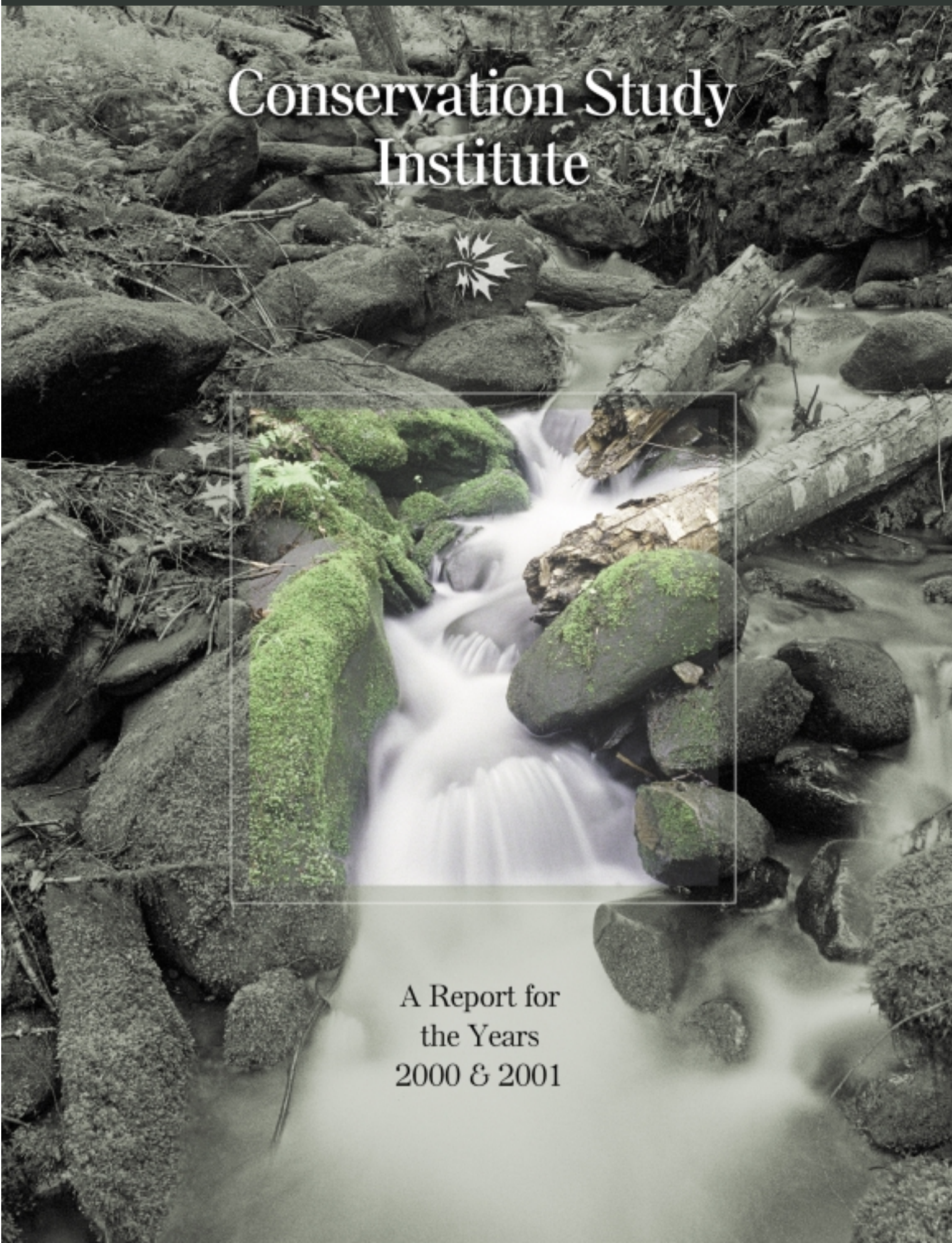
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



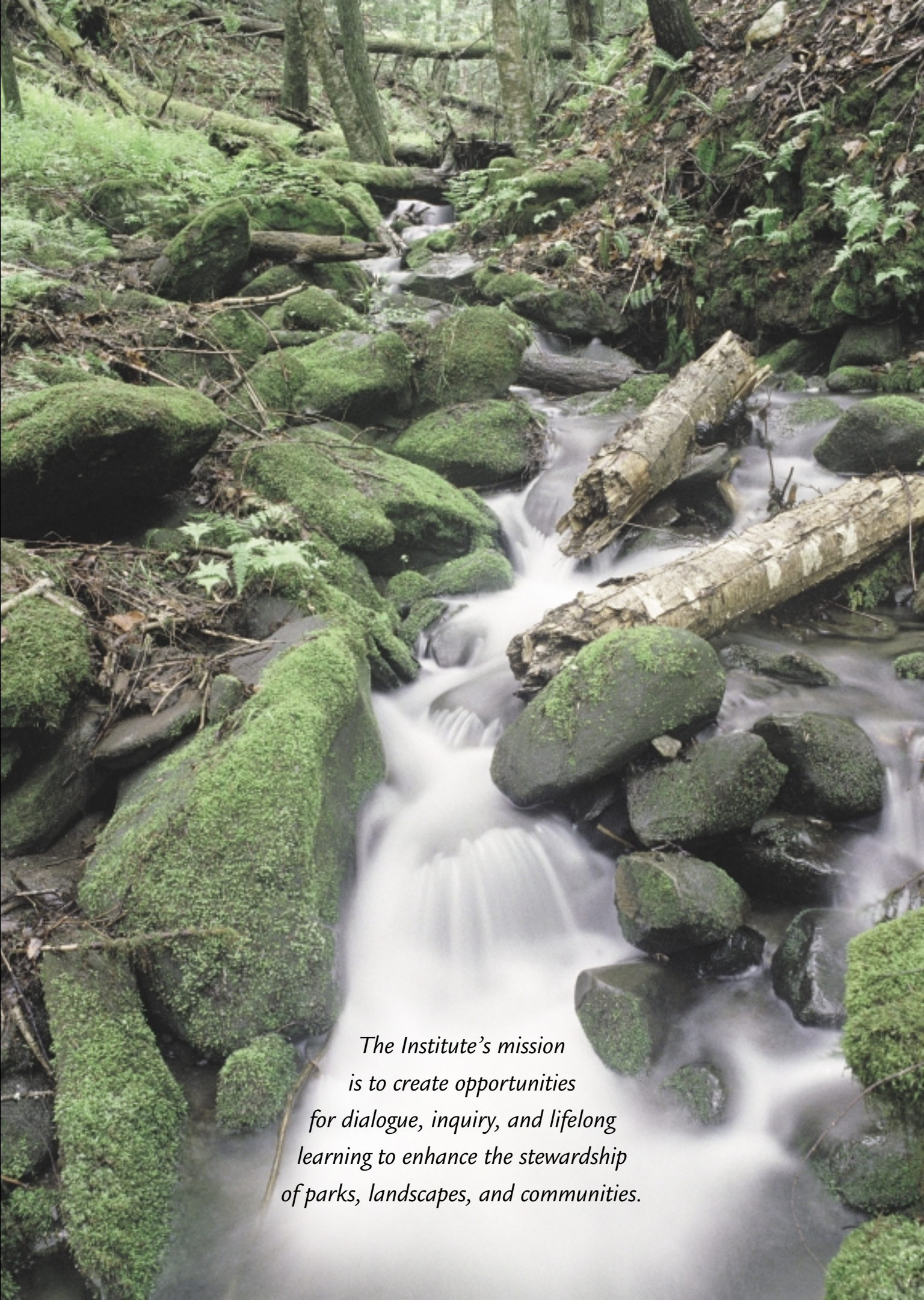
Conservation Study Institute

A Report for the Years 2000 & 2001

The Conservation Study Institute (CSI) was established in 1998 by the National Park Service (NPS) to enhance leadership in the field of conservation. In collaboration with the NPS and academic and nonprofit partners, the Institute provides a forum for the conservation community to discuss conservation history, contemporary issues and practice, and future directions for the field.

The Institute's vision of conservation is inclusive and interdisciplinary. Our vision encompasses natural and cultural heritage in defining sense of place, and emphasizes the role of people in stewardship. Reflecting this vision, the Institute's approach is founded on collaborative leadership and community-based conservation involving cooperation and partnerships.

A key role of the Institute is to stay informed of new developments in the field of conservation and promote an active exchange of ideas among the academic community, practitioners, and the general public. Through its programs, the Institute contributes to enhanced understanding, involvement, and commitment from a broad spectrum of people, which is critical to the success of conservation today. The Institute's national program also realizes the hope of Laurance S. Rockefeller that "the message and vision of conservation stewardship and its importance for the future will ... go out across the nation from the hills of Vermont."



The Institute's mission is to create opportunities for dialogue, inquiry, and lifelong learning to enhance the stewardship of parks, landscapes, and communities.

The home office of the Conservation Study Institute is located at the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont.

Letter from the Director

A Gathering Ground for Conservation

Our cover photograph is our home watershed—the forested slopes of Mount Tom in the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont. The concept of watershed is an old one and was central to George Perkins Marsh's view of stewardship and his landmark nineteenth-century conservation book, *Man and Nature*. According to his biographer, Professor David Lowenthal, in his later years Marsh reflected on his childhood explorations on Mount Tom: "To my mind the whole earth lay spread out before me. . . [my father] pointed out the direction of the different ranges of hills. . . [and] on the top of a steep hill, bade me notice how the water there flowed in different directions, and told me that such a point was called a *water-shed*." In his writings, Marsh defined watershed as a "gathering ground of a river system."

This idea of a watershed as a "gathering ground" provides a good analogy for the work of the Institute, as we create a variety of opportunities to reflect and talk about conservation. Through these opportunities for dialogue, inquiry, and lifelong learning, we hope to contribute to the stewardship of parks, landscapes, and communities.

In collaboration with the National Park Service, our founding partners, and a growing network of new partners, our programs are exploring models for conservation that work across political and institutional boundaries. This report highlights four areas of our work—analyzing new directions in conservation, fostering innovation through international exchange, cultivating collaborative and reflective leadership, and exploring place and citizenship through stewardship education. We invited writer Doug Wilhelm to interview our partners and participants in our programs in order to include their perspectives, which he has eloquently accomplished in four lead stories.

We are grateful to our many partners and look forward to future collaborative endeavors, creating a "gathering ground" for the conservation community.

Nora Mitchell

Nora Mitchell

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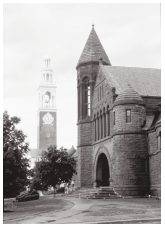
Partners

Partnerships are the cornerstone of the Institute's vision and success. We are committed to collaborating with others to capitalize on various perspectives on conservation from academic, government, and private interests, to shape relevant programs, and to develop programs with a diverse array of partners. We continue to strengthen our collaboration with our four founding partners described on the following page. Over the last two years, we have worked extensively with additional organizations including National Park Service (NPS) Park Planning and Special Studies, the NPS National Leadership Council, The Conservation Fund, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, and ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property). The Institute envisions our network of partners will continue to expand over time.

ABOVE: *Institute partners gather for annual meeting.*

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park is the only national park to tell the story of conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in America. In 1864, Woodstock-born George Perkins Marsh wrote *Man and Nature*, one of the seminal texts of environmental thinking. Strongly influenced by *Man and Nature*, Frederick Billings in 1874 began reforesting the denuded and eroding slopes of Woodstock's Mount Tom, creating one of the earliest planned and scientifically managed forests in the United States. The park was established in 1992, when Frederick Billings' granddaughter, Mary French Rockefeller, and her husband, conservationist Laurance S. Rockefeller, conveyed their estate's residential and forest lands to the people of the United States. The park, working in partnership with the Billings Farm & Museum, chronicles three generations of stewardship and the emergence of a national conservation ethic. The Conservation Study Institute's home office is located at the park.



The University of Vermont (UVM) provides both scholarship on conservation history and educational programs through the School of Natural Resources and allied programs on campus. Faculty in the School of Natural Resources have extensive expertise in recreation management research in national parks and national forests across the country. This partnership with the state's land grant university has historical roots with both George Perkins Marsh and alumnus Frederick Billings. In 2000, Institute Director Nora Mitchell was appointed Adjunct Assistant Professor in the School of Natural Resources (SNR) at UVM. She also serves on the SNR Board of Advisors' Research Committee.

QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF) is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the rural communities and environment of New England and eastern Canada and to create models for stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage that can be applied worldwide. Incorporated in the United States and Canada, QLF has over 35 years of experience working in rural communities of the Atlantic region. Its international programs extend to the countries of Central Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean. QLF has a long history of cooperative work with the National Park Service on stewardship projects, public education, and leadership development training.

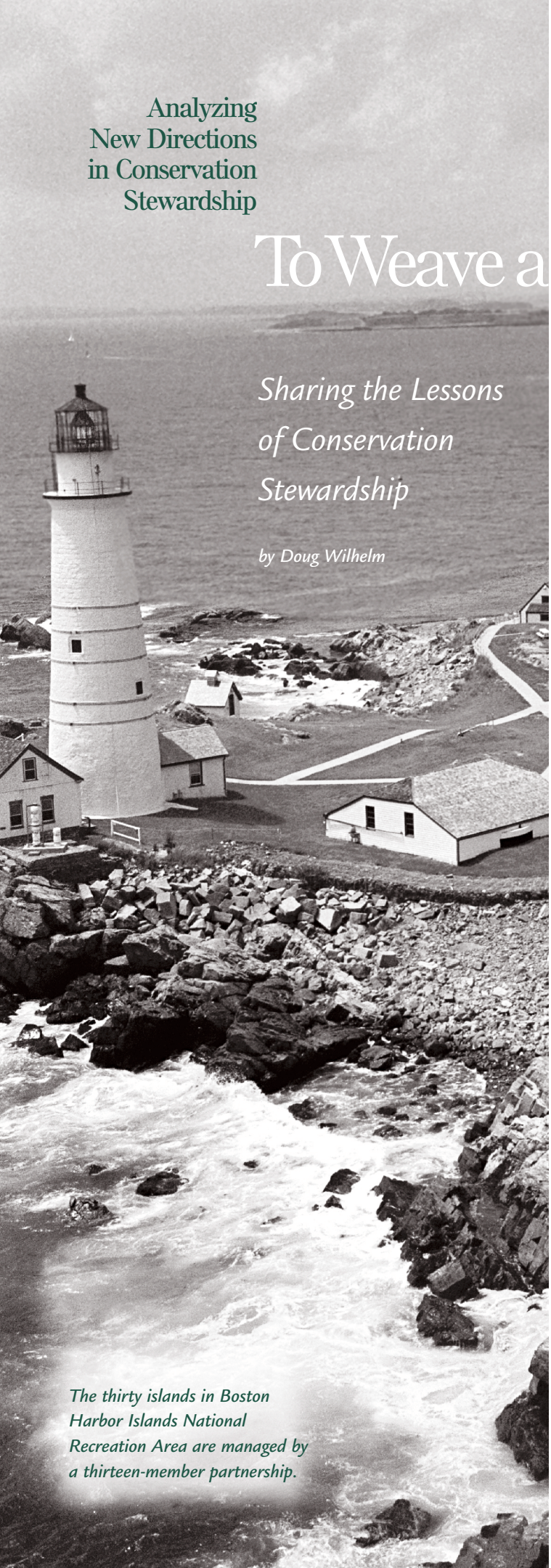
Shelburne Farms is a nonprofit, environmental education organization whose mission is to cultivate a conservation ethic in Vermont and around the world by teaching and demonstrating the stewardship of natural and agricultural resources. Its educational programs reach students and teachers, conservation professionals, and the public. Its stewardship of a national historic landmark property on Lake Champlain serves as a model for sustainable development. Shelburne Farms works with community-based environmental education projects in Central Europe and Japan. It is the primary partner of the Vermont Education for Sustainability Project, a unique consortium of nonprofit organizations and government agencies working together to integrate education for sustainability and place-based education in school reform.

Analyzing
New Directions
in Conservation
Stewardship

To Weave a New Tapestry

Sharing the Lessons of Conservation Stewardship

by Doug Wilhelm



The thirty islands in Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area are managed by a thirteen-member partnership.

The Conservation Study Institute (CSI) centers its efforts on collaboration and on working with a wide array of public, private, nonprofit, and academic partners on projects that build conservation leadership. Increasingly today the National Park Service is looking to such partnerships as the most practical, effective means of fulfilling its mission on the contemporary American landscape.

That's why, for people like Jonathan Doherty and Barbara Tagger, there was real value in CSI's workshop, "Planning and Collaboration: Lessons Learned in Areas Managed through National Park Service Partnerships," held in May 2001.

Doherty and Tagger were among 25 conservation professionals from within and outside the NPS who traveled to Woodstock to attend this program. Doherty manages the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network; only a small fraction of this area is National Park Service lands. Tagger is the NPS's southeast regional coordinator for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program, which includes no NPS properties at all.

This workshop was convened by the Conservation Study Institute with one of its founding partners, QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF), in cooperation with the NPS Planning and Special Studies Program. This opportunity was designed to share experience, skills, strategies, and new ways of thinking that are developing as the U.S. Congress and the NPS and its partners turn increasingly toward collaboration to accomplish conservation goals.

"Nowadays, the resources with which the National Park Service is involved, whether they're natural, cultural, or historical resources, often stretch far beyond any boundaries we can draw on a map or that any one entity can own," observed Doherty. The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, for example, interweaves national and state parks, refuges, water trails, historic port communities, and an interstate federal partnership in telling the great bay's overall story.

"The Park Service can benefit from a greater understanding of how partnerships work, what their benefits are, and how to develop them," Doherty observed. "At the same time, the broader conservation community can benefit from the National Park Service being more involved in partnership approaches."

"A New Set of Models"

American conservation goals are embracing an ever-broader range of places, resources, and people—not just lands suited for the traditional model of publicly owned parks, but also historic and scenic rivers and corridors, industrial landmarks, and heritage areas that include long-settled communities. As Congress has authorized efforts to protect these resources over the past decade or so, it has increasingly called for partnership efforts to get the job done.

"We have to learn to think outside the box," said Tagger, who works on the Underground Railroad Program with a wide range of partners, from individuals and local historical societies to collaborators in the Caribbean, Canada, and Mexico. "The NPS needs to maintain its traditional mission, while at the same time finding ways to include those ethnic groups that have been customarily ignored as part of its overall conservation goals."

"We're working with a whole new set of models—models that have long-term partnerships written into legislation or where collaboration is the key to successful landscape stewardship," said Nora Mitchell, director of CSI.

Added Jessica Brown, vice president of QLF, "I think there was a recognition by everyone in the session that this is the new direction for our national park system. And it is a trend globally, as well."

Warren Brown, program manager for NPS Park Planning and Special Studies, in his foreword to the workshop's published proceedings, *Collaboration and Conservation*, notes that "protecting our nation's natural and cultural heritage depends upon our ability to expand a stewardship ethic throughout the nation, to protect resources at the local level, and to see the units of the national park system as hubs in a broader network of protected areas."

Session at Planning and Collaboration workshop.

People who work in collaborative projects need more opportunities to learn from each other, workshop participants noted. They recommended that the NPS continue bringing together people to share their experience, that it develop ways to recognize the success and contributions of collaborations, and that it build other planning and management tools to help partnerships succeed.

"Partnerships are becoming an increasingly vital way for the National Park Service to carry out its mission ... We hope this report will encourage more discussion of different models for NPS involvement in the protection and management of special places."

– NPS Director Fran P. Mainella

A Place to Make Connections

As this effort continues, both Doherty and Tagger see a continuing, coordinating, and convening role for the Institute.

"I think there is a need for it," added Tagger, "particularly if we are going to start looking at different ways we can broaden our services to the American public and focus on building community coalitions and partnerships as essential ingredients to accomplishing our mission."

"I think what's interesting and unique about the Conservation Study Institute is its relationship with a park that is primarily focused on understanding conservation stewardship," said Doherty. "That direct relationship creates a locale, a venue—and a beautiful one—for bringing folks together to deal with these issues."

Analyzing New Directions in Conservation Stewardship

The Institute seeks to identify and examine new models of conservation that reconnect people with place, with each other, and with their communities to integrate conservation more fully into the everyday life of all citizens.

Nature *and* Culture, not Nature *versus* Culture

The Institute works to bridge the traditional gap between natural resources and cultural heritage conservation. Park and landscape managers today are turning to inclusive resource conservation models that also address the interests of local communities. Research is underway on a *Handbook for Managers of Cultural Landscapes with Natural Resource Values* that will identify successful approaches and tools to integrate natural resource values in the management of cultural landscapes. This handbook will include lessons learned from case studies of innovative, multidisciplinary, cultural landscape programs across the country. This effort will contribute to the development of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's *Guidelines for Cultural Landscapes.* The handbook will be available in 2002 on the Institute's web site.

Italian road signs illustrate the relationship of nature and culture.

PARTNERS: *QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, with a grant from the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology*

Building Stronger Links between Parks and Neighboring Communities

A national course titled "Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities" was held at the Institute, November 14-17, 2000. Participants discussed how to collaborate more effectively in identifying and addressing the issues shared by public lands and neighboring towns and cities, often referred to as gateway communities. Each participant was a member of a local team comprised of public land managers, city planners, local conservationists, municipal officials, and local business people. Teams came from Colorado, Maine, New York, Vermont, and Wyoming. Participating teams worked together on economic analysis and identification of local assets, and explored using a visioning process to create a set of common goals for the future.

As a follow-up to this national workshop and in response to requests from gateway communities across the country, the partners are sponsoring additional workshops and creating a handbook to guide development of future regional programs. Since partnerships have become essential to conservation, the Institute seeks to understand and share the characteristics and skills needed for successful collaboration.

PARTNERS: *The Conservation Fund, Sonoran Institute, NPS Park Planning and Special Studies Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center, The Woodstock Foundation, Inc.*

Understanding National Park Visitors

Robert Manning, professor at the School of Natural Resources and chair of the Recreation Management Program at the University of Vermont, conducts research on visitor expectations of park usage and crowding. Park managers and NPS training programs benefit from this scholarship conducted through cooperation with CSI. Manning's research covers a variety of sites managed by the NPS, including parks, monuments, cultural sites, and trails. Areas being studied in partnership with the Institute include Acadia, Denali, Isle Royale, and Mesa Verde National Parks; Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area; Saratoga National Historical Park; and Appalachian National Scenic Trail.

PARTNERS: *University of Vermont, national parks across the country*

Stories of Conservation

The experience of 50 national and international conservation practitioners is shared in *The Landscape of Conservation Stewardship.* These stories were collected through interviews conducted by members of a collaborative project team. The analysis identifies three common threads of successful conservation stewardship:

1) a sense of place that is complex and multifaceted;
2) community-based conservation that is comprehensive, collaborative, respectful, and self-sustaining; and
3) a foundation of commitment and passion that works in concert with a sound scientific understanding to provide enduring inspiration.

The report findings contribute program ideas for a long-term strategy that will deepen the understanding of conservation stewardship and its benefits, boost the effectiveness of practitioners, and promote stewardship across disciplines, professions, and sectors.

"When I die, my children are going to judge me not by the money I make, but by whether I have kept the forest in good condition."

– Interview with a Samoan, excerpted from *The Landscape of Conservation Stewardship*

PARTNERS: *Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park (NHP), The Woodstock Foundation, Inc., Project Team: Jacquelyn Tuxill, Rolf Diamant, David Donath, John Elder, Virginia Farley, Philip Huffman, Brent Mitchell, Nora Mitchell, Jeffrey Roberts*

Making History Visible

While a scholar in residence at the Institute in the spring of 2001, Professor David Glassberg, chair of the History Department and director of the Public History Program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, completed the first phase of a research project on heritage areas. The project involved both networking with various public agencies and private organizations active in the national heritage areas movement and assessing the kinds of technical assistance available for interpreting the history of these heritage landscapes.

Honoring a 200-Year Legacy

By drawing on the lessons of history, the Institute enhances understanding of the conservation legacy of previous generations and inform its strategies for current conservation challenges. David Lowenthal, professor emeritus of geography at the University College of London and author of the recent biography *George Perkins Marsh: Prophet of Conservation,* gave a series of lectures in 2001. This six-part national series celebrated the 200 years of conservation stewardship since Marsh's birth.

"Stewardship ... requires communities ... that transcend the life spans of individuals ... Only awareness of what we owe to those who preceded and concern for those who will follow enable us to care enough to plan ahead."

–David Lowenthal in *George Perkins Marsh: Prophet of Conservation*

David Lowenthal examines the entry in the journal at Vallombrosa Monastery (near Florence, Italy) describing the events of July 23, 1882, the date when George Perkins Marsh was laid in state.

PARTNERS: *Forest History Society, George Wright Society, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, Norman Williams Public Library (Woodstock, Vermont), Pinchot Institute for Conservation*

Fostering Innovation Through Exchange of International Experience

Insights Across the Water

Building Leadership through International Exchange

by Doug Wilhelm

Park rangers at Abruzzo National Park, Italy

ABOVE: The shoreline at Circeo National Park, one of the earliest national parks established in Italy

RIGHT: Terraced vineyards at Cinque Terre National Park, Italy, represent centuries-old cultural land use traditions.

While serving as U.S. envoy to Italy and the Middle East in the mid-1800s and observing the human depletion of land resources there, George Perkins Marsh first began setting his similar Vermont experience in a wider global context. Those insights gave rise to *Man and Nature,* Marsh's 1864 landmark book that helped lay a foundation for conservation in the U.S. and around the world.

Building on Marsh's legacy and exploring the possibilities of gaining new insights from an international perspective, the Conservation Study Institute (CSI) partnered with the National Park Service (NPS) Northeast Region and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment to convene a multi-day working session in June 2001. "New Directions in Parks and Protected Areas: Opportunities for U.S.-European Cooperation and Exchange" brought together colleagues from the U.S., Italy, and other European countries to exchange experience, find common areas of interest, and develop a multi-year strategy for international cooperation.

"International experiences do give you insight—into your work and the underlying assumptions of your culture—by helping you understand the world view of others," noted Nora Mitchell, CSI's director. In bringing together people involved in conservation and parks in the U.S. and Europe, the program sought to create an opportunity to learn from each other through exchanging both success stories and perspectives on the pressing challenges in conservation today.

"If you think about the conservation challenges we face and the need to develop new leaders and try new approaches, one of the tools to meet these challenges is international exchange," Mitchell said.

What's more, as the American parks system evolves to meet ever-more-complex priorities—which often involve how to conserve lived-in, rather than only pris-

tine, landscapes—international models have much to offer, observed Jessica Brown, vice president for international programs of QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment.

"There is so much to learn from the experience of other countries that have created many different kinds of protected areas," she said. "We're always strengthened by an exchange of ideas with people who are facing similar problems and coming up with their own array of solutions."

When Common Ground Bears Fruit

Among the workshop participants from the NPS who found richness in this experience were Brenda Barrett, national coordinator for NPS Heritage Areas, and John Debo, superintendent of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio.

Barrett's challenge is to protect lived-in landscapes with historic value. She has found that NPS heritage areas, which began emerging in the 1980s, have much in common with European national and regional parks.

"Their parks came a lot later than ours, and they didn't have big open spaces to take control of," Barrett said. "Many of the lessons they've learned relate to what we are now doing here." At the workshop, Barrett found herself especially impressed by what she learned about parks in Italy. Preservation efforts there draw on a strong and deeply shared sense of history and traditions.

"We have to develop that sense of history among the American people," she reflected afterward. "So that was one lesson I took away. The other was that they do a really strong job of selling this as an economic development tool." In Europe, she learned, protected landscapes are often seen as a way to revive both rural countryside and older industrial areas.

John Debo told colleagues at the workshop his own story of how international insights can bear fruit. On a study trip to Great Britain several years ago, he observed how British national parks help to preserve working landscapes in the countryside. Debo returned to create the Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Initiative, a partnership effort to help resettle the agricultural lands in the region of his park—"not to recreate the past, but to continue a tradition of farming in the Cuyahoga Valley from a modern and forward-looking perspective."

When he described his Countryside Initiative at the workshop, Debo said, "several of the Italian participants were immediately enthusiastic and began to discuss their experience around these same issues. By the end of that meeting, we had developed a very strong sense of shared interests and shared professional endeavors."

One of the Italian participants was Patrizia Rossi, superintendent of the Alpi Marittime nature park. "Because the national park idea was born in the U.S.," she said, "I have always thought that the European evolution of this idea would have a lot to offer our American colleagues, especially those whose protected areas are in the eastern U.S., which has many similarities with Europe.

"The workshop built a bridge across the Atlantic Ocean," Rossi added. I really hope it will be possible to keep the contacts we established and to continue to build our network."

This June workshop, held at Valley Forge National Historical Park, was just one of several international exchange initiatives with which CSI was involved in 2001.

"We're reaching out to our colleagues in other countries to build our partnership network," said Nora Mitchell. "To serve the NPS audience well, we really have to involve a broader audience. We have to continue encouraging people to reach out, listen to other people's sense of priorities, find common ground, and work collaboratively in a sustained way."

Fostering Innovation Through Exchange of International Experience

The Institute is building a network for collaborative international exchange to offer fresh perspectives for conservation stewardship practitioners who face challenges close to home.

CSI International Fellows

During 2000 and 2001, CSI invited three outstanding conservation scholars and practitioners to become fellows of the Institute. In each case, their research in conservation history or current conservation practice coincided with the specific interests of the Institute.

CSI's first fellow, **John Elder**, is Middlebury College's Stewart Professor of English and Environmental Studies and the author of several books, including *Reading the Mountains of Home.* During six months on a Fulbright fellowship in Florence, Italy, his work explored the role of landscape stewardship in the evolution of environmental thought. In the tradition of George Perkins Marsh, the American embassador to Italy for 21 years, Elder reflected on the stewardship of the Italian and Vermont landscapes for insights into conservation and people's relationship to place.

Judith Benedict, on sabbatical from her position as director of land acquisition for the Rhode Island office of The Nature Conservancy, is the author of a number of professional papers on land use regulation and history. Her current research as a CSI fellow based at Oxford University focuses on international approaches to land use planning strategies for conservation.

Gil Latz, professor of geography and international studies at Portland State University and senior research fellow at the Forest History Society, has conducted research, published articles, and produced educational videos. His current Fulbright research compares sustainable forestry and agriculture in Italy and the U.S., and explores the conservation of cultural landscapes through public education.

CSI fellow Gil Latz is documenting landscape history at Spannocchia, a traditional Tuscan (Italy) estate, to inform development of sustainable land use practices.

Meeting of the Protected Landscapes Task Force in Cotswolds, a protected landscape in England

International Landscape Conservation Networks

One of the most important outcomes of the June 1999 "International Working Session on the Stewardship of Protected Landscapes," cosponsored by CSI, was the establishment of the IUCN World Commission's Protected Landscapes Task Force. This group provides a network for ongoing communication and, in particular, exchange of successful models for conservation of lived-in landscapes. Michael Beresford, co-director of the International Centre for Protected Landscapes (Wales), chairs the task force and Bob Wishitemi, professor at Moi University (Kenya), is the co-chair.

In response to the growing number of landscapes being added to the World Heritage List, in 2001 the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (Paris), in cooperation with ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, Rome), initiated the preparation of management guidelines for cultural landscapes. The World Heritage Centre assembled an international team, including CSI Director Nora Mitchell, to guide this effort. The international guidelines team has provided the nexus for an exchange network and serves as a sounding board for particularly challenging landscape management issues.

Abruzzo National Park (Italy) works cooperatively with communities inside the park, such as Civitella, which has a visitor center and other visitor services, many of which are located in restored historic buildings.

Italy-U.S. Partnership for Conservation

The United States and Italy share the legacy of George Perkins Marsh, the first U.S. ambassador to Italy (1861-1882). Marsh's prescient environmental observations, articulated in *Man and Nature* (*L'Uomo e la Natura*), were shaped by his experience in both countries.

Building on this legacy, the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) and the Italian Nature Conservation Service (INCS) signed an international agreement in 2000 for professional exchange on a variety of landscape and park management issues common to both countries. Most recently, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP and the Conservation Study Institute have teamed up with Lazio Regional Park Agency and the Pangea Institute of Italy to work on value-added traditional park products, stewardship education, and interpretation of large-scale landscapes.

PARTNERS: *NPS Northeast Region, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, Italian Nature Conservation Service, Lazio Regional Park Agency (Italy), Pangea Institute (Italy)*

Cultivating Collaborative And Reflective Leadership

Growing New Leaders

"Deeply Personal" Course Builds Commitment

by Doug Wilhelm

Intake class members participate in small group discussion.

ABOVE: Graduation—Intake Class of 2001

RIGHT: (Former) NPS Deputy Director Deny Galvin talks with Intake Class of 2000.

When park rangers Susie Qashu and Christie Denzel Anastasia arrived at the Conservation Study Institute (CSI) in August 2001 to complete a concentrated two-week course on conservation, they and 25 colleagues were at the end of a two-year Leadership (Intake) Program recently created to identify and train the next generation of National Park Service (NPS) leaders.

The Institute presented the final training course, "Conservation Leadership: History and Practice," featuring several senior NPS managers along with reading, dialogue, outdoor exploration, writing, and shared reflection. The goal was to draw participants back to the personal reasons they chose a National Park Service career—and to connect each individual's sense of purpose and meaning with the larger mission of NPS.

The two-year program brought the group to NPS locations around the country, conveying a rich array of skills and information. At the end, said Denis Galvin, (now former) deputy director of the NPS, "our idea in having them come to CSI and to Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park was to reground them in conservation principles and to build in them an awareness that they are part of a much larger conservation movement."

For Qashu and Anastasia, the experience in Vermont did exactly that. Both bring a depth of experience to the NPS. After college, Qashu worked for a decade in

environmental education, then spent four years in Chile working in large part with the Chilean Park Service. Anastasia worked for the NPS before and after her Peace Corps service in West Africa, which was focused on resource education. Both women came back to the U.S. with their international experience having reinforced the global nature of their chosen careers in conservation.

"I know what I want to be doing," said Qashu, and that's to be involved with natural-resource-dependent communities. She is now doing just that, working much of the year at Washington's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, where the Olympic National Park is one of several partners.

"For me, it always comes back to the point that these lands are open to the public," said Anastasia, now a ranger at Point Reyes National Seashore in California. "Most people have access to some place that is set aside for the common good. That's incredibly important to me."

"Something Like That Stays With You"

The leadership program participants were chosen through a selective competition and bring sophistication, broad experience, and new diversity to NPS—all important qualities for a time when conservation extends beyond park boundaries. "The preservation of the parks really depends to a great degree on the outside world," Galvin reflected. "Yellowstone is not big enough to hold off all the things that are happening all around it: air quality, water quality, and intense recreational use. All these are driven by forces in the communities' surrounding parks, starting with the communities right next door—which is why it is so important to work collaboratively."

Participants were asked to reflect on the importance that national parks and sense of place could have in our lives. "Conservation is fundamentally focused on what people care about, in terms of their communities, their families, and how they see the future," observed Virginia Farley, CSI's leadership program director. That is why this Institute course gives all participants a chance to make or to rediscover those connections. "I think it was all about reminding ourselves what we already know," Christie Anastasia observed. "In today's world, we have a lot of information—but we don't have a lot of time for reflection."

At the close of the leadership course, each participant was asked to spend time outdoors alone in the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP forest. Each then created some personal expression of the essential meaning of conservation. Returning to the group one final time, each person had a chance to share that expression. Susie Qashu chose to sing a Mexican "mariachi" song, she said, "about someone going off to fight a revolution.

"I sang it to let everyone know how much this experience had meant to me and how much everyone's support had meant to me during the last two years," she said. Her colleagues commented afterward that Qashu's way of using a song for expression was exceptionally touching and memorable.

For Anastasia, completing the two-year learning experience at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP had great value in itself. "Part of the story at this park is how the land has the capacity to heal," she reflected. "So there's a lot of hope there—and that's what the Conservation Study Institute is about—encouraging us to ask: 'What do you believe and how are you going to act on that?'"

"Something like that stays with you," she concluded. "It was a deeply personal experience."

Cultivating Collaborative And Reflective Leadership

Through collaboration, the Institute ensures that programs examine the most challenging current issues and draw on contemporary experience and state-of-the-art thinking within the NPS and the broader conservation community. In leadership development programs, the Institute highlights two important aspects of a new style of leadership—the reflection and articulation of a personal stewardship ethic and the ability to build and sustain collaborative relationships.

Superintendents' Leadership Roundtable

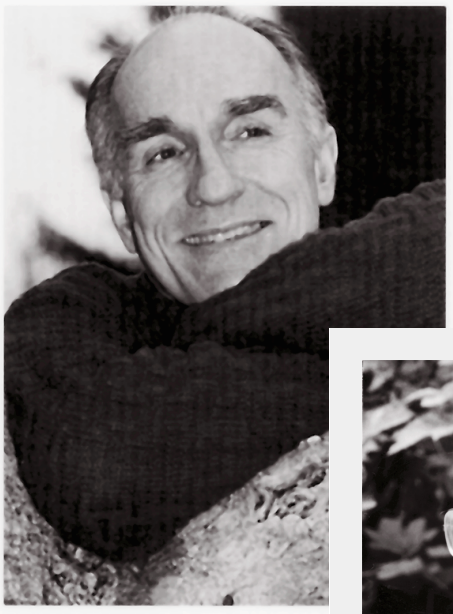
In this new program, NPS superintendents participate in a forum of their peers to discuss successes and challenges. Each year the program has 12 participants, who meet as a group several times. The primary focus is on building and maintaining collaborative relationships with colleagues, the workforce, partners, and other stakeholders in an environment with an accelerating pace of change. Rather than offering a traditional training course, this program uses the model of continuous learning and network building within the NPS community. The first year of this program was cosponsored by three NPS regions—Northeast, Intermountain, and Pacific West. The initial session was held May 7-11, 2001, in Big Fork, Montana. A second group of roundtable participants convenes in 2002.

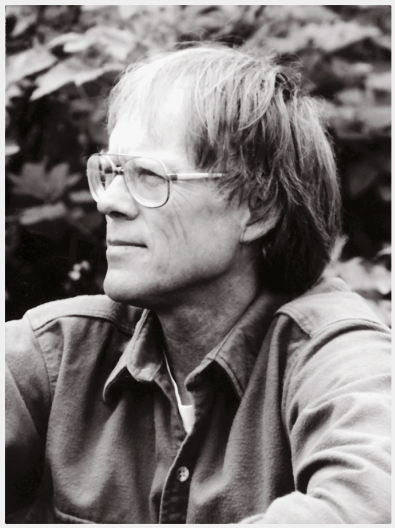
PARTNERS: *NPS Northeast Region, NPS Intermountain Region, NPS Pacific West Region, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP*

Discovery 2000

The National Park Service's decade conference was held September 11-15 in St. Louis and created an opportunity for NPS staff to reflect on their commitment to conservation work and the mission of the NPS. Nora Mitchell, director of the Institute, served on the conference planning team. She and Virginia Farley, leadership program director with the Institute, conducted six journaling workshops at the conference. They asked participants to articulate a vision for the NPS in the next 50 years and to reflect on their personal inspiration for conservation work (see facing page). Writers Richard Nelson and Scott Russell Sanders were invited to participate in the workshops and give readings from their recent work. These workshops were open to all conference participants and well attended. In addition, the Institute created a journal section within the conference program that provided space for reflective writing.

PARTNER: *NPS Discovery 2000 Conference Planning Team, The Orion Society*





Scott Sanders (above) and Richard Nelson

Journal entry from reflective writing session at "Discovery 2000" Conference

Vision for the 21ST Century

The 21ST Century should be embraced as a time when we dare to envision the ultimate, to voice it and work to make the ultimate dream a reality; as a time when we find the courage to be totally inclusionary -- at all levels and for all concepts -- and never, never exclusionary; and as a time ~~that~~ when we seek and capitalize on every opportunity to hold hands with the world through partnerships with the goal of educating, preserving enjoying and balancing -- for all natural and cultural resources for this and future generations.

Pat Hooks
Deputy Regional Director
Southeast Region

Exploring Place Through Stewardship Education

A Partnership for Learning

Turning Forests into Classrooms

by Doug Wilhelm

Biologist Jim Andrews demonstrates field techniques for exploring local sense of place.

ABOVE: Teachers at Summer Institute

RIGHT: A student journals about her local landscape and community.

Vermont includes much of the great northern forest, which in total covers millions of acres across upper New England, upstate New York, and eastern Canada. Vermont's public woodlands include 385,000 acres of Green Mountain National Forest—along with forests owned by the state, communities, and even local schools.

So it was natural for several conservation-minded organizations based in Vermont to begin a new partnership this year to educate about and encourage the use of these public forestlands by teachers and students in public schools, as living laboratories for powerful out-of-classroom learning.

"Public lands have tremendous potential to contribute to education and the quality of life in our communities," observes Conservation Study Institute (CSI) Director Nora Mitchell. "If we can get young people thinking about not only the future of their local forest, but also the future of their communities, that's the beginning of lifelong learning—and it's also cultivating citizenship."

"A Forest For Every Classroom: Learning to Make Choices for the Future of Vermont's Forests" is a three-year collaboration that brings CSI together with Shelburne Farms, Green Mountain National Forest, Northeast Natural Resource Center of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), and Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park.

All five organizations, in fact, share the goal of encouraging and cultivating conservation stewardship. They worked together to design "A Forest for Every Classroom" to use public lands in "place-based education"—learning that grows from guided, hands-on study and involvement with real places and real issues close to home.

"So many teachers often teach about the rain forest, which is thousands of miles away," notes Liz Soper, education coordinator for the NWF's Northeast Natural Resource Center in Montpelier. "We wanted to get them teaching in, and thinking about, one of the last remaining great forests here in the Northeast."

"Public land belongs to the citizens," adds Kathleen Diehl, public affairs officer for Green Mountain National Forest. "When you're working with public land, you can make proposals about it, you can lead positive changes. These changes might include increasing bird and wildlife habitat on the land, creating outdoor classrooms for science, or creating literature and art around the historical and cultural resources associated with the land."

Making Complex Issues Real

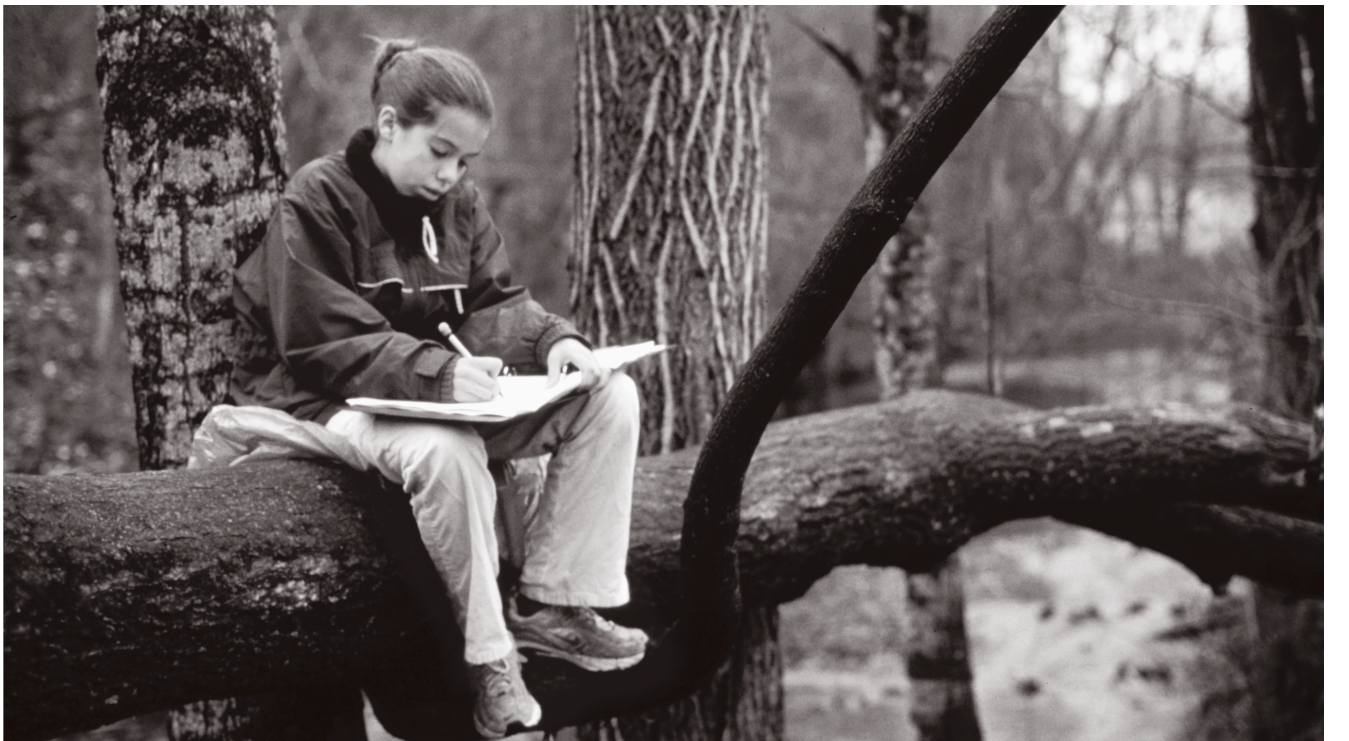
In its first year, "A Forest for Every Classroom" provided four multi-day workshops for 17 teachers from Vermont communities close to public forestland. A variety of experts that several teachers called inspiring—foresters and field naturalists, college professors of biology, forestry, and environmental studies, and writers about the natural world and stewardship—worked with the teachers, showing how the woods can bring learning to life.

From these experiences, new ideas, and a rich array of supplemental resources, the teachers built their own curriculum innovations.

"Students need knowledge and awareness—but they also need to actively participate," explained Megan Camp, vice president of Shelburne Farms. "In the forests and communities of our own backyards, all the issues of sustainability and stewardship can be illustrated and become real for students."

With three national organizations participating—the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Wildlife Federation—the partners have the capacity to offer their experience, as it develops, on a much wider scale. But meanwhile, says Barbara Slaiby, education program coordinator for CSI, the collaboration has already enriched its partners and participating teachers.

"We really are learning from each other," she said. "This program is about connecting parks, forests, and public spaces with schools and communities. That's the nexus that we're looking for. We want to keep building and enhancing that connection; that's our ultimate goal."



Exploring Place Through Stewardship Education

The Institute works with its partners to provide educational programs that expand the knowledge of conservation stewardship and strengthen citizenship skills.

Vermont Summer Land Conservation Program

For the last three years, the Institute has cosponsored a series of short courses on land conservation at the beginning of every summer (May 30–June 16, 2000, and May 29–June 15, 2001) with a consortium of partners. Each year this program examines tools and techniques for reading the landscape, shaping conservation strategies, and preserving a sense of place within communities. The theme of the most recent program explored "Knowledge of Place: The Art and Practice of Conservation and Stewardship." Courses offered included: "Selecting and Designing Land Conservation Projects," "Community Sense of Place," "Conserving Vermont Landscape: Analysis and Action," and "Knowing Home." The program is designed for professionals, students, and volunteers involved in conservation work. These one- and two-day courses are offered in locations throughout Vermont and are taught by academic faculty and conservation professionals. Most courses are available for graduate credit through the University of Vermont.

John Elder leads a writers workshop as part of the 2001 Vermont Summer Land Conservation Program.

PARTNERS: *Billings Farm & Museum, Equinox Preservation Trust, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, Middlebury College, University of Vermont Natural Areas Center, QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment, Shelburne Farms, The Woodstock Foundation, Inc., Vermont Land Trust*

Writing Workshops and Evening Readings

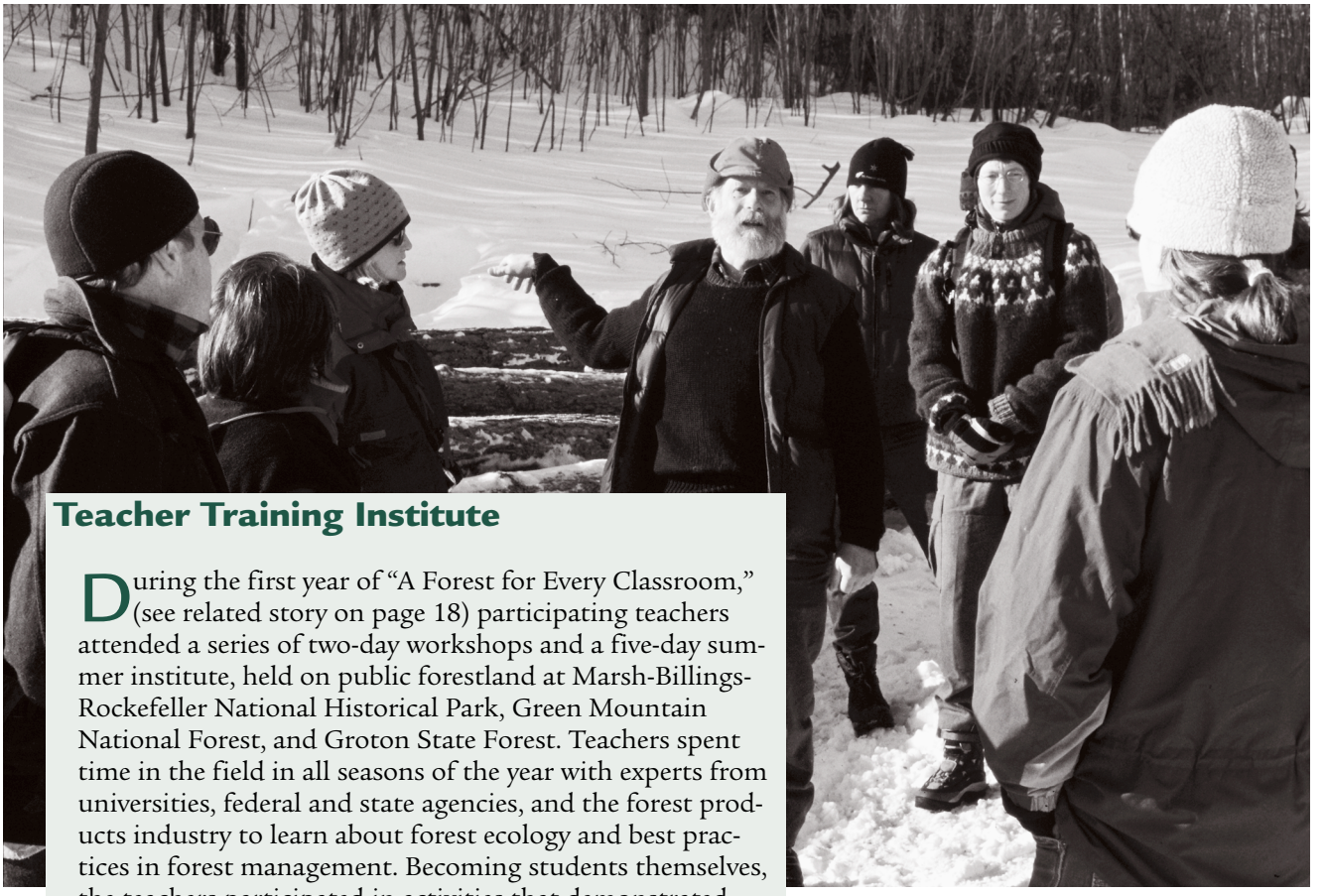
John Hanson Mitchell

Members of the public heard John Hanson Mitchell read excerpts from his latest book, *The Wildest Place on Earth: Italian Gardens and the Invention of Wilderness*, at the Institute on September 30, 2001.

As part of the 2000 Vermont Summer Land Conservation Program, award-winning author Scott Russell Sanders led an evening reading and writing workshop. The 2001 program included a similar event led by nature writer and professor John Elder. Participants in these events explored ways in which writing helps us be more perceptive of our surroundings and identify a sense of place.

PARTNERS: *Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, Billings Farm & Museum, Shiretown Books*

Teachers visit local forestry operation.



Teacher Training Institute

During the first year of "A Forest for Every Classroom," (see related story on page 18) participating teachers attended a series of two-day workshops and a five-day summer institute, held on public forestland at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, Green Mountain National Forest, and Groton State Forest. Teachers spent time in the field in all seasons of the year with experts from universities, federal and state agencies, and the forest products industry to learn about forest ecology and best practices in forest management. Becoming students themselves, the teachers participated in activities that demonstrated new approaches to teaching subjects about which many previously had limited knowledge. Through case studies, teachers also learned about service learning as a method for teaching students important citizenship skills. Service learning is an important part of the Vermont standards-based curriculum units that the teachers are developing. The peer network created among these teachers over the past year has enabled informal mentoring and the exchange of information and ideas.

PARTNERS: *Green Mountain National Forest, National Wildlife Federation, Shelburne Farms, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, with grants from Ittleson Foundation and NPS Parks as Classrooms Program*

"This course has rekindled my soul and passion for teaching. It has made it meaningful again. I am so grateful for the vision, the inspiration, the follow-through, and the commitment and knowledge that the partners have channeled through us."

–Lauren Ashley, Academy School, Brattleboro, Vermont

Shaping Vermont's Future

A two-part workshop, "Imagining the Vermont Landscape: Past and Future," explored the heritage and future of the Vermont landscape with historian Jan Albers, author of *Hands on the Land: A History of the Vermont Landscape.* This program was held in Woodstock, Vermont, on April 24 and 26, 2001, and was part of a series of workshops offered throughout the state. The sessions encouraged community-wide discussion on how Vermont's extraordinary landscape has evolved and what citizens can do to create the landscape they want for the future.

PARTNERS: *Billings Farm & Museum, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, Orton Family Foundation, The Woodstock Foundation, Inc.*

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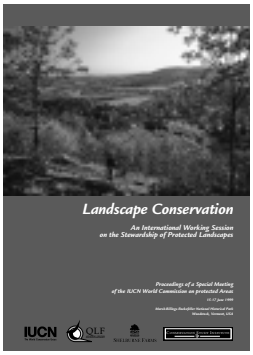
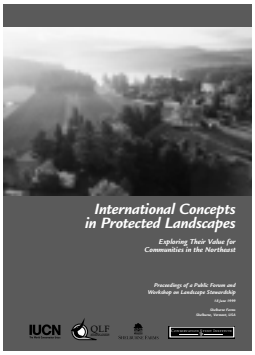
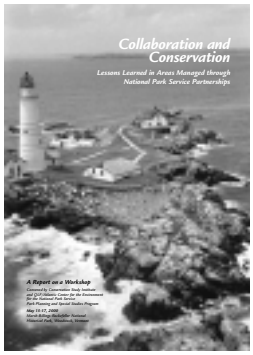
Publications and Articles

The Institute has launched a Conservation and Stewardship Publication Series in collaboration with its partner organizations. This series will include a variety of publications designed to provide information on conservation history and current practice for professionals and the public. The series editor is Nora Mitchell, director of the Institute.

To obtain a copy of any Conservation Study Institute publications contact us by email: stewardship@nps.gov or by mail: Conservation Study Institute, 54 Elm Street, Woodstock, VT 05091.







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No. 2—Conservation Study Institute, IUCN The World Conservation Union, and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment. *Protected Landscapes: Exploring Their Value for Communities in the Northeast*. Woodstock, Vermont: Conservation Study Institute, 2001.

No. 3—Tuxill, Jacquelyn L., and Nora J. Mitchell, eds. *Collaboration and Conservation: Lessons Learned in Areas Managed through National Park Service Partnerships*. Woodstock, Vermont: Conservation Study Institute, 2001.

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