



Michael Brondi
Maintenance Worker

The reasons that we have these parks is because several generations ago, a bunch of people decided that the lands protected now in parks were worthy of protection from exploitation for natural resources.

That, I think, protection has proved its merit again and again and we can look around the world to places where public lands have been kept open and for the public and they're very, very cherished in virtually all situations.

My name is Mike Brondi. I am officially a wage grade-8 maintenance worker. Among my duties, I am North Cascades National Park's volunteer coordinator. I manage the native plants production. This national park is the only park I've worked for and I have worked for this park for 23 years.

You know, coming out here, from New Jersey, I went through the North Cascades. I hitchhiked as a college student looking for summer work through the North Cascades, and resolved to come back.

I remember the impressive mountains, I remember the impressive forests. I was learning about them in my forestry school. And decided upon graduation to head on out.

I am not a person who has moved from park to park and so I've only ever worked for this park. That is a fairly unusual situation for someone who has worked for the park service for 23 years. But I have seen a lot of changes at this park and I've gotten to know most of the characters at this park, especially over the last several years.

We have a small staff, many of whom have been around for a very long time and there is a closeness between staff members that resembles family, including the dysfunctions that can happen in any families [laughs]. So we may not be unique in that, but I think we're different from most parks in that many many of the employees of this park have been here for a long time and intend to stay for the duration.

I'm particularly enthusiastic about working with middle school, high school, college students who are so very close to being the leaders and managers of this wonderful place. And there's the vicarious thrill of the discovery. I guess maybe that's it, it's the sharing, the aha moment with people. We get a little reminder of that aha moment the first time we experienced it.

The way that we can keep our parks healthy and relevant is to get people into them, teach them about the parks and encourage them to enthusiastically share what they know with others.

Rosemary Seifried
Park Ranger

A Wilderness is only as good as the law that makes it a Wilderness and laws are only as good as the people who participate in the process, that's what really keeps these areas protected, it's the laws but public's due diligence of our laws and our democratic process.

My name is Rosemary Seifried and this is my 13th year here and I am a park ranger.

I had no idea growing up in New York that a place like this was part of the United States, outside of Alaska. In 1995, I was taking a road trip across the country and I got this atlas, the Rand McNally atlas, standard atlas and on the cover of this was this amazing photo of Mount Shuksan. And I really wanted to go see this mountain. I had no idea where it was, I'd never heard of Washington or been there and I really wanted to go there. But in the course of my road trip I visited all these other national parks, never made it to Washington. And so I was like, ugh! next year I'm just going to move there. And so next year I applied through the Student Conservation Association and just moved out to

Washington, to this park, which was on the cover of the atlas. And that's how I ended up in Washington.

There are never-ending things to see, whether it's the gentians that are just opening, or a vista that's just unfolding, or a little bird or, we just went on a hike and saw a salamander, which is really cool, you don't see those very often, I still have to look up what it was. . . So there's always something to be excited about. And you don't have to worry about anything else. Your function is just to hike and go somewhere, take care of eating and sleeping, and that's it. Whatever else you were worried about, you left it behind.

*Interview conducted and edited by Michael Liang, Visual Information Specialist.
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