



Adirondack Park Agency

SHERMAN CRAIG
Chairman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES
Public Awareness and
Communications Committee
September 15, 2016
Agency Meeting
WHT:KPM:mp

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE **September 15, 2016**

The Public Awareness and Communications Committee convened at 4:00 pm.

Committee Members Present:

William Thomas, Committee Chair, Daniel Wilt, Bradley Austin (DED) and Sandi Allen (DOS)

Other Members or Designees Present:

Sherman Craig, Chairman, Chad Dawson, John Ernst, Karen Feldman, Arthur Lussi, and Robert Stegemann (DEC)

Local Government Review Board Present:

Frederick Monroe, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Keith McKeever, Mary Palmer

100th Anniversary of National Park Service

James Connolly gave a presentation marking the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service. He focused on the legislative history of the national parks and the preservation movement in the United States.

Mr. Connolly gave a brief history of Yellowstone National Park. He said expeditions financed by the railroad industry explored the area and published photographs and articles which generated interest in the East. It caught the attention of then USGS Director Ferdinand Hayden, who persuaded Congress to finance a scientific expedition which led to designation of the area as a National Park - first in the US and world.

Mr. Connolly discussed the role of President Theodore Roosevelt and his efforts to establish a national park system to preserve the national wonders of the United States. Mr. Connolly cited the Raker Act, which in 1913 authorized a dam at the mouth of Hetch Hetchy Valley in the Tuolumne River watershed of Yosemite Valley, as a defining

moment in US history for land preservation. The Hetch Hetchy fight focused congress's attention on the national controversy which erupted over land conservation and preservation. He indicated that in 1916 Congress and President Wilson created the National Park Service Act. The Act consolidated management of the then existing 14 National Parks and 21 National Monuments.

Mr. Connolly said today the National Park Service manages 383 parks, monuments, recreation areas, battlefield preserves, memorials, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, scenic trails, and wild and scenic river corridors. He added that the national park system consists of almost 85 million acres of land which extends from the islands of Acadia National Park in Maine to the Hawaii Volcanoes in the Pacific, and from the Gates of the Arctic in Alaska to Florida's Everglades. It also includes North America's highest peak (Denali) and its lowest elevation (Death Valley).

Mr. Connolly said Yellowstone encompasses 3,472 square miles (2.2 million acres) of which 96% is in Wyoming, 3% in Montana, and 1% in Idaho. It has 5 park entrances, 466 miles of roads, 950 miles of backcountry trails, 97 trailheads, 287 backcountry campsites, as well as 1 jail, 1 federal judge and 1 FBI agent that work there.

Yellowstone is home to the largest free-roaming, wild herd of bison in United States, one of the largest elk herds in North America and one of the few grizzly populations in the contiguous United States.

Mr. Connolly said in 1948 Yellowstone received 1 million visitors contrasted to an estimated 4 million visitors in 2015 - most during the months of June through September. Management issues facing the national park system today include invasive species, resource degradation from increased recreational pressures, climate change and under funding.

Mr. Connolly said the US Mint is celebrating the 100th birthday of the National Park Service with three commemorative coins. The US Postal Service has also unveiled 16 postage stamps featuring national parks.

Mr. Craig thanked Mr. Connolly for the presentation.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at 4:55 pm.