



# Stewardship Begins With People

*An Atlas of Places, People & Hand-Made Products*

P R O J E C T   U P D A T E

A Cooperative Project of the National Park Service's Northeast Region  
Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park  
NPS Conservation Study Institute and  
Shelburne Farms National Historic Landmark







**Stewardship begins with people.** This atlas celebrates the personal stories of stewardship, while illustrating its broad, rich geography. Its inspiration comes from people taking care of special places. For more than 30 years, **Mary Lee Begay** (left) has woven traditional Navajo rugs for Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site in Ganado, Arizona. **Dave Evans** (below, left), a fifth-generation Pierce Point rancher at Point Reyes Seashore, California, is developing innovative, sustainable approaches to keep agriculture alive on the peninsula. Along the Blue Ridge Parkway, **Judy and Bill Carson and Kit Trubey**, owners of The Orchard at Alta Pass in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, encourage local theater and music, while growing heirloom apples. These are faces of stewardship—friends, neighbors, and communities in and around our national parks, heritage areas, and national historic landmarks. They preserve authentic traditional cultures and landscapes, demonstrating for local residents and visitors alike, an enduring stewardship ethic and a commitment to sustainability.

This is the beginning of an exploration of the connections between places, people, and special products. We start with three case studies illustrating good stewardship and highlighting traditions and innovations that advance conservation and sustainability. In the *Atlas of Places, People & Hand-Made Products*, we will include more stories from more places. Ultimately, we plan to produce a series of regional travel guides for landscapes and special products and build a network of park people and producers eager to share their knowledge and experiences.

## Principal Project Objectives:

1. *Recognize people practicing stewardship that sustains important landscapes and living cultures.*
2. *Demonstrate the relationship between people, special products, and landscapes and explore issues related to marketing, branding, and certification.*
3. *Highlight the biodiversity value of cultural landscapes.*
4. *Model sustainable behaviors to visitors and neighbors, demonstrating a commitment to community stewardship of landscapes.*
5. *Enhance relationships between parks and neighboring communities.*
6. *Build a network of people and organizations involved in this work.*

The concept for this atlas draws inspiration from a series of exchanges between the U.S. National Park Service and the Italian Nature Conservation Service and Lazio Regional Park Agency, under an international agreement to promote innovation and cooperation in the protection and management of national parks and protected areas. Through these exchanges, park managers on both sides of the Atlantic shared ideas and experiences and discussed ways to “promote and market local products that enhance park operations, community relations, local traditions and culture, and sustainable practices.” The Italian parks, in cooperation with Slow Food Italia, produced an atlas that highlights an extraordinary array of authentic traditional food products identified with the park areas in which they are grown or made.









# Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site

GANADO ARIZONA

**H**ubbell Trading Post National Historic Site is an alive, authentic, and evolving place for Navajos (Diné) and visitors alike. The Trading Post's mission is to sustain a bona fide business operation that respects history and tradition while adapting to contemporary change. Today, a shopper can buy a rug, silver and turquoise ring, can of beans, or a loaf of bread, much in the same way a Diné or visitor experienced John Lorenzo Hubbell's trading post a hundred years ago. Especially for older Navajos who don't drive, the store offers a convenient place to shop, perhaps obtain credit, and interact with the Diné staff, who speak the Native language. In addition, positions at the post offer real economic opportunities by providing steady, prestigious jobs with benefits.

Since Hubbell is so deeply connected to Navajo rugs, the Park interprets this part of its history through onsite weaving demonstrations. Three women, all salaried employees of Western National Parks Association (WNPA), weave traditional Navajo rugs in the Visitor Center. Mary Lee Begay has been weaving at Hubbell for 31 years, Evelyn Curley for 25 years, and Helen Kirk for 22 years. During their tenure, several million visitors have watched these women work at their craft, providing visitors an appreciation for this mystical and sacred art, an art form not often observed in progress.

Bill Malone, WNPA's Trader/Manager at Hubbell since 1981, in addition to continuing the traditional trading practices established by previous managers, encourages

Diné weavers to sign their rugs. This helps to identify their craftsmanship, while providing a marketing tool to stimulate sales. Bill Malone buys rugs from contemporary weavers for resale in the Trading Post and also sets prices for the rugs made by Mmes. Begay, Curley, and Kirk. Visitors may purchase these rugs even before they are completed!

In 1999, the Park inaugurated a semiannual Native American Art Auction at which enthusiastic buyers purchase hundreds of contemporary crafts; most of them highly prized rugs. Diné weavers, their families, and buyers meet, talk, enjoy local food, and share a mutual appreciation for Native crafts. In many ways, the auction revives various activities sponsored by John Hubbell; he frequently organized rodeos, socials, and feasts for both Navajos and non-native visitors.

Equally important, the auction helps educate both groups about the dynamic nature of Native culture and the Nation. It offers a way to demonstrate how the Navajo people continue their traditions in a changing contemporary world, while stimulating renewed interest in weaving within the Navajo Nation. In 2003, the auction contributed over \$200,000 to the community's economy.

Superintendent Nancy Stone (far left) says simply, "The Park fulfills its stewardship mission admirably. We continue to support the Navajo weaving tradition and the Trading Post works much the way it did in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a tribute to the Park Service and the Navajo Nation."



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**STRAUS**  
FAMILY CREAMERY



ORGANIC

MARSHALL, CALIFORNIA

Point Reyes  
Vineyard Inn  
Bed  
&  
Breakfast  
12700 State Hwy1  
(415)863-1011

VACANCY

MEMBER OWNER

California  
**DAIRIES**

inc.  
SHARON DOUGHTY DAIRY



the **HOG ISLAND**  
OYSTER COMPANY

POINT REYES

original blue  
BLUE CHEESE

FARMSTEAD  
CHEESE COMPANY

3Lb  
(1.36kg)



# Point Reyes National Seashore

POINT REYES STATION CALIFORNIA

**A**nchoring the western shore of Marin County, Point Reyes National Seashore preserves the natural ecosystems and cultural resources of one of the most spectacularly beautiful coastal landscapes in the United States. The Point Reyes peninsula has been long associated with the early history of dairy farming in California. This panoramic landscape is shaped by characteristic features such as windbreaks, stock ponds, open pastures, and rolling fence lines. A number of the ranches in the Seashore's "historic dairy district" have been in continuous operation since the 1860s.

Point Reyes is also an important part of a larger regional landscape and economy. Marin County's three dozen dairies, including the Seashore's historic 19<sup>th</sup>-century dairies, provide 20 percent of the milk for the San Francisco Bay area. In 1994, the Straus farm became the first organic dairy west of the Mississippi. Today, Sue Conley (left) and Peg Smith's Cowgirl Creamery produces a wide array of award-winning fresh and aged cheeses made only from Straus farm milk. They own two retail stores in San Francisco, one of them in the newly renovated Ferry Building. The Creamery, together with Marin French Cheese Company and Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company, help identify the region as America's "Normandy."

Point Reyes high-quality pastures make raising grass-fed beef possible and profitable. A fifth-generation Point Reyes rancher, Dave Evans is one of a growing number of West Marin farmers and ranchers open to innovation and committed to a more sustainable agriculture. Evans practices pasture rotation, avoids antibiotics or growth hormones, and sells directly to consumers. Recently, he set up a moveable henhouse that allows chickens to forage in the pastures. The free-range birds fertilize the soil and break up manure.

The county is also well known for its oyster aquaculture, with a half dozen companies that annually produce about 20 percent of California's oysters. For example, Hog Island Oyster Company in Marshall grows five types of North American oysters: the Pacific, European, Atlantic, Kumamoto, and a trademarked Hog Island Sweetwater.

Local producers and regional consumers recognize Point Reyes and West Marin as places of quality production and authentic foods. An unusual opportunity exists to demonstrate the powerful linkage between these innovative, sustainable agricultural enterprises, market recognition, and the continued, careful stewardship of an important cultural landscape. Wendell Berry once wrote "we live on the far side of a broken connection." Point Reyes is a place that can reconnect people to their natural heritage through a richness of wilderness and recreational experiences; and a place that can also reconnect people to the food they eat, the landscapes where it is grown, and the honorable labor of producing it.







# Blue Ridge Parkway

## VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA

**T**he Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) traverses the southern Appalachian Mountains in Virginia and North Carolina and links the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. Over its 70-year history, the BRP has become many things. For example, the Parkway leases farmlands to some 500 local people who raise livestock and crops. It connects visitors to historical and contemporary Appalachian and Cherokee culture and traditions. NPS staff, officials at all levels of government, nonprofit organizations, and citizens work together to create a broad array of public and private stewardship initiatives to preserve and nurture local communities.

One cannot imagine this vital region today without the Parkway's existence, much like a spine, linking a living body together. This narrow ribbon of land affects nearly every aspect of life—agricultural, cultural, economic, physical, and social—in western North Carolina and southwest Virginia. BRP and its neighbors preserve, nurture, and steward special places—a rich, vibrant tapestry of culture and tradition.

### AGRICULTURE

The Parkway acquired farmland adjacent to the highway to protect views, natural resources, preserve heritage sites, and conserve the working landscape. On BRP-leased land, farmers raise beef and dairy cattle, hay, fruits and vegetables, corn and other row crops. An aesthetic agricultural or working landscape does not happen by accident.

Farmers, working the land for a variety of products, create the pastoral settings visitors appreciate along many sections of the 469-mile scenic road.

For example, Whit Sizemore (left) continues to farm near Galax, Virginia, on leased land, which his family settled in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mr. Sizemore sold his land to the Parkway to avoid what he describes as a “casual, slow deterioration” of the farm and forest landscape. He raises grass-fed beef and takes great pride in the quality of his pastures. Their rich green color reflects a rotational grazing regimen—the way he and his family farmed for decades. An old farmhouse and barns still exist, built by his grandfather from chestnut trees cut just across the creek. And yet, traditional practice works together with modern technology, as he uses solar power to electrify the fences surrounding the land. From both an environmental perspective and a profitable business model, these practices contribute to good stewardship of the land.

The Blue Ridge Mountains contain a wide variety of native and cultivated trees and plants. From the once-dense populations of chestnut trees to hickory and black walnut, to berries, to botanical and medicinal plants, to grapes and apples, an abundant array of foods was found throughout the hills. Today, growers tend orchards, berry farms, vineyards, and even medicinal plants for public consumption. These working farms make many contributions to the region by providing visual appeal, biological, and economic diversity, cultural and historical links, and fresh, tasty foods.



Equally important, the Parkway brings visitors. Without a steady flow of tourists, many of these businesses simply would not exist. For example, Bill (below) and Judy Carson and Kit Trubey, owners of The Orchard at Altapass in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, grow a variety of heirloom apples. Their orchard is a place for discovery—of apples and food, local music and theater, and a place for stories and conversation. While celebrating regional history and contemporary culture, the orchard helps bring money into the area.



## TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND CULTURE

HandMade in America, one of the country's pioneering rural economic development enterprises, preserves traditional crafts and culture. Founded in 1993 by Becky Anderson, the organization focuses on the invisible universe of craftspeople already working in shops, classrooms, studios, and galleries throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains. HandMade joins art, craft, and economic development together by linking culture, traditions, and land with local decision making.

Beyond the tangible items—folk art, foods, crafts, music, farms, and so forth—HandMade defines cultural heritage tourism as a product, an extraordinary resource if managed carefully. HandMade anticipates that elevating the value and place of culture in western North Carolina will increase tourism and maintain authentic experiences to help prevent the region from becoming a theme park. They believe such knowledge and understanding makes us good stewards both where we visit and live.

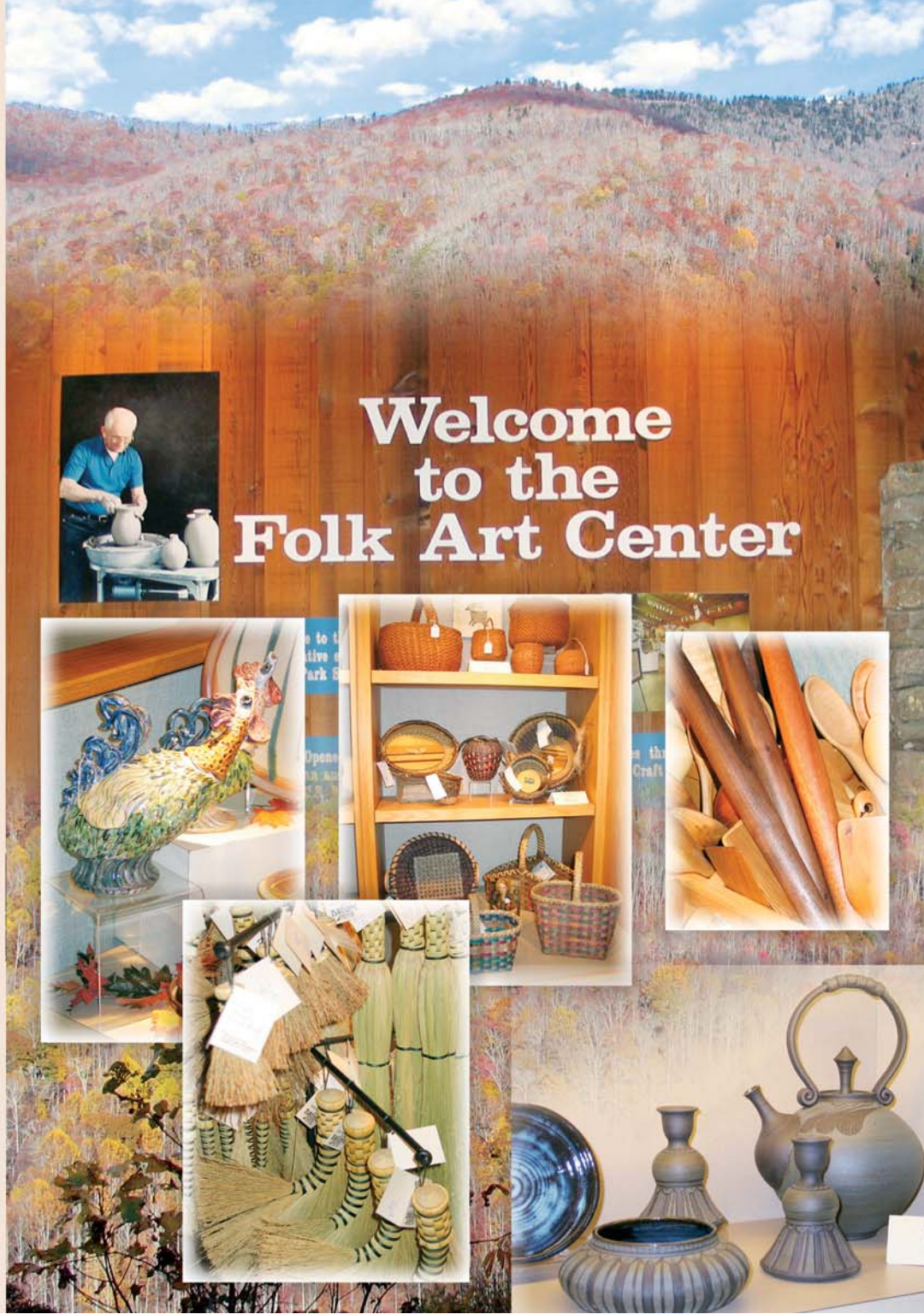
In November 2003, Congress authorized the creation of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area to preserve and interpret long-established instrumental and vocal folk music, traditional arts and culture, the heritage and influence of the Cherokee Indians, and various historic sites and collections of artifacts. The Heritage Area—25 counties in western North Carolina—establishes the Blue Ridge Mountains as a historic and scenic destination. Over a 15-year period, a partnership of state, local, nonprofit, and Cherokee Indian representatives will manage and oversee planning and development of the area and receive money to support these efforts. HandMade and Advantage West in Fletcher, North Carolina are the lead nonprofit organizations in this initiative.



**THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS  
CRAFT GUILD** is one of the

Appalachian region's most successful and accomplished nonprofit organizations. It operates two retail stores along the BRP, one at Flat Top Manor in the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park and one at the Folk Art Center, near the Parkway Administrative Offices in Asheville.

The Guild sells work from 850 craftspeople and artists from 293 mountain counties spread across nine Southern Appalachian states. The Guild and the Parkway's leadership recognize that people who enjoy parks and cultural tourism appreciate and buy locally made crafts. Whether searching for fine art, jewelry, crafts, or traditional items, a consumer will find hundreds of choices, many made with local materials and traditional techniques. Working with the Parkway to preserve local crafts, the Guild displays a permanent collection of older pieces at the Folk Art Center, while offering contemporary artists a place to work and educate visitors. With nearly 300,000 guests annually, the Center is the most-visited facility on the Parkway.



# Welcome to the Folk Art Center





## Expanding the Vision

We look forward to your comments and suggestions. In preparing a final report for the *Atlas of Places, People & Hand-Made Products*, we anticipate adding material from the following sites:

*Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Heritage Area, LA*

*Canyon de Chelly National Monument, AZ*

*Cuyahoga Valley National Park, OH*

*Crissy Field, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, CA*

*Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, WA*

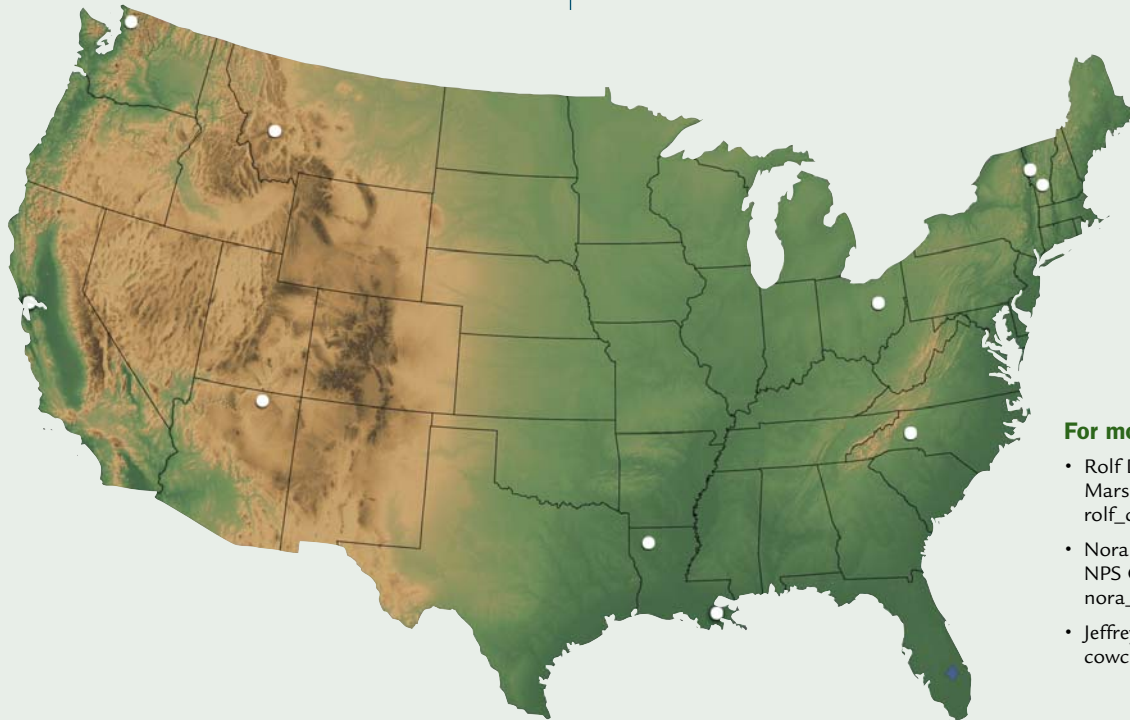
*Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, MT*

*Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, VT*

*New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, LA*

*Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, NC*

*Shelburne Farms National Historic Landmark, VT*



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