

**Minutes**  
**National Parks Second Century Commission**  
**Inaugural Meeting**  
**Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area,**  
**Los Angeles, California**  
**August 25-26, 2008**

**Attending Commissioners:**

Co-Chair Howard Baker (by conference call)  
Linda Bilmes  
Rita Colwell  
John Fahey (August 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Vic Fazio (August 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Denis Galvin  
Sally Jewell  
Stephen Lockhart  
James McPherson  
Rob Portman  
Jerry Rogers  
Margaret Wheatley

J. Bennett Johnston  
Milton Chen  
Silvia Earle  
Belinda Faustinos  
Carolyn Finney  
Maria Hinojosa (August 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Tony Knowles (August 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Gretchen Long  
Gary Nash  
Timothy Roemer (August 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Deborah Shanley

**Commissioners Unable to Attend:**

James Blanchard  
Sandra Day O'Connor  
Peter Senge  
Richard West  
Edward O. Wilson

**Day One: Monday, August 25**

**Session: Call to Order and Opening Remarks**

Co-Chairman Bennett Johnston called the Commission meeting to order, announcing that Co-Chairman Howard Baker was joining the session via conference call, because a family emergency required his presence at home in Tennessee. Senator Baker said the keys to the Commission's accomplishment were independence, vision and a plan of action for the next Century National Park Service and national park system. He thanked John Fahey of the National Geographic Society for offering to produce the Commission's report and noted that, as a new Administration and Congress assume their responsibilities in the coming year, this was an excellent time to undertake the work this Commission had set out to do.

Senator Johnston said the national park idea had changed significantly over the years, citing as an example the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. He recalled that when the park was first proposed, the principal reason for its creation was to protect the airshed of Los

Angeles, and only a “little recreation” was anticipated. Last year, however, there were 35 million visits to the park, five million of those in the mountains! He said the nation has done great things in the last 30 years with urban parks, cultural parks and heritage areas and that in his view there were many great things to be done yet to expand on these ideas and the great vision of Yellowstone.

National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) President Tom Kiernan expressed appreciation to all the Commissioners for agreeing to serve, saying that the Commission must be different from the many park studies and commissions that preceded it, because it must serve what will be a different America.

### **Session: Commissioners’ “Check-in”**

Staff director Loran Fraser invited Members to share what motivated them to join the Commission, and how that might tie to a vision of what parks must and should be.

Commissioner Deny Galvin recalled that 40 years working with the National Park Service had led him to believe these are perilous times for park resources regionally, nationally and globally, that challenges press across a variety of fronts and represent the same forces threatening us as a nation and a people.

Commissioner Sally Jewell offered concern about a growing disconnect between children and nature, that forces such as urbanization and significant demographic shifts in the nation added to this problem, and that too often public lands were not open to all facets of the public, even excluding some publics.

Commissioner Gary Nash stated that the National Park Service can and should be a democratizing institution, a responsibility that depended on public access to and balance in its interpretive programs.

Commissioner James McPherson shared that parks were unique outdoor classrooms that connect people with history in a special way, to the places where events took place, providing an environment for learning otherwise not possible.

Commissioner Steve Lockhart proposed three objectives for the Commission’s work: first, that parks provide a framework for both formal and informal education of the young, especially to create new stewards the future will require; second, that the parks reflect the diversity required to keep pace with the nation’s demographic trends; and third, that the parks help cultivate and strengthen private-public partnerships that can better leverage resources and build political will.

Commissioner Milton Chen professed his belief that there were four great democratizing institutions in our nation’s history: public schools, public libraries, public broadcasting, and public parks – that these were social elements of our culture that helped us understand who we were as Americans. The role of parks specifically was to reconnect young people to nature and the responsibilities of stewardship.

Commissioner Linda Bilmes expressed concern that the Commission’s recommendations be adequately funded and address long-term investments. She said a piece-meal funding approach would always be starved for monies and result in an inability to plan ahead to make needed investment and required change.

Commissioner Carolyn Finney spoke of the passion for parks in people's lives, and said it was a privilege to serve on a body looking to the future of the parks, an irony because when she was young, her father, a black man, was unable to get a job working for the Park Service. She said too often, in the past, people of color had thought the parks had nothing to do with them. She declared that this must change.

Commissioner Tony Knowles said his state of Alaska was blessed with an extensive array of national parks, that major challenges looking forward were to protect the park systems ecological integrity and to develop adequate funding to maintain the public/park trust relationship.

Commissioner Maria Hinojosa said that paramount to the future needs of the national parks was that they understand their mission to tell the truth, and that they be representative of and connect to the communities they serve. She hoped she could play a role in putting the parks into the larger context of the new America. She said the national parks must be open and welcoming to all.

Commissioner John Fahey recalled that the National Geographic Society had been forefront in the effort to create and preserve national parks, that the parks were one of the most popular subjects among readers of the Society's magazine. He said there was a spiritual aspect to our lives, that without the kind of experiences that national parks afford, we were limited in fully knowing what it was to be human.

Commissioner Jerry Rogers offered that national parks must be understood to represent more than just scenery and passive stories, that they hold ideas that need to be conveyed to people, ideas about their communities and their heritage.

Commissioner Deborah Shanley said that parks provide an opportunity to blend history and science in schools, that every child should have the opportunity to attend a national park at some point in their schooling and that integral to these programs should be two things: how to cultivate the sense of stewardship in children; and accountability to ensure they were achieving results.

Commissioner Gretchen Long stated that the national parks had served as a catalyst for our thinking about the protection of resources, and that among the challenges facing the parks were: dealing with pressures on resources from outside park boundaries; how to market the park system more effectively; the need for more partnering while at the same time preserving the identity of the Service and the parks; and what's needed to strengthen park leadership in stewardship and education.

Commissioner Vic Fazio said that as the National Park Service was entering its second century, the Commission must be mindful of the need to work toward a broader cultural understanding of America as the nation and its people change. Parks must not be remote, but accessible to all that they serve.

Commissioner Rob Portman expressed satisfaction at having worked on the funding proposal for the Administration's National Park Centennial Challenge program. He hoped the Commission would represent a meaningful exercise, not just a petition for more money, and he urged that it include specific actions in its recommendations, not just broad statements about lofty goals.

Commissioner Tim Roemer asserted that the challenge in looking to the future was to get people more involved, to translate the grand images and purposes of national parks into inspiration and action, and to determine how the Commission would carry its work forward.

Commissioner Rita Colwell stated that the challenges facing national parks were the same facing us as inhabitants of the earth, and the answers they offered were critical to our success as a people and species. She expressed concern that parks have the capacity to accomplish their purposes, and that they be protected from mass privatization.

Commissioner Margaret (Meg) Wheatley said the Commission's challenge was to answer the question: how to create needed broad-scale system change? The work of the Commission was based on values that could no longer be seen as counter-culture based, but values tied to the issues of life and death themselves.

Chairman Johnston thanked the Commissioners for their statements and emphasized the importance of Committees in exploring, sifting and bringing back to the Commission as a whole the results of their work. Loran Fraser offered a quick review of the Commission's meeting agenda, recalling the importance of developing a vision to guide development of recommendations for the report.

### **Session: Forecasting the Future – Establishing a Context for the Commission's Work - Paul Saffo**

Chairman Johnston introduced Paul Saffo, who taught at Stanford University, served on the Board of the Long Now Foundation and for the last 20 years had been technology forecaster in Silicon Valley.

Saffo predicted that by mid-century, the world's population would grow from 6.7 billion to 9.3 billion people and the population of the United States would reach 400 million. The significant shift was that 80 percent of the population growth in the U.S. between 2005 and 2050 would come from immigrants. One notable trend in terms of population would be increased "rootlessness." He said that as the world became more transient, old notions about ways of life would no longer apply. Were the parks going to be ready for a world of transient people? Within recent memory, half of the world's population lived in cities. By the year 2010, that number would approach 75%. It was the "exurbs" which were going to see the most notable increase; having great implications for national parks and gateway communities. An area where technological change was providing great opportunities was in education. "How does the global movement of people around the world affect the national parks? Everyone is passionate about something, but that passion may not be about 'here'." "How do you get people to care about where they are, not just where they are from?"

### **Session: History of the National Park Idea – Points of Change**

Rolf Diamant, Superintendent of Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, and Dr. Dwight Pitcaithley, History Professor, New Mexico State University and former Chief Historian of the National Park Service, were presenters for this session.

Rolf Diamant said there have been moments of awakening in the National Park Service that resulted in periods of notable change, as well as periods of retrenchment. The question that emerged was "whether there were useful lessons for organizing change in the National Park Service that would stir discussion and development of possible futures?" A key principle associated with the national park idea had been never to abandon the original concept, but build

on it, to allow parks to do more. The notion was often present that national parks were about individual experience. But there was also a continuous thread that wove the idea of their social dimension: that they strengthened us as a people, both in health and citizenship. That transformative potential was stated in 1865 by Frederick Law Olmstead, who saw parks as “a continuous force of refinement for the Republic.”

The first key point of change occurred shortly after the creation of the Park Service in 1916, when the center of the national park system began to shift from the West to the Eastern United States, with the creation of parks such as Acadia, Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains. At the same time, the park idea was enlarged from the natural to include the historic. Almost from the beginning, the Service gave education a prominent role, believing that education gave parks an over-arching purpose. The second point was in the early 1930s, when the Service became an emergency conservation organization, helping administer the Civilian Conservation Corps. This work resulted in the creation of state park systems throughout the US, and it “built people” as well. The CCC changed how the Park Service was seen by the public and grew respect for it; it helped the American people restore faith in themselves and the nation. During this period, the park system doubled in size and expanded its professional ranks to include not just engineers and landscape architects, but historians, anthropologists and scientists.

The 1970s-1980s constitute the third point of change, when the NPS simultaneously launched into urban parks and doubled its size through the creation of massive wilderness parks in Alaska, transforming the Service into a diversified organization. Variations on the park idea were employed in places such as Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and its connection to local communities, while parks such as Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve and Kaluapapa National Historical Park encompassed on-going communities and ways of life. This represented a period with a steep learning curve to find ways to manage new parks, engage partners, interact appropriately with complex social networks and embrace diverse populations and cultures. The lessons learned in these places inform and influence all parks, supporting an organizational culture capable of resiliency and innovation. Alaska’s national parks proved no less of a challenge not just because they encompassed vast ecosystems, but because of the inextricable web of adjacent communities and subsistence practices that tied the parks to the people of Alaska. Finally, this point of change also saw the creation of the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program and other assistance programs within the National Park Service, to support the creation of historic, recreational and natural conservation efforts at the non-federal level.

Dwight Pitcaithley spoke to the 1990s, when Congress changed the name of Custer Battlefield National Monument to Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, directing the NPS to create a more balanced interpretation for the site as well as a monument to the Indians. Prior to that time, the expansion of the park system and the national park idea moved along a fairly predictable trajectory. These new parks told a part of American history that was not easy. An example is the story of Japanese internment during World War II at Manzanar National Historic Site. A whole series of Civil Rights parks were also created, beginning with Martin Luther King Jr. NHS, but with an even darker tone at parks such as Cane River Creole National Historical Park and the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail.

These parks require a heightened emphasis on education. Three parks, the Lower East Side Tenement National Historic Site, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site and Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, exemplify this edgy-kind of new park. But this emphasis on providing a broader, balanced story in interpretation was not solely at the direction of Congress to serve a new kind of park. Some of the change was internal, with superintendents at civil war

battle sites wanting to talk about the broader story, and particularly the causes of the war, a position eventually ratified legislatively by Congress.

A second momentous change from the 1990s took place with the publication of NPS historian Dick Sellars *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, which was highly critical of the Park Service and its management of natural resources. The NPS Director at the time used the book as the impetus for creating the Natural Resources Challenge program, which allocated \$80 million yearly in pursuit of better natural resources management and science. Since its inception, the Challenge program has resulted in more than a half billion dollars of new investment in natural resource management.

Until 1998, the National Park Service had no mandate for research. That was accomplished in the 1998 National Parks Omnibus Management Act, which created the Cooperative Ecosystem Study Units around the country, which allowed the NPS to work with universities on a range of research topics of concern to good park management. These units can be used by historian and archeologists as well. This collaborative approach is not unique to just science: in 1994 the Service entered into a formal agreement with the Organization of American Historians to provide the highest standard of historical scholarship. This agreement was forged under Commissioner Gary Nash's leadership of the OAH.

The National Park Service Advisory Board's *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century* built upon the Park Service's internal analysis the Vail Agenda, asserting that parks must play a role in American society to encourage the public to be better stewards, to think sustainably, and to take the message of parks beyond national parks boundaries in the promotion and protection of local parks and significant landscapes.

Dr. Pitcaithley and Rolf Diamant concluded saying they would be remiss if they left the Commission with the impression that progress within the NPS was inevitable. They said the Park Service was a very conservative organization. It had a hard time thinking of itself as a System. While the Vail Agenda report set forth an educational emphasis for the Service, the agency's structure worked against this. Cultural resources, natural resources, and interpretation were managed as distinct and separate organizations within the Park Service, and hence did not have the level of interaction and coordination needed to support their common purposes. Moreover, the educational function itself ebbed and flowed. At times it had been prescriptive, at other times it had been viewed as not inherent to the agency. In recent years, Department of the Interior political leadership had even described education as representing "mission creep." Pitcaithley and Diamant offered questions in closing:

- How should the National Park Service evolve to assume a greater role in the world?
- How can the NPS change to give education more priority and ensure program effectiveness?
- How can the NPS more effectively capture innovation, using what it already had learned at the local/individual park level and consolidating it to the benefit of the overall organization?
- How should the success of the NPS be measured?
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### **Commissioners' Discussion and Comments**

John Fahey asked if the National Park Service was organized to do what it needed to do in the face of the nation's greater diversity. Did it need to assume a new role in society? Was it ready? Should its priorities remain the same? Did it find or lose its way in the 1990's?

Sally Jewell observed that often those doing interpretation in the parks were contractors and not well prepared. The career track in education was not good. In terms of the culture, some fundamental values were missing when it came to education. She noted that the average age of exhibits was 20 years, with some materials in worse shape than that. Rob Portman said there may need to be an effort to enhance the professionalization of interpreters.

Rita Colwell said the National Park Service did not have and needed a research program to monitor the natural functions of the parks. Linda Bilmes said there appeared to be a lack of investment in the people of the organization. Vic Fazio said the parks need staffs that reflect the diversity of the nation and there seemed to be unevenness in staffing from one park to another.

Responding, Superintendent Diamant said there were concerns about stove piping and the centralizing of services. There was a tension between innovation at the field level and control from central offices.

Steve Lockhart spoke to the importance of a shared dream, a vision of the future, one that connects young people as well as the next generation of employees.

Chairman Johnston noted that there were 130,000 volunteers working for the NPS and suggested ways are needed to expand these efforts. Rob Portman said it was important for the Commission to take a look at the NPS mission, that the investment required for volunteers, as well as that to leverage the potential contributions from friends groups deserved consideration.

Sylvia Earle said the NPS mission should promote stewardship broadly, not just to preserve the parks, which she described as potentially the last bits of nature. She said parks are more than simply places to play, that they are vital programs for taking care of the natural systems that take care of us.

Tim Roemer asked what the Vail Agenda and the National Park System Advisory Board Report called for in terms of organizational change, and what the Congress needed to do strengthen the organization?

Loran Fraser, calling a break for lunch, urged members to consider: “what does the nation want national parks for, and how might the Commission come to answer that question? Meg Wheatley suggested the question should be amended to: “why does the nation *need* national parks?”

### **Session: Welcoming Remarks from the National Park Service**

NPS Pacific West Regional Director Jon Jarvis recalled that in addition to the units of the national park system, the Park Service managed a broad portfolio of programs, including the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, the National Historic Landmarks and National Natural Landmarks programs, and the “State-side” Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants program that had expanded parks and outdoor recreation facilities to some 90% of all counties in America.

Echoing the opportunity of education, Jarvis noted that through a partnership with the Yosemite National Institute, the NPS had reached 40,000 kids a year. But, in the Los Angeles School

District alone, there were some 694,000 kids. He asked: how could the NPS meet that additional need? Regarding the role of the parks in speaking to broad issues, he offered that parks had been challenged to develop a climate change strategy, a number of which were converting to solar power. Some had dramatic stories to tell: Mount Rainier was showing visitors the retreat of the mountain's glaciers. With respect to the NPS role in societal change, he noted that the Military Advocate General's staff recently toured Manzanar NHS to get a sense of how history might judge their work with the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. He affirmed the belief of many that the Park Service had a role it can play in many of the issues that hadn't yet been aired, such as obesity, Attention Deficit Disorder and gangs.

He offered the view that the Park Service was unique among government agencies in that it had the capacity to bring people together. Cultural parks, all places of national historic significance, helped lift the next generation to a higher plane of citizenship. The natural parks were critical for what they protected in terms of biodiversity, but also in stating our willingness, as a people, to set something aside, thinking and acting at a higher level of humanity than simple concern about ourselves.

Jarvis described the Park Service as an optimistic organization, its mission oriented to the future. As Commissioners did its work, he said, "...moving the Commission was not the challenge; moving the National Park Service, the Congress and the American People was where the real work lay." He promised Commissioners that as they visited the parks, they would see extraordinary things. But as an agency, the Commission would see a failing. He said the NPS had been described as a collection of the best run boats in the most disorganized navy the world may ever see. He asked: how can the NPS be made to work better, to serve better public needs in the next century?

### **Session: Developing a Vision of the Future (Commissioners' Dialogue)**

Commission Meeting Designer Nancy Burgas challenged members to speak to some of the preliminary ideas they had heard in the morning sessions; perhaps considering ways to embrace technology, or issues with organizational structure, some suggesting giving up things done in the past. Three questions were posted for the Commissioners to help stimulate thought and discussion.

1. What does Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area suggest for the future with regard to other major American cities?
2. What will be the implications of having significant human populations near parks that previously have been protected by their remoteness?
3. Today "urban/wildlife interface" invokes fears of wildfires and animal attacks--a wish to protect the urban from the wildland: in the second century how will it be possible to protect the wildland from the urban?

Jerry Rogers said the NPS was a values-driven organization. And, while some parts of the NPS were embracing and/or creating change, they did so with little support. Unless it wanted to change, it wouldn't. He quoted Deny Galvin saying it was a "loose confederation." He said he would call it a "tribe." Rita Colwell recommended that Park Service be evaluated as potentially an independent agency, as that would give it tremendous flexibility in terms of pursuing its mission. It was suggested that it might be helpful for Commission members to receive a primer on land management agencies vis-à-vis the National Park Service. Linda Bilmes raised a number of points, beginning with how to deal with the competition for resources between new and old parks. She disclosed that while there were 1.8 million government workers in the US

Government, there were 8 million government contractors. What did this portend for the Service's ability to perform its mission? How was training conducted, how should people in the NPS be trained?

Tim Roemer suggested that a key question for the Commission is how will it take its recommendations forward? Deny Galvin asked: "And, how can we build a political constituency for those resources, as well as future kids, that have no voice?"

John Fahey offered that the Commission might not get all the solutions needed for the next century, but it should work to come up with something creative and significant, something Commissioners can really grapple with to prompt dialog and debate in terms of the Service's mission.

Maria Hinojosa proposed that the Commission consider the issues of: 1) Inclusivity and identity, 2) the Immigrant experience, 3) Collaboration with other entities, 4) Parks vs. cultural institutions, and 5) Resistance to change.

It was discussed that a strategy was needed to make sure the Commissions work was something more than just printed words gathering dust. The objective was to execute change. To engage creativity, it was suggested the question that needs asking was: "What's possible here?" and "Who really cares?"

### **Session: Introduction to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area**

Superintendent Woody Smeck said the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area was unique among national parks because of the interface with the City of Los Angeles weaving in and around the park. Some 22 million people lived in the Greater LA area, half of whom resided within a 30-minute drive of the park. It was an area of great human diversity: 161 different languages spoken in the schools; 47% of the population Hispanic, 26% Caucasian. The city was host to a large immigrant population with eight of every 10 school kids in the LA Unified School District born, or of parents born in another country. Very few residents were aware of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA or any other national park. Transportation was one of the large issues that confronted many of them, particularly the children. The park had employed a number of programs to reach these populations, to engage them in a meaningful way, relying mostly on offering "place-based" learning experiences.

The park faced a tremendous amount of growth pressure. Each year there were about 10,000 applications for development, but the park could comment on only a thousand of these. The park was seeing significant fragmentation of its resource base, particularly in the two corridors that connected the mountains with the more pristine mountain ranges to the north. This pressure was chopping up cultural resources as well, particularly cultural landscapes. All of this had an effect on the air and water quality so vital to the sustainability of life in the Los Angeles Basin. One of the park's best investments and key tools in working with surrounding cities and local governments was *information* derived from research and database mapping (geographic information systems). A principal value of the park that must be appreciated (and was all too often forgotten) was its benefit to public health.

The scale of the challenges facing the park went beyond the resources given to it by Congress. To reach beyond those limits, the NPS had joined with state and local park agencies to create a seamless partnership to coordinate and share scarce resources and maximize their benefits.

Many programs, such as volunteer trail patrols are completely integrated. Volunteers work the trails without respect to which agency happened to own the land beneath the trail.

**Session: Park Tour Description**

- Commissioner and staff board two buses at Four Seasons Hotel-Westlake. Superintendent Woody Smeck and the SAMO Planning and Science Chief, Ray Sauvajot, provide interpretation of features along the route while in transit to the first stop.
- The first stop was at Lois Ewen Overlook near the geographic center of the mountains. Passengers depart bus for dramatic 360-degree view of the mountains, Pacific coastline, and Greater Los Angeles urban expanse. Dr. Sauvajot provided an orientation to the setting and an introduction to managing protected lands in an urban-wildland interface environment. Issues for discussion included habitat fragmentation and landscape connectivity, preserving biological diversity, and managing beyond park boundaries in a complex urban interface. Dr. Sauvajot highlighted the Juan Bautista De Anza National Historic Trail. Cooperative partnerships were discussed as a necessary framework for conservation.
- The second stop was at Solstice Canyon. Superintendent Smeck provided an orientation to the setting and introduced Wendy Janssen, Chief of Interpretation and Education, and Henry Ortiz, Science Coordinator for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Both discussed outdoor education programs and the importance of place-based, experiential learning in nature as a necessary extension to classroom instruction. The park's suite of curriculum-based programs was shared, including Parks as Classrooms, Service Learning, Residential (emersion) Program, and Citizen Science. Ms. Janssen discussed education partnerships and changing needs, audiences, and demographics affecting education programming. Commissioners observed a service learning program in progress called EcoHelpers, where approximately 55 diverse youth from "Roots and Shoots" and the California Science Center Summer Program were working with NPS biologists to restore a watershed.

**Day Two: Tuesday, August 26**

Co-Chairman Johnston called the Commission Meeting to order for a second day of meetings.

**Session: Collaborative Park Management**

Superintendent Smeck introduced Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Executive Officer of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), and Ron Schafer, Angeles District Superintendent, California State Parks, who together represented the three principal park agencies working collectively to manage the Santa Monica Mountains NRA. He added that the Commission's meeting site that day, the King Gillette Ranch, was acquired through joint purchase by the three agencies, as well as through privately raised funds and contributions from surrounding communities. The ownerships within the park boundary constituted a highly mixed and complex array of properties, some protected as parks, much of it not. This interweaving of responsibilities made partnering among the agencies inevitable. The framework within which they operated was spelled out in the NPS General Management Plan, which provided a common vision and protocols for the three agencies. A second plan dealing with land protection supported this effort, serving as a framework for land acquisition priorities.

Chief Deputy Executive Officer Rorie Skei provided the Commission with an introduction to the King Gillette Ranch property, saying it was destined to become the Administrative Headquarters for the national and state parks, providing a common visitor center for all the agencies. Currently the property was open every day, offering collaborative programs through partners. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority was the joint-powers operating arm of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), a state agency established in the early 1980's shortly after the national recreation area was created, to work alongside the national and state parks in acquiring park lands. The Conservancy and the MRCA had expanded their protection roles beyond the NRA to reach into the urban core of Los Angeles itself. The urban sites function as jumping off points that connect to the Santa Monica Mountains.

State Park Superintendent Ron Schafer explained that the cooperative relationship among the park agencies boiled down to "flexibility," which allowed any agency to pursue the common mission of the parks on any agency's land using any agency's resources. They tried to make use of their respective policies to make the best one work on behalf of all. The NPS was currently bringing in construction dollars needed to design and construct the visitor center. Ron Schafer also recounted that the Conservancy helped resolve a long dispute with the city of Malibu over State Park lands. He said all agencies had collaborated on the operation of the Park Link Shuttle system and California State Parks was currently paying for much of the mountain lion research the NPS was conducting. Planning for King Gillette is jointly managed. All volunteer trail patrols and volunteer training was done jointly. The State Parks just completed hearings on camping at a state park north of the recreation area; NPS testified in support of it before the State Parks Commission. The three agencies helped one another on emergency response and management. The purchase of King Gillette Ranch exemplified the collaborative process.

Sally Jewell asked if there was anything that could help knock down bureaucratic barriers to this partnering. She asked: what forced you to work outside the bounds? What got in the way? Linda Bilmes observed that lack of fungibility between partners and nonprofits was known to be an obstacle for organizations like this.

Woody Smeck said that key to making these arrangements work began with committed leadership that goes from the top down through the staff at the field level. They had to talk to one another and feel empowered to make decisions. He added that Title 16 U.S.C. 1a-2(l) enacted in 1998 has enabled agencies to move resources across from one agency to another and that had truly helped. It would be good if national parks had more authority to expend resources outside the park boundary. Rorie Skei explained that State agencies had to work with California's Public Works Board on almost any project, which really slowed things down. Fortunately, the MRCA doesn't have to go through the Board. One thing that did need to happen, and this applied to all the park agencies, was to get operating money at the same time that property was acquired. From the standpoint of the burden of bureaucracy, any time a grant was given by California State Parks, they took ten percent from the top to use as oversight for grant administration. Jon Jarvis observed that when collaboration takes place on the ground, things go fine; but when moved to higher organizational levels, bureaucratic obstacles were encountered.

Milton Chen asked whether the partners anticipated private funding, or how they handled that. Woody Smeck responded that they had a relationship with a non-profit entity and that they can pool donated monies together. Ron Schafer said that one hurdle they faced was that they could not raise money directly. In turning to private dollars, donors often wanted name recognition, which violated policy.

## **Session: The National Park Service and the Marine Environment/ Opportunities and Future Directions**

Dr. Gary Davis, National Park Service retired, was the opening presenter for this session, joined by Rita Colwell and Sylvia Earle, and Commission science consultant Mike Soukup.

Gary Davis stated that with pressures building on the oceans dire forecasts have been made about the future viability of the world's fisheries. He said the window of opportunity to act was closing, but there is hope. He said the United States had had ocean national parks for nearly a hundred years. They were parks where the land and sea converge to create coastal habitat. Acadia National Park was the first. Glacier Bay with 650,000 acres under water is surely one of the most notable early accomplishments. About half of Everglades National Park was made up of ocean habitat. Each decade, more and more parks with ocean resources were included in the park system. Cabrillo National Monument was among the early units, established in 1913. One of the most recent was Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument created by Executive Order in 2001. There were also parks that had boundaries that didn't extend to the water beyond the mean high tide line; but much of their wildlife was ocean dependent, particularly seabirds. NPS units were not the sum total of all the protected ocean resources in America. There was also 2.6 million protected acres in the National Wildlife Refuge System and 17 million protected acres within the National Marine Sanctuaries.

Dr. Davis said: Collectively, the agencies had not done a good job caring for these resources, a tasks becoming more challenging all the time. Until recently it was not easy to get underwater. At one time, at Dry Tortugas National Park the NPS was lucky to see a thousand visitors, now there are twenty thousand. Once, the Great Barrier Reef was virtually impossible to get to, now 95% of it was visitor-accessible because of high-speed flying boats. The threats boiled down to stress on the aquatic environments that supported ocean life. In most parks, commercial fishing was still allowed: people were invited to the national parks to see, camp and fish. From the arctic to the tropics, there were huge problems. In a recent biological survey at Virgin Islands, it took eight weeks to find a grouper, once a relatively common fish. Invariable, the solution pursued has been to protect one-species-at-a-time, and sometimes it worked. But, to protect these resources, it is essential to create reserves, which protect whole systems, and the best protection vehicle for this was the National Park concept. Given the scope of the challenge, more reserves are needed. The opportunity to do this was in the territorial waters of the United States which effectively double the size of the nation. It was important through education to connect people to the ocean. Partnerships were critical to the future of these strategies. In our lifetimes, much had changed.

Rita Colwell offered that there were selfish reasons why ocean resources need protection: they had been a rich source of discoveries that benefit human health. Oysters harvested from Chesapeake Bay had yielded a bacterial film that lead to discoveries dealing with l-dopamine. A similar film peculiar to abalone had been the source of a promising compound that functioned as a neural transmitter. Bobtail squid had a symbiotic relationship with bioluminescent bacteria containing a signaling molecule used to locate and interfere with human pathogens. Toxins in Red Tide produced treatment compounds. An extracted molecule from sea cucumbers provided anti-leukemia agents. The loss of coral reefs would not just be an aesthetic concern; they represent a major source of uptake for CO<sub>2</sub> that can help modulate the forces of global warming. She said the National Park Service needed to have a research component to conduct long-term integrated studies to understand the mechanics of these complex systems. This work should be done in partnership with universities.

Sylvia Earle stated that oceans were the stabilizing force for natural systems on the entire planet, and the place where most life on earth was present. She said we are witnessing the unraveling of the ocean habitat, that ninety percent of the big fish in the ocean were now lost. She seconded the recommendation that creating reserves to protect ocean life was imperative, and that the national park designation was an extraordinarily important vehicle to do this, helping to ensure both protection and appropriate public access. Mike Soukup emphasized the critical importance of education in addressing this challenge. He recalled that the Commissioners had heard on their previous day's field trip that the Santa Monica Mountains education program was the largest in the Park Service, it had only six people!

### **Session: Issues Roundtable**

Loran Fraser introduced subject-matter experts serving as Commission consultants to highlight briefing papers provided Commissioners prior to the meeting. He said NPCA's Vice President of Programs Ron Tipton would present on the topic of Alaska.

Mike Soukup/Natural Resources - reiterated that the NPS "Organic Act" mandate to protect the parks "unimpaired" for the future was a mission that propelled the organization to acquire and utilize science. He said the Park Service had responsibilities in this area that far transcended what was envisioned in the Organic Act, responsibilities that should be viewed as opportunities to meet growing societal needs. The forces of genetic science make it essential that we preserve the roadmaps back into the past, so that we can make the blueprints for the future.

Pat Tiller/Cultural Resources – provided a brief overview of the National Park Service heritage mission, beginning with the historic sites administered directly by the NPS. No other public or private agency held such a large and complex portfolio, one that extended from the earliest people in North America at Bering Land Bridge National Preserve to our most current struggles, as reflected in the Flight 93 National Memorial. Some 65% of all units in the National Park System were "heritage parks" although all parks had cultural resources, just as they all had natural resources. Beyond the boundaries of its sites, the Park Service served as the nation's ministry of culture, with 1.3 million properties of national, state and local significance. The NPS served in this role as a partner with money, technical assistance and training. He said Commissioners might feel overwhelmed by the "dollar" needs of the preservation programs, but that was less of a challenge than it might seem because the opportunities for partnering are huge.

Julia Washburn/Education – stated that National Park Service place-based learning opportunities were unique and powerful. She reported on efforts of the past few years to strengthen the Service's education function and highlighted the NPS education and interpretation action plan of 2006 which focused on the following five goals: 1) Engage People to Make Enduring Connections to America's Special Places; 2) Use new Technologies; 3) Embrace Interpretation and Education Partners; 4) Develop and Implement Professional Standards; 5) and Create a Culture of Evaluation. She said that despite top leadership-level involvement in this work, the action plan above had not been funded, though the ask was for only \$10 million dollars.

Samuel Stokes/Collaboration - suggested that one way to look at the NPS mission its entirety was as a "continuum." At the far left end of the continuum, were those places where the NPS virtually had total and exclusive ownership, a model that began with and was still represented by Yellowstone National Park. Immediately to the right were units such as those in the National

Wild and Scenic Rivers System, of which there were thirty-seven. These areas had mixed ownership. Located in this zone were also parks such as Santa Monica Mountains NRA and Lowell National Historical Park. And a little farther in, with nominal to no ownership were the units such as the Long Distance Trails (19 designations) and the National Heritage Areas (37 designations). Going still farther toward the right end of this programmatic spectrum were the designated areas, such as the National Historic Landmarks, the National Natural Landmarks and the properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All of these areas were owned by someone else, but their designation affords some protection. At the far right of the continuum were the technical assistance programs. The International program provided assistance to park agencies around the world, but it was limited to reimbursable work. The Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) served some 300 communities per year. Most of the work provided through RTCA centered on design and technical assistance. The projects themselves were locally borne – but the involvement of the NPS helped ensure a better care and added credibility.

Ron Tipton/Alaska – said the 56 million preserved acres in Alaska could be seen as the largest park system in the world. It had become the cornerstone of Alaska's economy, with park tourism the leading economic sector in the state. Much of the initial opposition that the NPS faced in Alaska when the parks were created had turned to support. Managing and protecting the wildlife resources of the parks was a significant challenge, as the National Park Service only had partial control – Alaska's Department of Fish and Game continually asserted its authority over wildlife issues, creating a lot of conflict. Trends in climate change represent a challenge to all parks, but nowhere as much as in Alaska.

Each year there were more and more visitors and increasing numbers create demands for more services, access and creature comforts. Tipton said that there was considerable opportunity in the broad public interest in visiting Alaska's parklands. More visitors would result in more facilities. Some may be developed in the parks, others in the gateway communities.

Regardless of where, it needed to be done right. There were also opportunities for boundary changes and adjustments to enhance resource protection, and this had to be done working with the Bureau of Land Management and others.

Warren Brown/Planning - observed that much of the national park systems growth had been without any vision or plan. In the mid-1970's Congress instructed the Park Service to monitor the condition of its national historic sites, natural landmarks and other unique areas of significance as the basis for feasibility studies that could produce an annual list of twelve recommendations for addition to the national park system. In 1981, the study program was eliminated and the authority for recommendations was taken away. Since that time, the NPS had been in a reactive mode. It needed vision again to determine where the system should go. In preserving cultural resources, the Park Service needed to look at and recommend different types of protection strategies. With regard to natural units, all too often the boundaries failed to conform to the requirements of the natural systems. They required boundary adjustments or changes in authority to deal with issues beyond traditional boundaries and enhanced ability to work with other Federal agencies and entities.

Jim Giammo/Budget - the pending budget request is for 2.43 billion dollars; of which \$240 million was from highway funds, \$261 million from fee revenues – the budget noted the NPS received 100 million volunteer hours. There were 21,650 people in the NPS. \$2.3 billion of the budget was for operations. Operations funding was up for this year by \$580 million, but other programs, such as assistance programs are down by \$590 million. So the overall amount of the increase was \$1.17 billion dollars, but with the exception of a couple 100 million, the increase had gone to cover fixed pay raises, retirement. The estimated backlog of pending operating

increase needs totaled \$775 million. There were also \$2 billion pending projects, and 6-13 (8.7) deferred. Only 5 million dollars had been allocated for land acquisition versus 600 million dollars in pending requests. Mr. Giammo explained there were hurdles to getting more money. The “first boxes” in the federal budget took up most of what was available – dedicated to mandatory payments and defense. The entire budget request for all of the agencies in the Department of the Interior only amounted to about \$10 billion. To get that, its budget request had to pass through OMB and then the appropriating committees. The entire appropriations bill that covered NPS, also included the U.S. Forest Service and EPA: altogether, their appropriation amounted to around \$30 billion. The Centennial Challenge, which provides \$100 million per year against matching non-federal dollars equal or greater than that amount, was not scored against any of the “boxes.” Internally, budget challenges within the NPS itself often arose because program managers in the central offices don’t necessarily have the same view as managers at the field level – say for instance for more science at Yellowstone or education at Santa Monica Mountains. Part of the challenge was not just one of more money, but better decision making as to how and where the money got used.

Tom Kiernan/NPCA - provided an overview of his organization which had 340,000 members. He said NPCA would build support for the Commission by assembling coalition groups, park friends, concessioners, gateway community representatives, travel and tourism folks, as well as people who were part of the National Park network. He offered that NPCA recently contracted an opinion study that asked people if they would actively become involved in a national campaign to support the national parks. Thirty-seven percent of the respondents said they would; usually a response of anywhere from 10-15 percent indicated a really hot issue. He concluded that this level of response meant there are 100 million Americans motivated to help. He said, they wanted to know, “what can I do?”

### **Commissioners’ Discussion and Comments**

Meg Wheatley said young people want the opportunity to engage in meaningful work and the Commission needed to understand and make the best of this.

Gretchen Long noted that the Commission had heard much about accelerated change and turning points as drivers for action, and that conditions were so changed Members should think broader in formulating its recommendations. She proposed that the NPS ethic be made more transparent, possibly placed in the forefront of Commission recommendations. Deny Galvin agreed, commenting that the ethic applies to “place,” which is complicated with historic and cultural multi-layers. Place, he said, was connected to our feelings, and this was the powerful common ground for all of us.

Sally Jewell said the Commission needed to get clarity about the Park Service in terms of what it is and what it should be. She was unsure that the Commission should get bogged down in structural details. The objective should be to paint a vision, perhaps outlining five or six things to do. Commissioners needed to rise above detail.

Linda Bilmes offered that the organizational structure of the National Park Service seemed to be all over the place and stood in need of rearranging – possibly into something big, such as the Department of Homeland Security. She said if all conservation agencies and entities were put together it would create a large lift politically, and she wondered about benefits to this kind of approach. Rita Colwell noted that some have advocated for a “Department of the Environment,” but the idea did not interest her. She said consideration should be given to National Park Service becoming an independent agency.

Gary Nash asked what it would take to change the way NPS leaders were selected, including the term that they served. He observed the agency was too beholden to the winds of politics, with too frequent changes in top leadership. A term change, he thought, would go with the idea of the Park Service as an independent agency. Chairman Johnston observed that one remedy to this adopted by the Congress was making the NPS Director subject to Senate confirmation, but the right person is still needed for the job. Rob Portman noted that this is what was done with the IRS Commissioner.

Rita Colwell reflected on her service as the former head of the National Science Foundation, saying the NPS Directorship might be a term of six years. Accountability would be assured through Congressional oversight and White House oversight of the budget. What was needed was to avoid a layering of process and political interference. That doesn't mean the agency would be isolated. At the National Science Foundation, over a term that included both the Clinton and the Bush Administrations, the agency's budget increased 70%. Colwell said she thought it was a powerful model, particularly since the NPS had strong bipartisan support. Loran Fraser added that those suggesting NPS independent status were seeking greater independence in professional, scholarly and scientific decision-making.

Linda Bilmes added that with respect to the tenure of organization executives, for political appointees, the average term was 20 months; for business executives, the average term was 3.8 years, and for university officials, the term is in excess of 5 years. For political appointees particularly, it was a difficult environment in which to cultivate expertise.

Chairman Johnston said it was very important for the Commission to engage the new Administration, new Congress and the public, and he asked how best to accomplish this. Should there be separate reports to the Congress and the Administration, with recommendations specific to each. Should the report be separated into sections, one for laws, another for budget, and one for management? Steve Lockhart responded that perhaps there should be two tracks to the Commission's work: the first, an engagement piece aimed at the American public, capitalizing on the growing buzz about parks; the second, recommendations which included a vision and action goals that are significant and that propose a quantum leap into the future. He said the goals should hold people accountable.

Rob Portman responded that while he liked the idea of vision – vision could prove to be impractical, and it was important that the Commission be centered on developing practical recommendations. He said organizational change was full of distractions and hard to achieve, and sometimes the better approach was to make adjustments around the edges. He said the Commission must ask how to tighten the National Park Service, not just expand it, that consideration should be given to narrowing the NPS mission. Partnerships, on the other hand, represented a great opportunity for expansion, but they must be perfected so they project partnering into the future. He predicted that budget issues would not be easy to address, as the U.S. economy was faltering. He concluded that one thing to ask was how to keep communities surrounding the parks thriving and prosperous.

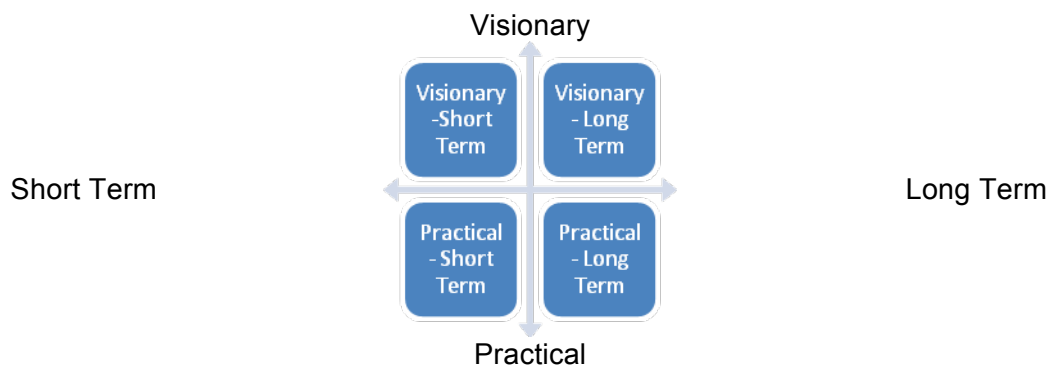
Sylvia Earle agreed the NPS budget should be considered from the standpoint of the economy, but also from the standpoint of national security and health, both of which were at risk due to depleting natural systems. She said that a balance sheet approach to the issue should identify the economic value of a vibrant and healthy environment. Deborah Shanley added that there was a need to articulate the benefits and values of national parks in terms of education for the Nation. The parks were great places to attract teachers, she said. We need to inspire people to

become science teachers and it that this was a place to do it. Colleges and universities could be forums for this discussion.

Jerry Rogers observed that while he appreciated distinctions between the practical and impractical, vision was central to what the Commission was all about, and he noted that the initial discussion about vision on the meeting's first day had excited Commission members. Steve Lockhart seconded this, and recommended that the Commission could get to the practical by working back from its vision. Gretchen Long proposed that a solution rested on the need for specifics established within the framework of a vision. Chairman Johnston agreed, but cautioned against results that were so general anyone could agree with them.

Deny Galvin observed that Santa Monica Mountains served well as a model for a vision, a map that worked: it worked for animals and it worked for people. He said the Commission's task was to look at how parks fit with and met the needs of the nation, and how the Nation might embrace a park ethic. It is that ethic, he said, that encouraged people to care about saving their own communities. Milton Chen suggested that through a certification process the NPS could invite the highest level of protection and sustainability, and this could include certifying state and local park systems. Gretchen Long said national parks had influence beyond their boundaries, serving as catalysts for change in our communities, promoting the highest levels of resource protection and social responsibility.

Linda Bilmes suggested a model that might assimilate some of the various points of view from around the room. All of the Commission recommendations that had been discussed might appropriately fall within one of the four boxes in the model, depending on whether they were "Visionary" or "Practical" on the vertical axis; and "Short Term" or "Long Term" on the horizontal axis.



Chairman Johnston posed several questions to consider:

- Should there be an interim report that all Commission members endorse? For example, if offshore oil development were pushed forward, should the Commission express its view that some of those dollars could be reserved for parks?
- How should the Commission make decisions? Should it follow the example of the Congress, where proposals move from committees to a body of the whole where recommendations are deliberated? He said the Commission would require a process where it offered "yea" or "nay" on the developing content of its work. He said a forum was needed where naysayers can make their case.

Rita Colwell offered her view that an interim communication to the new Administration's transition teams would be a good idea.

## **Session: Other Voices**

Christine Steigelman, *5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, Manzanita Elementary School* explained that her school was a Title I School with 70% of the students in poverty. She said hers was a story of stewardship, and a program called SHRUBs (Students Helping Restore Unique Biomes) targeted at 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Once a month, kids were transported five miles on a Friday to the park, where they took a hike, had lessons, and engaged in service-learning. They collected native plant seeds, stored and raised them. Each child had a meter square plot to tend which advanced understanding about the diversity of plants and life. The children were so engaged and proud that they brought their families to the park. The program opened doors for these children who now think about possible careers in areas like biology or, even, becoming a ranger, whom they looked upon as rockstars. If Stewardship was one of the key questions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, education for children offered an essential answer.

Bill Wade, *Chair of the Executive Council, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees*, spoke on behalf of the Coalition, which had some 670 members and 20,000 combined years of experience. He said that NPS people looked at the Service as more a lifestyle than a career. He said the Coalition was concerned about trends involving commercialization and privatization in the parks, with philanthropy a cause for some concern. He urged the Commission to pay attention to the need for critical resource acquisitions. He said there may be too much worry about declining visitation, and there was a need to consider what visitation was and how technology was providing other kinds of park experiences. He urged Members to pay strong attention to interpretation and education, once a hallmark function of the agency, now allowed to fall away.

Michael O'Connell, *Executive Director, Irvine Ranch Conservancy* spoke of the Irvine Ranch Conservancy as a model of resource protection, specifically because of the property's designation as a National Natural Landmark, an NPS program that provided key public benefits, including in his instance the Irvine Ranch part of the National Park Service family. He urged the Commission to recommend improved funding for the landmarks program, saying its funding at \$500,000 was now half of what it used to be. As a result, the designation process was not well managed and too little used. More could be done.

Robert Garcia, *Executive Director and Counsel, The City Project*, said his organization's focus was to secure more open space in the Los Angeles inner city, afflicted with child obesity, poverty and too many people. He said open space access and parks were vital for a healthy quality of life. Yet, demographics showed that where poor people were, parks were not. The Southern California Area Governments Council had called for the alleviation of this imbalance. The City Project was restoring open space in areas where children of color routinely had no access to parks. He said that among the affirmative steps taken, the Los Angeles State Historical Park and Greenways provided transit to Trails programs. As diverse as Los Angeles was, of the 900 monuments and historic designations within the city, only 67 pertained to people of color. He urged the Commission in the looking to the next century to include in its consideration the critical importance of open space in and around urban areas.

Kenneth Breisch, *Director, Architectural Preservation Program for the University of Southern California's School of Architecture* offered that national parks were among the truly visionary institutions produced by our nation, and Santa Monica Mountains NRA represented a new paradigm for parks, as did National Heritage Areas and Heritage Corridors, exciting preservation opportunities for the future, integral to their surroundings, not islands. He shared

that recently one of his graduate students from China said he had discovered the NPS website and contrasted its constructive programs with those of his own country, which had worked to preserve its great monuments but was failing to preserve its communities. It was important, he stated, that the Commission understand the NPS reach was global and the organization must be prepared to engage diverse populations and needs.

Joe Edmiston, *Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains* urged Commissioners not to approach their task with perspectives grounded in hundred year old assumptions about parks. He said the NPS mission must be relevant to public needs in the future; otherwise the world will pass national parks by. Technology was fine, he observed, as were pictures in a magazine, but they did not allow touch, which made all the difference in experience. He noted that nature was where you found it, and that when necessary, we must be prepared to reclaim it from the city. That was the challenge and the opportunity for the national parks looking forward, the reintroduction of the wild into the urban.

Linda Dishman, *Executive Director, Los Angeles Conservancy*, said her organization is the largest membership-based local historic preservation organization in the country, and is dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of the cultural heritage of greater Los Angeles. She said that while not every site needing protection should be a national park, there were critical programs within the NPS that helped accomplish preservation objectives in the nation's communities, such as the National Register of Historic Places and preservation tax credit certification, programs essential to help teach stewardship.

Charles Thomas, *Executive Director for Outward Bound Los Angeles*, said his organization sought to engage low-income inner city youth, people of color, in outdoor conservation. A long-term partner with the NPS, Outward Bound did conservation work at Death Valley National Park and at Olympic National Park, including spotted owl surveys. He said there was a powerful message in preservation – to care for things that had no outward appearance of value. In doing this, kids acquired health, access to their true inheritances and a connection to prior generations. He said kids were looking for connections and outdoor skills offered an alternative to what they might find in gangs: a sense of identity and personal significance; a feeling of safety; excitement and adventure; connection with others by working together; and income (being paid for the value of their time). He said Outward Bound Los Angeles' vision of the national parks was that they offered a key to problems our society faces. Kids needed activities that were social-based. At the same time, the national parks needed to achieve a more diverse visitor base.

### **Session: Commissioners' Discussion with Panel Members and Comments**

Milton Chen praised the panel for reminding the Commission that one of the real purposes of the national parks was to create human capital. Sally Jewell observed that there was a role for the NPS to play at Santa Monica Mountains, and the models the Commission had seen could be applied anywhere. Jerry Rogers said he was impressed with cultural preservation work in LA, particularly efforts to promote careers in preservation, which drove home the message that it can't all be done inside national parks. He asked what the NPS could do to broaden its support of this work.

Charles Thomas said partnerships made limited resources go farther and helped reach more young people. The best examples of this were places like Gateway NRA, Golden Gate NRA and Santa Monica Mountains NRA, because they had pocket parks that extended the reach of the NPS to more people. He thought it important to unite these parcels into one seamless

organization. Further, he said, it was important to promote ideals and understanding through places like Manzanar NHS, that this should be an essential mission of the NPS, fostering dialogue about democracy and freedom in the context of diverse populations. He said that because it was the National Park Service that brought that message, people would listen. Michael O'Connell agreed, saying the NPS brand conveyed quality, and he suggested that the vision for the future was a model involving partners. Joe Edmiston felt the NPS could pursue more aggressively an intake program to bring diversity into the organization and committed stewards in our communities. Rob Portman, noting the Commission's previous day with kids in Solstice Canyon, asked how to get parks into more schools? Joe Edmiston said transportation was a major problem. It was suggested that if the Los Angeles Police Department can send officers into classrooms, there was no reason rangers couldn't go there, too. Linda Dishman said her organization was looking at after school programs.

### **Session: Commission Program Summary, Next Steps**

Loran Fraser recalled that a concept for accomplishing the Commission's work had been proposed in a memorandum to Members in late June suggesting five working committees: 1) Science and Natural Resources; 2) Cultural Resources and Historic Preservation; 3) Education and Learning; 4) Shaping the System for the Future; and 5) Institutional Capacity. He said that based on feedback a sixth committee was suggested to address park visitation. Regarding scope, he said each committee should address issues of budget, workforce and organization as these pertain to its topic. Linda Bilmes commented that internal consistency was important when the committees communicate proposals with cost estimates to the budget. Sally Jewell requested a budget primer be provided to Commissioners.

Fraser suggested that a proposed Institutional Capacity Committee might be made-up of the chairpersons of each Committee, and that this group might synthesize recommendations for a Committee of the Whole, as Senator Johnston had suggested might be a way the Commission could make final decisions. He said each committee's work should be shaped by vision, as vision was central to shaping the Commission's directions. He said there would be a major discussion at the next meeting aimed at developing vision. After some discussion, it was agreed that the committees should develop vision statements (an "opening paragraph") and present these to the Commission at the Lowell meeting. It was also agreed that work on funding and budget considerations should get underway.

Chairman Johnston asked Commissioners to self-select their assignments to the committees, and that they were not limited to participation on just one. He cautioned Commissioners that there would not be many more Commission meetings, so committees needed to shape proposals soon. Regarding budget costs, he said that private funding sources should not be overlooked. He said committees needed to define procedures and timelines to expedite their processes and keep their work on track. He proposed that at the last Commission meeting, or perhaps the last two meetings, something like a committee "markup" should take place, bringing the work of the separate committees together for review and approval by the full Commission. He said it was necessary to involve the public in Commission work, and one way was through the website, but that there might be a need for actual meetings.

It was agreed that committees could include non-Commission members who would be specifically distinguished from Commission members. It was also agreed that NPS staff could be invited to serve as advisors to the committees. *At that time, those who had volunteered to chair these efforts and participate on committees were as follows (the chairperson identified in bold type):*

NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCIENCE  
CULTURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION

**Rita Colwell**  
Sylvia Earle  
**Jerry Rogers**

SHAPING THE FUTURE PARK SYSTEM

**Deny Galvin**

VISITATION

Carolyn Finney  
**Sally Jewell**  
Margaret Wheatley

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

**Milton Chen**  
Steve Lockhart  
Gary Nash  
Deborah Shanley

FUNDING AND BUDGET

**Linda Bilmes**  
Rob Portman

With that, the six committees above were approved. Chairman Johnston asked that consultants and staff consider what the content might be for a possible interim report. He asked NPCA President Tom Kiernan if there would be anyway to supplement the budget for the Commission's work. Tom Kiernan responded that he would see if there were other donors available who might offer such support. In closing, Chairman Johnston expressed his thanks to Commission staff and NPCA for their work in drawing the Commission together. He added that the work ahead required real vision, which would turn on the question of how much is possible.

**Whereupon the inaugural meeting of the National Parks Second Century Commission was concluded.**