



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Theodore Roosevelt National Park News Release

Immediate Release

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National Park Service Founder's Day to be Celebrated at Theodore Roosevelt National Park

The public is invited to join the staff of Theodore Roosevelt National Park in celebrating Founder's Day on Tuesday, August 25, 2009. Park visitor centers in both the North and South Units will offer free cookies and lemonade. National park-related movies will be shown at the South Unit Visitor Center at 9 a.m., 12, 4 and 5 p.m. to celebrate the entire national park system.

"We are pleased to celebrate the 93rd anniversary of the National Park Service with our park visitors," said Superintendent Valerie Naylor. "We are experiencing record visitation in the park this summer and the anniversary is a time to reflect on the value of national parks to Americans."

National Parks have been called "the best idea America ever had." During the 19th century, the idea of preserving special natural and cultural places ran contrary to the prevailing national mood when most Americans viewed nature as something to be subdued and history as what had happened in the Old World. As wilderness receded and remnants of prehistoric civilizations and revolutionary landmarks were lost, some saw the need to protect outstanding examples of the nation's heritage.

By 1916, the Department of Interior oversaw 14 national parks and 21 national monuments. On August 25th of that year, Congress created a new bureau to manage these areas, the National Park Service. Its guiding purpose was "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." The addition of parkways, recreation areas, and lakeshores enlarged the system in the 1930s. The last major expansion of the system came in 1980 with the addition of 47 million acres of parklands in Alaska. Remote and unspoiled, the Alaskan parks constitute America's greatest promise of a wilderness legacy "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." New parks are continually added to the system and currently there are 391 units in the national park system.

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