Reclamation Act required compliance with numerous, widely varying and complex state and territorial legal codes that to this day define reclamation. It also set in motion the most aggressive subsidized dam-building era in the history of the world.

The Bureau of Reclamation is deeply involved in Colorado River issues because the agency's reservoirs store and regulate most of the river's flow. The most complex and difficult of many interstate water allocation agreements is the Colorado River Compact. Under a 1922 agreement,

ratified into law by Congress in 1928 over the objections of Arizona, seven states divvy up the water from the Colorado River on an annual basis.

The compact was further complicated in 1944 when 1.5 million acre-feet was promised in a treaty with Mexico. Tensions among the parties to the compact have heightened over time as water demand increased and species were threatened and endangered by low flows. It became increasingly clear that there isn't consistently enough water in the river for all parties in the compact to receive their proscribed shares.

For most of the century, the seven Colorado River states have contended for the river's waters in a zero sum process, in which one state gained only at the expense of the others. The preferred method of settling differences was litigation, intermixed with Congressional battles, often linked to funding the construction of large-scale dams and delivery systems.

During the Clinton Administration, Western water policy underwent what Babbitt calls an "avulsive" change—the process of a stream abandoning its channel and making a clean break into one or more new channels. There were several catalysts for making a clean break, but none more potent than the Endangered Species Act and the pressures it brought to look again at how water is stored, managed, allocated and used.

Babbitt has done his own about-face on Western water policy since 1976, when Attorney General Babbitt predicted that if the Supreme Court ruled for the protection of the pupfish and against groundwater pumpers, "Arizona as we know it today will not survive." The decision, he warned, would wreak economic havoc on his state, and make cities like Tucson "ghost towns." It would make state water rights "worthless." Babbitt said in 1999, twenty-three years after those predictions, "Well, the pupfish won, and Arizona has hardly withered away."

During the Clinton Administration, Secretary Babbitt declared the era of the large reclamation project over. He directed Reclamation's change in mission from development to restoration. "Our challenge is not to build more dams, but to operate them in a more river friendly way. Our task is not to irrigate more lands, but to promote more efficient use of water on lands now in production. Our task is not to develop new supplies but to make use of those that already exist. We do have allocation and distribution problems, but they can be resolved through use of water markets, conservation and other innovations. Our task in the coming century is to restore rivers, wetlands and fisheries."

Babbitt told the warring parties in numerous watersheds that they could live in balance with the natural environment and that there "is sufficient water for today and for the future, and no other development projects are needed, provided that we use it efficiently, and engage markets (marketing and transfer), modern science and conservation to live and develop within sensible limits."

To conserve water, he advocated new pricing policies, like those employed by the southern California Metropolitan water district which have acted to restrain water consumption even during a period when the region's population has increased by twenty percent. He advocated water marketing, or water transfers from agricultural to urban users, citing as an example the

Department's successful negotiation of a transfer agreement sending water from California's Imperial (Valley) Irrigation District to the city of San Diego through the Metropolitan (Los Angeles) Water District aqueduct.

The Department worked with Arizona and Nevada to augment Colorado River water available to Las Vegas through an innovative agreement: Las Vegas pays to store river water in Arizona groundwater basins, and in return obtains credits allowing that city to take equivalent amounts of water directly from Lake Mead.

Babbitt advocated underground storage, citing surface storage inefficiencies at Lake Mead, which loses a million acre-feet per year to evaporation, and Lake Powell, which loses enough water through evaporation annually to supply a city the size of Los Angeles. "When rivers have surplus flood flows, the water can be drawn off and stored beneath the ground without the destructive consequences of building dams."

Where more surface storage is demonstrably necessary and groundwater basins unavailable, Babbitt advocated off stream storage, as is proposed in the Department-brokered Animas La Plata project in southwestern Colorado.

In the reclamation age now past, decisions affecting rivers were made one project at a time, by a priesthood of technocrats—the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, state water engineers, and a few key committee chairmen in Congress. In the next century water policy must be made in the context of the entire watershed.

Instead of litigation, Babbitt advocated collaborative watershed-level consensus-building that incorporates many agency mandates. The best results, he asserted, can only emerge from the collaborative watershed process of engagement, disputation and consensus building. "It works and that is the best reason for continuing on this path."

During the Clinton Administration, multi-party, multi-agency, stakeholder-intensive policy collaborations for water reform were advanced in Nevada, Oregon, Montana, California, Arizona, and in the Platte River Basin which includes Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska.

In a December 1999 speech to the Colorado River Water Users Association, Babbitt summed up the water policy progress during the Clinton Administration:

Over the past decade we have together invented many new forms of cooperative water management—markets, transfers, banking, re-use, efficiency, new technologies and pricing structures, to name a few. River protection and restoration, once considered an unaffordable luxury in the water starved Southwest, is now a widely accepted aspect of good water management. The Endangered Species Act, once dismissed as an impediment to growth, is now understood to be an important aid to the conservation of fish and wildlife and to sustainable economic development.

Working together we have brought Native Americans, all too often left languishing on the sidelines of water negotiations, into the mainstream of water policy.

Working together we have made a good start toward the coming century of cooperation and consensus—the water transfers, the Arizona innovations in water banking, progress toward the remaining Indian settlements, California’s progress toward living within its entitlement, environmental restoration in the Salton Sea, the implementation of habitat protection programs in both the upper and lower basins, the outlines of an Animas-La Plata settlement, to mention the obvious ones.

## **DAMS ARE NOT FOREVER**

It took seven years to build the Glen Canyon dam on the Colorado River in the 1950s and '60s. It took ten years to agree to restore the beaches and habitat in the Grand and Glen Canyons that the dam and its water management regime had destroyed. The process that led to that controversial restoration took years of study, a multi-volume environmental impact statement and countless meetings and consultations among federal and state agencies, tribes, cities, trout fishermen and river runners. The culmination of that effort was an orchestrated flood of 46,000 cubic feet per second, which Babbitt began with the turn of a valve on March 6, 1996. In 2000 the restored beaches provide habitat for endangered birds and fish.

Babbitt’s controlled Glen Canyon flood proved spike flows worked to save species without harm to other users. He had a different solution for some other dams and watersheds. In 1997, he would wield a sledgehammer to signal not only the end of the dam-building era, but a new era of dam-removal.

### *The Sledgehammer Tour*

Sixty years ago, President Franklin Roosevelt and his Interior Secretary, Harold Ickes, toured the country to dedicate dams, including four of the largest dams in the history of civilization. 75,000 dams have been erected in the U.S., a number equivalent to building one dam a day, every day, since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

In 1997-98 Babbitt led the selective destruction of environmentally harmful dams and signaled what he believes is the beginning of a new era of dam-busting in America. Gleefully, Babbitt climbed aboard a bulldozer or wielded a sledgehammer or signed a document to take down a dam wherever an opportunity presented itself. He participated in events to take down or celebrate the destruction of fourteen dams. He also toured the dams in the Olympic Peninsula which are planned for destruction.

There are three reasons to take down dams, Babbitt said: some dams outlive their function; some dams’ benefits can be derived in other ways, and sometimes the price of these benefits is just too high.

Babbitt believes that every stop on his tour attracted enormous local, regional and national attention because dam-busting is a tangible symbol of the public’s growing stewardship impulse toward restoration. The public understands that “we have paid a steadily accumulating price for dams in the form of fish spawning runs destroyed, downstream rivers altered by changes in temperature, unnatural nutrient load and seasonal flows, wedges of sediment piling up behind structures, and delta wetlands degraded by lack of fresh water and saltwater intrusion.”

Larger dams, Babbitt admits, pose more complex issues because they have more, and bigger economic stakeholders—entire industries, the price of electricity for millions of people, water storage for cities all depend on some large dams. But where dams remain, the challenge remains to find progressive ways to operate them to reverse the ecological damage.

Babbitt issued a challenge to young people on the Sledgehammer Tour: “My parents’ generation gloried in the construction of dams across America’s rivers. My generation saw how those rivers were changed, deformed, killed by dams. Your generation must help decide if, how and where those dams stand or fall.” He also quoted Ecclesiastes:

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth always...all the rivers runneth to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place where the rivers flow, there they flow again. . . .

## **REWRITING WILDLAND FIRE POLICY**

A “red-carded” firefighter and veteran of many wildland fires until he retired from the field in 1998, Secretary Babbitt brought an intimate understanding and passion to the need to rewrite policy and change public perception about wildland fire. As in other major policy and programmatic issues with significant impact in the West, Babbitt has included tribal, state and local leaders, as well as the public, in reshaping and supporting a new approach to wildland fire management.

Over 6.5 million acres of land burned in the 2000 fire season, the worst wildland fire year since 1910. In September 2000 six Western governors and Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman announced a joint strategy to lobby Congress for \$1.6 billion in fire relief. The proposal included the estimated \$800 million backlog of fire-recovery projects, including erosion control, reseeding and rebuilding. The balance is to be spent on fire prevention, local firefighting outfits, fire prevention education and creation of a cabinet-level fire-coordination team. The Denver Post called the joint proposal a “unique bipartisan moment in a very contentious election year.”

After a tragic fire season in 1994, when thirty-four wildland firefighters lost their lives, Secretary Babbitt directed the Interior agencies, and Secretary Glickman directed the Forest Service, to jointly conduct a review of federal wildland firefighting policy. The new policy launched an historic shift toward safety and away from fire suppression.

In numerous speeches and editorials, Secretary Babbitt spoke of the scope of the problem and described the new approach.

Wildland fires are burning hotter, bigger and faster, growing more lethal, destructive and expensive to fight. A century of snuffing out all small and regular fires has clogged our landscape with dense, dying and exotic fuels. Once ignited, flames now result in an intense, unpredictable inferno, killing life down to the roots, leading to mudslides and floods and loss of game and wildlife habitat.

We know from science, and fire scars, how long ago natural fire cleared out alien species, digested and recycled nutrients, and kept landscapes healthy, stable and resilient. Using the new policy, the Clinton Administration is making those exceptions the national rule, saving money and lives.

The new federal wildland fire policy emphasizes firefighter and public safety, using fire in land use planning and management, use of the best science available, economic viability, coordination and cooperation with federal, state and tribal governments and federal agency standardization of policies and procedures.

In 2000 the Departments of Interior and Agriculture entered their fourth year of a program of intensive prescribed fire use and mechanical removal to combat generations of vegetative fuel buildup. Nearly a million acres a year are being treated in this program to promote health of the land and reduce the likelihood of severe and costly "escaped fires" like the Los Alamos fire in the summer of 2000. A fire science program has been developed to inventory and prioritize fuels treatment through mapping and to evaluate the effectiveness of treatments.

## PROTECTING UNIQUE NATIONAL LANDSCAPES

Protecting the Escalante area of southern Utah has been discussed since Harold Ickes was Secretary of the Interior. Ickes considered recommending the Kaiparowits Plateau and adjacent wild spaces to President Franklin Roosevelt for monument designation under the Antiquities Act to protect the area from potential mining development. The threat of development, in the form of a large proposed coal mine, did not materialize until 1996.

In preparing his national monument recommendation for the President, Secretary Babbitt grappled with the issue that had stopped Ickes from recommending it—traditional use for desert livestock grazing. Assigning management responsibility to the National Park Service, the traditional administrator of national monuments, would ensure that grazing would stop. Babbitt believed that the area could be managed to allow hunting and appropriate grazing. The Secretary subsequently recommended to President Clinton that the area be placed under the management of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the largest of the federal land management agencies, and one with a multiple use mission. The BLM could manage the area to protect the objects of scientific and historic interest that the monument proclamation laid out, yet assure the local communities that a well-managed grazing program could continue on monument lands.

On September 18, 1996, President Clinton proclaimed the 1.7-million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, to include the Grand Staircase, Kaiparowits Plateau, and Escalante Canyons areas, and to be managed by the BLM.

The 1996 designation was controversial. The Administration was accused by Western lawmakers and property rights groups of acting by stealth and in secrecy, without consultation with the Congressional delegation or the local communities. Although the proposal was discussed with the delegation and Governor's office prior to the designation, the hostile reaction in the West led Secretary Babbitt to design a new process for future monument recommendations.

In November 1998, President Clinton asked Secretary Babbitt for recommendations on additional areas that warranted protection under the Antiquities Act. Anticipating the President's request, Babbitt had returned earlier that year to northern Arizona, to a place of special significance in his own history. Babbitt's grandfather had been involved with President Teddy Roosevelt in the original Grand Canyon designation. Roosevelt first set aside a portion of what is now the Grand Canyon National Park under the Antiquities Act in 1908.

### *January 2000 Monument Designations*

In 1919, Congress converted the Grand Canyon National Monument to a national park. Adjacent lands were made national monuments by Presidential Proclamation in 1932 and 1969. Congress enlarged the Park in 1975 to include these lands, but the legislation left several drainages north of the Grand Canyon unprotected and directed the Secretary of the Interior to study and report back on the issue.

Babbitt conducted his own study, camping three days on the Shivwits Plateau with some of his staff, including the Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent and BLM district manager. Over a campfire, they created a plan to engage local communities and the Congressional delegation in a dialogue about protecting these lands.

In the months that followed, Babbitt conducted meetings throughout northern Arizona on the future management of the Shivwits Plateau. Knowing that Babbitt would push Presidential action if Congress did not act to protect the area, Congressman Bob Stump introduced legislation to designate the area a National Conservation Area, the legislative equivalent of a BLM national monument. But instead of including the necessary protections, the Stump bill opened the area to more development than existing practices allowed.

Disappointed with the Stump legislation, Secretary Babbitt recommended in December 1999 that the President create the one-million-acre Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument made up of the Shivwits Plateau and the remainder of the north rim watershed. He also recommended that the area be jointly managed by BLM and NPS through its Lake Mead National Recreation Area; that the Proclamation prohibit mineral entry and cross-country vehicular travel, and that hunting and grazing in the monument continue under the same rules and regulations that govern BLM lands.

The Grand Canyon-Parashant became the public and Congressional participation model for all subsequent monument designations. Secretary Babbitt would actively engage the public on the management of the area and offer Congress an opportunity to provide the necessary protection prior to moving forward with a national monument recommendation to the President.

Secretary Babbitt initiated a public involvement process in July 1999 on protection of the Agua Fria region, meeting with leading archeologists, Arizona State officials, and staff from the Arizona delegation. Along with the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, President Clinton created the Agua Fria National Monument, the California Coastal National Monument, and expanded the Pinnacles National Monument on January 11, 2000.

### *May 2000 Monument Recommendations*

Secretary Babbitt continued traveling throughout the year to Western communities to discuss greater protection for nearby fragile or threatened landscapes. In May 2000, Secretary Babbitt sent another group of monument recommendations to the President, and on June 9, 2000, President Clinton created Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Hanford Reach National Monument, Ironwood Forest National Monument, and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument includes Soda Mountain and approximately 52,000 acres of public land managed by BLM in south central Oregon. Hanford Reach National Monument encompasses approximately 195,000 acres of public land within the borders of the Department of Energy (DOE) Hanford Reservation. Ironwood Forest National Monument was designated at the request of the (Arizona) County Board of Supervisors and other supporters. The Secretary gladly recommended that the President create this 129,000-acre monument near Tucson, a landscape swathed in the rich, drought-adapted vegetation of the Sonoran Desert.

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument recommendation was preceded by a series of meetings with local residents conducted by the Secretary or the BLM Resource Advisory Council in the spring and summer of 1999. Public discussions on the national significance of this area date back to a 1894 Salt Lake Times story detailing interest in protecting the region. In 1979, a bill was introduced in Congress to designate the area a National Conservation Area. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell introduced new National Conservation Area legislation in February 2000, but he suspended action on his bill the following month.

### *Congress Acts to Protect Areas*

Secretary Babbitt and the Clinton Administration actively engaged Congressional delegations in a dialogue for protecting important landscapes. Assuming that protection would be given to these areas through Presidential action if Congress did not act to do so, Congress created three new national conservation areas, one national monument, and one cooperative protection area in 2000.

Legislation sponsored by Congressman Scott McInnis and Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell created the 122,000-acre Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and within it a 75,000-acre Wilderness Area in western Colorado and eastern Utah outside of Grand Junction, Colorado.

Congressman Jim Kolbe and Senator John McCain sponsored legislation that created the 42,000-acre Las Cienegas National Conservation Area southeast of Tucson with an additional 142,000-acre acquisition district.

Legislation sponsored by Congresswoman Mary Bono and Senator Diane Feinstein created Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, an area of over 150,000 acres near Palm Springs, California. This was the first Congressionally created national monument giving management responsibility to the BLM.

Congressmen Greg Walden and Earl Blumenauer and Senators Gordon Smith and Ron Wyden in the Senate sponsored legislation creating the 425,000-acre Steens Mountain "Cooperative Management and Protection Area" and a 155,000-acre wilderness area in southeastern Oregon with a nearly one-million-acre mineral withdrawal area.

The Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act provides important new environmental protections to the Steens Mountain area of southwestern Oregon. The legislation is a result of a cooperative process between Oregon Governor Kitzhaber, the Clinton Administration, and the entire Oregon Congressional delegation. Dedicated to the principle that the Steens must be protected, they met frequently on their own and cooperatively with Secretary Babbitt to craft a consensus to keep Steens Mountain in its current, relatively undeveloped state.

In the most fragile areas, the bill sets apart 87,000 acres of public lands as "cow-free." Both the wilderness area and the "cow-free" area will increase in size (by approximately 13,000 acres and 9,000 acres respectively) upon completion of the land acquisitions authorized by the legislation.

### *August 2000 Monument Recommendations*

In the summer of 2000, Secretary Babbitt traveled to Idaho and northern Arizona, focusing protection discussions on two areas, Craters of the Moon and Vermilion Cliffs. Acting on Babbitt's August 2000 recommendations, President Clinton created the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and substantially expanded the Craters of the Moon National Monument on November 9, 2000.

Vermilion Cliffs National Monument is 239,000 remote and unspoiled acres, containing the majestic Paria Plateau, the brilliant Vermilion Cliffs, and the Paria River Canyon, spanning elevations from 3,100 to 7,100 feet above sea level. The area contains high densities of Ancestral Puebloan sites, including remnants of large and small villages.

Twenty species of raptors have been documented in the monument, as well as a variety of reptiles and amphibians. California condors have been reintroduced into the area, and Desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and other mammals roam the canyons and plateaus. The Paria River supports sensitive native fish, including the flannelmouth sucker and the speckled dace.

The Craters of the Moon National Monument has been a work in progress for more than seventy years. The boundary of the monument has been adjusted by Presidential Proclamation on four occasions, in 1928, 1930, 1941, and 1962. In 1989-90, Congressman Richard Stallings introduced legislation to create Craters of the Moon National Park, a failed proposal that included almost twice as many acres as Babbitt's monument expansion proposal.

Beginning in April 2000, Secretary Babbitt visited the area three times and led a process to solicit public input and advice about the future management and protection of the Craters of the Moon region, meeting with leading geologists, local ranchers, local elected officials, and staff from the Idaho Congressional delegation.

President Coolidge first described the volcanic features of Craters of the Moon as of "unusual scientific value and general interest" an assertion illustrated by the procession of scientists studying the lava field and its distinctive flora and fauna, by the NASA astronauts who explored the monument in preparation for their mission to the moon, and by a quarter-million annual visitors.

Like Grand Canyon-Parashant, the Craters of the Moon expansion will be managed jointly by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

### *National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS)*

At the Secretary's recommendation, the BLM established a National Landscape Conservation System in 2000 to focus more attention and resources on the new national monuments, national conservation areas, Headwaters Forest Preserve and other areas designated during the Clinton Administration. BLM also placed wilderness, conservation areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national scenic and historic trails designated pre-1993 into the new management structure.

The units of the NLCS continue to be operated at the field level by BLM field managers. The NLCS office, based in BLM headquarters, provides policy guidance and management support. Conservation is the established management priority in NLCS units, and visitor contact and information facilities are to be located in adjacent communities.

### **GRAZING REFORM**

The conventional wisdom is that the Secretary and Administration "caved in" and lost the battle over grazing on public lands in 1994, sacrificing reform on grazing and mining to ensure enough votes for the Administration's economic package. The truth is the Secretary and Interior quietly went about winning the war.

"We set out at the beginning of this Administration," Babbitt said in May 2000, "to put in place a reform package that would modernize grazing regulations which hadn't been significantly changed since enactment of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934, and help restore the health of Western rangelands."

Each year from 1989-92, the House had proposed and approved a grazing fee increase, and each year the Senate had voted to block it. In February of 1993—less than a month after his inauguration—President Clinton unveiled a budget that proposed raising \$1 billion over five years from royalties made on Western land use. The grazing fee on federal lands, then \$1.86 per month per cow, was to be tripled.

In August 1993 the Secretary announced the Healthy Rangelands initiative and an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that included changes in standards for livestock grazing in rangeland ecosystems and increases in the grazing fee formula. During the course of the debate in Congress, significant support for the reforms became evident, and legislative reforms passed by a 3-1 majority in the House and by a comfortable majority in the Senate. But ranchers were howling in the press that they would be ruined and livestock interest groups lobbied intensely.

Late in the session, an amendment by Senator Domenici to place a one-year moratorium on changes passed 59-40 and halted further legislative progress.

In March 1994, Interior released the proposed regulations, which administratively doubled grazing fees on public lands phased in over three years beginning in 1995, offered discounts and incentives for grazing stewardship and established Resource Advisory Councils—balanced in composition to include ranchers, local officials and conservationists—to set regional grazing standards. The Secretary and BLM proceeded to hold an unprecedented series of meetings to build consensus on the new regulations, including forty-eight public hearings held simultaneously throughout the Western states in June 1994.

All sides were critical of the administrative grazing proposal. Environmentalists wanted a national grazing standard, not regional standards arrived at by consensus with ranchers and local officials. Ranchers very vocally opposed any new fees. Colorado Governor Romer called for changes in the make-up of RACs, eliminating environmentalists from the boards. Utah Governor Leavitt proposed that governors make the RAC appointments. Environmentalists boycotted meetings in New Mexico.

After the 1994 Congressional elections put Republicans in a majority in both the Senate and House, it seemed clear that fee increases would jeopardize acceptance of the President's budget, and Babbitt announced that the fee portion of the proposal would be postponed to give Congress time to act on fee increases. The other reforms proceeded.

Despite the initial criticism, the composition of the locally-based RACs remained: five citizens representing traditional uses like grazing, energy development and timber production; five members representing conservation and non-commercial recreation interests; and five members who were local or tribal elected officials, academicians, and state and local personnel. The RACs gave the public unprecedented representation in public land management decision making.

The RAC charters specify that a majority from each interest sector must vote affirmatively to refer any recommendation to the BLM. BLM works with the RACs to develop a broad consensus on standards of rangeland health and the standards are, in turn, incorporated into BLM land use plans.

By the end of 2000, as a result of BLM action in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Councils, 100,000 acres of riparian habitat have been replenished for trout and wildlife, 20 million acres of uplands are restored to functioning condition, and erosion has been reduced. From the original eleven established in 1995, the number of RACs has grown to twenty-four.

Suits filed by ranchers, three of which reached the Supreme Court in May 2000, upheld the Secretary of the Interior's right to set limits and deny livestock grazing permits to protect other values on public land.

## **HARDROCK MINING REFORM**

The Bush Administration proposed reforms in the Mining Law of 1872 before leaving office, and the Clinton Administration made several attempts to get Congress to bring hardrock mining law into the 20<sup>th</sup> century before the 21<sup>st</sup> century arrived.

The 1872 Mining Law, signed by President Ulysses S. Grant and not modified since, allows patents for hardrock minerals—gold, silver, copper, zinc—on public land to be mined for a fee of \$2.50 - \$5.00 an acre. The ancient formula often means mine operations can reap millions, even billions, from public land minerals by paying less than \$200 in fees, and paying nothing to reclaim the land if they abandon the mine.

The Clinton Administration proposed imposing a royalty on hardrock mining equivalent to the public land oil royalty (12.5 percent on gross proceeds) in its first budget submission to Congress in February, 1993. The Administration withdrew its proposal that Fall when Western Democratic Senators opposed it, and it was clear that it would not survive the Congressional budget process.

In 1994 and 1995, Secretary Babbitt used Administrative prerogatives, including stalling and stonewalling, to keep nearly 600 mining patents from being awarded, granting claims only under court order, one or a few at a time, and doing it in press conferences where he railed against corporate welfare and the fleecing of taxpayers because Congress refused to enact meaningful hardrock mining reform.

Sensitive to charges of allowing taxpayers to be ripped-off, Congress imposed a moratorium on new hardrock mining claims each year beginning in 1995, but they were mute on the several hundred claims filed before the moratorium was imposed.

In 1995, and again in 1998, legislation backed by the mining industry in reaction to administrative reforms was introduced to abate criticism and free the patent logjam, but the Administration vowed to veto them and Babbitt derided the bills for their loopholes and paltry royalty formulas. Testifying before Congress on the industry-backed reforms in 1998, Babbitt signed patents for three claims worth \$80 million in mineral reserves in Alaska for which the mining company was paying \$155.

The Administration backed legislation sponsored by Senator Bumpers in 1998 that would have imposed a five percent royalty on gross proceeds and require reclamation. The measure failed.

In the meantime, BLM continued work on revised "3809" surface mining regulations (subpart 3809 of the bureau's mineral rules) begun in 1991, held up for several years while Congress appeared to be working on 1872 Mining Law reform, and then taken up again after Babbitt ordered completion of the rulemaking process in early 1997. BLM developed the revised regulations to fulfill its duty under federal law to prevent "unnecessary or undue degradation" of BLM lands from hardrock mining.

Final 3809 Surface Mining Regulations were announced and published on November 11, 2000.

The tough new regulations require hardrock mining operators to submit a plan of operation for all mining and allow BLM to reject a plan of operation if that operation would result in "substantial irreparable harm" to scientific, cultural or environmental resources that cannot be effectively mitigated; require mining operators to meet outcome-based performance standards in all aspects of operations, including exploration, mining, processing and reclamation; require operators to provide a financial guarantee for all operations; require an additional financial guarantee that covers the estimated cost of reclamation; and provide for public notice and comment on proposed plans of operations and bond releases. The new regulations incorporate, for the first time, specific provisions on cyanide leaching operations and acid mine drainage and strengthen BLM's administrative enforcement and penalties for violation of the regulations.

## **INDIAN TRUST REFORM**

Evolving over two centuries, the complex and sometimes contentious trust agreement between the United States and the American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives is not incorporated in any single document, but defined by numerous laws passed by Congress, by federal administrative practices and by Indian trust law based on federal court decisions. Title to land is held in trust for tribes and for some individual American Indians by the federal government. Tribal funds derived from lease agreements and sales of natural resources such as minerals, water and trees are also held in trust by the federal government.

The Secretary of the Interior has fiduciary responsibility for approximately \$3 billion held in trust for 315 Indian tribes and over 262,000 individuals. About \$800 million passes through the tribal trust system annually.

Through budget and policy advocacy and program reform, Secretary Babbitt has addressed critical issues in Indian country and Indian trust management. Babbitt has pressed for increased school construction and public safety and law enforcement funds, increases for tribal priority allocations, the settlement of Indian land, water and fishing rights claims, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) management reforms and trust funds system improvements.

During the Clinton Administration, tribal self-determination and self-governance in accord with tribes' sovereign authority has been upheld and strengthened to an unprecedented degree. Through a series of Executive Memoranda and Executive Orders, the President has acknowledged the rights of tribes to exercise inherent sovereign powers over their members and lands, directed government-to-government consultation on the impact of federal government plans, projects, programs and activities on tribes, directed the development of a strategic plan for coordinating existing economic development initiatives, directed the support of tribal colleges, universities and the improvement of low-performing schools, directed agencies to work with tribal leaders to analyze and improve tribal public safety, law enforcement and criminal justice systems and directed the protection of religious objects, sites and practices.

Administration budget proposals have attempted to further strengthen self-determination and self-government. More money appropriated to Interior for Indian programs goes directly to tribes than at any other time in history. Like a county government, BIA supplies such critical programs as education, housing, law enforcement, natural resource management and road

maintenance, administered by the tribes themselves, by BIA, or in partnership. Nine out of every ten dollars of BIA-appropriated funds is spent on tribal reservations.

The Clinton Administration has actively supported tribal self-determination by providing tribal governments with more opportunities under Public Law 102-477 to directly administer programs of the BIA and other federal departments and agencies, allowing tribes to integrate their employment, training and related services into one program and one annual reporting requirement. Since 1994, 200 federally-recognized tribes have benefited under 477 programs.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, and consequently Indian tribal programs, have been historically under-funded. Of the 557 federally-recognized tribes in the U.S., about fifteen are truly prosperous. Those tribes have been assisted economically by the establishment of gaming near high-density populations. Thirty percent of American Indians have incomes below the national poverty line.

Administration budget proposals for Indian country initiatives have met with little success in Congress. There have been moves in the Republican-controlled Congress since 1994 to take away one-third of the funds allotted to tribes with gaming operations and to enforce taxation by the states on tribally owned land and businesses. Congress has for some time appropriated just enough money annually to maintain the status quo on reservations.

### *Water Rights Settlements*

One area where the Secretary and his staff have successfully acquired funds and directed a coordinated improvement effort in Indian affairs is in the settlement of numerous Indian land, water, and fishing rights claims. Lack of certainty regarding these rights has hindered tribal economic development and self-determination for decades.

Many tribes have reserved water rights under the law, but obtaining reserved water from states and compacts has been problematic for generations. Negotiated agreements between tribes, states, local parties, and the federal government are the most effective and cost-efficient way to resolve reserved water rights claims while providing for sound water resource management. The benefits of negotiated agreements outweigh the uncertainties and expense of litigation.

Accordingly, Secretary Babbitt created an Indian Water Rights Office in his immediate office to lead the Department's overall efforts to resolve controversial Indian water rights issues in the western United States. The Secretary also engaged in an ongoing dialogue with tribal leaders on water rights issues. The Department's response to Indian water rights claims has complemented and strengthened the efforts of tribes and western governors to gain Congressional support for Indian water rights settlements.

Although still a work in progress, this effort has produced notable successes, including settlement of claims for the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs reservation in Oregon, the Jicarilla Apache in New Mexico, the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's reservation in Montana, the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona, and the Shivwits Band of the Paiute Indian Tribe in Utah.

The Secretary helped achieve the Arizona Global Water Settlement resolving litigation between the U.S. and the Central Arizona Water Conservation District over repayment and operation of the Central Arizona Project. A stipulation contained in the settlement is the first step to a comprehensive resolution of several Indian water rights claims in Arizona, including the settlement for the Gila River Indian Community, one of the largest Indian water rights claims in the western United States.

The Administration also expects enactment of the Colorado Ute Water Rights Settlement Act Amendments, which will authorize the Administration's proposal for final implementation of the original settlement of 1988. The Act will also resolve the status of the Animas-La Plata water project.

### ***Land Claims Settlements***

Based on the successful water rights model, the Secretary has also directed federal negotiation teams to resolve protracted Indian land claims and disputes. These claims typically involve allegations of improper taking of Indian land dating back to the late 1700s and early 1800s, in violation of federal law, or due to under compensation. The claimed areas today are often the homes of third party private individuals or administered by state, federal or local governments. The tribes and pueblos whose claims have been settled or advanced through the Administration's effort include the Catawba, Crow, Hoopa, Miccosukee, Santa Domingo, Timbasha Shoshone, and Sandia.

### ***Fishing Rights***

Interior has also been aggressive in addressing and protecting Indian fishing rights reserved by treaties between the tribes and the United States that are critical to sustaining tribal cultures and economies. The Department's effort to protect Indian fishing rights have included negotiating new consent decrees which govern the allocation of Indian fishing rights and proposing and analyzing extensive environmental restoration efforts designed to result in extensive anadromous fishery benefits.

## **TRUST FUNDS MANAGEMENT**

Historically, the accounting practices for tribal and individual American Indian monies held in trust by the BIA have been notoriously inadequate. A study conducted by Arthur Andersen, LLP, examined \$17.7 billion in non-investment transactions that the BIA handled from July 1972 to September 1992. Of the total, \$15.3 billion were reconciled. Supporting documents could not be located for 14 percent of the transactions. \$1.87 million of reconciled transactions, or 1 percent, were in error. Slightly less than half of the errors were to the detriment of tribes.

Secretary Babbitt inherited this failed system, and has done more than any other Secretary of Interior to reform it. Legislation in 1994 and the U.S. District Court's Opinions and Orders in the class action lawsuit Cobell vs. Babbitt compelled a new trust funds management regime, and in 1996 the Secretary established the Office of Special Trustee for American Indians under Secretarial supervision, to provide oversight and reform, and to coordinate policies, procedures,

systems and practices used by the Departmental agencies in managing Indian trust assets. The Special Trustee issued a *Strategic Plan for Trust Improvement* in 1997, revised and updated in 2000. The Office of American Indian Trust was also created within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to carry out specific activities and reviews to ensure Secretarial obligations under the trust responsibility are carried out.

At the end of the Clinton Administration, every tribal and individual Indian account and all investments are operating on the same commercial-grade trust used in major banks. BIA has made progress on the implementation of a trust asset management system which will manage income-producing assets such as mineral and grazing leases on 170,000 tracts of land. Congress passed legislation on one of the Administration's highest trust reform priorities. The Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000 will begin relieving the administrative and financial burdens of fractionated ownership of Indian lands, addressing one of the root problems of trust management.

These are but a few highlights of the most important accomplishments of the Department of the Interior under Bruce Babbitt during the Clinton Administration. Under Babbitt's leadership, each Interior bureau and office undertook many additional policy and programmatic initiatives that have contributed to the Clinton Administration legacy.

# VOLUME I: INTERIOR LEGACY—POLICY AND PROGRAM INITIATIVES

## CHAPTER ONE: FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

### *U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE*

Over the past eight years, the Clinton Administration has led a major effort to conserve the nation's wildlife for the enjoyment of future generations. Its accomplishments on National Wildlife Refuges, in habitat conservation programs, and in ecosystem-based resource management all contributed to the greatest effort by any nation in the history of the world to conserve ecologically healthy and diverse habitats for fish and wildlife. Throughout America, ranchers, farmers, and other private landowners are joining hunters and anglers in the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's efforts to protect the habitat our fish and wildlife need to survive.

### **Making the Endangered Species Act Work Better**

There are 1,204 threatened or endangered plants and animals listed in the United States. None of them achieved that status overnight; for most, it was a long, gradual downhill slide, usually nudged along by people and an ever-increasing competition for space that continues to eliminate, shrink or fracture habitat. But since 1973, the year President Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act into law, the legislation has managed to allow both people and plants and animals to engineer a better balance.

Although a Massachusetts Institute of Technology study showed the most threatened and endangered species have been added to the list in states with the most successful economies, the Clinton Administration inherited a pervasive mythology that protecting endangered species was economically counterproductive. Property rights activists have remained the sharpest critics of the law. The Clinton Administration dedicated itself to demonstrating that the Endangered Species Act does not pit animals and plants against people and jobs.

### **Resolving the Spotted Owl Controversy**

The Clinton Administration determined to resolve the conflicts involving administration of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In one of his first major actions, the President convened a cabinet-level working group to resolve concerns over forest management then associated with the listing of the northern spotted owl as a threatened species in the Pacific northwest.

On April 2, 1993, President Clinton convened the Forest Conference in Portland, Oregon to address the human and environmental needs served by the federal forests of the Pacific Northwest and northern California. The President, Vice-President, Secretary of the Interior and much of the Cabinet spent an entire day listening to all points of view and collecting information. The President then directed his Cabinet to craft a balanced, comprehensive and long-term policy for the management of over 24 million acres of public land. An interagency, interdisciplinary

team of expert scientists, economists, sociologists and others was assembled - the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team led by Dr. Jack Ward Thomas. After three months of intensive work, which included the review of all fully developed proposals for management of federal forests within the range of the northern spotted owl, the team produced a detailed report assessing ten options. President Clinton announced his proposed "Forest Plan for a Sustainable Economy and a Sustainable Environment" on July 1 of that year, consisting of strategies for forest management, economic development, and agency coordination.

The forest management and implementation portion of the strategy was analyzed in a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement issued in July that received over 100,000 public comments during a three-month public comment period. A Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was made available to the public in February 1994. The Record of Decision implementing Alternative # 9 of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement represented the first time that two of the largest federal land management agencies, the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, developed a common management approach to the lands they administer throughout an entire ecological region. The conservation measures included in the strategy were based upon the best available science and attempted to anticipate and forestall future environmental problems, while avoiding economic dislocation and legal gridlock.

This pro-active stance toward resolving conflicts associated with the ESA set the agenda for the following eight years of policy decisions on implementation of the Act. The Administration used the flexibility contained in the current law to make the Act work better.

### **Ten-Point Plan**

In June 1994, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and D. James Baker, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, announced a series of administrative policy reforms and legislative ideas designed to improve the ESA's effectiveness while making it easier for Americans to work with and understand. Collectively called the "Ten-Point Plan," these policy and program initiatives were aimed at improving the ESA's effectiveness, while easing regulatory burdens on landowners and businesses and encouraging development of partnerships to conserve species. Specifically, improvements were intended to:

- Base ESA decisions on sound and objective science;
- Minimize social and economic impacts; provide quick, responsive answers and certainty to landowners;
- Treat landowners fairly and with consideration;
- Create incentives for landowners to conserve species;
- Effectively use limited public and private resources by taking an ecosystem approach to conserving species;
- Emphasize the conservation of candidate species; promptly recover and de-list threatened and endangered species;
- Promote efficiency and consistency; and
- Provide state, tribal and local governments with opportunities to play a greater role in carrying out the ESA.

## HCPs, Safe Harbors, CCAs & Landowner Incentives

One of the major efforts associated with implementation of the ten-point plan was an increased emphasis on Habitat Conservation Plans, or HCPs. The Act provides for permits to take listed species when such taking is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity and the impacts on the species have been minimized and mitigated to the maximum extent practicable. When President Clinton took office in 1993, only fourteen of these permits had been issued. By the end of July 2000, more than 300 were in effect, covering more than 200 listed species such as bald eagles, golden-cheeked warblers, giant garter snakes, and many more.

In many parts of the country, having listed species on one's land was considered a major liability. To address that concern, the Administration sought ways to encourage private landowners to participate in conservation of listed species. Chief among those efforts was the development of the "No Surprises" rule. This policy provides assurances to landowners who enter into voluntary Habitat Conservation Plans that as long as they are implementing their conservation plans properly, the government will not require any additional compensation (either lands, water, or money) of them for species covered under their HCP.

As the HCP program grew, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service published a joint HCP handbook in 1996. Just four years later, the Services amended this handbook with a significant update called the "five-point policy". The policy provided additional direction to HCP practitioners by emphasizing the need for biological goals and objectives, incorporation of adaptive management to address uncertainty, encouraging public participation in HCP development, clarifying how permit durations should be determined, and emphasizing the need for compliance and effectiveness monitoring.

To encourage voluntary conservation efforts by property owners, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service published joint final policies for "Safe Harbor" and "Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances" under the Endangered Species Act. The majority of endangered and threatened species occur on privately owned lands. Working with these landowners is critical to the recovery of many of America's most vulnerable species. The "Safe Harbor" policy provides incentives for private and other non-federal property owners to restore, enhance, or maintain habitats for listed species. Under the policy, the agencies provide participating landowners with technical assistance and assurances that additional land, water, and/or natural resource use restrictions will not be imposed as a result of voluntary conservation actions that benefit or attract listed species. At the end of a "Safe Harbor" agreement, the landowner would be allowed to return the property to its original "baseline" condition.

The agencies also released their final policy on "Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances" (CCAA) for species that are not yet listed as endangered or threatened, but are considered to be in decline and could be listed in the future. CCAAs identify actions that the landowner commits to take to conserve declining species. They may include habitat protection; management; or restoration actions such as fencing, stream rehabilitation, controlled burns, or species reintroduction. Landowners who participate in this program will receive assurances from the agencies that no additional conservation measures above and beyond those contained in the

CCAA will be required and that no additional land, water, or resource-use restrictions will be imposed upon them should the species become listed in the future. These policies are part of a package of reforms initiated by this Administration to make the Endangered Species Act more effective in achieving conservation while enhancing its flexibility for private landowners.

### **Endangered Species Successes**

Fulfilling its commitment to another element of the "Ten-Point Plan" the Clinton Administration made significant strides in recovering populations of threatened and endangered species. Eight species of U.S. plants and animals under Fish and Wildlife Service jurisdiction were removed from the Endangered Species list. These species are the Tumamoc Globeberry, Spineless hedgehog cactus, McKittrick Pennyroyal, Arctic and American peregrine falcons, Cuneate bidens, Lloyd's hedgehog cactus and Dismal Swamp southeastern shrew.

The final de-listing of the American peregrine falcon received wide-ranging news coverage. A medium-sized raptor, the falcon nests on tall cliffs or urban skyscrapers and hunts other birds for food, reaching speeds of 200 miles an hour as it dives after its prey. The bird's remarkable speed and agility, however, could do nothing to prevent its sharp decline after World War II when widespread use of the pesticide DDT and other organochlorine pesticides hurt the bird's ability to reproduce. When the Service listed the peregrine falcon as endangered, populations in the eastern United States had completely disappeared and populations in the west had declined by as much as 80 to 90 percent below historical levels. By 1975, the population reached an all-time low of 324 nesting pairs in North America. The banning of DDT made the recovery of the peregrine falcon possible. The protections provided by the Endangered Species Act and the extraordinary partnership efforts of the Service and the Canadian government, state wildlife agencies, universities, private ornithological groups, and falcon enthusiasts-accelerated the pace of recovery through captive breeding programs, reintroduction efforts and the protection of nest sites during the breeding season. Currently, there are at least 1,650 peregrine breeding pairs in the United States and Canada.

Eight additional species have been proposed for de-listing. Two species proposed for de-listing, the bald eagle and Aleutian Canada goose, represent significant recovery accomplishments. As a symbol of strength and courage, the bald eagle represents the best of what America has to offer. On the eve of Independence Day weekend, July 2, 1999, President Clinton marked the culmination of a three-decade effort to protect and recover this majestic bird by announcing a proposal to remove it from the list of threatened and endangered species. The bald eagle once ranged throughout every state in the Union except Hawaii. When America adopted the bird as its national symbol in 1782, as many as 100,000 nesting bald eagles lived in the continental United States, excluding Alaska. By 1963, only 417 nesting pairs were found in the lower forty-eight. Today, due to recovery efforts by the Service in partnership with other federal agencies, tribes, state and local governments, conservation organizations, universities, corporations and thousands of individual Americans, this number has risen to an estimated 5,748 nesting pairs. As a result, biologists believe it may no longer require the special protection of the Endangered Species Act.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was poised to remove the Aleutian Canada goose, one of the first animals protected under the Endangered Species Act, from the list of threatened and

endangered species in the fall of 2000. Populations of the goose, a small subspecies of Canada goose found only on a few of Alaska's remote, windswept islands and in areas of California and the Pacific Northwest, numbered only in the hundreds in the mid-1970s. Today, biologists estimate there are 32,000 birds, and the threat of extinction has been eliminated.

In addition, seven species improved in status to the point that they could be reclassified from endangered to threatened and six species have been proposed for reclassification to threatened. The most notable proposed reclassification is that for the gray wolf.

Gray wolves have gone from a few individuals in northeastern Minnesota when first listed to currently more than 250 in the northern Rocky Mountains. Progress toward wolf recovery has followed quickly on the heels of the Service's historic reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho in 1995 and 1996. Those efforts re-established wolf populations in areas where the animals had been completely eliminated in the 1920s. Secretary Babbitt, who participated in the Yellowstone reintroductions, also assisted in efforts to reestablish Mexican wolves in Arizona in 1998 and 1999. These reintroduced wolves were the first of their species to roam freely in the southwestern United States in more than three decades. Other major efforts to reintroduce species to their historic ranges by establishing experimental populations during the Clinton Administration included the black-footed ferret, with four separate reintroductions, the California condor in Arizona, and the whooping crane in Florida.

### **Critical Habitat Policy**

Identification of the habitat needs of listed species and the conservation of such habitat is the key to recovering endangered and threatened species. While the Endangered Species Act provides a variety of tools to conserve species and their habitats, beginning in the mid-1990s much public attention was focused on the designation of critical habitat under the Act. Concern centered on the effectiveness of these designations in conserving imperiled species and on minimizing the impacts of these designations on landowners. Under the law, critical habitat designations affect projects funded, authorized or carried out by federal agencies, but do not affect activities conducted on private land or by private citizens if there is no federal involvement. The Service attempted to provide the greatest protection to the greatest number of species by focusing limited resources on the listing of more than 200 species that were in need of protection but that remained unlisted. To a large extent this backlog was due to a one-year moratorium on the listing of new species that was imposed by Congress in April of 1995. However, beginning in 1998, the Service's approach began to be rejected by the courts, and the Service was ordered to designate critical habitat for several species.

On June 14, 1999, it published a notice of intent to develop policy or guidance and to revise regulations, if necessary, to clarify the role of habitat in endangered species conservation. In that notice, the Service sought comments on the benefits of the designation of critical habitat, suggestions on effectively streamlining the process of designating critical habitat and recommendations on possible legislative actions that might improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the critical habitat process. The Service received over 500 comments and incorporated them into a draft critical habitat addendum to its Endangered Species Listing Handbook. Work on improving critical habitat continues as of this writing.

## **President's EO on Endangered Species/Native American policy**

Another important example of the Administration's commitment to making the Endangered Species Act more responsive was the joint secretarial order signed by Secretaries Babbitt and Daley (Commerce) to clarify the responsibilities of both Departments when actions taken under authority of the Act involve tribal land, tribal trust resources, or tribal rights. The order acknowledges the trust and treaty responsibilities and obligations of the United States to Native Americans and its government-to-government relationship with tribes. The order not only gives tribes a seat at the table in the planning and consultation process, but an ability to lend their expertise and traditional knowledge to conserve and improve recovery for species with habitat on Indian lands. The joint order called for both Departments to:

Work together to restore ecosystems and enhance tribal management plans that affect listed species, to conserve and recover declining species and to create an environment of trust and respect for the missions of both the Departments and the tribes for the ultimate benefit of sensitive species;

Consult with and use the expertise of affected Native American tribal governments, including the use of traditional knowledge, when determining which species should be listed, conducting surveys on species populations, and implementing conservation measures;

Provide notification to, use the expertise of, and solicit information from affected tribal governments when considering impacts to tribal trust resources and tribal lands;

Encourage and facilitate tribal participation in activities that may affect tribal interests; and provide deference to tribal conservation plans for Indian lands that address the conservation needs of listed species.

## **Strengthening the National Wildlife Refuge System**

The Administration demonstrated similar leadership in caring for the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, one of the world's most diverse collections of lands and waters dedicated to wildlife conservation. Assistance for this leadership effort came from a powerful alliance of non-government sources.

### **The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE)**

Responding to continuing funding shortfalls for managing the National Wildlife Refuge System, a diverse group of conservation and recreation organizations came together in 1997 to educate Congress and the American people about various challenges facing the System. The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement developed a plan for modest but steady budget increases for Refuge System operations and maintenance and supported legislation strengthening the Refuge System. Organizations including the Wildlife Management Institute, Defenders of Wildlife, the National Rifle Association, Ducks Unlimited, National Wildlife Federation and others aggressively pursued a plan to help the Refuge System fulfill its conservation mission by its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2003. Congress responded to the challenge by passing the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act as well as significant budget increases in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

## **President's EO on Priority Public Uses**

On March 25, 1996, President Clinton signed "Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System," a landmark Executive Order that set a new direction and ensured new opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Executive Order 12996 accomplished several important firsts for the System:

For the first time, it defined a conservation mission for the Refuge System "to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations." This mission sets the Refuge System apart from all other federal lands.

The EO defined six compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation) as priority uses of the System, and directed the Secretary to provide expanded opportunities for these activities.

The EO defined four guiding principles for management of the System: habitat conservation, public use, partnerships, and public involvement. Of these, the conservation of habitat was the foundation upon which all sustained use is dependent.

## **National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act**

A little more than a year later, President Clinton signed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act into law on October 9, 1997. This law, modeled on the President's Executive Order, built upon the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 in a manner that provided an "Organic Act" for the Refuge System. It was passed to ensure that the Refuge System is managed as a national system of related lands, waters, and interests for the protection and conservation of our nation's wildlife resources.

The passage of this Act, with strong bipartisan support and the backing of a diverse group of non-governmental organizations and state fish and wildlife agencies, gave guidance to the Secretary of the Interior for the overall management of the Refuge System. In addition to codifying the requirements of the Executive Order, the act also clarified the process for determining compatible uses of refuges and established planning processes to ensure improved public participation in the growth and management of the National Wildlife Refuge System. A critical new element mandates that the Service develop comprehensive conservation plans for each refuge over a fifteen-year period.

Following passage of the Refuge Improvement Act in 1997, Congress approved an historic \$42 million budget increase for the refuge system in FY 1998. The following year, President Clinton signed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century into law, providing \$20 million in new funding for wildlife refuge roads each year from 1999 to 2003.

Congress continued its increasing support for the refuge program in October of 1998, when it approved an additional \$17.8 million budget increase for the refuge system for FY 1999. That same month, President Clinton signed the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act. The Act opened new avenues for partnership projects and enabled the Service to expand a volunteer network that already accounts for 20 percent of all work performed on refuges each year and is worth \$14 million annually to the American people.

### **Fulfilling the Promise**

With these new priorities clearly in place, the Service began preparations for its first ever conference of National Wildlife Refuge Managers. The managers, along with many partners from Service, federal, state and non-governmental organizations met in Keystone, Colorado in October 1998 to produce *Fulfilling the Promise*, the system's road map for its second century. This report elaborated upon and provided meaningful direction for many of the issues discussed at the Keystone Conference. *Fulfilling the Promise* called for national wildlife refuges to provide a "variety of opportunities to enjoy and appreciate America's fish, wildlife, and plants," and recommended several steps to improve and expand services for hunters, anglers, and other refuge visitors. This document received final approval in March of 1999, and implementation activities began immediately.

### **Proposed Refuge System Centennial Legislation**

Congress demonstrated additional support for the refuge system in May 2000, when it passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Act (H.R. 4442). Forwarded to the Congress by the Administration in April 2000, the National Wildlife Refuge System Commemoration Act was introduced in the House of Representatives by New Jersey Representative Jim Saxton, chairman of the Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee. Intended to strengthen and highlight the 93 million-acre refuge system for its 100th birthday, the bill would establish a high ranking commission, including the Secretary of the Interior, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and up to ten other members, to build public awareness and secure new resources to manage the system. It is modeled after a similar distinguished group that oversaw the National Park System's successful Centennial celebrations in 1972. The House version of the bill was approved on July 11. At this writing, the Senate version of the bill is pending a floor vote.

### **Summary of Major Refuge Additions**

In Fiscal Years 1993 through 1999, the Service acquired interests in approximately 2,164,950 acres of land including the establishment of thirty-four new refuges, twenty-four new waterfowl production areas, and one new wildlife management area. In FY 2000, five new refuges have been established and possibly one more will be established by the end of September. The Service is committed to the preservation of biodiversity and the management of resources on an ecosystem basis. Interior's land acquisition program continues to be used as an important tool for identifying and acquiring the priority habitats within each ecosystem so that Interior can reach its fish, wildlife and plant protection goals. The following is a summary of acquisition totals and examples by each year:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u># of New Refuges</u>	<u>Key Examples</u>
1993	610,237	5	Kalia Pond NWR, HI, R1
1994	220,563	8	Trinity River NWR, TX, R2
1995	257,611	4	Big Branch Marsh NWR, LA, R4
1996	286,724	3	San Diego NWR, CA, R1
1997	295,576	4	Ten Thousand Islands, FL, R4
1998	182,239	4	Blackfoot Valley NWR, MT, R6
1999	312,000	6	Aroostook NWR, ME, R5
2000	Acres Unavailable Until end of FY	5, possibly 6 by end of FY	Big Oaks NWR, IL, R3
TOTALS:	2,164,950 (New Total to be determined at end of FY)	39, possibly 40 by end of FY 2000	

## **Protecting What We Have-Okefenokee NWR, Izembek NWR**

In addition to expanding the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, the Administration demonstrated its commitment to protecting the resources of established refuges. In 1994, the DuPont Corporation announced plans to develop a heavy minerals mine on 38,000 acres directly adjacent to the east boundary of Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, potentially altering the hydrology and water quality of the Okefenokee Swamp and St Mary's River. Impacts would likely destroy thousands of acres of wetlands and critical habitat, and change permanently the hydrological relationships between the swamp, the underlying aquifer, and superficial ground water.

Secretary Babbitt traveled to the refuge to announce that "this kind of dredging and strip mining is not an appropriate neighbor for a national wildlife refuge" and maintained the Administration's opposition to this development throughout the ensuing negotiations. In February 1999, after an extensive series of negotiations, DuPont and the Department formally ratified an agreement for a "no mining" alternative. Success of the "no mining" proposal will depend on the availability of funding from private foundations, universities, government agencies or other sources to carry out the proposal. None of the elements of the "no mining" agreement has been implemented to date, nor is the agreement binding on DuPont.

In 1998, the Aleutians East Borough and the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska, proposed to link themselves with a thirty-mile road that would have crossed Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, including seven miles of a designated wilderness area. Responding to Congressional efforts to build this road, Secretary Babbitt declared that "if they can get away with this, your favorite park may be next," and led the Administration's efforts to prevent passage of this measure. Through a series of negotiations with the communities, the State identified alternative means for improving transportation. Language was inserted in the FY 1999 appropriations earmarking funds for the construction of a new airstrip and marine facilities serving the communities.

The Service also received its largest conservation gift ever in Alaska, when The Conservation Fund donated 8,496 acres of land for addition to the Izembek refuge. This donation was made possible by a gift from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. The donated lands, located at Morzhovoi Bay, round out the western boundary of the Izembek Refuge. The lagoons, bays and marshes of Izembek, recognized as wetlands of international importance, play a critical role in maintaining healthy populations of several species of waterfowl. The entire population of Pacific flyway brant, as well as emperor geese and a significant portion of the world's population of Steller's eider, rely on the abundance of nutrient-rich foods at Izembek.

## **Taking Migratory Bird Conservation to the Next Level**

Migratory birds are a trust responsibility of the Service. It is responsible for the conservation and management of 836 species of migratory birds, 778 that are non-game species and fifty-eight that are legally hunted as game, all of them protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

For much of the past decade, the Service has been paying much closer attention to the individual factors that kill birds. These include collisions with communication towers, electric power lines,

wind turbine generators, and glass windows; fatal encounters with cats, aircraft, and cars; electrocutions; poisoning from pesticides, contaminants, and oil spills; the effects of global climate change; and, the greatest threat of all, loss or degradation of habitats. In 2000, International Migratory Bird Day received special attention from President Clinton when the White House issued a Presidential Message on May 13<sup>th</sup>, urging all Americans to learn what role each of us can play in creating safe habitats for birds and to teach children to appreciate the beauty and wonder that birds can bring to their lives.

### **Status of Migratory Bird Populations; Status of Wetlands**

Duck habitat and populations declined considerably during the 1980s and early 1990s. As a result, the Service issued hunting regulations designed to reduce harvest rates of ducks compared to the relatively liberal regulations of the early 1980s. Unfavorable habitat conditions and other factors, however, prevented recovery of duck populations until 1993 when habitat conditions began to improve in important nesting areas of North America. The improved conditions stimulated the growth of duck populations and in 1995 regulations were liberalized. Populations have remained high in 1996 through 2000. In 2000, the total duck breeding population in the traditional survey area was 41.8 million birds, 27 percent above the long-term (1955-99) average.

Breeding habitat conditions in the prairie-pothole area of the upper Midwest vary by region and time of season. However, in 2000, the number of May ponds in important duck nesting areas was 37 percent greater than the long-term average. The normal or above-normal precipitation that occurred in the last seven years over most of the prairie-pothole region, the principal breeding grounds for most of the major duck species, resulted in large duck populations. Since 1985, several million acres of waterfowl nesting habitat have been created or enhanced on conservation easements in the Dakotas and Montana. Both the increased availability of water and the augmentation and enhancement of nesting cover in the region have facilitated population increases.

Thanks to this combination of deliberate habitat protection and fortuitous improvements in weather, late in 1995 Service Director Mollie Beattie could announce that American duck populations had increased 40 percent from the near-record lows of the 1980s. Consequently, when amendments that would threaten the conservation programs of the Farm Bill were introduced, Beattie spoke out strongly against them. Citing the Conservation Reserve Program, Swampbuster, and the Wetlands Reserve Program as among the most effective wildlife conservation programs ever, she urged continuation of these incentive-based, non-regulatory efforts that have conserved millions of acres of wetlands.

The Administration successfully opposed an amendment to the Farm Bill that would have exempted as many as 12 million acres of agricultural wetlands from Swampbuster protection. Administration efforts also blocked a proposal to exempt wetlands smaller than one acre in size from the conservation reserve program. If enacted, this proposal would have left roughly 80 percent of all the potholes in the prairie-pothole region, America's "duck factory," completely unprotected.

## **Growth & Value of North American Waterfowl Management Plan**

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan, begun in 1986 to increase cooperative efforts to protect waterfowl habitat, continued its growth under the Clinton Administration. The Plan was updated in 1994, and its commitment was expanded. Mexico became a signatory to the plan, joining our longstanding partner, Canada. Habitat protection under the Plan increased from 11.1 million acres to 14.7 million acres. When the plan was updated again in 1998, its scope expanded again. The revised plan refined its biological foundations, encouraging a landscape-level approach to conservation and expanding its planning and implementation actions to consider the role of all habitats in bird conservation. The Plan Committee approved implementation of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, thus creating the 11th habitat joint venture in the United States. The Plan Committee also endorsed formation of a Sea Duck Joint Venture in the U.S. and Canada to reverse the declining trend of the fifteen species of this group of ducks. Joint venture boundaries under the Plan also expanded to include additional areas of concern not only for waterfowl but also shorebirds, songbirds, and colonial waterbirds. From FY 1993 through FY 2000, Plan activities protected 882,745 acres of land, restored another 450,667 acres, and enhanced 1,607,718 acres of bird habitat. Working with partners, the Plan also secured \$848,378,767 to underwrite these efforts.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act proved crucial to the success of the plan. During the Clinton Administration, funding from the Act supported 632 grants affecting 5,384,945 acres of land. Non-federal partners more than doubled funding available under the grants program.

### **Adaptive Harvest Management**

To better manage migratory waterfowl, the Service instituted Adaptive Harvest Management in 1995 to help wildlife managers better understand the effects of hunting while providing maximum harvest opportunities consistent with waterfowl populations. An essential feature of the process is a set of alternatives, including framework dates, season lengths, and bag limits, which balance hunting opportunities with efforts to achieve waterfowl populations identified in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

To further improve the regulatory process, the Service and the states developed the Harvest Information Program, known informally as HIP, to develop more reliable estimates of the number of all migratory birds harvested throughout the country. HIP is based on a voluntary survey of selected migratory bird hunters in the United States. In simplest terms, the state wildlife agencies collect the name, address, and some additional information from each migratory bird hunter in their state, and send that information to the Service. The Service then randomly selects a sample of those hunters and asks them to detail the kind and number of migratory birds they harvest during the hunting season. Those hunters' reports are then used to develop reliable estimates of the total harvest of all migratory birds throughout the country. These estimates will give biologists the information they need to make sound decisions concerning hunting seasons, bag limits, and population management. All states except Hawaii have participated in this program since the 1998 hunting season.

## **Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds**

In recognition and support of the crucial role that urban communities play in migratory bird conservation, the Service launched the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds program in 1999. This program brings U.S. cities and the Service together to conserve migratory birds through education and habitat improvement. Treaty cities build an action plan that includes work in four focus areas: habitat creation, protection and restoration; education and outreach; reduction of hazards; and management of invasive, exotic or nuisance species. The Service provides challenge funding and technical assistance. The Treaty City develops and implements bird conservation projects and programs, provides matching dollars and in-kind support, and develops additional partnerships. Programming has begun in New Orleans and Chicago. In the fall of 2000, the Service expects to announce a list of cities that will become part of the program over the next two years.

## **Management of Overabundant Populations**

Not all increases in bird populations were welcome. Populations of light geese, for example, were expanding faster than their spring habitat's ability to support them. In the winter of 1998, the Service instituted population control measures, including more liberal hunting regulations, for mid-continent light geese. Designed to halt widening destruction of fragile arctic migratory bird breeding habitat caused by exploding populations of lesser snow and Ross' geese, the measures were implemented on Feb. 16, 1998, but were withdrawn in May of that year after a legal challenge.

In 1999, President Clinton signed legislation reinstating the control measures. As directed by the legislation, the Service notified twenty-four Midwestern and Southern states that they are allowed to take conservation measures in the winter and spring of 2000 aimed at reducing the population of mid-continent light geese. The Service has since begun work on an Environmental Impact Statement that will determine its long-term management strategy for overabundant lesser snow and Ross' geese populations, as well as the rapidly increasing greater snow goose population.

Increasing numbers of double-crested cormorants have raised concerns about impacts on recreational fishing, habitat and other migratory birds. In 1999, the Service began developing a comprehensive national plan for cormorant management. The plan will evaluate the species' status, known and perceived impacts on other resources, and potential management strategies. The plan will consider the administrative, logistical, and socioeconomic impacts of various management strategies.

In 1999, the Service also gave states greater flexibility to cope with expanding populations of resident, or non-migratory, Canada geese in urban and suburban communities. Most Canada goose populations are migratory, wintering in the southern United States and migrating north to summer breeding grounds in the Canadian arctic. Increasing urban and suburban development in the U.S. has resulted in the creation of ideal goose habitat conditions: open, park-like areas of short grass adjacent to small bodies of water.

As a result, growing numbers of locally breeding geese now live year round on golf courses, parks, airports and other public and private property. Resident Canada goose populations enjoy consistently high reproduction and survival rates. In recent years, biologists have documented tremendous increases in populations of Canada geese that nest predominantly within the United States. The Service announced a new rule that will give state wildlife agencies the opportunity to design their own management programs and to control specific populations without having to seek a separate permit from the Service for each action. The new special Canada goose permits will allow states to act as soon as it becomes apparent that resident Canada geese are a problem.

In a longer-term effort, the Service also began to develop a nationwide management strategy for resident Canada geese. The study will explore ways to control and manage increasing populations of resident Canada geese that pose a threat to human health or safety, or that cause damage to personal and public property.

### **North American Bird Conservation Initiative**

Increases in some bird populations, however, were mirrored by decreases in other species of birds. To help address this situation, the Service played a lead role in establishing the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, launched in late 1999. The magnitude and scale of this bird conservation effort is unparalleled. The U.S. steering committee for this continent-wide effort held its first meeting in the fall of 1999, which the Service co-chaired along with the President of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Many of the bird-conservation work plans the Service and its partners put together, from Partners in Flight to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, are being dove-tailed into this initiative, making possible on-the-ground projects that will provide habitat for all bird species, from the Yucatan to the Arctic.

### **Protecting What We Have**

A Utah-based electric utility company was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Denver at the end of a landmark 1999 case involving the protection of migratory birds in the United States. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources jointly investigated Moon Lake Electric Association, Inc. The utility was fined \$100,000 for illegally killing protected raptors, was placed on probation for three years and ordered to retrofit its utility lines. The fines were restitution for the electrocution of eagles and other raptors that landed on its powerlines and poles in northwest Colorado and eastern Utah. The company unsuccessfully argued to the court that the prohibitions against killing protected birds in the two laws referred only to illegal hunting and did not apply to "unintentional" avian deaths caused by contact with powerlines or other company equipment. The District Court concluded that both the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Eagle Protection Act provide a basis for prosecuting utility companies and other businesses whose activities harm protected birds.

The Service also launched a major effort in conjunction with the telecommunications industry to protect birds from a growing number of tower collisions. In a first-of-its-kind workshop in August of 1999, the Service brought together experts from across the country to discuss the problem and begin deciding a course of action. This cooperative approach builds on earlier

success in working with the electric utility and wind generation industries to help solve bird collision and electrocution problems.

In addition, the Service led the initiative at the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in getting unanimous approval of an International Plan of Action to Reduce the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries. The Service is presently working to extend the territorial jurisdiction of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to the high seas, which should considerably improve enforcement and management of fisheries and seabirds. The Service successfully negotiated agreements between the U.S. and Japan on shared issues of migratory bird conservation between our two countries.

## **Habitat & Aquatic Conservation**

### **Invasive species**

In February 1999, Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman (Agriculture), and Under Secretary of Commerce James Baker announced President Clinton's Executive Order 13112. This order established a coordinated federal effort to curtail the growing environmental and economic threat posed by invasive plants and animals non-native to the United States. Many scientists believe the spread of invasive exotic species is one of the most serious, yet least known, threats to biodiversity. Invasive animal and plant species have caused billions of dollars worth of damage to crops and rangeland and have caused other problems, such as the clogging of municipal water intakes by zebra mussels.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service played a key role in implementing the President's Executive Order 13112. The Order directs agencies to develop and implement a national invasive species prevention strategy, and to create control plans for the most troublesome of the thousands of non-native plants and animals that already are established in the United States.

That effort dovetails with the work of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, an intergovernmental organization of seven federal agencies dedicated to preventing and controlling aquatic nuisance species, and co-chaired by the Service. The Task Force, established by the Non-indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, addresses all new non-indigenous aquatic species activities that are conducted, funded or authorized by the federal government, except those involving intentional introductions. The Task Force program consists of three elements: prevention, detection, and monitoring and control. It is also involved in research, education and technical assistance, and related activities. The Task Force has engaged in efforts to control the zebra mussel, ruffe, brown tree snake and green crab. It has also undertaken biological and ecological studies, ballast water management projects, and other initiatives. For example, the Service is developing prevention and control programs to hinder the introduction of high-risk species and reduce the risk of spreading aquatic nuisance species from one part of the country to another. One such project, the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Initiative, seeks to prevent the spread of zebra mussels to the western U.S.

Invasive species in the United States are inflicting damage now estimated at \$138 billion a year and contribute to the population declines of nearly half of all endangered species. Experts estimate that invasive plants already exist on more than 100 million acres of land and continue to

increase at a rate of 8 to 20 percent a year, consuming an area twice the size of Delaware every 365 days.

### **President's Executive Order on Recreational Fisheries**

Executive Order 12962 on Recreational Fisheries, signed by President Clinton in June 1995, directed federal agencies to work with others to increase recreational fishing opportunities. To help the agencies accomplish that task, it established a National Recreational Fisheries Coordination Council with representatives from the Departments of Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, Energy, Transportation and Defense, along with a member from the Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, the Executive Order expanded the role of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council to monitor and review federal activities related to recreational fishery resources.

The Service spearheaded two major multi-agency fisheries initiatives, responding to President Clinton's 1995 Executive Order on recreational fishing. The first was the joint Service and National Marine Fisheries Service policy to improve administration of the Endangered Species Act as it relates to recreational fisheries. The new policy ensures consistent and effective administration of the Endangered Species Act while giving full consideration to fish species and habitats important to anglers. The Service also took the lead in developing the Recreational Fishery Resources Conservation Plan outlining strategies that Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Interior, and Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency pursued throughout the Administration to improve recreational fisheries within the context of their programs and responsibilities. The Conservation Plan identified federal contributions to improve water quality, habitats, fishery population management, access, education and outreach, and partnership. The Conservation Plan recognizes that federal agencies have individual and, in some cases, shared responsibilities for the conservation of all aquatic resources within their jurisdictions, including those listed as threatened and endangered.

If a new national public outreach campaign which began gearing up in the summer of 2000 is successful, more Americans will be heading to the water to boat, fish, and develop a commitment to conserving our nation's aquatic resources. The five-year, \$36 million campaign will be administered by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation under a cooperative agreement with the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 directed the Interior Secretary to develop, in cooperation with the federally chartered Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, a national outreach plan to encourage greater public interest and participation in boating and fishing. The plan also aims to provide more information about recreational boating and angling opportunities, reduce barriers to participation in these activities, and promote conservation and the responsible use of aquatic resources.

### **Improving Fish Passage/Dam Removals**

During his tenure, Secretary Babbitt repeatedly drew attention to the damage to fisheries and aquatic habitats caused by old and unneeded dams. Approximately 75,000 dams that are six feet or higher, and some 2.5 million smaller obstructions now block or impede fish passage in the nation's waterways. Dramatic declines in migratory fish populations are due in great part to the

damming of rivers, which once provided an open passage to the freshwater habitat where these species reproduce. Larvae, juvenile and adult fish are often unable to reach spawning or rearing grounds.

In June 1999, Secretary Babbitt participated in breaching Maine's Edwards Dam, opening seventeen miles of the Kennebec River to nine migratory fish species. For the first time in 160 years, the Atlantic salmon, American shad, blueback herring, striped bass, and rainbow smelt of the Kennebec, as well as other fish, now have free access to their historic habitat. The Service played a major role in the historic 1997 decision by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to require removal of the Edwards Dam. The landmark two-to-one decision was the first time the federal government has ordered the destruction of a hydroelectric dam.

Representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were among those from seventeen federal, state, regional and local agencies and three private conservation organizations attending October 1999 ceremonies marking the beginning of the \$1.5 million Little Falls Dam Fishway Project. The project features a notch passage, which will open ten more miles of spawning and nursery habitat for the imperiled American shad.

On December 1, 1999, on the Little River just outside of Goldsboro, North Carolina, the Rains Dam was reduced to rubble when Secretary Babbitt gave the signal to ignite charges carefully set by munitions experts from the U.S. Marines. The dam removal project, a federal/state/private partnership, opened forty-nine miles of suitable spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous alewife, American shad, hickory shad, Atlantic sturgeon, shortnose sturgeon, and striped bass.

These dramatic events were only the foreground to a much broader effort to restore fish passageways to America's streams and rivers. In 2000, the Service budgeted \$900,000 to pump into fish passage projects in seven watersheds in twelve states, removing four dams and other impediments and restoring access to more than 1,000 miles of habitat for fish and other aquatic species. More than seventeen commercial and recreational species such as salmonids, American shad, river herring and sturgeon, as well as four species already on the Endangered Species list will benefit, and the projects also hold the promise of helping to avoid listing other species. In 1999, the program completed restoration projects in fourteen states, including those designed to help the watershed work of more than fifty partners. Some 23,000 acres of riparian, streambank and wetland habitats were restored and 1,000 miles of river were improved or reopened to spawning and rearing habitat. At least fifty species of fish and wildlife benefited, including ten listed fish and freshwater mussels.

### **National Fish Hatcheries**

Given existing budget constraints, the National Fish Hatchery System has been hard pressed to meet its responsibilities to conserve native species, mitigate the adverse impacts federal water projects have on local fisheries, and support Tribal fisheries. As a result, during the 1990s, the National Fish Hatchery System of sixty-six hatcheries, seven technology centers, and nine fish health centers has functioned with operational deficits of \$46 million and amassed a maintenance backlog of \$274 million.

Yet the National Fish Hatchery System has become increasingly more important to conservation in the face of an increasing biological crisis in America's waters. Scientists estimate that in North America, the nation will lose freshwater species at a rate of 3.7 percent per decade throughout the new century, a rate that is five times the extinction rate for land species. The National Fish Hatchery System has an important role to play in restoring America's aquatic ecosystems to good health.

To ready the Hatchery System for this role, the Service, together with its partners, has undertaken a number of internal and external reviews, including a review by the Northwest Power Planning Council, an audit by the General Accounting Office, and a report by the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council.

In July 1997, Congress directed the Northwest Power Planning Council, with the assistance of the Independent Scientific Advisory Board, to conduct a thorough review of all federally funded artificial production programs in the Columbia River Basin. The Council was to recommend a coordinated policy for future operation of artificial production programs, and to provide recommendations for how to obtain such a policy. The Council recommended ten policies to guide use of artificial production.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) completed its audit of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS) and released its final report, entitled *National Fish Hatcheries: Authority Needed to Better Align Operations with Priorities* (GAO/RCED-00-151), in the summer of 2000. The first GAO review, *Classification of the Distribution of Fish and Fish Eggs Needs Refinement*, issued in October 1999, found that appropriations for operating the National Fish Hatchery System dropped by 15 percent from FY 1992 through 1999. About one-fourth of the positions at federal hatcheries are currently unfilled, and 1998 fish distribution was about 19 percent below 1992 levels. The final GAO report found that:

- Current NFHS hatchery activities are legal, falling within the broad boundaries of the 100+ laws that govern FWS hatchery operations.
- Because of the continuing decline in aquatic species, FWS emphasizes the recovery of threatened or endangered species and the restoration of other native fish to self-sustaining levels.
- Hatchery programs have succeeded in increasing the size of some listed and declining fish populations.
- FWS continues to emphasize mitigation.
- Maintaining existing programs with declining funds has impaired hatchery operations.
- While FWS has successfully obtained reimbursement for mitigation in some cases, in other cases FWS is precluded from obtaining reimbursement or its ability to obtain reimbursement is questionable.

The GAO report also recommended that Congress:

- Provide direction on which programs it wants the hatcheries to emphasize;
- Authorize FWS to open, close, change, move, and consolidate hatcheries to allow more efficient and effective alignment of its operations with Congressionally directed priorities; and
- Provide FWS with clear authority to seek reimbursement from federal water development agencies and/or project beneficiaries for all hatchery operation and maintenance expenses associated with mitigation projects.

The Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council's Hatchery Steering Committee, composed of diverse stakeholder groups, recommended a significant new course for the hatchery system. The new course focuses on fulfilling mitigation obligations; restoring and maintaining native fisheries; improving recreational fisheries; strengthening cooperation with states, tribes, and other partners; and improving accountability with Congress, NFHS stakeholders and the general public. The use of science-based management principles and practices was a central theme of the steering committee's report.

### **Partners for Fish & Wildlife**

Working with private landowners, who manage the vast majority of the nation's wildlife habitat, is an essential element of habitat protection. The voluntary Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is a critical element in meeting the nation's habitat protection and restoration goals, and regularly maintains a backlog of more than 2,000 landowners interested in working with the Service to improve habitat on their lands.

Since the program began in 1987, the Service has entered into partnership agreements with more than 21,500 landowners and restored nearly a million acres of wetlands and uplands. During the Clinton Administration, the Partners for Wildlife Program became the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Increasingly, program resources were used to restore aquatic habitats. This not only helped restore native fishes to headwaters areas, it also improved water quality in downstream reaches. The Partners program has restored more than 2,700 miles of instream and riparian habitats and opened more than 581 miles of streams for fish passage.

### **Wetlands and Coastal Habitat Restoration**

The Service issued a Final Policy on the National Wildlife Refuge System and Compensatory Mitigation under the Rivers and Harbors Act and the Clean Water Act in September 1999. The Policy does not allow compensatory wetlands mitigation on refuge lands for water resources development projects permitted by the Army. These lands are already protected and targeted for restoration in accordance with refuge management plans.

The Service is the major producer of digital wetland maps that aid the nation in the stewardship of these precious natural resources. The Department of the Interior and the Service have actively guided development of the digital wetlands layer of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.

This has been largely accomplished in concert with the Federal Geographic Data Committee, which includes involvement of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector. Secretary Babbitt has actively chaired this Committee, which has representatives from seventeen cabinet and executive level agencies. The Fish and Wildlife Service has chaired the wetlands subcommittee, and is responsible for the coordinated development, use, sharing and dissemination of wetlands data. As a result, digital map data for more than 40 percent of the conterminous United States and 13 percent of Alaska have been added to the wetlands layer of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. Digital National Wetlands Inventory maps have been completed in cooperation with more than fifty federal, state, and university mapping organizations that have provided data or funding support.

Since 1994, the Service has served digital wetland data over the Internet and more than one million data files have been downloaded by users. To better meet general public demand, the Service implemented a Web-based browser-driven mapper in September 1999. This Wetlands Interactive Mapper has enabled Internet users to produce more than 250,000 custom maps using their desk top computers. In the hands of public and private users, these maps and digital information have been applied to myriad resource management scenarios ranging from project siting and transportation routing, to habitat protection, to locating recreational opportunities.

## **Alaska**

### ***Exxon Valdez Trust Fund***

As a result of the devastating 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound, a trust fund was created to study, monitor and protect wildlife, habitat and other sensitive resources affected by the spill. In 1994, the trustee council for the fund adopted a restoration plan that, in part, was devoted to habitat protection and acquisition. By 1996, \$400 million had been committed to these efforts over a ten-year period, making it the largest habitat restoration program in the United States. Funding has been used to protect over 270,000 acres within the Alaska Maritime, Kenai, and Kodiak National Wildlife Refuges. A portion of the trust fund has been set aside for long-term habitat protection initiatives that may benefit national wildlife refuges.

### **Migratory Bird Treaty Act Amendments**

The United States reached a formal agreement with the Canadian government that will improve the management of birds that migrate between the United States and Canada and permit regulated spring subsistence hunting for the indigenous peoples of Canada and Alaska. The agreement formally implements a protocol amending the 1916 Migratory Bird Convention, an important bilateral treaty for the conservation of migratory birds. The amendments to the Migratory Bird Convention, which were approved by the U.S. Senate in 1997 and the Canadian government in 1995, will allow the United States and Canada to recognize and cooperatively manage subsistence hunts with native peoples. Many indigenous peoples in the far north depend on traditional subsistence hunting for their survival, and such hunting is guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution and protected by established U.S. policy. The Migratory Bird Convention with Canada, signed in 1916, is North America's oldest international wildlife conservation pact.

## **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

Oil and gas development and wilderness designation on the coastal plain of the refuge has been discussed continuously since the contentious Alaska lands debate of the 1970s. Section 1002 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) required the preparation of the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain Resource Assessment, while Section 1003 prohibited leasing or production of oil and gas until authorized by further Act of Congress. Although serious consideration was given to allowing oil and gas drilling and exploration of the 1002 area during the 1980's, similar legislative proposals have been strenuously opposed by the current Administration during the 1990s. In May of 1998, Secretary Babbitt noted that "there are places on the Arctic Coastal Plain that should be forever set aside. The Administration's commitment to protect and preserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has not and will not change."

## **Subsistence Hunting and Fishing Issues**

New regulations expanding federal subsistence fisheries management in Alaska became effective in the early fall of 1999. The regulations govern subsistence fishing on rivers and lakes within and alongside more than 200 million acres of National Park Service lands, National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, and other federal conservation lands, representing about 60 percent of Alaska's waters.

The new federal subsistence fisheries management program was phased in by spring 2000, when the major subsistence salmon fisheries began. The new regulations resulted from the 1995 *Katie John* decision directing the federal government to expand federal jurisdiction for subsistence fisheries in waters within federal conservation units. A series of Congressional moratoria postponed implementation of the court's decision to allow the State of Alaska more time to craft a solution that complies with ANILCA provisions giving rural residents priority for subsistence uses. In the summer of 2000, the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals advised it would reconsider the *Katie John* ruling.

## **International Conservation and Law Enforcement**

### **Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty aimed at regulating the worldwide trade in threatened and potentially threatened species. It became effective July 1, 1975, with the United States as one of the original ten member countries. Currently more than 150 nations are signatories to CITES, which is administered through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. CITES is implemented in the United States under the ESA, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the lead agency for this implementation.

In 1994, the United States hosted the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to CITES in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Approximately every two years, CITES member nations meet to review and vote on proposed resolutions and decisions to improve the effectiveness of CITES, and also on proposed amendments to the listings of protected species in the CITES Appendices. This was the first time these member nations had met in the United States since the drafting of the convention.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, June 9-20, 1997, included discussions on the relationship between CITES and the International Whaling Commission, as well as the proposed reopening of commercial trade in whales and seas turtles. The most visible and controversial issue, however, concerned the status of African elephants. Three countries (Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe) proposed to downlist their African elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II to allow trade in stockpiled ivory to Japan. Party members voted to allow resumption of limited trade in ivory eighteen months after the downlisting took effect, but only to Japan and only if certain conditions were met and approved in advance.

At the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties, held in Gigiri, Kenya, April 10-20, 2000, opposition by Kenya and India on resumption of the ivory trade led to a compromise with the southern African countries, which withdrew their proposals to reopen the trade. This provided additional time to improve methods for monitoring both the status of elephant populations and the poaching and illegal trade in African and Asian elephants. In addition, the conference turned down proposals to downlist some whale populations, including our own grey whale, and listed some vulnerable shark species.

Also raised at the April 2000 conference was the issue of bushmeat. The meat of wild animals is a staple of the diet of forest dwelling peoples in the equatorial forests of west and central Africa. As the population of Africa becomes increasingly urbanized, commercial hunters and traders have moved to meet the demand for bushmeat. The illegal trade in ape meat is the greatest threat facing gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos today. A working group was formed to consider ways to stop the killing of these protected primates.

### **Protecting Sturgeon**

Global concern about overharvesting of sturgeon for the caviar trade prompted the member nations of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to extend new protections to these fish during the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in 1997. The United States and Germany, two of the world's leading caviar-consuming countries, spearheaded the proposal to impose trade controls on all sturgeon species and Sturgeon Products B, controls that brought the high-volume, high-profit caviar industry under Service regulation and worldwide scrutiny for the first time. The new trade controls required U.S. caviar importers to declare their shipments to the Service and obtain CITES export permits from the country of origin properly identifying the species involved and verifying that trade represented no threat to sturgeon populations in the wild.

Before the controls took effect on April 1, 2000, the Service conducted outreach to educate the industry on the new requirements, developed procedures for dealing with existing caviar stocks, and pioneered a DNA technique for identifying sturgeon species—a forensics capability that would be essential for effective trade monitoring. During the next two years, Service law enforcement staff at major ports of entry inspected more than 200 tons of caviar, intercepting significant quantities of black market roe and breaking up several major smuggling operations. In November 1999, the nation's first federal prosecution upholding global protections for sturgeon produced guilty verdicts against the owner of Gino International, a Connecticut caviar import company, and his business associate. During a seven-month period, the pair had

smuggled more than 21,000 pounds of caviar into New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport using "suitcase" couriers traveling on commercial airline flights from Europe. In July 2000, U.S. Caviar & Caviar, a major American caviar supplier based in Rockville, Maryland, pleaded guilty to 22 federal charges related to caviar smuggling, conspiracy, and fraud. The company's president, business manager, and the owner of a caviar export firm operating out of the United Arab Emirates also pleaded guilty to multiple felonies in the case, which documented profiteering involving more than \$7.5 million worth of Caviar B, one of the largest value wildlife trafficking schemes ever uncovered by the Service.

### **Rhinos, Tigers, Elephants, Asian Medicinals**

Protection of species used in traditional Chinese medicine has been an ongoing issue for CITES since 1994. At that time the United States committed to working with traditional medicine practitioners to advance conservation awareness of the plight of tigers and rhinoceroses, listed in the Chinese *materia medica* as ingredients in medicinal formulas. Since that time, the United States has contributed to increased awareness of these species' conservation needs, both at a national and an international level. Domestically, it has worked with schools of traditional Chinese medicine to provide information on CITES protection for these species. Internationally, the United States, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, manages a small grants fund established by the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, to support critical conservation efforts in nations whose activities directly affect rhinoceros and tiger populations. An amendment to the Act in 1998 led to prohibition of sale, importation, and exportation of products labeled as containing rhinoceros or tiger parts, whether these products actually contained the species or not. This represented a significant step forward in U.S. efforts to halt domestic trade in these species, particularly in traditional medicine products claiming to contain them.

### **Panda Policy**

Giant pandas also benefited from development of U.S. policy. In December 1993, the United States placed a moratorium on the processing of import permit applications for live giant pandas. There was growing concern that short-term giant panda loans to U.S. facilities might adversely impact dwindling wild panda populations in China. The moratorium was lifted in 1998 with the publication of a giant panda conservation policy. Under the policy, imports are only allowed if the research or breeding efforts of U.S. facilities seeking panda loans are coordinated with Chinese efforts and have direct benefit to pandas in the wild. The main focus of the policy is on funding high-priority conservation projects listed in China's National Project for the Conservation of Giant Pandas and Their Habitat, or their National Survey. Funding of China's breeding plan is also important. Permission to import pandas could be made contingent upon an importing facility's willingness to return panda-associated revenues. The facility holding pandas must use any funds associated with the panda loan (loan money, net profit, fund-raising money) to China, where the funds would support these high-priority projects. The policy is designed to ensure that any panda loan activities requiring a permit from the United States will contribute to the survival and recovery of the wild panda populations.

## **Coral Reef Conservation**

Service law enforcement co-chaired the international trade subgroup of the Presidentially-created U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, directing an interagency effort to analyze U.S. trade data for corals and other reef resources and propose improved trade controls. The group worked to facilitate international cooperation on conserving the world's coral reefs; secured initial Congressional interest in legislative mechanisms for promoting sustainable trade; and conducted liaison with states and territories, industry, trade groups, and conservation organizations that helped increase public awareness of the U.S. role in the trade of coral reef species. Working as part of the North American Wildlife Enforcement Group, the Service took the lead in planning, coordinating, and conducting a November 1999 marine invertebrate identification workshop for U.S., Mexican, and Canadian wildlife law enforcement officers. In August 1999, Service law enforcement also secured the first federal felony conviction for coral smuggling in a Florida case that involved illegal trafficking in corals plundered from reefs in the Philippines.

## **National Fish & Wildlife Forensics Laboratory**

The Clark R. Basin National Fish & Wildlife Forensics Laboratory, which opened its doors in Ashland, Oregon, in 1988 as the first facility of its kind in the world, assumed an increasingly important role in the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crimes. The number of federal, state, and international cases handled by the Service's small cadre of forensic experts more than doubled in the 1990s; in FY 1999, for example, scientists worked on 672 cases, involving the examination of more than 3,300 pieces of evidence. During this period, lab scientists also developed many of the analytical techniques needed to help solve wildlife crimes. By the end of the decade, wildlife forensics had gained global recognition as a new field of science, thanks largely to the Service's pioneering research. Examples include the application of DNA analysis to species identification, including the development of a DNA method for detecting the sturgeon species represented in a tin of caviar; work to pinpoint the contents of traditional Asian medicines, many of which claim to contain endangered species; and the successful use of hemoglobin analysis to identify wildlife species from blood samples.

## **Federal Aid**

Relationships with some Members and staff of the House Resources Committee and some constituent groups became contentious during 1999 and 2000, after the Committee initiated a General Accounting Office (GAO) audit of the Service's Federal Aid program for Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration. Under this program, federal excise taxes are collected on sporting arms and ammunition, fishing tackle, motorboat fuels and certain other boating equipment. The funds raised are distributed through the Fish and Wildlife Service to State fish and wildlife agencies, and constitute a major source of conservation funding for most states. The programs were enacted in 1937 (for wildlife) and 1950 (for fish) and have been highly successful in restoring fish and wildlife species such as striped bass, white tailed deer, and wild turkey.

GAO found poor management and record-keeping practices in the Service's administration of the Federal Aid program, but did not issue an official report on their findings. The Fish and Wildlife Service disputed some of the findings but took the audit results seriously and initiated a series of administrative reforms, in partnership with state fish and wildlife agencies. Several

contentious Congressional hearings were held on this topic, and some interest groups (National Rifle Association, National Wilderness Institute) charged that the management shortcomings in the Federal Aid division were part of an anti-hunting, anti-gun bias on the part of the Clinton-Gore Administration. Although the Service acknowledged management weaknesses in its Federal Aid division, the hearings served as a platform to air unsubstantiated allegations of illegality and diversion of funds. These allegations were repeated, distributed by several organizations and reported in some news articles. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 to reform the Federal Aid program was introduced in early 2000 and passed the House; at this writing the legislation has not been acted upon by the Senate.

## **Operations from a Landscape Level and Ecosystem Approach**

### **Restructuring of Service Research Function**

Shortly after the Administration took office, newly appointed Secretary Babbitt announced a reorganization of the Department of the Interior's biological science programs. This reorganization, which was completed before the end of 1993, separated the Service's research function and combined it with functions from National Park Service to create an independent agency, the National Biological Survey (NBS). A lack of Congressional support for the new agency eventually led to its losing its independent status and being reorganized again as the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey.

### **Ecosystem Management**

In 1993, the Fish and Wildlife Service and other natural resource agencies began adopting a management philosophy known as "ecosystem management." This philosophy emphasized the health of entire ecosystems and encouraged Service personnel to work across traditional program lines, which were organized around species groups or issues such as migratory birds, fisheries, endangered species, and refuges. Organizing the agency to implement this ecosystem approach to conservation proved challenging. In 1994, Service leadership formally adopted the ecosystem approach concept and provided each Service region with the opportunity to organize to implement this approach. In October 1995, all of the regions were directed to adopt a geographic focus at the assistant regional director level, creating positions known informally as GADS (geographic assistant regional directors). These positions managed all issues (migratory birds, refuges, etc) within designated geographic areas in each Region. This was a departure from the previous organization, which had assistant regional directors who managed issues by program for the entire region, so that, for example, all refuge issues in the Region were managed by one individual, and all fisheries issues by another.

A formal evaluation of this management approach by the Ohio Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit of Ohio State University found that the Service was still in the preliminary stages of adopting this management approach and that many Service employees would prefer a return to a programmatic structure. The Ohio State report recommended a geographic line management approach with programmatic staff support.

Service leadership adopted a modified version of the Ohio State recommendations in the spring of 1998 and created Program Assistant Regional Director, or PARRED, positions while retaining

the GARD positions as well. In the fall of 1999, recommendations from an employees team established to help Service leadership implement the ecosystem approach led to a further organizational review, conducted by a team of deputy regional directors and deputy assistant directors. The results of that review showed that Service employees support the ecosystem approach, but found the GARD/PARRED organization complex, confusing, and cumbersome. To address these shortcomings, Service leadership eliminated the existing GARD and PARRED positions in the regional offices and created Assistant Regional Director positions which are responsible for both program policy and geographic line management. The Service also established a Special Assistant for Ecosystems reporting to each Regional Director to help the agency maintain its landscape-level conservation focus.

During the management restructuring, field-level ecosystems teams, organized around fifty-three major watersheds, continued to function effectively and carried out numerous high-priority, cross-program efforts, such as restoring habitat for threatened scrubjays in Florida.

### **National Office Reorganization**

In conjunction with the 2000 restructuring just discussed, the Director instituted a revised organization in the headquarters office. That change was prompted, in large part, by the massive workload associated with administering the Endangered Species Act and the desire to elevate the status of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The new organization also provided greater focus on migratory bird conservation and Federal Aid to States. (Organization charts are included in the documentary supplement.)

### **California-Nevada Operations Office**

In May 1998, the Service established a new California-Nevada Operations office, headquartered in Sacramento, California, to handle the growth in fish and wildlife issues in those states involving habitat conservation planning, land acquisition priorities and refuge compatibility issues. The nine-person office manages high profile resources issues under an Operations Manager and a Deputy Operations Manager. The office falls under the direction of the Pacific Northwest region. This organizational structure was approved after nearly a year of negotiations with Congress. The Service had first proposed establishing an additional region to handle issues within these rapidly growing states.

### **National Conservation Training Center**

Conservation in America gained a permanent home during the Clinton Administration with the creation and opening in 1997 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center near Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The \$143 million campus offers more than 250 courses in all aspects of natural resource management; it anchors America's conservation community by providing a site for common learning and consensus-building, as well as a research center for the history of American conservation. President Clinton capitalized on these features when he brought Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Syrian Foreign Minister Sarouk Al-Sharan to NCTC in January 2000 for continuing negotiations as part of the Middle East peace process.

## **GPRA and Strategic Planning**

Under the Government Performance and Results Act, the Service established four principal mission goals: establish self-sustaining populations of fish and wildlife species; conserve wildlife habitat; promote public use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources; and strengthen conservation partnerships. For these mission goals, the Service has developed twelve measurable long-term objectives that it aims to fulfill by 2005. The Service's goals and objectives and the progress realized in achieving those objectives are documented in two strategic plans (1997 and 2000), three annual performance plans (1999, 2000, 2001), and the 1999 annual performance reports.

## **Using the Internet**

Since 1993, the Service has created nearly 25,000 Web pages so the public can access fish and wildlife information via the Internet (Home Page: <[www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)>). In an effort to improve public access to its information, all Service news releases are distributed via listservers as well, and even historic news releases dating back to 1914 have been posted at <[news.fws.gov](http://news.fws.gov)>. The Endangered Species listings, plans, and species profiles are accessible via the Web, as are many of the Service's publications in an online library at <[library.fws.gov](http://library.fws.gov)>.

## **FWS Leadership: 1993-2000**

In 1993, President Clinton named and the Senate confirmed Mollie Beattie of Vermont as Director of the Service. The first woman to head the Service, Beattie came to Washington with an extensive background in state government and resource management. Beattie came to the Service from the Richard A. Snelling Center for Government in Vermont, an institute for public policy and service, where she was executive director.

As a forester by training, and the first woman to hold the Director's spot, Beattie's nomination was initially met with skepticism from some quarters of the conservation community. Prominent groups charged that she did not support such traditional constituencies as hunters and anglers. Beattie faced her critics and won their confidence through her actions.

Beattie's tenure as director was marked by intense national debates over reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act, concerted efforts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration, proposed National Wildlife Refuge System legislation and often contentious Congressional funding issues. Under her guidance, the Service was able to weather these storms and reach many milestones, including taking the first steps to remove the peregrine falcon from the Endangered Species list.

Before stepping down as director, Beattie led an intensive effort to restart the Endangered Species Act listing program that Congress had once placed under moratorium. Amidst widespread publicity, she guided the first post-moratorium listing under the restarted program.

Beattie served as Director of the Service for three years, but resigned in June 1996 because of failing health. After what Secretary Babbitt described as "a valiant one-year struggle," she succumbed to brain cancer shortly after her resignation. Congress designated a large area of

Alaska's Brooks Range in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as the Mollie Beattie Wilderness Area in her memory.

Following Beattie's resignation and untimely death, Dr. John G. Rogers, a career Service employee served as acting Director. He had served as Deputy Director since 1995, replacing Richard N. Smith. Rogers served as Acting Director of the Service until the Senate confirmed the President's nomination of Jamie Rappaport Clark, the Service's second woman Director and a career civil servant with the Service, as Director on July 31, 1997.

Prior to being named Director, Clark was the Assistant Director for Ecological Services for the Service, a position she was named to in 1994.

Clark's directorship was marked by the passage of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, as well as intense Congressional interest in the Service's Federal Aid program. She was an active participant in reintroducing Mexican wolves into the wilds of Arizona. Her tenure as Director was also highlighted by the formal de-listing of the American peregrine falcon and the Aleutian Canada goose as endangered species, and the formal proposal to remove the bald eagle, the nation's symbol, from the list of endangered species as well. Under her direction, the Service focused on four priority areas: strengthening the ecosystem approach to fish and wildlife conservation, lifting the conservation of migratory birds to a higher level, leading efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, and strengthening the National Wildlife Refuge System.

### **Saving Wild Places and Wildlife for Future Generations**

Summarizing the last eight years of activity, Director Clark characterized the "invaluable support" of Secretary Babbitt throughout the Clinton Administration as the "greatest gift the employees of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service could receive—the opportunity and encouragement to succeed." The Fish and Wildlife Service is now better situated to fulfill its charge from the American people: to save wild places and wildlife so that these irreplaceable resources can be handed down to future generations. With the policy advances of the past eight years, the Service made great strides in ensuring that our national wildlife refuges are places where Americans can go to learn how wildlife conservation happens. Through its role in administering the Endangered Species Act and other conservation programs, the Service also has encouraged more Americans than ever before to take an active role in conserving the unique ecosystems that define their communities.

## ***NATIONAL PARK SERVICE***

During the Clinton Administration, the National Park Service focused on restoring park infrastructure and protecting the natural and cultural treasures preserved in national parks. The NPS budget increased under both Director Roger Kennedy and Director Robert Stanton, while partnerships with other federal agencies and the private sector led to further improvements in resource protection, educational opportunities and business efficiency.

### **Growth in the NPS Budget**

In his first testimony before Congress and in his first budget, Secretary Babbitt pressed for operational increases in the NPS budget. Because of the emphasis placed on it by the Secretary and the Clinton White House, from FY 1993 to FY 2001 the NPS budget grew from \$1.38 billion to over \$2 billion.

Since FY 1997, the National Park Service budget has continued to grow to accommodate pressing operational and infrastructure needs in parks, as well as through partnership programs. Between FY 1997 and the FY 2001 budget proposal, the NPS budget grew overall by \$449 million (28 percent). The single largest appropriation within the NPS budget, operations of the national park system, increased \$206 million (27 percent) during this period. Slightly more than half of this growth is associated with programmatic increases, with the balance linked to fixed costs. Of the programmatic increases, significant growth has occurred for park base operations, which dramatically affects the day-to-day operations of parks. Other significant increases have been in natural resources management for the natural resource challenge (\$33 million), as well as growth in funds appropriated for repair and rehabilitation.

In FY 1999, a five-year maintenance and capital improvement plan was instituted. In FY 2000, NPS received funding for the first time in five years for the state assistance and urban parks programs of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

### **Implementing New Legislative Authorities and Mandates**

#### **The National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998**

In 1997 and 1998, Secretary Babbitt and NPS staff worked closely with Sen. Craig Thomas of Wyoming on comprehensive legislation to address National Parks needs. Passage of the 1998 Omnibus Act provided clear direction for the NPS in a variety of management disciplines and strategies.

#### **Implementing Concessions Reforms**

The National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 instituted the first legislative reforms of NPS concessions management practices in a generation. In response, NPS developed regulations and guidelines for concessions contracts, commercial use authorization, and the use of franchise

fees. The legislation also allowed the NPS to retain concessions franchise fees in the parks in which they are collected.

### **The Recreational Fee Demonstration Program**

In 1996, at the urging of the Administration and the recreation industry, Congress created the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program to help NPS and other land management agencies deal with increasing visitation, unfunded infrastructure repair, and rising operating costs. The NPS has named 100 demonstration projects, twenty of which are charging recreation fees for the first time. Of the fee revenue collected, 80 percent is retained for use in the park where the fee is collected, with the other 20 percent distributed on a Service-wide basis. Over \$140 million in fees were retained by NPS for use in the parks in 1999.

The Recreational Fee Demonstration Program has been extended through September 30, 2001. The revenue will be available to the NPS through September 30, 2004.

To date, public acceptance of the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program has been high. Surveys indicate that the strong support that visitors give to the new fees are related to the public's strong preference that most or all of fee revenue remain in the park where it is collected, to improve visitor services or protect resources.

### **Protecting Park Resources**

#### **Vanishing Treasures**

The Vanishing Treasures program, inaugurated by Director Kennedy, completed high priority and emergency preservation projects, recruited and trained craftspeople, recruited and trained experts such as archeologists, engineers, and exhibit specialists, and provided for management, oversight, and accountability of preservation efforts. Most of the craftspeople hired have traditionally been American Indian or Hispanic employees who live near the parks. Approximately \$2,029,000 has been made available to recruit and train thirty-seven preservation specialists in fifteen parks, and \$1,947,800 has been made available to conduct thirty high-priority preservation projects in eighteen parks.

#### **Defeating the "Parks Closure" Bill**

Republicans took control of Congress midway through President Clinton's first term, and with support from the Democratic former chairman of the House parks subcommittee, they advanced legislation directing a reassessment of the criteria and procedures for adding areas to the park system and a reevaluation of existing parks. The "National Park System Reform Act" would have led to recommendations for removing areas from the system, though actual divestiture would have required further Congressional action. Secretary Babbitt, the National Parks Conservation Association, and other opponents characterized it as a park closure bill aimed at dismantling the system. Sensitive to such charges, the House decisively defeated the bill on September 19, 1995, by a vote of 180 to 231.

## The Natural Resource Management Challenge

In 1997, historian Richard Sellars published *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, a comprehensive history in which he traced the clash of values between traditional scenery and tourism management and emerging ecological concepts in the national parks. Sellars argued that for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, NPS had practiced a curious combination of active management and passive acceptance of natural systems and processes, while becoming a superb visitor services agency. The book was widely read in the Service, and prompted the National Leadership Council under Director Stanton to conclude that such a management style would not be sufficient to protect natural resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In 1998 and 1999, NPS developed a plan to revitalize and expand its natural resource programs, strengthen partnerships with the scientific community, and share knowledge with educational institutions and the public. On August 12, 1999, at the ceremony marking the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Mount Rainier National Park, Director Stanton announced a major effort to substantially improve how the NPS manages the natural resources under its care. *The Natural Resource Challenge: The National Park Service's Action Plan for Preserving Natural Resources* addresses the challenges of caring for our country's natural heritage within the complexities of today's modern landscapes.

NPS's FY 2000 budget passed by Congress included \$14 million in increases to implement the Action Plan and subsequent budgets include further increases. These funds will help complete natural resource inventories so that park managers have critical baseline data available for informed decision making. They will increase funding for large-scale preservation projects, restoration of threatened and endangered species and restoration of areas damaged due to human disturbance. Congress appropriated over \$15 million more in FY 2001 to implement the Action Plan.

## Saving America's Treasures

The Clinton Administration understood that too many of the historic buildings, sites, monuments, objects and archival documents that tell America's story are deteriorating and are not being preserved and restored because of lack of resources and organized interest. President Clinton proposed a Save America's Treasures initiative in his Fiscal Year 1999 budget to be administered by NPS, and Congress approved \$30 million in federal grants to address the nation's most urgent preservation needs, significant historic sites and collections.

By law, each grant award required a dollar-for-dollar non-federal match. Many states, communities, corporations and foundations—including General Electric and Calvin Klein—supported projects through financial contributions, donations and in-kind services.

Agencies covered within the Interior appropriations bill became eligible to submit urgent federal projects, or apply on behalf of other regional sites or collections that fit the criteria established by the park service. A panel of five experts, representing preservation and conservation disciplines from non-competing federal agencies, reviewed the applications and made recommendations for funding to Secretary Babbitt, who then consulted with the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and the White House Millennium Council.

On May 19, 1999, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, honorary chairman of the White House Millennium Council, joined by Secretary Babbitt and Director Stanton, announced the recipients of the first round of Historic Preservation Fund Grants to "Save America's Treasures."

Grants were awarded to twelve federal agencies for sixty-two projects in twenty-four states, the District of Columbia and the Midway Islands. The projects included preservation or restoration work on the Thomas Jefferson papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin in Wisconsin, the historic Vail Ranch House in Arizona, Ebenezer Baptist Church—Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site—in Georgia, the National Film Preservation Foundation's "Saving the Silents" project, and ancient cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado.

In July 2000, the President announced another round of Save America's Treasures grants for projects at sites including Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, Ellis Island in New Jersey, and the USS Missouri anchored off Hawaii.

As part of the ongoing Administration effort to bring attention to America's national treasures and ensure their survival into the next century, Director Stanton joined Mrs. Clinton in three "Save America's Treasures" tours of America's national treasures. Together they toured cultural sites in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and the American Southwest.

## **Reducing Impacts to Park Resources**

### *Overflights*

Air tour operations over units of the National Park Service drastically increased in the two decades prior to the Clinton Administration. In 1993, an interagency working group was formed to explore ways to limit or reduce the impacts from overflights on national parks, especially the Grand Canyon, and to decide what measures could and should be taken to conserve natural quiet while providing airspace access over national park units.

In response to the working group's recommendations, President Clinton issued a Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies (61 FR 18229, April 25, 1996) to address the impacts of transportation on the visitor experience in National Parks. The President directed the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the heads of relevant departments and agencies, to issue "A notice of proposed rulemaking for management of sightseeing aircraft in National Parks."

The National Parks Overflights Working Group was established in May of 1997 to respond to the Presidential memo, and in November 1997, they submitted its findings as a recommended rule.

The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 mandated that each park affected by air tour operations develop an Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Because the FAA is responsible for the safety and regulation of

the airspace, it was designated the lead agency in the ATMP process. The National Park Service convened the first meeting on ATMPs in August of 2000.

Also in 2000, the NPS established a central office to handle all ATMPs for the NPS units. The FAA, in turn, has identified counterpart FAA units to work on ATMPs with the NPS office.

### *Personal Watercraft*

During the Clinton Administration, NPS sought to restrict use of personal watercraft in some park units and ban them in others.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the use of personal watercraft (PWC) dramatically increased in units of the National Park Service and elsewhere. Also known as jet skis, waverunners, wavejammers, wetjets, sea-doods, wet bikes and surf jets, PWCs are high performance vessels designed for speed and maneuverability, and are often used to perform stunt-like maneuvers. Over 1.2 million PWCs are in use in the U.S. in 2000, with sales growing annually.

The solitude and natural quiet enjoyed by visitors to America's pristine rivers and secluded lakes have traditionally been protected by Park Service policies limiting the number of boat launches and the number of users allowed on remote, unspoiled waterways. Shallow-drafted PWCs are able to navigate waterways not formerly open to motorized watercraft, and their launch is difficult to monitor. PWC users tend to travel in groups, and their movements are characterized by repeated acceleration and deceleration. The resulting pattern of noise, along with PWC's distinctive engine whine, is particularly disturbing to other visitors and to wildlife.

There are also safety concerns when high-speed PWCs are operated in river corridors frequented by slow moving canoes and rafts. While PWCs make up less than 10 percent of the registered vessels in the United States, they are involved in approximately one third of all boating accidents. Operator inexperience, excessive speed, and alcohol use are factors in many PWC accidents.

PWCs release pollutants harmful to aquatic vegetation and wildlife. Nearly all PWCs in use today are powered by two-stroke engines that lose about 30 percent of their unburned fuel-and-oil mix directly into the water. Tougher EPA regulations effected in 1999 call for a gradual phasing out of two-stroke engines, with a total ban imposed by the year 2008.

On April 20, 2000 the NPS rule on PWC use (36 CFR 3.24) became final. This rule prohibits PWC use in all units of the system unless a site-specific rulemaking is carried out. The service-wide rule provides for a two-year grace period during which twenty-one NPS units will continue to allow PWC use on an interim basis while new PWC management plans and rules are being formulated.

### *Snowmobiles*

In January 1999, The Blue Water Network and several other environmental organizations petitioned the NPS to ban snowmobiles in the National Parks. The petition heightened NPS

awareness of the need to re-evaluate its policy of allowing snowmobile use in the parks, and to apply NPS policies consistently throughout the National Park System.

The NPS agreed, in effect, that it was not in compliance with its own long-standing policies, nor with Executive Orders regulating snowmobile use. Recent advances in snowmobile technology have greatly expanded snowmobile performance capacities, and their use in national parks has increased correspondingly. The NPS had not accurately tracked this increase, and, as a result, had not recognized the growing and increasingly deleterious impacts of snowmobile use on the air quality, wildlife, natural resources, natural quiet, visitor safety, and visitor experience of non-snowmobile users.

In 2000, Assistant Secretary Don Barry made curtailing snowmobile use in parks a priority. Until that time, forty-three National Park areas had allowed recreational snowmobile use. NPS is amending its service-wide regulation (36 CFR 2.18) to reflect new criteria for snowmobile use. Subsequently, park specific regulations will also be rewritten to be in compliance with the new service-wide regulation.

## **Protecting and Restoring Park Resources**

### ***Yellowstone National Park: 1993-2000***

The Clinton Administration pursued a variety of strategies to protect the resources at national parks. Some of its most important successes benefited Yellowstone National Park.

#### ***New World Mine***

In the early 1990s, Crown Butte Mines, Inc., proposed the New World Mining Project, an underground gold, copper, and silver mining complex, to be located less than three miles from the northeast corner of Yellowstone National Park. The mine would have operated year-round at elevations from 8,000 to 10,000 feet, at the headwaters of three drainages: the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River (Wyoming's only Wild and Scenic River), the Stillwater River (which flows into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness), and Miller Creek, a tributary of Soda Butte Creek which flows into Yellowstone Park. NPS was greatly concerned about the potential for degradation of Yellowstone's surface and groundwater quality. Other concerns included changes in the quantity of water flowing into the park; increased occupation and disturbance of grizzly bear and other wildlife habitat; loss of scenic and recreational values in and adjacent to YNP; noise intrusion; deterioration of air quality—including the degradation of scenic vistas leading to and from YNP; socioeconomic changes to the nearby communities of Silver Gate and Cooke City; and the cumulative effect on what is presently the least-visited entrance of the park

The Clinton Administration negotiated with Crown Butte Mines to remove these threats, and on August 12, 1996, President Clinton, during a ceremony near Barronette Peak in YNP, signed an agreement with Crown Butte Mines to halt the permitting process for the New World Mine. Under the agreement, Crown Butte turned over all of its properties and mineral claims at the New World Mine area to the Government in exchange for public properties worth \$65 million.

Crown Butte agreed to place \$22.5 million of the \$65 million into an escrow account to cover the costs of cleaning up the site and restoring any damage to natural resources. They were also responsible for cleaning up environmental damage caused by historic mining activity dating back more than 100 years, most of which occurred before the company took ownership.

### *Wolf Reintroduction*

In 1991, Congress directed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to prepare an EIS on reintroduction of gray wolves to Yellowstone and central Idaho. A draft EIS was released to the public for review and comment and received over 160,000 comments, the largest number of comments on any federal proposal ever received. Over 130 open houses and hearings were held throughout the process. A final decision was approved by Secretary Babbitt in 1994. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prepared special regulations outlining how wolves would be managed as a nonessential experimental population under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act, and these regulations took effect in November 1994.

Reintroduction of wolves began in the winter of 1994-95 and was scheduled to continue for three to five consecutive years until a wild population was established to full recovery. A recovered population is defined as a minimum of ten pairs of wolves that have successfully bred for three successive years in each of the recovery areas—Yellowstone, central Idaho, and northwestern Montana. In 1995, fourteen wolves were released into Yellowstone National Park; two packs produced a total of nine pups.

During his first visit to Yellowstone National Park on August 25, 1995, President Bill Clinton hiked up to the Rose Creek pen in the northeast corner of the park to assist park staff with feeding the animals. He then held a brief, informal meeting with conservation organization representatives where he discussed his concerns about and support for conservation issues.

In 1996, seventeen more wolves were released; four packs produced a total of fourteen pups. Because more pups were born, survival was higher, and livestock depredations were lower than expected, further reintroductions were unnecessary. Currently, there are approximately 115-120 free-ranging wolves in at least twelve packs, not including pups born in 2000.

Because the program has been so successful, the states of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho can prepare to de-list the wolf by creating wolf management programs for the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). Such specific programs must be in place for the GYE to assure that wolves will be successful beyond Park boundaries.

### *Bison*

Management of bison is a critical protection issue at Yellowstone. Because some bison in Yellowstone National Park are infected with brucellosis, ranchers in Montana fear that in the winter when bison migrate north and west across park borders, they will infect livestock, though there have been no proven cases of this occurring in the wild. Brucellosis can cause cattle to abort and so is strictly controlled by state veterinarians and the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service. The mere presence of brucellosis in the region can lead to restrictions on interstate shipment and sale of cattle and economically devastate cattle owners.

In 1990, the State of Montana, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the NPS entered into an agreement to develop a long-term management plan and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for managing bison migrating from the park into Montana. Interim plans and accompanying Environmental Assessments were developed and implemented through the years, but a final EIS was never completed.

In 1995, the state of Montana sued the NPS and the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) over bison management and threats to Montana's brucellosis-free status. A settlement agreement to the lawsuit resulted in an interim bison management plan that called for construction of capture facilities inside and outside the park, capture and shipment to slaughter of all bison exiting the north park boundary at Reese Creek, and capture and serological testing of all bison exiting the west boundary. Bison from the west boundary testing positive, as well as all pregnant females, were shipped to slaughter. Non-pregnant bison testing negative were allowed to roam freely on designated public lands in the west boundary area.

During the severe winter of 1996-97, the interim plan resulted in approximately 1,100 bison being killed, reducing the largest wild, free-ranging bison population by over 30 percent to about 2,000 animals. The winter slaughter of Yellowstone bison created a firestorm of publicity and protest. Secretary Babbitt and the NPS worked throughout the second Clinton term to find a solution and prevent recurrence of the conflicts between state, federal and local interests.

The resulting final EIS, completed in late 2000, is designed to maintain the Yellowstone herd as the largest wild, free-ranging population in the U.S. and address the risk of brucellosis transmission. Employing a number of techniques within an adaptive management framework, it envisions tolerating some bison on public lands during winter, limiting the spring bison population to 3,000 animals, vaccination of bison, vaccination of cattle, and additional monitoring of cattle in specific areas near Yellowstone. A Record of Decision was finalized by December 2000.

### *Bioprospecting*

An estimated twenty-one national parks have geothermal resources. Yellowstone is the undisputed hotbed of bioprospecting activity because of microorganisms found in geothermal water and soil. In the past several decades, organisms discovered at Yellowstone have led to at least thirteen proven or potential beneficial uses by biotechnologists. The best known of these applications is the case of *Taq* polymerase, the essential component of DNA fingerprinting, which has revolutionized biology and medicine, and earned hundreds of millions of dollars for its patent-holder. The crucial, heat-stable enzyme used in DNA replication process was extracted from *Thermus aquaticus* Yellowstone type-1 (*Taq* YT-1) an organism discovered in the park's Mushroom Pool. There are about twenty bioprospecting scientists currently working in Yellowstone.

Scientists work in parks through access granted under scientific collecting permit regulations. Interior/NPS has the legal authority to permit access for scientific research pursuant to the NPS Organic Act and related regulations. "Benefits-sharing" or compensation is due the taxpayer or the park when a successful discovery results from research on park specimens, but before 1997

the parks received no compensation from research results. The absence of any “benefits-sharing” provisions in existing research permits prevented the parks from maximizing the potential conservation incentives and financial support associated with bioprospecting.

Under the authority of the Federal Technology Transfer Act, the NPS implemented the first national park benefit-sharing agreement at Yellowstone in August of 1997. Congress then confirmed the parks’ authority to implement benefit-sharing agreements with the research community in the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998. Vice President Gore signed the first agreement during his official trip to Yellowstone in 1997, when he spoke at the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary event at Mammoth Hot Springs honoring supporters of Yellowstone. The park is spearheading the effort to do an EIS that would provide a foundation for additional agreements.

### *Winter Use*

Since the completion of the Winter Use Plan in 1990, winter use and visitation has increased significantly beyond projections. In response to this increase, NPS and Forest Service staff began work on a coordinated interagency report on Winter Visitor Use Management in 1994.

In the meantime, in the spring of 1997, the Fund for Animals and other organizations and individuals filed a lawsuit against the NPS over winter use issues. Under the terms of the November 1997, settlement agreement, the NPS agreed to prepare a new winter use plan and corresponding EIS by September 2000. The interagency staff eventually produced a final report, *Winter Visitor Use Management: A Multi-Agency Assessment* (1999), which identified a number of concerns and issues regarding winter use in the greater Yellowstone area.

A final EIS was published for public comment and a Record of Decision was signed in November 2000.

The plan calls for the eventual ban of snowmobiles in Yellowstone and their use in Grand Teton National Park only on crossing routes to access other lands open to snowmobile use. The plan recommends transferring all winter visitors to mass transportation (snowcoaches) once they enter the parks. A three-year implementation would commence in the 2000-01 season, with full implementation of the plan by the winter of 2003-04.

### *125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (1997)*

In 1997, NPS commemorated and celebrated the Yellowstone’s 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of events to celebrate the origins and evolution of the national park idea, an idea which originated with Yellowstone National Park and has spread around the world.

The Yellowstone Park Post Office held a commemorative stamp cancellation event in March. On July 5, Garrison Keillor led a live broadcast of *Prairie Home Companion* from Old Faithful. A program honoring “protectors” of Yellowstone was held at Mammoth Hot Springs led by Vice President Gore on August 17. On August 25, an event was held at Old Faithful honoring the “best idea America ever had—Yellowstone National Park”. The National Gallery of Art in

Washington, D.C. exhibited works featuring Yellowstone features by artist Thomas Moran from September 1997-August 1998 in several venues.

#### *Royal Teton Ranch Land Conservation Project*

The 12,000-acre Royal Teton Ranch (RTR) is located north of Yellowstone National Park on the Gallatin National Forest in Montana. The RTR lands provide critical wildlife migration and winter range habitat for a multitude of species, including mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, antelope and bison. The lands also provide essential habitat for the grizzly bear and the Yellowstone Cutthroat trout. In 1997, the Forest Service and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) developed a multi-component agreement with the RTR landowner—Church Universal & Triumphant, Inc.—that included direct purchase of lands and conservation easements, a small land exchange, acquisition of all of the Church's geothermal interests, and a long-term right of first refusal to purchase all remaining RTR lands.

Overall, approximately 7,782 acres were permanently protected. The first portion of the acquisition consisted of 3,107 acres and was completed between June 1998 and February 1999. The second phase of the acquisition consisted of 3,663 acres and was completed on August 30, 1999. The Forest Service and Interior each contributed \$6.5 million of Land and Water Conservation Fund monies.

In February 1999, the Church also granted a long-term right of first refusal to the Elk Foundation and the Forest Service for potential purchase of an additional 6,000 acres west of the Yellowstone River.

#### *Everglades Restoration*

This initiative, of enormous consequence to Everglades National Park and other units managed by the Department of the Interior, is covered in several sections of the narrative. The NPS section offers a history of key milestones.

#### *A SHORT HISTORY OF THE EVERGLADES ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION*

- 1993            Clinton Administration establishes South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to coordinate federal agency ecosystem restoration efforts.
  - 1994            Governor Chiles establishes Commission for a Sustainable South Florida to make recommendations for achieving a healthy ecosystem in coexistence with and supportive of a sustainable economy and quality communities.
  - 1996            Water Resources Development Act authorizes the Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study; expands the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to include state, local and tribal governments.
- Farm Bill appropriates \$200 million to acquire keys lands for restoration.

Interior completes a land exchange with the Collier Corporation in southwest Florida. Interior trades land in downtown Phoenix for multiple tracts of South Florida land owned by the corporation. Over 100,000 acres are added to Big Cypress National Preserve, Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

Interior acquires an additional 40,000 acres within the East Coast Buffer/Water Preserve areas and Southern Golden Gate Estates area. Funding is provided for construction of a melaleuca quarantine and research facility to facilitate eradication of this invasive exotic.

1997-2000 Interior Appropriations Acts provide for land acquisition by the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service for restoration.

Clinton Administration acquires 500,000 acres for restoration.

The federal government purchases 16,000 acres along the eastern edge of the Everglades to connect marshlands, reservoirs, and aquifer recharge basins to help meet future water supply needs for the environment, urban areas and agriculture.

1999 Clinton Administration purchases and exchanges 51,000 acres from the Talisman Sugar Corporation in the Everglades Agricultural Area.

Interior issues the largest and most comprehensive multi-species recovery plan in the Nation, a blueprint for the recovery of 68 species now listed as threatened or endangered. Among the plan's long-term goals are de-listing seventeen species including the Loggerhead sea turtle. The Plan assists local communities and private landowners in development of Habitat Conservation Plans.

Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan is submitted to Congress, outlining 68 projects to modify the water delivery system and improve the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water to the natural system. The estimated cost of \$7.8 billion to be shared 50-50 by the federal government and the state.

Water Resources Development Act extends critical restoration project authority until 2003; authorizes two pilot infrastructure projects.

2000 The State of Florida provides \$2 billion in funding for ten years to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

Clinton Administration provides funds to help the State of Florida acquire 9,000 acres in the Caloosahatchee River basin known as Berry Grove to be part of a 20,000-acre reservoir that will capture excess water from the Caloosahatchee River and Lake Okeechobee

Administration completes outcome-oriented strategic plan to coordinate federal and non-federal activities necessary to accomplish the three ecosystem goals: (1)

get the water right; (2) restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species; (3) foster compatibility of the built and natural systems

Everglades National Park completes land acquisition of 120,000 acres in East Everglades, an area essential to restoring the natural hydrologic conditions in Shark River Slough drainage.

Water Resources Development Act legislation authorizes the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan including the first ten construction projects and four pilot projects at a cost of \$1.4 billion.

2003 Kissimmee River Restoration to be completed. This project will restore forty miles of river and floodplain ecosystem home to approximately 320 fish and wildlife species.

### *The California Desert*

Provisions of the California Desert Protection Act of October 31, 1994 (Public Law No. 103-433) contributed to the growth of the National Park System as well as to preservation of significant areas of the desert region in eastern California. As a result of the California Desert Protection Act, Death Valley National Park currently has a total land acreage of 3,367,627.68, approximately twice the size of the Delaware, making it the largest national park unit in the contiguous United States.

Under Title III, Death Valley National Monument was re-designated a national park and NPS acquired jurisdiction over more than 1.2 million acres of additional lands formerly administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Title IV re-designated Joshua Tree National Monument as a national park and added some 234,000 acres to the park. Title V established the Mojave National Preserve, consisting of 1,553,815.65 acres. Title VI designated significant portions of these three National Park Service units as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System: approximately 3,158,000 acres in Death Valley; nearly 700,000 acres in Mojave, and more than 131,000 additional acres in Joshua Tree.

The California Desert Protection Act also designated approximately four million acres as sixty-nine Wilderness Areas to be managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Much of the land protected by the Act is habitat for threatened and endangered species native to the California desert, including the California desert tortoise, the Mojave ground squirrel, and the flat tailed horn lizard. The passage of the Act, the largest land use action in the lower forty-eight states in U.S. history, significantly changed the management and regulatory prescriptions for most of the federal lands in the desert.

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*Gettysburg**by Superintendent John Latschar*

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Under the leadership of President Clinton and Secretary Babbitt, Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP) has dramatically improved the preservation of critical park resources and enhanced the public's understanding of the significant events that occurred there and their impact upon the development of our nation.

*Partnerships*

From the beginning, Secretary Babbitt encouraged the National Park Service (NPS) to seek partnerships with the private sector in order to solve the myriad problems facing national parks, problems that could not be solved exclusively through Congressional appropriations or federal agencies acting in isolation. At Gettysburg NMP, this challenge—this opportunity—was seized upon with vigor. The park has built its volunteer program from virtually nothing into a critical component of its current success. In 1999, for example, over 3,400 volunteers contributed over 50,000 hours of labor to the park, in activities as varied as providing "living history" encampments for visitors, participating in the "Adopt-A-Position" battlefield maintenance program, and signing up for the "Park Watch" protection program. If translated into the equivalent of federal personnel or dollars, this volunteer program has provided the park with the equivalent of twenty-four additional full-time employees with a value of \$659,000 per year.

The park accepted the partnership challenge with equal energy when it came to raising funds to supplement Congressional appropriations. In 1993, donations from the Gettysburg Friends group amounted to \$34,000, donation returns from the park's cooperating association were \$280,000, and donations from the general public were negligible. In 1999, by contrast, the Friends group provided donations and services worth just over \$1 million, cooperating association returns exceeded \$570,000, and general donations from the public had grown to almost \$70,000—in total, an increase of 477 percent in donated funds.

The park's proudest partnership accomplishment came via its new General Management Plan, which received the personal support and endorsement of Secretary Babbitt. In order to achieve long-standing goals such as adequate preservation of the park's museum and archival collections, preservation of the Cyclorama Painting, rehabilitation of the historical landscapes of the battlefield, and to provide park visitors with a basic understanding of the significance of the Battle of Gettysburg, the NPS formed a partnership with the non-profit Gettysburg National Battlefield Museum Foundation. Under the terms of this partnership, the Foundation is responsible for raising the \$39 million for the design and construction of a new visitor center and museum complex, and for the removal of the park's current visitor facilities and restoration of their site to its historic appearance. The Foundation will operate the new facilities on behalf of-and at no cost to-the NPS for a period of twenty years, then donate the facilities to the NPS. Gettysburg NMP was indescribably pleased and honored that the "1999 Department of the Interior Accomplishments" report included the "Restoration of Gettysburg National Military Park" as its # 3 accomplishment.

### *Resource Management*

Though there have been great strides in the preservation of park resources throughout this Administration, three initiatives stand out. In 1995, the NPS released a White-Tailed Deer Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement to determine the best means of controlling the over-population of white-tailed deer on the battlefield. The numbers of deer at the battlefield exceeded the scientific "carrying capacity" of the ecosystem by over ten-fold, and deer browsing was making it impossible for the NPS to maintain and preserve the historic battlefield crop-fields and wood-lots. Although the plan was challenged in federal court, the validity and legality of managing NPS wildlife populations was upheld by both the District Court and Circuit Court of Appeals. Consequently, the deer density at Gettysburg NMP has now been reduced to merely twice the ecosystem carrying capacity, and final success at controlling the density of the deer population is within sight.

Another dramatic example of the Administration's dedication to restoring the battlefield landscapes occurred on July 3, 2000, when Secretary Babbitt presided at public ceremonies for demolition of the so-called "Gettysburg National Tower," a privately-owned tourist facility which had long dominated the battlefield landscape. This was, literally, a Secretarial initiative, for Mr. Babbitt had pledged a year earlier to remove the tower "on his watch." It was symbolic of his commitment to resource preservation throughout the national park system.

The Park Service is starting to make real progress in acquisition of privately owned lands within the park boundary. After years of small or non-existent appropriations for land acquisition, Gettysburg NMP has received \$1-2 million per year for the past five years. This has enabled the park to acquire, preserve, and interpret almost a dozen critical tracts of land, which otherwise would have been vulnerable to incompatible development. Fortunately, through the combined efforts of the Friends group, the Conservation Fund, and the Civil War Preservation Trust, non-NPS organizations have acquired and protected even more land. There is still more land left to acquire, and the cost of land and development pressures in this part of the U.S. are escalating. The President's Land Legacy program, recently funded by Congress, will be a giant step towards ensuring that these precious lands are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

### *Interpretation*

This Administration has given consistent policy and moral support to the NPS efforts to interpret its historic sites to the American public "within context" of the times in which historical events occurred. Specifically, the NPS is moving slowly but surely towards interpreting the "causes and consequences" of the Civil War at its Civil War sites, an initiative which has caused a certain degree of concern among some of NPS's Civil War constituencies. It has also captured a certain amount of media attention during these days of public debates over whether it is appropriate or not to display the Confederate battle flag at public institutions. Again, in a symbolic but very public gesture, the Secretary took the time to personally open the NPS's symposium at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site in May 2000. That symposium, entitled "Rally on the High Ground," was dedicated to strengthening NPS interpretation of the Civil War era.

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### *Elwha River Ecosystem*

In October 1992, the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act (Public Law 102-495) was signed by President Bush. Known simply as the "Elwha Act", this law authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams on the Elwha River in Washington State, and to fully restore the river's ecosystem and native anadromous fisheries. "Anadromous" fish—such as salmon and shad—are so called because they swim upstream, from salt to fresh water, in order to spawn. Soon after taking office, Secretary Babbitt made restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem a priority.

In May 1994, the Elwha Report was transmitted to Congress, in accordance with the Elwha Act. The report concluded that to meet the Act's goal of full restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem and fisheries, both dams should be removed.

The Department of the Interior, led by NPS, developed two environmental impact statements (EIS) to fully analyze the impacts and costs of removing the two dams. The final version of EIS-1 was released in June 1995, and recommended the removal of both dams. The final version of EIS-2, released in November 1996, recommended allowing the accumulated sediments to naturally erode downstream following dam removal. Identification of water quality mitigation, flood control and other measures were included, as well as revegetation and fish restoration plans. The overall cost of the restoration project, including the dams' acquisition cost of \$29.5 million, and the costs of water quality and flood protection, revegetation, and fish restoration, was estimated at \$113 million (April 1995 dollars).

In response to rising concern about the Elwha project's possible effects on Washington state residents, an ad hoc citizens' advisory group, the Elwha Citizens' Advisory Committee (ECAC) was named. Their goal was to study and offer recommendations to resolve the controversy surrounding Elwha River restoration. Comprised of Clallam County residents and representing a wide range of interests and positions, this group had a broad range of views about the wisdom and feasibility of fisheries restoration and dam removal. On March 7, 1996 the ECAC held a town meeting, gathering community input to help form a locally developed solution. On April 30, 1996, the ECAC advanced their conclusions, together with six recommendations. Among other things, the group recommended a phased approach to restoration, including immediate federal acquisition of the projects, timely removal of the Elwha dam, and a waiting period to assess funding availability and restoration success prior to removal/modification of the Glines dam.

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt made his first visit to the Elwha River in 1997. During an informal press conference at the Glines Canyon dam, Secretary Babbitt emphasized that the key to securing funding for Elwha restoration was finding consensus among state officials, the Washington Congressional delegation and especially Senator Slade Gorton, who chaired the Senate Interior appropriations subcommittee. The Secretary characterized the purpose of his visit as not only a chance to see the area for himself, but also an attempt to "facilitate a larger consensus on how we might manage the river."

Washington Senator Slade Gorton stated his support for the acquisition of both hydroelectric projects and removal of the Elwha Dam in 1998, provided that several other provisions are met. The fate of the Glines Canyon Dam would be decided following removal of the Elwha Dam.

In 1999, the Elwha River chinook salmon (March) and bull trout (November) were listed as threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

A total of \$22 million was appropriated in the FY 2000 budget for Elwha Restoration. These funds will be used for final project design and for water quality protection measures and fisheries restoration.

The first meeting with Elwha water user groups-City of Port Angeles, Dry Creek Water Association, Elwha Place Homeowners Association and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe-was held in November 1999 to discuss measures necessary to protect them from the "possible adverse impacts of dam removal" (Elwha Act Section 4).

The release of the Environmental Assessment prerequisite to the development of an Interim Management Plan for administering the 1,061 acres surrounding the Elwha dam and Lake Aldwell was released in January 2000. Very few changes to the current type and level of management of these lands were proposed, and the State of Washington and Clallam County will retain existing jurisdiction during the interim period. Public use and access to these lands remains essentially unchanged. The National Park Service will serve as interim land manager for Lake Aldwell and the land associated with Elwha dam until a long-term manager is selected.

On February 11, 2000, Secretary Babbitt chaired a ceremony attended by Congressmen Norm Dicks and Jay Inslee at Glines Canyon Dam in recognition of the pending federal purchase of the two Elwha River dams and hydroelectric projects. Secretary Babbitt and representatives of Fort James, Daishowa America, and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe signed a commemorative declaration acknowledging "the many entities and individuals" working to make Elwha restoration a reality.

Capping a full year of negotiations, and paving the way for dam removal, ownership of the two Elwha River dams was transferred from private to public ownership on February 29, 2000. The \$29.5 million purchase price for the two dams, set by Congress in the Elwha Act of 1993, was paid to the former owners and operators, the Fort James Paper Company and Daishowa America, Inc. Final design work and instituting water quality protection measures will take three to four years, then dam removal can begin.

On March 1, 2000, federal operation of the Elwha and Glines Canyon hydroelectric projects began. Though under National Park Service (NPS) jurisdiction, the two dams will continue to produce power, pending further review. They are being operated for the NPS by the Bureau of Reclamation. Power generated by the dams is now part of the regional power grid under the marketing authority of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). BPA is paying the operations and maintenance (O&M) costs of the projects and donating the margin (revenue after deduction of O&M costs) from the sale of Elwha-generated power to the National Park Foundation (NPF) to invest in the restoration project. As stipulated by the Elwha Act, Daishowa America is guaranteed replacement power through BPA.

In September 2000, the Clallam County Board of Commissioners sent a letter to Senator Slade Gorton urging concurrent removal of both Elwha River dams. In October 2000, restoration work began with the clean up of a former utility pole storage yard near the Elwha Dam.

### ***Grand Canyon/Colorado River Flood Releases***

In late March of 1996, Secretary Babbitt led a controlled experimental habitat-building flood release from Glen Canyon Dam. The purpose of the flood release was to redistribute sediments stored on the bed of the Colorado River and rebuild sandbars (beaches) and associated habitats which have been lost to progressive erosion since the completion of Glen Canyon Dam in 1965. Before the river was dammed, sediment-laden snowmelt floods deposited large sandbars on the shoreline of the Colorado River in Glen and Grand Canyons. The dam effectively eliminated the annual spring snowmelt flood. Sandbars continued to erode.

Sandbars on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon are important resources for recreation (camping) and riparian vegetation (and associated wildlife), and also form backwater areas needed by native fishes. Sandbars also serve to protect cultural resources from erosion.

The preferred alternative in the Environmental Impact Statement on the operation of Glen Canyon Dam called for periodic flood releases in excess of the dam's powerplant capacity

The March, 1996 flood release was executed by the Bureau of Reclamation in cooperation with the National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal and state agencies, Native American tribes and universities. Secretary Babbitt turned the valve that began release of approximately 46,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water over a seven-day period. Releases had not exceeded roughly 30,000 cfs (power plant capacity) since natural flood spills in 1983-85. An accompanying scientific monitoring and research program documented the floods' beneficial effects. Considerable amounts of sand were deposited on the river's margins.

The habitat-building flood flow experiment was highly controversial. Upper basin states and hydropower interests opposed the release until criteria were modified in the Colorado River Annual Operating Plan, which constrains the use of flood releases as a management tool. While some controversy still surrounds the long-term use of flooding, all interests agreed that a scientifically-evaluated assessment of the concept was necessary. The 1996 flood release served the purpose of demonstrating the river resource effects of a high flow, and provided for an objective scientific analysis of the benefits and detriments to downstream natural and cultural resources.

### ***Independence National Historical Park***

Work done in the Clinton Administration will culminate in 2001 in the complete transformation of Independence National Historical Park (INHP)

In September, 1993 the National Park Service (NPS) began the public process of developing a General Management Plan (GMP) for Independence National Historical Park (INHP), in central city Philadelphia. During the next four years, INHP held eighteen public meetings-one

televised-to convey information and seek public input in the developing plan. This public outreach included a comment call-in line and an Internet home page outlining the preferred alternative.

In April, 1997 the GMP was finalized with a Record of Decision which focused on sweeping changes to Independence Mall, composed of three "super-blocks" stretching north from Independence Hall. Within six months, a Master Plan for a complete re-development of Independence Mall was announced to the public by the NPS and the Philadelphia-based Olin Partnership, which specializes in landscape architecture and urban design.

The Master Plan created new spaces and gardens, enhanced views and vistas of Independence Hall and improved visitor access and circulation. Block One will include a new facility to house the Liberty Bell and a new First Amendment Rights Area, where citizen groups can assemble and demonstrate without disrupting daily visitation to the Mall.

Block Two will feature a new Gateway Visitor Center, a welcome and orientation space that would serve as a gateway to the park and to the surrounding Philadelphia area. The Independence Park Institute, also in Block Two, will serve the educational needs of visitors to the park, including 400,000 school-age children annually.

In Block Three the privately developed National Constitution Center will focus on the influence of the U.S. Constitution in the lives of American citizens. This block will also have a bus loading facility to minimize traffic congestion.

With the early and intense public involvement in the prior planning, the new design was greeted with widespread support from key government officials, the news media, cultural institutions and the public, despite an estimated price tag of approximately \$250 million.

Several major partners immediately stepped forward with commitments of funds. Six weeks after the Master Plan announcement, INHP Superintendent Martha Aikens was joined by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell and Pew Charitable Trusts President Rebecca Rimel to announce pledges of \$10 million each to help fund the Gateway Visitor Center and the Liberty Bell Complex. Soon thereafter, the Annenberg Foundation added its support of \$10 million to help fund the Liberty Bell Complex and landscaping.

National Constitution Center secured funds from the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government, as well as from foundations and private donors. The Eastern National region teamed with INHP for design and fundraising for the Independence Park Institute, adding Temple University as the prime educational partner in the effort.

Construction began on the Gateway Visitor Center in spring of 2000 and will be completed in the fall of 2001. On September 17<sup>th</sup>, Constitution Day 2000, President Clinton participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the National Constitution Center, which is slated to open on Constitution Day, 2002. The Liberty Bell Complex is expected to be complete in early 2002.

### ***Glacier Bay National Park***

The population of commercially harvested fisheries throughout the world's oceans is in steep decline from both over-harvesting and pollution effects. Glacier Bay National Park, as the largest marine protected area in the USA, can serve both as a site for baseline research on fisheries, and as a nursery for fish stocks that can freely move in and out of the park.

Two million pounds of fish were commercially harvested from the waters of Glacier Bay National Park in 1986. In 1996, ten million pounds of fish were harvested from the same area. After years of evaluation and consideration, NPS decided in 1998 to phase out commercial fishing in most of the marine waters of Glacier Bay proper, while allowing it to continue in the outer, ocean waters of the National Park

Commercial fishing has been prohibited in most national parks by policy and regulation since 1966, but had not been enforced in Alaska. In 1998, Congress passed a law essentially putting the NPS phase-out plan into effect and balancing that with a \$23 million compensation program for affected fishermen and fishing-dependent communities near the park.

### ***Voyageurs National Park***

Since its establishment in 1974, Voyageurs has been one of the most troubled parks in the system, with nearly constant local opposition to its management. In 1997, NPS sent a new superintendent to run the park, and began preparing a new general management and visitor use plan. In addition, NPS brought in the Federal Mediation Service to conduct a multi-party negotiation to attempt to settle numerous controversies. While the mediation itself did not result in a conclusive settlement, it did result in the opportunity to finalize the new management plan with a broader base of public support than was previously possible.

### ***Big Cypress National Preserve***

As a result of litigation over the effects of off-road vehicle (ORV) use of the Preserve's wetlands, NPS agreed in 1998 to prepare a new ORV management Plan and EIS. Although ORV use was permitted in the Preserve's enabling legislation, it was supposed to be limited to designated roads and trails. Over the 25 years since its establishment, lack of enforcement had resulted in over 20,000 miles of ORV tracks through the Preserve. Assistant Secretary for Fish & Wildlife & Parks Don Barry seized upon this issue in 1999 and personally led the effort to develop a plan that would control ORVs and restore the damaged areas. Under a Final ORV Management Plan approved in 2000, these vehicles will be limited to some 400 miles of designated and hardened roads and trails in the Preserve.

### ***Cumberland Island National Seashore***

This island has both significant cultural sites and structures and statutory wilderness, and the management of these natural and cultural resources together has been a seemingly intractable problem for the park since its establishment. Assistant Secretary Don Barry and NPS Director Bob Stanton decided to bring their personal energy and expertise to the park to resolve these issues. A series of local stakeholder meetings were convened in 1999 by the Assistant Secretary

and the Director, and resulted in an agreement among all parties on a set of principles and management actions. Significant additional funding was allocated to the seashore for restoration projects. Subsequently, the National Park System Advisory Board appointed a Committee, chaired by Board Member Tom Williams and comprised of a full array of stakeholders, to review NPS draft management plans for the seashore, and make recommendations for changes to the full NPS Board. The Committee presented its recommendations to the Board in November, 2000, and the Board adopted them unanimously. NPS issued the draft management plans for public comment in December 2000.

### ***St. Croix National Scenic Riverways***

Beginning in the early '90s the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation (DOTs) began planning a new multi-lane highway bridge across the St. Croix near the town of Stillwater to replace an existing outdated bridge in the town that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act requires NPS approval and appropriate mitigation for a project that could adversely affect the purposes for which the river was designated for inclusion in the national park system. The DOTs wanted to tear down the historic bridge when the new one was completed, and NPS did not want two bridges impacting the scenic and natural qualities of the river. The Federal Highway Administration and the NPS attempted to reach a settlement of the dispute, but had been unable to do so until Secretary Babbitt and Transportation Secretary Slater suggested requiring additional mitigation for the adverse affects of the new bridge using conservation easement acquisitions along the river valley. While a final settlement with the two states seems now to depend on additional funding for the easement mitigation effort, the project is much closer to a final resolution.

### **Cooperative Ecosystem Study Units**

With the active support of Secretary Babbitt, Congress enacted legislation in 1998 establishing a network of university-based research centers to support park management. Shortly after, Secretary Babbitt decided that such a network could serve all of the land-management agencies and directed that the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESUs) provide research, technical assistance and education to federal land management, environmental and research agencies and their partners.

The broad scope of the new CESUs includes the biological, physical, social, and cultural sciences needed to address natural and cultural resource management issues at multiple scales in an ecosystem context. Each CESU is comprised of federal agencies, a host university, and partner institutions. Cooperative and joint venture agreements allow each of the participating federal agencies to efficiently transfer funds to university partners while maintaining responsibility for agency-sponsored activities with CESUs

CESUs are organized around biogeographic areas. Four CESUs were competitively established in 1999 in the biogeographic areas of the Colorado Plateau, Rocky Mountains, Southern Appalachian Mountains, and North Atlantic Coast. Agencies participating in these four CESUs include the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Department of Energy. There are thirty-one universities and other institutions included in these CESUs.

Research, technical assistance and education projects are underway. Some of the federal agencies have located employees at participating universities to increase collaboration.

An additional four CESUs have recently been competitively established in the biogeographic areas of the Pacific Northwest (including Southeast Alaska), Desert Southwest, Great Plains, and South Florida/Caribbean. There are thirty-eight universities and other institutions involved in these CESUs.

A third formal competition to establish additional CESUs is currently underway. Three biogeographic areas are California, Chesapeake Watershed, and Great Basin.

### **Environmental Leadership/Green Energy Parks**

A workshop held in Shepardstown, WV, in June, 1998 created a working relationship between the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior and initiated "Green Parks: Making the National Parks a Showcase for an Energy Efficient Future."

An April 27, 1999, Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of the Interior officially inaugurated the joint "Green Parks" program to promote the use of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies and practices in national parks, and ensure that the visiting public is informed about these efforts.

An environmental NPS leadership summit was held in January 1999. On July 13, 1999, Director Stanton issued a *Memorandum on Environmental Leadership for the National Park Service*.

### **Alternative Transportation Systems**

In September 1997, Secretary Babbitt appointed Jacqueline Lowey, a senior Transportation official, to Deputy Director of the National Parks Service. Among her contributions during her three years as NPS Deputy Director, Ms. Lowey several initiatives related to transportation in the parks.

President Clinton issued a challenge to the NPS on April 22, 1996 in a memorandum directing the development of a comprehensive plan to improve public transportation in the national parks. On November 25, 1997, Secretary Babbitt and Transportation Secretary Slater signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to implement innovative transportation planning compatible with the protection and preservation of the nation's cultural and natural resources. Though the transportation planning strategy is intended to benefit all NPS units and projects, five parks-Yosemite, Zion, Grand Canyon, Acadia, and Golden Gate National Recreation Area-were specifically mentioned in the MOU.

The NPS developed a manager's guidebook to transportation planning issues and options. The guidebook includes sections on: the role and purpose of transportation in National Parks; an explanation of transportation planning and tools; problem identification; transportation analysis techniques; transportation management techniques; evaluating alternatives; implementing solutions; and funding opportunities. There is an emphasis on partnering with gateway communities and State, regional, and local governments. The guidebook also features best

practices, lessons learned and resources and contacts that expand upon these topics. The guidebook can be downloaded from the ParkNet Web site.

NPS conducted four regional transportation training conferences, “New Approaches to Transportation: Planning, Partnerships, and Programs” in 1999 and 2000.

Comprehensive transportation legislation—The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21)—increased annual funds to the Park Roads and Parkways program, allowing NPS to keep pace on road repairs and providing funds for over fifty specific park projects and over 100 trails projects.

Yosemite, Zion, and Acadia National Parks were selected to compete for a grant of \$1 million from the Federal Highway Administration plus \$1 million from NPS for an ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) Field Operational Test (FOT). Intelligent transportation systems employ advanced information processing, communications, control, and electronics technologies to create 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation networks that save lives, time, and money. A consultant to The Federal Highway System (FHWA) helped the parks develop strategies for a valid FOT. On November 1, 1999, Secretary Babbitt announced that Acadia National Park had won the grant.

In June 1999, Acadia National Park, in conjunction with local communities, initiated a clean-fueled shuttle bus system that carried over 140,000 passengers in its first summer in operation.

In May 2000, Zion National Park inaugurated the use of a shuttle system to carry visitors up Zion Canyon and officially opened its new visitor/transportation center. Park visitors entering at the south entrance leave their vehicles at the visitor/transportation center to ride on one of the shuttle buses that run at frequent intervals. Once on the buses, visitors can exit at several stops in the canyon, where they can use backcountry trails or visit the concession facilities.

With the personal support of Secretary Babbitt, progress has been made toward an ambitious light rail system at the Grand Canyon, where 6,000 vehicles compete for 2,500 parking spaces on the South Rim during peak visitation. The park dedicated the transportation/orientation center, the Canyon View Information Plaza, on October 26, 2000. When Grand Canyon’s transportation system is fully functional, visitors will board light rail outside the park, and will exit the trains at the Canyon View where they can walk to the rim or board shuttle buses that will stop at points along the South Rim. The transportation system is expected to be operational in 2002.

### **NPS Management Policies Emphasize Resource Protection**

In 2000, NPS revised the primary written guidance for NPS managers—*NPS Management Policies*, last published in 1988. The new management policies place the primary emphasis on the NPS preservation mission. New concepts and topics were added or expanded, such as sustainability and environmental leadership; management accountability; managing information resources; partnering with others to help protect parks and serve the public; and dealing with management challenges coming from outside park boundaries.

One significant difference from 1988 is a clear message that the dual objectives of resource protection and public enjoyment do not carry equal weight in the decision-making process and

that the law requires that resource protection be paramount. The National Park Service also revised and rewrote all of its Director's Orders, Handbooks and Reference Guides, supplemental documents that form a second and third level of policy guidance.

## **Expanding the National Park System**

### **NPS Units Added 1993-2000**

#### *The Presidio (1994)*

In October 1994, the Presidio of San Francisco, a former military base, was transferred from the Department of Defense to the National Park System. In an innovative partnership, the Presidio Trust manages the buildings and reduces the operational cost to the federal government by leasing many of them to private and non-profit enterprises. The NPS manages the grounds and interprets the natural and cultural history of the area to the public.

#### *Mohave National Preserve (1994)*

Mohave National Preserve in California was created on October 31, 1994, through the California Desert Protection Act. A legislative and conservation victory for the Administration and the California Democratic delegation, it is one of the most diverse desert environments in the world. The area ranges from creosote bush dominated flats in low areas to pinyon pine and juniper woodlands in higher elevations. The roughly 1.6 million acres in the Mohave Desert is defined by sand dunes, volcanic cinder cones, Joshua tree forests, and mile-high mountains.

#### *New Orleans Jazz National Historic Park (1994)*

New Orleans Jazz National Historic Park was established on October 31, 1994, to celebrate and preserve information and resources on the origins and early development of jazz, America's indigenous art form, in the city widely recognized as its birthplace.

#### *Cane River Creole National Historic Park (1994)*

Cane River Creole National Historic Park in Louisiana is within the Cane River National Heritage Area, 40,000 acres of privately and publicly owned land along the banks of the Cane River. The park, established on November 2, 1994, includes forty-two acres of the Oakland Plantation and eighteen acres of Magnolia Plantation outbuildings. Among its other missions, the park will interpret the history of plantation slavery.

#### *Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area (1996)*

The Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area in Massachusetts, including thirty islands and within the Greater Boston shoreline and covering 1,482 acres, was created on November 12, 1996. The Area is managed by a unique, thirteen-member partnership, which includes the NPS and other public and private organizations. An advisory council provides a mechanism for public involvement.

*New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park (1996)*

New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park in Massachusetts, created on November 12, 1996, commemorates the heritage of the world's preeminent whaling port during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The park includes a visitor center, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the Seamen's Bethel, the schooner Ernestina, and the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum. The park's enabling legislation also established a formal connection between New Bedford Whaling NHP and the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, Alaska, to commemorate the more than 2,000 whaling voyages from New Bedford to the Western Arctic.

*Nicodemus National Historic Site (1996)*

Nicodemus NHS in Kansas preserves, protects, and interprets the only remaining western town established by African Americans during the Civil War Reconstruction Period. The town, covering 141 acres, symbolizes the pioneer spirit of African Americans who left familiar surroundings to seek personal freedom and opportunity.

*Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve (1996)*

Congress passed created Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in the Flint Hills region of Kansas to protect what remains of the 400,000 square miles of tallgrass prairie that once covered North America. Approximately 11,000 acres, the Preserve will be a new kind of national park, remaining under the ownership of the National Park Trust, which purchased the land in 1994. The National Park Service will own up to 180 acres, and the the Park Service and the National Park Trust will manage the entire acreage cooperatively.

*Washita Battlefield National Historic Site (1996)*

Just before dawn on November 29, 1884, the 7<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry under Lt. Col. Geroge Armstrong Custer attacked the Southern Cheyenne village of Peace Chief Black Kettle. Washita Battlefield National Historic Site in Cheyenne, Oklahoma, protects and interprets the site of that attack.

*Oklahoma City National Memorial (1997)*

The Oklahoma City National Memorial, covering six acres in Oklahoma City, honors the victims, survivors, rescuers, and "all who were changed forever" on April 19, 1995 by the terrorist bombing of a federal building. This monument, created by legislation on October 9, 1997, and dedicated by President Clinton on April 19, 2000, includes an outdoor memorial, reflecting pool, children's area, rescuer's orchard, and survivor tree. A National Memorial Center is scheduled to open in early 2001.

*The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (1997)*

Although Congress authorized a Washington, D.C. memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1959, it was not completed and dedicated until May 2, 1997. Both President Clinton and Vice President Gore spoke at the dedication ceremony of the impressive, multi-faceted memorial located next to the Tidal Basin.

After the dedication there was public pressure for an addition recognizing President Roosevelt's disability and use of a wheelchair throughout his Presidency. On July 2, 1998, a committee appointed by President Clinton announced its recommendation that the main entrance to the Memorial be re-configured to create an additional outdoor "room" of granite with a bronze, human-scale statue of FDR in the small wheelchair he invented. The setting for the new statue is being created by the memorial's designer, Lawrence Halprin, stone carver John Benson, and sculptor Robert Graham, who created the First Inaugural and Social Programs elements of the Roosevelt Memorial.

*Tuskegee Airman National Historic Site (1998)*

The Tuskegee Airman National Historic Site in Alabama was established on November 6, 1998, to commemorate and interpret, in association with Tuskegee University, the heroic actions of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. The Tuskegee Institute was the center for African-American Aviation during World War II.

*Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site (1998)*

Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, Arkansas, commemorates the site of an key confrontation in the history of desegregation in the United States and the black teenagers who attempted to desegregate the school in the 1950s.

*Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and the Conservation Study Institute*

When Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park opened to visitors in 1998, it became the first national park in Vermont and the only national park to tell the story of conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in America. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP interprets the history of conservation with tours of the mansion and the surrounding 550-acre forest. The park focuses on the development of three core program areas: sustainable land stewardship; stewardship education; and conservation leadership skills. The woodland is managed as a working forest demonstrating the best practices for long-term sustainability. In 1999 the park opened its Carriage Barn Visitor Center and Stewardship Exhibit. Finally, the park works with its principle partner, the Conservation Study Institute on projects to enhance conservation leadership skills. The National Park Service established the Conservation Study Institute in 1998 to enhance leadership in the field of conservation. In collaboration with the NPS and academic and nonprofit partners, the Institute provides a forum for the conservation community to discuss conservation history, contemporary issues and practice, and future directions for the field.

*Minuteman Missile National Historic Site (1999)*

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in western South Dakota is not yet open to the public, but will interpret part of the complex story of the Cold War. The site consists of a Launch Control Center and a Launch Facility, also known as a missile silo. The site will be co-administered with Badlands National Park to conserve operating expenses and share services.

## **Tightening Requirements for New Area Studies**

In 1995, the Administration and the Park Service opposed a Congressional attempt to redesign the process of adding new parks to the NPS system, and the National Park Service Reform Act of 1995 was defeated. The Administration agreed with Congress, however, that the procedures for identifying, studying, and recommending potential system additions needed reform. In November 1998, Congress amended Section 8 of the General Authorities Act to require the Secretary to annually submit a list of areas recommended for study, based on established criteria of national significance, suitability, and feasibility. The amendment provided that a new area study could not be made without specific Congressional authorization. The Secretary was also directed to submit annual lists of natural and historical areas that had already been studied, arranged in recommended priority order for addition to the system. These requirements, it is hoped, would inhibit the promotion of unqualified park candidates.

## **Ensuring the Safety of Employees and Visitors**

### **Forging a Partnership with OSHA**

Deeply concerned about recent data that showed an increase in accidents among park employees, NPS Director Stanton and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Assistant Secretary Charles Jeffress signed an agreement on October 6, 1998, to improve the safety and health of employees and visitors at park sites. Under the agreement, OSHA worked with ten selected park sites in 1999, and they will serve as safety and health models for the entire NPS.

In 1999, NPS experienced a 19 percent reduction in the number of lost time accidents among its workforce and that decline continues.

The management of workers' compensation cases also was emphasized in the NPS safety program. Three coordinators were hired to assist parks in helping workers return to work following a lost-time accident.

## **Increasing Workforce Diversity and Delivering Programs to a Diverse Audience**

### **A Diverse NPS Workforce**

During the Clinton Administration, NPS implemented a Diversity Action Plan to hold park managers responsible for diversifying seasonal and permanent staff, to establish full time recruiters focused exclusively on recruiting highly skilled candidates from underrepresented categories of workers, including the disabled, and to educate managers about diversity issues. By recruiting a diverse pool of applicants, NPS has increased the percentage of minorities employed in summer seasonal jobs.

NPS also established relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and other groups. For example, on April 26, 1999, Director

Stanton signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Hispanic Environmental Council to encourage environmental education and outreach efforts in Hispanic communities.

### **The Urban Recreation Research Center at Southern University**

On December 11, 1998, Director Stanton traveled to Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to deliver the commencement address and inaugurate the NPS Urban Recreation Research Center. The Urban Recreation Research Center is assisting managers of urban NPS sites in protecting resources and providing visitor services through a program of social science research, technical assistance, and education; creating a wider diversity of scientists conducting research on urban recreation and increase the pool of minority students interested in NPS careers; and providing technical support to NPS partners to strengthen the role of parks in urban communities.

Faculty and students at the center will examine the needs of urban youth for recreation and environmental education, problems related to high-density visitation, and ways to make parks more meaningful to people with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

### **The Underground Railroad**

Responding to community initiatives around the country, legislation passed in 1990, and additional legislation signed by President Clinton on July 21, 1998, NPS implemented a national Underground Railroad initiative.

On April 7, 1998, Director Stanton unveiled an Underground Railroad handbook containing artwork, graphics, historical documents, essays by noted scholars, and suggested sources for further information. The handbook is an accessible, full-color guide for the general public, students and educators. NPS also produced Web sites, a travel itinerary, and an interpretive brochure.

Cooperative agreements at the national, regional, and park levels allowed the NPS to provide assistance to other government agencies, private organizations, and educational institutions interested in documenting, preserving, and interpreting the Underground Railroad. As a result, there were many new listings on the National Register of Historic Places and several Underground Railroad sites have been designated National Historic Landmarks. NPS also issued publications to assist communities in documenting sites, including a booklet for local historians entitled *Researching the Underground Railroad*.

## **Expanding the Involvement of Youth in NPS Programs**

### **The Public Land Corps**

On June 8, 1998, Secretary Babbitt and Director Stanton announced the inauguration of the Public Land Corps (PLC), which was authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1993, but not funded until 1998 with \$2 million from the NPS Recreation Fee Demonstration Program and matching funds of \$1.5 million. The Act requires that the Corps be run in partnership with non-profit, youth-oriented organizations. The Student Conservation

Association and the Association of Service and Conservation Corps were chosen as the primary national partners for the Public Land Corps.

In 1998, the Public Lands Corps gave 834 young people an opportunity to earn minimum wage working on backlogged maintenance projects in the national parks. The value of the work completed by PLC members in 1998 was about \$5.3 million. The program employed over 800 youth again in 1999, and was expanded to employ almost 2,000 young people in 2000.

### **Job Corps**

The NPS Job Corps Program improved tremendously during the Clinton Administration. The NPS manages three Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, serving more than 800 young men and women in a variety of vocational and educational training programs. The Labor Department now rates all three NPS-operated centers in the top 50 percent of centers nationally and training programs at all three centers are now accredited by national organizations.

### **Boy Scouts**

In 1999, the Boy Scouts of America pledged to contribute one million volunteer hours to the parks.

## **Connecting People to Parks**

### **NPS Education Program**

The 382 units of the National Park System provide the setting for a unique hands-on educational experience. The National Park Service extends educational outreach beyond the park boundaries to connect the American people to their parks. Educational activities include personal presentations by professionally trained staff and the development of curriculum-based materials, publications, interactive CD-ROMs, Internet-based connections, and distance learning opportunities. Through the curriculum-based Parks as Classrooms program, the NPS works directly with schools to develop resource-based programs that compliment existing school curricula. Programs include teacher workshops, on-site learning experiences, teacher/student workbooks, traveling trunks, audio-visual materials, and distance learning opportunities. Since 1991, the NPS has distributed more than \$7 million, funding over 600 education projects reaching nearly 6 million students and 135,000 teachers.

In April 1997, the NPS and NASA signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to jointly produce earth/space science educational materials and programs. NASA has provided funding to detail NPS employees to NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. These individuals have provided training to NASA and NPS employees, developed a NPS/NASA Web site, developed a joint exhibit, provided educational materials to NPS interpreters and educators, and supported resource management by providing aerial and satellite imagery to park managers.

Other non-curriculum-based educational activities or programs include Junior Ranger programs offered in 213 parks; materials offered on the Internet through the NPS ParkNet Web site; the

Natural Resource Challenge; Environmental Leadership; Green Energy Parks; Fire Ecology; Invasive Species; Wilderness Education; and Aviation.

The strategic vision for accomplishing the NPS mission in interpretation and education is articulated in Goal Category II of the NPS strategic plan: provide for the public enjoyment of and enhance the visitor experience in our nation's parks. To determine how to best achieve this goal, the "Connecting People to Parks in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workshop" was held April 28-29, 1998, in Alexandria, Virginia. The forty-eight workshop participants represented the NPS regions, the Washington office and the private sector. In choosing the theme of "connecting people to parks," NPS emphasized that such connections serve to create memorable experiences for visitors, preserve the Nation's diverse heritage, and promote responsible stewardship. A workshop in conjunction with the Education Initiative Symposium, held in Santa Fe in September 1997, led to the creation of a comprehensive five-year national work plan for interpretation and education, a plan which is currently being implemented.

## **Expanding Partnerships**

### **Volunteers in Parks**

The NPS Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program provides the mechanism to accept and use voluntary help that is mutually beneficial to the NPS and the volunteer. In FY 1999, 116,000 volunteers contributed 4,265,000 hours of service valued at \$60,996,000. By 2000, there were 321 separate VIP programs, and volunteerism in the National Park System is growing at a rate of 5 percent per year.

### **National Park Service Cooperating Associations**

Cooperating Associations are non-profit organizations, incorporated under state law, that have signed agreements with the NPS to provide program and financial assistance to NPS activities in interpretation, education, and research through the production and sale of educational and public affairs media. In FY 99, the sixty-five associations under agreement with the NPS had revenues of over \$110 million from earnings and donations. From these revenues, they donated over \$30 million in cash, equipment, facilities, and services to support NPS programs in interpretation, education, and research.

### **Mount Rushmore Development Completed with Private Sector Funding**

1999 marked the culmination of a ten-year, \$56 million fundraising drive for Mount Rushmore National Park improvements through the Mount Rushmore Preservation Fund. The effort has become a model for other innovative public-private partnerships. The funds were used toward preservation of the sculpture and construction of the interpretive center, museum, amphitheater, Presidential trail, orientation center, and avenue of flags. A parking facility was constructed under a concession contract with the NPS, and is operated by a private concessionaire.

The visitor center/museum provides an interpretive experience unequalled in western national park areas. Situated on the lower level of the museum, the visitor center provides over 25,000 visitors a day with an unobstructed view of the Rushmore sculpture from the Grandview Terrace.

## **Redwood National and State Parks**

The National Park Service and the California Department of Parks and Recreation signed a benchmark Memorandum of Understanding in May of 1994 to cooperatively manage Redwood National and State Parks. Under the agreement, the agencies work together and commit resources, staff, equipment and facilities to the common protection of all resources contained within the parks.

## **Isle Royale Housing**

The public-private partnership established in 1994 between the Department of the Interior, NPS, Isle Royale National Park and the National Park Foundation has been extremely successful in its initial efforts to resolve critical housing needs at the park. With committed leadership from the National Park Foundation, NPS, Northern Michigan University, the Home Builders Association of Superiorland, Michigan National Guard, the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation and the First Martin Corporation, the Isle Royale partnership proved just how much a private/public alliance can accomplish. Within a forty-eight-month period from 1995-99, the partnership commissioned designs, solicited funds and materials, attracted volunteer labor, and coordinated logistics to build two duplex units and a ranger station at remote locations. They converted an abandoned pumphouse into a campground host cabin and constructed a four-plex housing unit and a new visitor center at Windigo. In 2000, the park is constructing a triplex at Windigo, using remaining donated funds. Volunteers have contributed in excess of \$150,000 in labor, and donors have contributed over \$550,000 in funds and in-kind donations.

## **NPS Partnership Programs**

### **The American Battlefield Protection Program**

Secretary Babbitt offered great support for the preservation of America's historic battlefields. The American Battlefield Preservation Program (ABPP) helps communities near historic battlefields develop balanced preservation approaches for these sites at the local level. During the Clinton Administration, the ABPP and its partners helped protect and enhance more than 100 battlefields by co-sponsoring more than 150 projects in twenty-one states and the District of Columbia. Individual project funding has ranged from \$1,000 to more than \$115,000; the average amount is \$22,000. Most partners contributed matching funds or in-kind services to these projects. In addition to awarding small matching funds to organizations sponsoring planning and educational projects at historic battlefields, ABPP historians, preservation planners, and archeologists provide technical assistance to owners of battlefield property, battlefield friends groups, and state and local governments interested in preserving historic battlefield land and sites.

### **Federal Lands-to-Parks**

Through its Federal Lands-to-Parks program, the National Park Service helps state and local agencies acquire surplus federal lands, buildings, and recreational facilities at no cost. Military bases that are closing and other surplus federal lands provide the potential for transfers of land

and facilities to local jurisdictions for public use, conservation, or community revitalization. NPS helps by identifying historically and naturally significant surplus federal properties, notifying communities of upcoming opportunities, acting as liaison with other federal agencies, and ensuring the long-term preservation of properties transferred under these programs. NPS has completed dozens of transfers to state and local governments since 1993.

### **Heritage Partnerships**

Secretary Babbitt and Directors Kennedy and Stanton each strongly endorsed the concept of heritage partnerships, and nationwide interest in heritage partnerships grew throughout the Clinton Administration. Seventeen National Heritage Areas, one form of Heritage Partnership, have been designated by individual acts of Congress.

Heritage Partnership is a strategy for conserving and promoting natural, historic, scenic, cultural, and recreational resources in areas that are not owned or managed by the National Park Service. Heritage Partnerships can help conserve important resources in ways that are compatible with their continued evolution and productivity. Local partnerships are enabled and encouraged to pursue politically viable conservation strategies that are responsive to local needs and values.

Upon request, the NPS provides technical assistance to state and local governments and nonprofit organizations working as partners to develop strategies for heritage conservation. Growing demand for this type of assistance has led to consideration of federal legislation to establish a system for designating heritage sites and to create specific authorities for providing technical and financial assistance to Heritage Partnerships.

## **Providing Global Leadership for Parks and Conservation**

### **World Bank National Park Partnership**

Beginning in 1997, NPS Special Assistant to the Director Brooke Shearer developed a strong working relationship with the World Bank so that Bank projects in key countries could be augmented by direct NPS involvement in an assortment of heritage preservation and tourism development projects. To date, the NPS has begun park and heritage projects in Albania, Croatia, Georgia, Haiti, Jordan, Ukraine, and Vietnam in association with World Bank economic development loans or at an earlier stage of the assistance process.

### **World Protected Areas Leadership Forum**

In the spring of 2000, the National Park Service hosted an historic international event for national parks and protected areas—the inaugural meeting of the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum (WPALF) in Warrenton, Virginia. Park and protected area system Directors/CEOs from nineteen of the world's developed and developing countries met to exchange ideas and perspectives about emerging park issues. They also shared experiences and lessons learned about common approaches to protected area challenges. The forum served as an important mechanism for protected areas leaders to jointly consider their pressing issues at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to bring them forward for consideration at the 2002 World Parks Congress to be held in Durban, South Africa in September 2002.

The park Directors established the following eight key issues: 1) Establishing an Overall Vision and Strategy; 2) Building Awareness; 3) Capacity-Building; 4) The Role of Eco-Management, Science and Technology in Protected Areas Management; 5) Building Linkages to and Demonstrating the Benefits of Protected Areas; 6) Marine Ecosystems; 7) Leveraging Resources; and 8) Protected Areas Governance.

### **Development of International Agreements**

During the Clinton Administration, NPS negotiated more than a dozen bilateral agreements for technical exchange and cooperation with counterpart national park management agencies from the following countries: Argentina, Bahamas, Canada, Chile, China, Italy, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, United Kingdom, and Venezuela. In Argentina, China, South Africa, and Venezuela, full-blown two-year action plans that include technical exchanges, study tours, training workshops, and cooperation in parks and protected area management are well under way.

#### *Partnering with U.S. Neighbors Canada and Mexico*

In May 1998, Director Stanton signed an agreement with Canadian officials to coordinate management responsibility for preservation of natural and cultural resources along the U.S.-Canadian border, and to share management expertise beneficial to park managers in both countries. In June 1998, Director Stanton signed a first-ever agreement with the Mexican officials responsible for the preservation of cultural resources in that country. One on-going area of cooperation with Canada and Mexico involves international efforts to interpret the Underground Railroad.

#### *China and South Africa*

In May 1998, Director Stanton traveled to China to sign the NPS's first-ever formal agreement with its Chinese counterpart agency. Several NPS teams have traveled to China under the agreement, which commits NPS to advise China on preservation and operations in some of its national parks.

In May 1999, Director Stanton traveled to South Africa to initiate discussions and cooperative activities with the South African National Parks ministry. NPS is advising South Africa on the preservation and interpretation of its cultural resources.

### **NPS Leadership**

Roger G. Kennedy became the fourteenth director of the National Park Service in June 1993. Formerly director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, Kennedy is an historian, lecturer and published author. As director of NPS, he reemphasized the need for partnerships to further NPS objectives and sought a greater educational role for the bureau beyond the parks, through such media as the World Wide Web.

Kennedy left in March 1997, and Robert G. Stanton became the fifteenth director of the National Park Service the following August. The first NPS careerist in the post since 1985, he had been a park superintendent, an assistant director, and regional director of the Service's National Capital Region. Under legislation enacted in 1996, he was the first appointee to the position required to undergo Senate confirmation. Stanton was the Park Service's first African American director.

The same legislation that required the Director to be confirmed by the Senate created a Deputy Director position within NPS. Jacqueline Lowey, formerly Deputy Chief of Staff at the Department of Transportation, became the first appointed Deputy Director. She served as Deputy Director from 1997 to June 2000.

In September 2000, Karen Atkinson, an attorney and former aide to Assistant Secretary Don Barry, became the first Native American Deputy Director of the NPS. The Green Energy/Green Parks initiative benefited from Ms. Atkinson's leadership.

Under Secretary Babbitt's active leadership, the National Park Service re-dedicated itself to its mission of preserving unimpaired the nation's natural and cultural heritage. During the Secretary's tenure, the NPS budget increased almost 50 percent, to over \$2 billion. Major environmental restoration projects occurred at the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite, the Everglades and at other national parks. The Secretary's ideal that resource knowledge should drive decision-making permeated the Service, positioning it as a leader in restoration and interpretation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.