



Cindy Von Halle

I've spent almost 30 years finding my parks while exploring the United States from North Carolina to Alaska. I found my first park on a field trip in high school. The beautiful Great Smoky Mountains national park greeted me as teenager, inviting me to climb rocky peaks and discover new trails. I was fortunate to return there in 1982 and work as a seasonal ranger in Cades Cove. I volunteered on my weekends giving evening programs and bear talks.

Before I knew it, I landed a permanent job 2 years later and moved to Greenville, TN. As an Interpretive Ranger at Andrew Johnson NHS, I found myself steeped in American history and Presidential antidotes.

After a year, I moved to a favorite childhood destination- the barrier islands Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina. As an Interpretive Ranger, I walked the beach with my daughter, which was supremely satisfying since I had walked this same beach with my mother in the 1960s. I became immersed in legends and lore of pirates and lighthouses, and led beach walks for children and families.

Seeking new challenges, I found my next park in a cool green forest filled with caves and deep, cold springs called Ozark Riverways. I thrived there as the Education Specialist for five years.

In 1986, I moved to the Mojave Desert in California and basked in year-round sunshine at my first Western US national park. I worked as the lead interpreter for Joshua Tree NP, and completed detail assignments in Sequoia NP and Death Valley NP. The desert intrigued me with beauty and blazing sunsets every day for 13 years.



Then, stories of local prospectors and miners seeking gold became my story, too. In 2009, I headed north and found my current park in the great land of Alaska where I am the Chief of Interpretation at Klondike Gold Rush NHP in Skagway.

For me, living and working in national parks has been a rewarding lifestyle and has kept me on the move, finding new parks.