

February 3, 2004

Mr. Richard Powers
(b) (6)
Burke, Virginia 22015

Richard,

I thought you would be interested in the enclosed article on the National Park Service. "National Park Service's Winter of Discontent," recently published in *Preservation News*. Since I can't imagine that you subscribe to *Preservation News*, I thought you would like to receive a copy.

It is a curious article. The thesis is that the National Park Service is suffering at the hands of the insensitive Bush Administration. Bill Wade is quoted as saying, "It has never been this bad."

But what is curious about the article is that the "evidence" used to back up the thesis seems so paltry. A few examples:

- The author cites the unfunded \$4.9 or \$6.8 billion backlog of maintenance projects. Of course you and I know that the mythical maintenance backlog has been used for at least twenty-five years, maybe longer, to indicate what bad shape the Park Service is in. We never get anywhere close to that number yet the Park Service seems to survive. Even if we received a small fraction of that amount we wouldn't have the professional staff to effectively utilize it (as in the need to have competent staff to plan, design, advertise, supervise the use of that money).
- Roger Kennedy is cited as an authority on how the current Administration is neglecting science. However, as a Clinton nominee, it seems to me somewhat disingenuous for him to criticize this Administration when it was Clinton's Secretary of Interior Babbitt's actions that led to the wholesale dismembering of the existing science initiatives within the Park Service (albeit at the hands of a

Republican Congress). Kennedy is quoted as saying, “They (the Bush Administration) don’t trust the professionals.” But it was Kennedy’s reorganization of 1985 that led a wholesale attack on the professionals.

- Out-sourcing is mentioned. But the example given is the Western Archeological Center. Probably this is the one organization within the Park Service where we would get the greatest agreement amongst Park Service managers that staff of this Center should be out-sourced. There are general arguments to be made against out-sourcing (such that it would close an avenue where minorities could begin their careers and advance to higher levels of responsibility within the Park Service), but they are not made in this article.

Anyway, enjoy the article. Deny Galvin is quoted on page 30.