

Sister Park Arrangement
Between
ACADIA National Park
&
PARCO NAZIONALE DOLOMITI BELLUNESI

Government of Republic of Italy
Ministry of Environment
Direction of Nature Conservation



and

ACADIA National Park
National Park Service
United States of America

BACKGROUND:

Since 2000, the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) of the United States of America and the Nature Conservation Service (Servizio Conservazione della Natura) of Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Italy have enjoyed cooperation concerning the conservation, preservation, and management of national parks and other protected natural and cultural heritage sites for the purpose of conservation, recreation, and public education. In particular, education, workshops, seminars, and other learning initiatives, such as educational tours involving parks officials, as well as university students, have been successfully carried out, both in the US and in Italy. In 2008, the Parco Nazionale Dolomiti Bellunesi, organized an international conference, *Parks, For Only One Earth (Parchi Per Una Sola Terra*, in Italian), aimed to identify and to discuss possible scenarios on the future of protected areas worldwide. The National Park Service was invited as a guest of honor to attend the American National Protected Areas System meeting in Italy, and the NPS was represented by the Deputy Director, in charge at that time. As a concrete result of the Conference, the "Charter of Feltre" has been produced and its principles, were shared and agreed upon at the Italian national level, may be considered as a strategic cultural term of reference for people involved in the promotion of the conservation and management of protected areas. Moreover, in 2008, an official delegation of Parco Nazionale Dolomiti Bellunesi representatives carried out a study tour in several US National Parks in the North East Region, to gather a better knowledge of the National Heritage Areas policies and to explore the possibilities of future forms of friendship and cooperation with the Conservation Study Institute and the Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park the latter considered particularly significant for the history of conservation, in Italy and in the US.

Within this conceptual framework of friendship and cooperation, two national parks - the U.S. National Park Service's ACADIA National Park and the ENTE PARCO NAZIONALE DOLOMITI BELLUNESI, from the Italian Ministry of Environment Direction for Nature Conservation - wish to establish a sister park arrangement to further mutually beneficial cooperation.

ACADIA NATIONAL PARK protects a landscape of rare scenic beauty. Acadia's mountains are the highest rocky headlands on the Atlantic shore of the United States, and the vistas from these mountaintops encompass forested woodlands, shimmering lakes, quiet marshes, bold rocky shores, and coastal islands. On all sides, the ocean - which surrounds the park - bisects and strongly influences the parks' character.

PARCO NAZIONALE DOLOMITI BELLUNESI is home to glorious natural landscapes and rare flora and fauna, which the park was created to protect. Located in the Southern Eastern Alps the park includes imposing mountains like Mount Serva and Vette di Feltre, as well as magnificent grasslands and valleys.

Although not twins, the two parks share enough to be "sisters." The management objectives of each are similar. Although they are of different types and origins, both are dominated by a great variety of natural ecosystems, spacing from peaks to shores; both host rare and endemic living species, many of them adapted to extreme environmental conditions. Both are rich in important geomorphologic features, as well as in biodiversity. The parks are comparable in the connections with human settlements around their boundaries, with the management of tourism, with the environmental education programs such as the *No Child Left Inside* campaign, shared by Acadia and Dolomiti Bellunesi parks, regardless of the distances and of the cultural differences.

Both parks face many common threats including the impact of the human settlements and mainly, the loss of biodiversity due to global changes. The employees of both parks share the common ideals of stewardship and preservation of the resources given to their care. Their highest priority goals are to preserve rare and endemic species; to restore degraded ecosystems; to create corridors and connections between habitats, with a particular focus on brown bear habitat; and to implement research, inventory, and monitoring programs necessary to achieve success in these preservation and restoration efforts.

The parks wish to increase their already substantial efforts toward the outdoor and environmental education of school children and the general public so that their country's people can become committed partners in conservation. Development of an environmental education camp according to the "No Child Left Inside" principles is proposed by both parks. Both parks are also striving to involve their surrounding communities in the development of compatible services and facilities to foster tourism and sustainable economic development.

The "sister parks" seek to enrich the experience and training of the personnel of both parks through projects of international cooperation that may include the exchange of technical and professional knowledge and personnel, information, data, technology, training and experience.

Examples of potential areas of cooperation may include:

- Sharing resource and biodiversity management methods and techniques.
- Electronic communication and technical information exchanges, including software programs for science and resource management applications.
- Park planning and environmental interpretation planning methods exchanges.
- Exchanges of environmental education techniques, programs, and facilities, including plans and designs for youth education camps and curriculum.
- Sharing of outdoor education methods and tools, for reconnecting children to nature and for developing guidelines for the "No child left inside" international campaign.
- Sharing of management experiences of the volunteers in parks program.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the "sister park" relationship is to promote international cooperation and support for the mutual benefit of both parks and to enrich the experience and training of the personnel of both parks through projects of international cooperation. The relationship allows the sisters to benefit by sharing experiences and approaches to collaboration, including local efforts to work with gateway communities, regional and local economies, friends groups and partner organizations. This may be accomplished primarily through the exchange of managerial, technical and professional knowledge, information, data, technology, training, and experience.

COOPERATION: Through years of protecting and managing these parks, each nation has gained invaluable experience. With the improved knowledge of the importance and value of national parks, protected areas and world heritage sites, each country has strengthened mutual exchanges and cooperation, which improves the protection, preservation and management work in a comprehensive way for the benefit of future generations.

Examples of potential areas of cooperation may include:

- Resource management methods and techniques for restoration of previously ditched or otherwise altered wetlands, forest and other habitat restoration, control of exotic, invasive or alien species, monitoring of air and water quality.
- Electronic communication and technical information exchanges, including software programs for science and resource management applications.
- Environmental education techniques, programs, and facilities, including plans and designs for youth education camps and curriculum and initiatives for reconnecting children, and their families, to the natural environment.
- Recreation and ecotourism management and planning, including private and public partnerships for development and economic development.
- Environmental interpretation techniques and park planning methods.
- Development of volunteer and "Friends" organizations for park support.

- Development of strategies and specific initiatives for sustainable development, according to the objectives of the parks, for local communities.

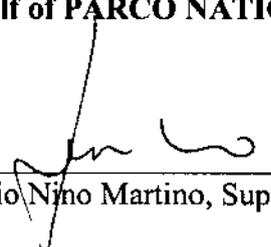
A Sister Park Action Plan should guide future cooperation and be composed of two parts: a Biennial Action Plan and an Individual Theme Project Plan. The Biennial Action Plan should be designed and accepted by the two parks, before submitting to the Italian Nature Conservation Service and to the NPS for filing by the end of November that year. The Individual Theme Project Plan should focus on specific topics and issues of common concern to the two parks and can be started at any time upon reporting for filing.

UNDERSTANDINGS: Cooperation under this relationship should initially be five (5) years. The term may be extended or modified in writing, or cooperation may be discontinued at any time by either park; upon written notification of discontinuation.

Both parks are to fund their own participation in this relationship. It is generally understood that when personnel of one park visits or are detailed to the other, the park sending the employee is to be responsible for the cost of travel to and from the receiving country and receiving park is to generally be responsible for travel and living expenses in their country; each exchange is to be negotiated individually and is dependent upon available resources.

Signed at Acadia National Park on this fifteenth (15) day of September, 2010, in English and Italian.

On behalf of PARCO NAZIONALE DOLOMITI BELLUNESI:



Vitantonio Nino Martino, Superintendent

On behalf of ACADIA NATIONAL PARK:



Sheridan Steele, Superintendent