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## Fogler Library Salon Series: Protecting Acadia National Park Through Public-Private Partnerships

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Kevin Schneider

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## **Fogler Library Salon Series: Protecting Acadia National Park Through Public-Private Partnerships?**

**Date:** October 2, 2023

**Run Time:** 01:19:29

**Presenters:** Daisy Domínguez Singh, John Daigle, Kevin Schneider, Ken Olson

University of Maine Professor of Forest Recreation Management John Daigle conducts an armchair conversation about the operational, philosophical and political realities of running Acadia National Park, Maine's most visited natural destination. Acadia faces challenges ranging from climate change to increasing diversity of its visitors to managing congestion and crowding. Acadia Superintendent Kevin Schneider will speak to the National Park Service mission of providing for visitor enjoyment, education, and inspiration while meeting the legal imperative to leave the parks unimpaired for future generations. Retired President and CEO of Friends of Acadia Ken Olson will lay out the part nonprofits perform in providing philanthropic services that help parks achieve a margin of excellence beyond what government can accomplish alone.

The Salon Series was made possible by generous contributions from Fogler Library donors and Honors College co-sponsorship.

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The following is an unedited, machine generated transcript. Alternatively, you may wish to activate your web browser's live captioning function.

### **Begin Transcript**

0:09

So now I'd like to welcome Provost Jon Volin who has expertise in restoration ecology and established an award-winning natural resources conservation economy focused on conservation and language planning education for high school students to make remarks about our salon protecting Acadian national park team public private Thank you, that and thank you all.

0:27

So, I want to hear speakers. I'm not the one that is going to introduce you, but thank you for coming today. And I think we'll have some of our speakers. I'm not the one that is going to introduce you, you know, thank you for coming today.

0:34

And I think we'll have some people online as well. And you'll be mind questions as they come in, right? Great. And so I love this topic, the private public partnership. I think a lot of people don't realize how far back it actually goes.

0:45

The conservation movement goes back over a hundred years, right? It really helps start the conservation movement. In my own life and experiences.

0:54

So, it's somebody you know, and I worked at the Everglade, the full delegates for ran on time.

1:01

The last bill that President Clinton signed in 2,000 was our resource at all act which authorized the comprehensive workplace restoration plan which is a 30 year that 9 billion now it's like close to 20 billion dollar restoration project that you know that got authorized but interesting thing about it is a private the private public partnership is what really got it going.

1:28

So, so, so, so, so, and, and, and, the, over, grass, we, that's like under an age, it's a powerhouse, but she wanted friends of the ever base and that's how it started and you know, could have all that actually just on that and it's an interesting one.

1:41

But it was interesting that the private public partnership that really got, you know, eventually the policymakers to put this forward.

1:50

And it's a really unique You know, that, you need partnership that really got it back to be able to go forward.

1:58

I will say, personally, my own, my own box in 2,000. I work on a land referendum where the company would, you know, read, you know, essentially bond themselves themselves, to buy a natural.

2:14

And so this was actually in Florida. And so this was actually in Florida and And so this was actually in Florida and Broadcom.

2:20

Been here in 2,000 in the elections and what was going on then but one good thing that came out and I'm not saying about the ultimate election talk about all the issues with the election, then what's going on here is that she was able to convince, the growers to task themselves.

2:37

70% of the voters 200 million dollars was the largest ever honor for them at a country level to buy the last of the national land is the Premier.

2:49

LAST. And you know and she had great support from the trusted public lands and the major concerns he was so private that really allowed that to pass into this the voters that this was important.

2:57

This is something that we should be doing. So this and these roots of conservation, you can, you can go be, you know, in so many different places.

3:11

But I'm promise to be short, but you know, I'm a, so, so I will finish there.

3:17

I do want to thank all of you but yeah, for coming tonight it's going to be great.

3:24

For coming tonight, it's going to be great. Coming tonight, it's going to be great. Coming tonight is going to be great. Oh, and I can introduce, Dr. Jeff Mills, who's the president CEO, and I can introduce, Dr.

3:31

Jeff Mills, who's the president, CEO, and I can introduce, Dr. Jeff Mills, who's the president CEO, the main foundation. Jeff got his PhD at Arizona State University.

3:38

And, but it is, he came back to Thank you, John. So great to be here on such a beautiful night at the States Library and also the States Research Library.

3:51

So we're very pleased to be here. At the Lane Brand, State's Research Library, so we're very pleased to be here at the LANE, BRANCe, And I have the pleasure of introducing the panel that will meet with us tonight.

3:59

So if, we'll start off with over. To my right is Ken Snyder.

4:08

He is the superintendent. Right over here. Much and wait everybody is there you go. He is a superintendent of Acadia National Park in the same.

4:22

They're also very fortunate to have right here on my left. Dr. John Dage, who is the associate professor for force.

4:30

Range M here at the University of May is also a tribal member of the And also we're very pleased to have with us our alumnus guest today who is Ken Bolton is a black bear from the class of 1968.

4:50

We also, was a soccer player while he was here at the University of, and a member of, He also is a senior scholar here at the University of Maine.

5:03

He's a member of 2 of our most distinguished societies for giving here in the university main the presence club for annual one issues and again and also the Stillwater Society is the second level member of that, which are many people who have given over a hundred \$1,000 to the institution.

5:21

We are also very fortunate that he is given his conservation papers. Those have been donated to the special collections.

5:28

Right here at OLD Library, University of So we'll have you all take it away for our setting discussion for tonight.

5:38

Thank you all. You want them with the microphone or? Yeah. That's it. Alright, well good evening everyone. And I am, I am really excited about the conversation.

5:55

And I, I think it's a great honor actually. To have this event it's gonna be recorded and be available for others to view in the future which I think will be helpful to students.

6:07

Here at the University of Maine and the public added, you know, interest in learning more about a Katie National Park and its management.

6:14

And so. The format for tonight, we talked about, basically I'm going to help facilitate some of the discussion this evening.

6:24

I have a view kinda questions I'll be asking our guests. And her will be a moderator for the Zoom participants.

6:34

And after we have a short discussion here, or maybe 30 min, we definitely want to open it up and have questions from the audience. Those that are in attendance here tonight. And those that are on the, the zoom link.

6:49

So, we will help facilitate those questions. On that side. So, yeah, so in terms of thinking about.

6:59

Kind of starting this off. I thought it would be good to just kinda each of us share some of our personal experiences of Acadia National Park.

7:08

Kind of can be shared personal experiences that you've had prior, maybe to your position, your current position, past position.

7:15

But you know, eventually how did that come to come to where you are now in your relationship to a Katie National Park.

7:23

So, Kevin, do you wanna start off on that? Yeah, sure. Thanks, John. And thanks to the University of Maine for having us here. It's great to be here on a college campus. I love being on college campuses. So thanks for having me here.

7:34

I. Fell in love with the national parks really when I was in junior high school. And I was fortunate enough to come to a Kadia National Park and my first job for the Park Service was working in public affairs in our Washington headquarters.

7:50

And I got to meet Ken Olson at the time who was the president and CEO of Friends of Acadia when we were launching the Island Explorer buses. And when we were, when we were, endowing the parks trails and I came up to help with this event and fell in love with Acadia then and my Park Service career took me to Yellowstone National Park.

8:11

Took me out West and I met a woman in Ireland who happened to be from Maine and was a graduate with bachelors and master's degree from the University of Maine.

8:19

So while I'm that alumni, my spouses and I said to her at the time, you know, there's only one national park in Maine, which at the time was true.

8:30

We didn't know, was in waters then. And I said, might not wind up there and here we are now. I've been in the KD as the superintendent for almost 8 years and it's a superintendent for almost 8 years and it's a wonderful place to live.

8:39

Thanks. Yeah, well, even though I was here at Lorna for 4 years, thank you for having us. Thank you, Jeff, your introduction too. And Thank you for doing this job. Thank you. And Joyce, thank you.

8:51

Even though I was here for 4 years, I really didn't get down to Katie very much.

9:07

And my inclinations are come off the nice and you started recently. Even though I was here for 4 years, I really didn't get down to a all 4 summers that I was here in, I worked as a husband in the Appalachian.

9:19

I've been introduced to the mountains and the outdoors. But my grandfather who graduated from Dartmouth in 1,917 and took me under his wing as one of the 6 grandkids.

9:29

And, that led to just a deep interest in the outdoors and actually, so the professional inclination and before.

9:37

Coming to, coming to friends with Katie as president, I, you have to work for the nature conservancy.

9:45

And, Connecticut is director there and president of American Evers in Washington. By the way, haven't even heard of the nature of the service.

9:53

Yeah, everybody has. There were times, this was the eighties, there were times when, we were getting mail address to, natural conservatory.

10:01

We have some stuff addressed to the mature conversation list. There's nobody in my office. The name I like best, the major conspiracy.

10:11

Anyhow, those all led to more and more to getting involved in a job came open here, with the French group.

10:17

And I didn't know what it was at the time I took the job. And, they're part of over 10 years and the, and, and partnerships with the National Park Service and very beautiful partnership I think for both sides and we're not the only one I have to say that's the K is not the only partner, does not proper work on behalf of the Katie National Park.

10:43

There many others. Happens to be. Raising private funds for the park that supplement and don't replace. We try to add a margin of excellence that cannot be achieved unless we're somehow involved in the equation.

10:57

We also have a volunteer core and we're somehow involved in the equation. We also have a volunteer core and we do a policy on behalf of the We're the only French group in the United States that has conservation director.

11:06

Most of them have something called the program. But we've oriented directly to the mission of the Park Service, which deals with cultural and natural preservation.

11:16

That's what we do too. And they're for you in this bus now the park system at our call national parks and only 200 friends.

11:25

So the job is to job is big and I'll finish with this that I think the time has come in that.

11:31

Evolution of the national parks. Which started in 1892 or so and we're formalized in 1916 that the best parks have French groups that are very active and successful.

11:41

If the parks that don't have active and successful groups, France groups don't do as well generally even in their own funding, not just what can be stop on the term.

11:56

That's why I think the friends groups undoubtedly bring a huge margin of excellence to our national hearts.

12:07

I like to say, you know, they help us be more creative and innovative. Because if I have an idea, I can go to friends, and say, here's an idea.

12:15

And let's see if we can find a way to maybe put a seed to this. And give it a try to pilot something and and piloting things you know that's sort of like a that's like a code word for saying hey we're gonna try something that everyone doesn't have to get too excited about it, but we're just gonna try and see how it works and and that's where friends groups can really

12:33

come in and help us. Yeah, thanks. Yeah, I'm looking forward to explore this a little bit more too.

12:40

And I guess I'd just like to share a little bit more too. And I guess I'd just like to share a little bit of my connection with Acadia.

12:46

And as mentioned, I'm from Maine. Citizen member of the POPs God Nation. Spent a lot of time doing outdoor activities for growing up. And I, and some of my earliest memories actually.

12:57

Is going to Acadia. Digging clams and going to places, near a Katy National Park.

13:04

And. And that really kind of led to my love for the outdoors and kind of outdoor careers.

13:11

So I went to the University of May. And graduated with the Bachelors of Science in Park Corporation and Tourism.

13:19

And, and what was really valuable going to school here in Orneau was the ability to go to KD.

13:28

I worked it. Seasonally at Acadia while I was going to school here as a dispatcher that I worked at Seawall Campground and then I worked as a law enforcement ranger all at KDO while I was undergrad.

13:39

University of Maine. And. Really met some great mentors that. Prepared me to.

13:47

Work out West, but eventually I thought my way back to teaching the same program that I graduated from. 1998.

13:55

And. And actually some of the same people who are working at Acadia when I when I was working there seasonally.

14:04

And, anyways, and that really kind of connected me to some of the research needs. And also for me to kind of witness the partnerships.

14:13

Role that friends of Acadia had with the Kady National Park on some of the projects that I was involved with.

14:19

And, so really, I, it's really something special that I think we'll start to see as we kind of describe some of the partner partnerships and experiments in some cases that were done to kind of test new ideas.

14:32

Because I really feel the, national park. Is really kind of a leader in some ways in terms of thinking through some of the visitor management strategies.

14:43



Yeah, with growing numbers of visitors. And not to be biased being from Maine and working at Acadia.

14:50

It's still one of my favorite desktop. I've worked in. So, but one of the things that I observed, as a ranger early on, you know, parks are popular, lots of visitors.

15:03

But really it has really rammed up in terms of the popularity of our national parks and the visitation that our parks are getting.

15:12

And so again, you know, one place that I could that we could talk about is again kind of visitor management thinking about all the people that would want to come to Acadia National Park and sometimes it can be pretty busy and thinking through strategies and keeping a park and enjoyable positive experience.

15:33

And maybe, Kevin, you can talk about, again, kind of the mission of the park, kind of that dual mandate.

15:39

And some of the challenges that's associated with kinda. You know, providing that visitor enjoyment at our national parks. We have increasing numbers of visitors. Yeah, John is that there's a lot there in that question.

15:53

And, you know, I got my bachelor degree in the same program more or less as you did in, so I have a love for visitors management because that's sort of what what I got my degree in and you know our visitary Spanish because that's sort of what what I got my degree in and you know our visitation in Acadia in about a ten-year time frame is increased by 70%.

16:10

And that's pretty exponential and at the same time our budget has more or less stayed flat and in fact when you adjust for inflation our budgets down about 17 or 18% and so you know managing this increasing volume of visitation people want to come to the market they want to have a great experience they want to have a transformative life-changing experience.

16:31

Those are the kinds of experiences that Acadia offers. And yet our mission at the same time is to preserve these places on impaired for future generations.

16:40

And so, you know, folks have thought of this as this dual mandate of doing both of these things. Allowing for enjoying it, but preserving unimpaired. And really we have interpreted that mission to to say that preserving the parks upon impaired is first and foremost.

16:53

Because future generations won't be able to enjoy them if they're not unimpaired in the first place.

16:59

And so really, you know, we're sort of like as a manager, you're sort of like a physician in the sense of do no harm, you know, we want to make sure that we don't harm these places so that they can continue to be transformative and inspirational for the future.

17:13

And that really sort of sets up like this question about how do you how do you manage a place like, in a context of visitation that's increased by 70% stakeholders that you know want many different things from the park communities for whom the park is very very important economically and and socially you know people moved to Mount there's an island to retire to build up like in the park to bike in the park. It's why I live on Desert Island.

17:39

So I can also be a visitor in the park. So it's a complicated environment. Yeah, and Katie is a poorest park. It was the first part of the established on the east and seaboard pretty much and it was created our private property so it was a bunch of patches and those the effect of those patches lives on today many many entrances to some form or something, which adds to your problem of management.

18:04

Also just on a bigger issue you raise about parks beginning to be or are being overwhelmed. The population part of the US Census Bureau, the population of the US in at the turn of this century this the 21.

18:19

The 20 first century that we're in. Is was 300 million people and right now today just 23 years after that we're about 330 million people.

18:33

The moderate projection that the Census Bureau has like, 2,050 is 400 million.

18:39

So that's a gain of a hundred 1 million. In under 50 years. And so my sort of the torque question is where are they going to go?

18:47

Not only just Linux space and resources, things like that, but as people having a human greater desire need to recreate, where do they go?

18:57

Things are so crowded as they are now. It's supply the map, right? And this is where it's like, I think, top, wood, water.

19:06

It's like, you know, the demand for these outdoor recreational experiences is huge, especially the growing population.

19:13

The supply isn't necessarily changing. Maybe we're adding some parks and protected areas and you know people want to have these recreational experiences and I think it points to the notion of you know trying to conserve when or people enjoy for say the climate change to be able to have places that could be published with our resiliency and adapt to it a change in the future, but clearly we need to check these special places.

19:37

I don't want to correct something I said down earlier and that is that it was 1872 that the first part was funded not 1892 we apologize The people that Yellowstone and Yeah, and you know, again, one of my first exposures, you know, in terms of the partnerships, you know, in terms of the partnerships that I saw.

19:57

Between the Katie National Parks that I saw between the Katie National Park and friends of Acadia National Park and friends of Acadia. Was a project that was being proposed. Around the Island Explorer bus system. And at the time it was pretty, there wasn't a lot of kind of bus transit systems and national parks like we see today.

20:14

So, data was really kind of on the front edge kind of thinking through ways of managing visitors. Instead of, again, we're talking about a pretty small park, right, instead of building parking lots to take up that natural space.

20:24

How can we kind of think through a system where we can get visitors to those locations. And you know, even though again, Acadia is kind of unique, right?

20:37

It has lots of entry points. It has hotels and campgrounds that are in very close proximity to the park.

20:45

And really what was so innovative I thought related to that bus system was integrating the community. Where people would leave their cars parked where they're staying if they're not staying in a national park camp room and they could pick up that bus there going to Bar Harbor.

21:00

And then use the bus to get into the park. And. And really, and I think it was the reason why Acadia was also kind of awarded a kind of field operational test site looking out of technologies to see what can be done to encourage more use of buses.

21:14

Getting people under their cars. Again, when we're talking about populations, they're not used to using public transit.

21:22

And I think really some of the things that are done. Between friends of Kenya and a Canadian national practice pretty innovative.

21:30

And I wondered if you could share some of that partnership that was sure on that. And also want to acknowledge your own work in a study pre study of the ID of the bus system and your.

21:41

Conclusion, one of many that, that needed to be free in order to, in order to be successful.

21:47

There was at the time before the, explorable system. How many? There are 35 or so buses that are literally 5 buses and it is the largest bus system in Maine when it's operating.

22:03

In a group of 2 little Jimmy like buses that, that were run by the non, wood, county's transportation, which runs the buses now.

22:14

And they were running a couple of bus lines down from Hellsworth into the into the sort of central part of our hardware hotel rooms.

22:23

And, the, then transportation planner is stuck with you just along. Tom Crippler, his name is.

22:30

And it's not any other transportation efforts. Came into the office one day with the head of Downing's transportation is a very taciturn fellow.

22:39

Didn't say very much, but Tom said, can friends of Acadia come up with some money to pay for the \$2 a head that we're charging on the present bus system.

22:51

To see if we take the \$2 off. Well, the wireship would be enforced. And I remember this now sick and it came out about \$6,000 and I have a discretionary fund at the time and didn't have to go to the board for it.

23:05

So, let's try and see what happens. And it was a, it was a massive success that rider should jump really large.

23:11

And then the next year, the number was 7,600 bucks. It was asked for. And that gave it and then showed, yeah, so pretty well confirmed that it had to be free.

23:20

It is today a fair free bus, but What's really paying for entities and things like that? And then, for example, from LLV.

23:29

We went down on the Park Service too. To see if they would be interested. And if you've been down to the CDI, on Explorer, you know, it's going to, on the side and ask them for a million and a half bucks, they gave us a million and they repeated that, several times now and they're just So this is the private sector coming in to try to help with the margin

23:53

of excellence. Beamed up something out of it. It got its name on the lesson and has done its own marketing research. That's told them this fact, real order for them. We know that anyhow, but they, they' it to themselves.

24:05

But that's an example where private enterprise can put a little risk money down and help.

24:16

That's great. And why I really liked about that partnership was kind of that community buy in. Again, seeing more and more visitors, but then how do we have those visitors move around?

24:22

Thinking through. You know, getting them out of their cars, maybe less pollution only on. So it's almost like a quality of life even for residents.

24:37

And other visitors right in terms of less. The buses were helping to contribute everybody's phone bus that you see.

24:46

There's 30 plus riders of it I guess is according to The figures, 10 cars off the road. And if you think it's crowded now, imagine what it was, or, or tried to be.

24:57

If those 10 cars on the road, that's all those buses times all those hours of operations are in effect.

25:03

Start a little thing that has continued to talk about how many cars were removed the first year and he talked about, you, a car backed up from the top of Cadillac.

25:20

. The number of cars that we've been on the road, back up. The number of cars that were in on the road, were back up.

25:29

So that was the first, that was about the first time. Now, the, the, the backup traffic jam bumper, the backup traffic jam bumper to number, goes down to what else worth it, the backup traffic jam bumper to Melbourne goes down to what else worth it.

25:41

It's down on the east coast of the United States. Goes around you all over it goes down to what else worth it. It's down to what else worth it. It's down the east coast of the United States.

25:47

Goes up to California. Have you interested in fire apply this transportation plan which has been a serious Seriously.

25:57

Yeah, yeah, it has the and the buses I just said too, you know, we just piloted the first electric buses this past month. And so we had 2 different manufacturers bring their electric buses. We put them on an explorer.

26:09

So, you know, the buses were always propane fuel. We're now looking at they get in, so you know the buses were always propane fuel.

26:16

We're now looking at it in the lecture and looking invested in an electric infrastructure. So I think that's great. 600,000 passengers before the pandemic. Or the numbers for Ireland Explorer. That's a lot of cars off the road.

26:27

And, and one of our challenges is, drivers. If you know anyone who's a commercial driver and wants to come to acadia for the summer, come work for Ireland Explorer because it's a great job and but we need drivers you know I don't explore would like to hire as many as 120 drivers.

26:43

This year we only had about 75 and that's been consistent for the last several years. So you know these are challenges we'd like to expand.

26:51

I'll explore even, but, we're really limited in our ability because of, drives.

26:58

And can you kind of that into the broader transportation plan? And, and you know, I think that's one of the challenges. It's managing success. So when visitation goes from say 3 million, when you might have worked for Brent's Acadia to 4 million, which is what it's been for the last couple of years.

27:14

You know, that's an incredible growth curve. And how do you, and even if 3 million visits a year, the park was very busy and extremely crowded.

27:22

And how do you manage that success? How do you go about visitor use management? I think there are a number of national parks that are thinking about this. It's not just Acadia, other parts across the country are also thinking about it. And it's really, really important because we want people to have these high quality experiences and that's where the park a few years ago did a comprehensive plan to look at transportation and Acadia, effectively a visitors management plan.

27:47

And you can see the impacts of that or the, so the initial, decisions with that with the catalog mountain reservation system. We launched that in 2020. As a pilot, odd year pilot because it was right in the pandemic.

28:02

But that pilot was very successful and and then we continued it for the full season in 2021.2 and 23 and and really what that is about is trying to manage.

28:14

The number of spaces we have parking spaces at Cadillac Mountain. And I like to tell people that you get a reservation for Cadillac.

28:21

It's the one place in acadia in July or August that I can promise you, you'll find a place to park. You can't say that about anywhere else. But if you have a reservation, you'll get it.

28:28

And people have great experiences as a result of that. And what were the shutdown times before you got to this plan?

28:38

Describe those so many when you had to close them off. Yeah, in 2018 I think we had about 80 times that we closed the road because of traffic we literally would get time 1 one calls from people saying they were stuck in traffic on a side of a Cadillac mountain.

28:54

And so imagine if a ranger had to respond to an emergency at the. Imagine if someone needed an 8, for example.

29:01

And that ranger is Not even to get through 30 min of, cork doubt traffic.

29:08

And you know, that's not the experience that people are coming to Arcadia National Park to provide and that's that's really what this notion of vehicle reservation comes in is we have this asset of parking and it's and it's utilizing that that available parking but trying to manage it to sort of the turnover rate of that parking to the to the amount of cars that it can accommodate and and not

29:30

more. I'm soon the the return of, from, soon the, gateway, Katie Gateway Center will be in fuller operation than it is now.

29:40

That's where the the bus operations base out of, be in Alzheimer's, based out of this spot, halfway between elsewhere.

29:51

And the other there is have have day visitors primarily leave their cars and get on the buses there. We know that overnight visitors have their luggage and their, you know, their switches and their stuff on the top of the car and backpacks and all that they can't just offload.

30:11

We think with the amount of data's attention that we can offload a bunch into this system and get on those buses before they get to the parking before they get to the.

30:20

So that's gonna be interesting. Why? It will. Yeah, that'll open in 2025 great partnership project with the state of Maine in the Bronx, Pedia with the Federal Transit Administration, main also tourism is going to be there.

30:27

An opportunity also not just market Acadia but a broader slice of the state as well. Go to the Gold Coast, go to these other other locations too, that are also great to visit.

30:42

And, and so that will become sort of a welcome center and then an opportunity for people to leave their girls behind their speaking of that particular partnership. When the federal government was interested in having transportation experimentation done. This is an equivalent error, I think.

30:59

The It was a that, arcs get partnerships set up with signatories and they were 22, when, Paul Hartel, the superintendent.

31:12

22 signatories to the creation of that. Explorer buses. There far fewer in it now, but it took those to to launch it and the the kind of federal money we haven't really seen before K you this transit money and stuff like that.

31:26

Came in as a result. Friends are paying his role as a private individual entity besides being a signatory to the agreement was to.

31:35

Which to, get the private funding set up and the one more thing I want to mention.

31:41

I'll think of it later, sorry. So I know, we've got the option on the property.

31:47

We We were able to go in and buy a piece of property for so \$100,000 after negotiating an option that became this area.

31:55

And that was another role that we apply that you couldn't that's now property owned by the

32:04

Yeah, and again, you know, related to the transportation. That the coordination again, at the federal level, the state of main.

32:14

Friends of Acadia, others, it's just really impressive. And even other businesses, right?

32:20

Because sugar loaf and other ski resort areas actually look. To help the design of the ONE Explorer was being used, how they might implement.

32:27

Really? Their work? Yeah, Sugar Buff Explorer. So, I did wanna touch on some of the other partnerships.

32:41

Commitments I think friends of has really kind of stepped up the plane, help work with, you know, in terms of some of the trail endowment money for maintenance.

32:54

Also just with support with you know, even with some of the research in terms of assessing the visitor experience.

33:04

Which I think is really vital when you have something new that's being proposed and developed. They've been involved in that and also tried to understand kind of the diversity of new visitors who are coming as we have more more visitors they tend to be more diverse visitors and A few years ago they helped.

33:26

Look at new trends with electric bikes and how that might be managing the case. So again, it's kind of that visitor management and work of a new visitors.

33:35

They have the stewardship program at a cat like or educating visitors about. Keep no trace. Just a lot of kinda cooperation there if you can add a little bit to that. Yeah, sure. So even the reservation system at Cadillac Mountain is something that couldn't have been done.

33:46

Without the support of Franz Picadia. So friends of Acadia had a number of pieces that they helped with, you know, for building reservation system, we have to understand what's the turnover rate.

34:01



What's the average length of state, for example, at the summit of Cadillac Mountain. It's different than it might be a Jordan pond or a sandwich. And so we needed to understand that we needed to understand how people come throughout the day there, what their patterns of behavior are.

34:08

And so FOI funded a visitor survey and then a model to develop essentially a visitor use model for the Southern Cadillac Mountain.

34:22

So we could use that so we knew how many reservations to sell at any given time of the day, you know, once your parking lot turnover or you want to manage that parking lot to be say, 90% full.

34:33

So there's a handful of spaces, but it's not. You don't want to under fill it and leave, you know, visitors aren't able to get out there.

34:39

We also don't want overfill too. So where's that sweet spot? That was funded by FOA. As I mentioned in 2,020, we sort of built these homemade kiosks to validate reservations and it was all very home spun.

34:52

But we, and we realized based on the success of that pilot for 3 weeks in 2020 that we needed to make roadway improvements, for example, we needed to bring electricity to the site.

35:01

We need to bring internet to site so that if you have your phone and you have your reservation, our rangers could validate.

35:07

But yeah, that you have a legitimate reservation. And so, FOA was able to pay for the traffic's the study to look at how we make the place safe for our folks to work.

35:16

I always have a fun bringing high voltage electricity to sites. We could light up our kiosk and bring the internet to the site.

35:23

You know, and they did that in the federal government. You know, one of the joys of working the federal government is, is that we like to take our time to do things and even procurement.

35:33

And so as we're trying to get the site set up literally in that time between Memorial Day when reservations first start and when the snow melts and say April you know you have a very limited window in which you can do road work there for us and so EPA was able to fund that to make it happen like that and not have to go through our federal procurement process, which would have made it

35:57

impossible to open by memorial. And that's the kind of excellence that a partner can bring. You can, you're so much more agile. You know, you can, you can do things without going through some of our process.

36:04

Yeah. And one of the things that really I was there for 10 years and they a lot of what, chemists describing this stuff has happened since then.

36:16

And it's, I think I watch, I've watched the organization become even, I think, more presentating has just been great and partnerships.

36:24

I found it about 4 million. I was there and I got up about 18 million. Now around 60 million assets, I think.

36:31

I forgot to look at the inner report, but it's that's the ability of the organization to act good.

36:37

Fundraising enables us to enact good. We are philanthropists and the word philanthropy comes from.

36:43

Of the words fill, which means long and anthropos, which change in time. And we are hoping human kind by getting money and we're not free to raise money. It's certainly true of my successors. But I want to say that on the scheme thing that you mentioned, different speeds.

36:59

One thing I truly enjoyed about about working for Dustin, for, for, 10 years as CEO.

37:05

Was the relationship park in regard to to making the speed the relative speeds work because a good non-profit works at 4 The government works at government speed.

37:15

So the object is to have an understanding of what your partner needs in terms of his speed requirements. There's a flow down.

37:27

Let's get You have to honor because we have dollars that want to see results. Not always gonna happen 5 years from now.

37:34

A good example of where the flexibility of Park was on like you mentioned the trails program after after theensicated before my time created the character of the balance.

37:46

We got quickly into something called a cadet transfer, which created endowments for the trails. And we went to your, you know, you had jumped to Casey for a while before you retired, great engineer who ran a lot of the practical aspects of the park and he said, well, we have this thing called the PMIS, the project management information.

38:07

And if you want to help us out with trails, the trails are at number 40 on this list and we logically have to go down from one to 40 and so we were able to strike a deal with the Paul Hartel, by your processors.

38:23

And gender Casey that, well, what if you put it up to the top and we came up with 9 million dollars and you came up with 4 million through the demonstration program.

38:35

Which you did that enable. That the Park Service is super flexible, got trails right up at the top where they belong and that they won't.

38:42

The other thing that happened to trails that I think was really interesting was Jim is a very logical fellow. And so then, you know, we've got, 111 miles, I think, of the having trail, but we've got a hundred 50, to.

38:57

I may have the numbers, you know. The peak of trails in mileage was during the war, About, 1945, 44 in there.

39:08

And he said we've got these beat up, you know, regular trail. So why should we put funds into abandoned press? And we said, well, how about this?

39:17

If you can do even you know 10% of the abandoned trail mileage 10% over your total knowledge that you're gonna work on a summer.

39:26

That can be the little that you did for abandoned trails and then you could put 90% to the other trails that really really needed that would satisfy the big dogs.

39:36

And we have 5 9. Don't leave me. It's just family that sort of met in court. And the answer is yes, we can do that. So what we saw. We saw flexibility in what you were willing to do.

39:52

And the answer is yes, we can do that. So what we saw, we saw flexibility in what you were willing to do and we would like to go to the donors and explain that. And it's worked out. Absolutely. No, our trails endowment today is crucial. And we have, you know, one of the things that Transit Dam does, and I've worked in a Yellowstone National Park.

40:03

I've worked in Grant Teamown Rock. I worked in a Schroper at Rocky Mountain National Park and all they know. I'll say something about that in a minute. But. What the private philanthropy has done is that Acadia has some of the most skilled trailspokes, than that there are a national heart system.

40:18

And it's because of a couple things. One is we have a stable funding source. We have an endowment. That's more stable than congressional funding, more stable than anything else. And so that means that they have year after year, they have projects and they have a job year after year.

40:33

So we have year round workforce for our trail group. And then because of the endowment, our folks are able to not just take a trail and maintain it sort of fast and dirty and get it done so that it's durable and well-, but they're actually even able to maintain into a historical standard.

40:50

You know, one of the things that makes a Katie is special is many of our trails are historic. We're the only national park with the entire trail system listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

41:00

So our trail crew will go and figure out, you know, what did that, how does that stream cross in, 1916?

41:07

And they'll restore it to that standard. They'll go back and look at just for photographs and try to understand that and they'll restore to that standard and that really is a much higher level of stewardship than most other parts can apply and it's because of the Friends of Acadia and for trails.

41:22

And the other thing I wanted to say about trails is that, you know, If you're a student listening to this, my summer job in college was working on the truck through at Rocky Mountain National Park.

41:33

And if you like the hike, I'd say it's the best job there is for National Park Service because you get the hike with the chains on a shovel.

41:40

And, anyway, it's a place where, you know, shovel. And, anyway, it's a place where, you know, folks who are, students, just, it's, it's great way to just be out there for the summer.

41:49

Yeah. Well, I wanna leave time for questions and maybe some students will have some questions. But I did want to cover one other area that really impressed me with the partnerships that I've learned over the years.

41:59

And, you know, with the COVID-19 and the transition of how we teach and communicate with Zoom and people able to join our conversation tonight.

42:11

I do really kinda change the landscape and our education system. And There's some negative, but I think there's also some positive in terms of who can participate, who can join.

42:26

If you have internet. But it really expands the potential impact of, of you, in, the Katie National Park because what really impresses me over these past few years is the educational program that within the interpretation staff.

42:42

The Institute reaching out to some of the communities in Maine kind of doing remote education still in person. But in all the national program, the programming that they do now.

42:54

Talking about a Katie National Park in Maine and the ecosystems of Maine so that people in the Midwest learn more.

43:01

It really impressed me and I know a lot of that educational program is supported with transformative through staffing and funds and equipment.

43:08

They have the green screen like whether people have, where you can have a different backgrounds. And the outreach is impressive.

43:16

And I'm sure that must impress some of the. What's that? The different levels of public outreach that's kind of going on.

43:22

You know, and I think, one of the hazards in this business is because you can attract some of the hazards in in this business is because you can attract some being in main on a Gold Coast main.

43:34

You can attract some really big funders and one of the objects is again consistent with the Parks mission.

43:41

And consistent with our ideals as philanthropists. How do we have the ordinary American? Right, or visit of any kind.

43:49

Feel wanted and represented by in this case a friends organization. You have a democratic kind of, mission yourself. Democracy is the parks, I think. You know, they've already represent democracy. And we had to be very careful in some of our campaign structures to make sure that the person who gave \$5 was as well appreciated as the couple that gave 5 million dollars.

44:11

And you learn to say thank you for all that. And How many volunteers work too? One for one of our top volunteers came in when we kind of were rumbling about doing this 13 million dollar campaign on trails and said in the privacy of the office.

44:28

I'm afraid that you're gonna put us out of business as trail volunteers. I said, I don't think so. I think it's gonna increase your work and make it more important, which it has. It has. It's going to increase your work and make it more important, which it has. It has.

44:40

It's a big volunteer program now Our volunteers come in, Katie, Friends, Mikadia Pays for the people who run that part of it.

44:48

With the parks VIP person visitor experience was that on volunteer and parks coordinator. Yeah, yeah, yeah, so that's another partnership.

44:58

But yeah, it's funny, it's for everybody. And we have to orient our pitches that way too.

45:05

Yeah. Very good. Yeah, did you wanna? Oh, just the education programs, are phenomenal.

45:11

We have, you know, the Scudic Institute, which is our other nonprofit partner at a Katie National Park operates the Scooter Institute campus and they're really a research of educational organization.

45:20

So it's a great example how we have friends of Acadia, which books, philanthropy, volunteerism, advocacy. Scudic Institute is really focused on education and research. And so it's a really nice compliment and we have this wonderful campus on this good it gets to do where everything from from kids you know we have school groups there this week who are participating in an immersive outdoor education program called Student Education Adventure.

45:45

Thanks to, and other contributors to that. They go out with Park Rangers, into the inner title area, they get their hands dirty and they go out with Park Rangers into the inner tidal area. They go out with Park Rangers, into the inner tidal area. They get their hands dirty and they, you know, the inner tidal area, they get their hands dirty and they, you know, go find some sea stars or maybe some green crabs and measure green crabs and, you know, of course there are non native species.

46:06

And so, just an incredible and everything from that, all the way to, you know, cutting edge research occurring on climate change. There's a special on main PBS right now about soil to summits where we're hiking soil into the top of Sargent Mountain to restore the sum of the Sargent Mountain of art.

46:19

That's through a scientist from Sputnik Institute also through support, friends of Acadia. So it's this it's really this web of partnerships that allow this stuff to grow through like this.

46:31

These are just some of the examples of the partnerships. That I think make a really special relationship, things that really make.

46:40

Really matter what you can really see some positive effect of partnerships. And, Acadia. And Prince of Acadia, I think it's a real role model, I think, for other.

46:53

Places in the United States. In terms of, of that kind of relationship that can build. Is there anything else you want to share before we open it up for some questions? Just to comment on that, we were talking earlier before the program started formally. About.

47:09

We have, we have a relationship with the part that is guided by a memorandum of agreement.

47:15

I don't know what's called now but that's what they used to be called. And so it's not contract per day. I don't know what's called now, but that's what they used to be called. And so it's not a contract per city, but it's, we have ready to do this if you agree to that.

47:22

I call that the good fences makes good neighbors policy. You know, this kind of thing what we're supposed to do, but there are parks where the friends operation, the park operation, really odds with each other.

47:34

It's a sad to see, but it's true. And you can, the, and probably in both accounts in each, each time.

47:40

So it's not the paperwork that we have, the formal paywork that makes the partnership, it's the mutual respect.

47:47

It's the coincidence mission, the deliberate coincidence. It's appreciating what professionals are in both places.

47:54

It's making sure that there's open communication. I remember when I was fired, one of the things I was talking about was communication.

48:02

I said presentation should never criticize the park service in public if we want to achieve something that's a little bit sensitive is to be done in camera.

48:12

That's when you have disagreements and how you work them out. But the rest of it is respect and I think that's why it works. And myself, it's a whole lot of relationships. Okay, so why don't we if there's a question I heard is there any question on the on the zoom? Yeah, good question. Actually, I started the first one.

48:39

You touched on this, briefly, but, Stephanie Should we be shipping part connection for our online or their education programs?

48:48

Be on our engagement programs for student workers and engagement. There's nothing comparable to having experience in the park, but I'm interested in hearing your opinions on how

49:04

Well, you mentioned the green screen, but FOA bought us the green screen. And that has allowed us to take some of our education programs to schools around the country. Even around the world and and that has allowed us to take some of our education programs to schools around the country.

49:18

We've been around the world, and bring a Katie to the classroom. Obviously, there is no replacement for, for being in the park, but having that ability to sort of broadcast virtually. The pandemic caused us to upargate very, very quickly on this. You know, we weren't really that that conversant doing some of these programs online, but suddenly we had to because that was the best way we could as class as we're going remote.

49:35

And, and so I think it's, I think it's crucial, you know, when I worked at a grantee time, Grand Teton National Park had a great program that they did that was an online program called Snow Desk where they built like the visitor center desk out of snow.

49:48

And the Rangers stood there and and filmed to people around the world doing Ranger LED programs through that snow desk. So I think the public expects it now for programs like this one that. So I think the public expects it now for programs like this one that you have a have an online component and it does allow for programs like this one that you have a public expects it now for programs like this one that you have, for programs like this one that you have, have an online component and it does allow us to reach new audiences.

50:12

You know, you have, have an online component and it does allow us to reach new audiences. You know, we know, at a Katie National Park, we need to diversify our visitors, our workforce.

50:18

It's really, really important to us. And so every little thing we can do, even if it's broadcasting online, that helps to get to that that goal is really important.

50:25

Yeah, yeah, I think Stephanie has a good point too in terms of thinking about future recruitment.

50:31

For employees interested in working for the National Park Service or other areas because that is really kind of a need, isn't it, Kevin, in terms of Billing up here we have students coming, you know, they're getting their degree in our, in tourism, but there's so many job offers.

50:48

How do we, how do we, them to work for a Katie National Park? You'd love to have them.

50:54

You'd love to have them. Actually, you'd have quite a track record of sending people to us. We do have some alumni there. Yes, and some of them actually still to it or haven't done in the past. What was then called?

51:06

The, Ridge Runner program and now it's called Son of Stewards and a lot of people interested in natural resource management and our study had come from Morneau and spend the summer helping out down there getting a really good professional experience and contacts and sometimes full-time jobs can emanate from that.

51:24



You know, and one of the things I love about working for the National Park Service is you're contributing to something so much bigger than yourself.

51:30

And you know. Granted the frustrations that come with working for the federal government, obviously, but but the sense of mission and the spirit to core within our workforce is so strong and it's and it's that's what keeps you coming back every day and of course getting a little of these beautiful places that everyone wants to go to.

51:46

On vacation is also is also really special too, but it's a great job and and you know there are a lot of opportunities to come work course whether it's for a summer or for a year-round musician and if you Google Acadia National Park jobs you can find our website and learn more about all the different kind of career fields that are out there.

52:06

But we hire everything from, you said engineers, historians, archaeologists, park rangers, most people think of it as part rangers, but it's so much more than that to biologists, ecologists.

52:18

It labors commercial drivers that run our heavy equipment. Carpenters, electricians, plumbers, you know, the list goes on.

52:31

So it takes a village to educate a national park run. It really takes all the different skill sets and backgrounds.

52:39

Yeah. Very good. Thank you. Other question?

52:45

Is there another one? Yeah. So, and then, just been asked, do you think that the lack of people flying for the Open Highland Explorer bus driver jobs relates to the lack of, available, Really?

53:02

Yeah, thank you. Yes, I too. No doubt about it. If you don't have housing, with your position, it's almost impossible to find housing in, in Mount Desert Island or even Ellsworth or Trenton.

53:15

This is a big, challenge for us. It's something we're actively working through public private partnerships solved.

53:22

I'm really excited to say that this year, friends of Acadia bought a button breakfast for Acadia National Park.

53:29

And so that's 10 beds for our workforce. Thanks to FOA in the task Southwest Harbor.

53:35

They didn't take any year round housing off the market. This was a V and and so a very appropriate purchase, great location. That'll provide 10 beds. Fela is looking at building some additional housing near Jordan Pod on in holding, that'll provide more events.

53:50

So we've realized that that housing is actually one of the most important things we can do is support our workforce.

53:58

And, and, you know, whether you're seasonal or even a permanent, you know, the cost of living here has really accelerated and at a pace that's far off, to see the wage growth for our workforce.

54:11

And so it's really, really important. It's also really important to diversity, equity and inclusion to making sure that if we want to be a diverse work place and be an inclusive workplace that we are able to offer.

54:25

Okay, good questions in the audience. It sounds like we were super intended to have quite a bit of authority as far as what we can and cannot do to working with groups.

54:33

Is that true? And has it always been that way? Is it been something?

54:44

I would ask you how much autonomy Kevin has with his position to be able to make decisions or has it and has it always been the way it is or is it involved a lot over time?

54:55

Yeah, that's a great question. It's a interesting one. I think, in general, one of the successes, one of the things that has made the National Park Service successful is that National Park superintendents have had significant autonomy operating within a set of comprehensive management policies and a set of guidelines but you know part superintendent have had the ability to work with their communities or their partners to kind of get business done.

55:19

You know, one of my leadership strategies is proceeded to apprehended. And you know most of the time you won't be able to take a president, take a calculated risk.

55:34

And, and, you know, most of the time, you won't be apprehended, right. And so, populated rest. Obviously, we're not gonna do anything that's really inappropriate, but I think, that kind of sort of, obviously we're not gonna do anything that's really inappropriate, but I think, that kind of sort of, I'd say aggressive kind of thinking is important and working with partners to be able to get stuff done.

55:50

I'm sure you have a perspective on this too. Yeah, I've seen situations in which the, yeah, I've seen situations in which the, especially with the new superintendent. In which the, especially with the new superintendent, there is a Sort of a tentativeness and a diffidence and stuff like that about decision making and you know, doesn't skirt the edges.

56:07

We're not we're not doing anything wrong but there is a the farther way you get from a national park the way you get from a national park the more you get into the regional offices in the national office is in the national office the less understanding there is of

philanthropy is in the national office, the less understanding there is of philanthropy because fundraising news from Washington eyes is the dirty stuff we hear about every  
56:24

day in politics. So we've had a hard time, I think. Except at the back level.

56:30

Explaining then what philanthropy is. It's a good thing that adds value to national parks and it's not to be as regulated as I think it is.

56:38

I think it's overregulated myself. But, And just because of this view that. This is kind of the dirty money. Sets. And they have matured about flying to be down there. I don't think. Say it's great.

56:51

Yeah. Hmm. Other questions? Did you have a question on Zoom? There is but if you want to go, yes.

57:11

My name is Peach and you mentioned a number of challenges and opportunities. I was wondering if you could paint a picture of a media, 5 in 10 years from now.

57:24

Wow, great question. I think, you know, clearly the, long as the most important long term challenge that we're facing is climate change.

57:30

Climate change has the potential or will, you know, dramatically. Change how we think about Acadia.

57:43

So in a 5 or 10 years time span, if we were to rewind 5 or 10 years, I would walk climate change with something that's gonna happen in the future somewhere, you know, maybe after I'm retired.

57:54

And I was wrong. And climate change is super seeing now. And so we're seeing. You know, as everyone I think knows in this room, events that are weather events that are, that are not within sort of the historic norm.

58:07

And so 5 or 10 years now, we're gonna see more of those. 5 or 10 years from now our visitation may be 4.5 million and so that's really what this transportation plan is trying to set us up to think about how do we sort of grapple with that growth?

58:22

You know, we're looking at having a vehicle reservation system for Jordan Pop. Another place that's overly congested where you can't find a place to park today. There was literally cars blocking the parking lot during upon Harker, legally, that be told. You know, that's not the kind of experience we want to provide for.

58:39

And so other places like even Ocean Drive, you know, potentially a vehicle reservation system for ocean drive in the park to manage to this capacity of available parking.

58:46

We have. I think we'll have a, I hope we have times buses in 10 years. And that'll help with that driver problem. Perhaps, you know, that's really exciting to think about how they're electric and carbon neutral.

59:04

We have solar on our facilities in 10 years. So that the parks operations are carbon neutral. I hope we have housing for all of our seasonal workforce and much of our permanent workforce in that time span.

59:19

Yeah. Keeping those high quality visitor experiences because one thing when I was a ranger working so many years ago there and what I'm there now doing research.

59:32

It's undeniable just what environment it is to be in just when you're encountering, you get away or high, you know, it's just a positive environment to be in when you're in a national park and when you're interacting with other visitors people are in a good Yeah, and so it's just a nice place to it's a nice place to work.

59:55

Yeah, so we did have another question. Oh, we have a couple of great ones. So the first, question is, what is the number one challenge. So the first, question is, what is the number one challenge in the K today? You might understand.

1:00:12

And then we have another one. Yeah. So the challenge we're facing like right in front of us is really housing.

1:00:19

And so, you know, we have another one. Yeah, so the challenge we're facing like right in front of us is really housing. And so, you know, we had. Yeah. So the challenge we're facing, like right in front of us, is really housing.

1:00:27

And so, you know, we had, summer workforce, about 100 and so, you know, we had, summer. And so, you know, we had, summer workforce, about 115 and yet we needed a workforce of 175 in the summer.

1:00:38

So we were short, you know, some 55, 60 positions, this summer you know all these all these sort of cascading effects and that's that's really partly because of housing and so we have on now that about events for our workforce so you can very quickly see you know the map between 175 is what we need we have 80 beds we're only able to hire a hundred 15 somehow

1:00:57

we gotta we've got to address that and you know it is just not awesome for someone to come work for us with summer and not be able to have housing that we provide. We don't provide, you know, come work for summer and not be able to have housing that we provide.

1:01:11

We don't provide, you know, anything elaborate, but you know, people need to bed and they need to over there over their over their housing.

1:01:17

So that's where working friends of Acadia, we're really trying to change that, to change those numbers, change those dynamics and FOA is able to bring private dollars.

1:01:24

I've always able to be the accelerator pedal with buying, for example, the Kingsley in the BET breakfast or helping to develop housing out of Park In holding.

1:01:32

This is where these partnerships are really, really important.

1:01:39

Yeah, and then another question. Can we talk about what the for us will look like in 2050 or 2,100.

1:01:48

Will look like in twenty-fifty or 2,100. Will look like in twenty-fifty or 2,100. Will the rest still be there? Are you engaging in assisted population range? These migration, keep the core, help in the future. Yeah, that's one that, my colleagues at the part think a lot about. You know, 100 years from now we know that a CAD is for us are gonna look different.

1:02:04

We think that there's of the 10 most populous tree species in Acadia, 7 are likely to decline. Red Spruce could be one of them. Spruce declines on the coast of Maine.

1:02:15

It's gonna look a lot different. You know, it's not gonna look like what we think about the coast domain to look about like in red spruces by far the most dominant tree in Acadia National Park.

1:02:21

So how do we think about this? I think this is philosophically one of the most interesting questions of our day.

1:02:32

I got my degree from Colorado State University. Which has a great natural resources, reckon tourism program.

1:02:38

In 1998, and yet this wasn't something I was trained in as a student of how to think about climate change. We knew about climate change, but it was something out in the future. It wasn't something that I was academically being prepared to confront.

1:02:53

As a future manager. John, I'm sure your students talk about this all the time. I'm sure something that you're thinking about now.

1:03:01

But this is the really important question. And I know our provost is the background in restoration ecology.

1:03:09

This is this is the future is trying to figure out how do we restore these disturb last case. How do we manage the basic climate change?

1:03:16

So assisted migration, is something that we're thinking about. We're doing experiments, for example, it's good against it to understand, you know, how to, what's the, what's the improvement ability for different tree species, what were able to produce seeds and move to maturity as we as we're starting to replant in certain areas we're replanting with native species

1:03:35

that we think are going to be more successful in a few in our future climate scenarios. And so it's really exciting science going on related to this at a KD and it's kind of fascinating to see but it's also fascinating to think about philosophically how do we manage in this and and my fear is that people like me who are super are gonna make mistakes.

1:04:00

And if you're managing one of the Crown Jewel National Parks like a, you don't wanna make a space, right?

1:04:06

And so how do we learn really what it's important to science having really good research occurring in parks so that we don't make those mistakes and we really understand what we're doing.

1:04:12

But also not doing anything is a decision too. And so we have to recognize that and think about. Not, not, have our hands tied and be, Yeah, and also just I guess the way I kind of think about it too is just How do we share that information, right?

1:04:34

Things are going to change. And we can be proactive, right, with looking at potential species that might be successful. But inevitable change is going to occur. How do we share that information? For people to learn from.

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And I and I think with just the numbers of visitors and outreach education. I think it can.

1:04:56

Help society understand some of the things that we're We're seeing now and that we're going to see in the near term.

1:05:02

We think about planet change. And plus just with a visitor experience, right? We had the washout that.

1:05:08

Took out a thunderbolt, which was millions of dollars to rebuild. And visitors could see that, you know, they saw the effects of that.

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And, and it's an opportunity actually just to kind of I think. And phone visitors. What we might be seeing more of in the future and how we can be prepared for that.

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So, of the vegetation but other things like infrastructure. And I think doing that science communication, as you said, is so important because we have such a captive audience when they come to national hearts people wanna learn and it's an opportunity to talk to all of the American public and indeed people from around the world about what we're seeing.

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And so if you're in a place like Acadia. Or Glacier National Market, for example, you know, these climate change.

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And that's really right and clearly obvious. And so it's and more trusted brand. There's so many good reasons why we should.

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We should be telling our visitors about the great science as a current of course.

1:06:05

Any other questions? These are great questions. Thanks. Or the audience. Asking these questions for discussion. I do have another one. Which is, looking, participant would be increasing aging population is 88, you can be.

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A virtual reality. We'll be increasing aging population is 88, you can have it. Are you providing a virtual reality? Is 88, you can, that, are you providing a virtual reality? We are goggles programs, senior centers, or other locations Yeah.

1:06:36

Being accessible is really, really important. The law is the right thing to do. We have a project right now, it being accessible is really, really important. It's the law, it's the right thing to do.

1:06:53

We have a project right now, on some of the Cadillac, you know, in the, public private partnerships that's, support through friends of Acadia, to connect, the parking lots, on the summit Cadillac mount with an accessible path.

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That's what we used all blue whole lot because people use both those parking lots and they go between the various locations. And they go between the various locations. Wanna do it in a safe, accessible way, not have to walk on the road.

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We have a accessible horse strong carriage. We have to walk on the road. We have a accessible horse strong carriage at Wellwood.

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We have a accessible horse strong carriage at Wildwood Stables for people who, you know, can't use a carriage.

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This is one carriage at Wildwood Staples for people who, you know, can't use a, carriage. This is one that someone can roll a wheelchair into, for example, and be able to have, you know, the carriage ride experience, through Wildwood's stables. But we have a lot more work to do.

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We have an accessibility study that's, you funded that looked comprehensively at the park, everything from physical accessibility to even our website, and how do we make our website accessible?

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So, that is a very long lifelong list, honestly, priorities, but, blow up and rebuild that whole sort of parking infrastructure and physical infrastructure to make it accessible to people.

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And that's absolutely front, center on our minds. And that fits really nice. Within linking with other systems like the I want to explore that.

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Is 88 accessible. They can bring them to the same beach parking lot and then maybe enhance that with other octu where they could go there. So yeah and also with the just understanding those desert change dynamics because Again, what we were finding out with those using electric bikes.

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Was that they used to use regular bikes but they're a little older down and they still have to ride a bike and how can you work with that?

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You know, at which you are. And so just to kind of understanding those changing dynamics with our visitors.

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Are you using drone technology much for the park yet? How do you balance that with the world in this experience? Yeah, great questions.

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The question was whether or not we're using drones to sort of and how do you balance that with the wilderness experience and it's a great question.

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By using produced by visitors are not allowed in the Kenya National Park or any of our national parks for that those sort of wilderness kind of characteristics that you know you don't want to be hiking on the precipice and have a drone buzz past you.

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It's not the experience visitors you're looking for. On the other hand, we are about to purchase our first throne, for park administrative use.

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And we'll use it in sort of limited sparing kind of circumstances, but they do have a potential to really help us on things like search and rescue.

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Potentially on fire. Looking for you know if you've got a hot spot on fire. Things like a bridge inspection you can send a drone up and take a look at something without having to put a human into potentially an unsafe situation and do it really quickly.

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So there's some there's some sort of management interest for these. We use drones and do well, we've used, aviation to do LIDAR, University of Maine, I think, has done light our flights for the park for for research purposes.

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So, you know, there's some interesting things you can do and, We want to sort of start to put our, put our toes into that water a little bit.

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Good. Any other questions? Yes, yes. Yeah. And now we just wanted to ask, additionally, Did you talk about how the R.

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So, so our AD is resist accept and direct and it is a it's sort of a park service spot process on how do we manage in the face of climate change.

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And if you're thinking about climate change you have a few choices. You can resist that change.

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You can try to accept the change or you can direct it and try to and try to shape it. And each of those pathways, and if you're really interested, there's a whole report that Nick Physicali from the Skeutic Institute is actually one of the co-authors of on the Park Services website.

1:11:22

But each of those choices may be appropriate in different circumstances. There's no one right answer. John, you mentioned Thunder Hole and the cost for Genderhole, for example. Thunder hole is the kind of place that I like to use as a great climate change example because at some point, you know, the ocean comes in and maybe every it was every 100 years the ocean we sculpted under all now with increasing storms maybe it's every 20 years maybe in another 10 years it's only going to be every a 10 year interval or a 5 year interval.

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And at some point repairing thunder pull is going to be a fool's errand. It's going to be more expensive than it's worth for the amount of time you're gonna get out of that investment.

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And so what do you do about that? Do you direct change and tell people to go somewhere else? It's more durable.

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Do you try to resist it by building a more sort of more bomb proof thunder hole or do you accept it and instead walk away from the hole and say, you know what, we're not going to provide that experience there anymore for visitors.

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And yet, Thunder Hole is a great one because it's you know, national parks are often these places that have cultural importance to us. In terms of generational kind of experiences where maybe you brought your kids to Thunder Hall and and and now they're gonna bring their kids and this kind of get passed down through our American culture.

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It's part of Americana. And so saying we're we may not have thunder hole is sort of like saying you know we're gonna burn the Sistine Chapel down.

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You know, but what do you do about that and what's the right answer? I don't know. These are these are some of the questions that are posed to us as managers because of climate change, but the RAD framework was just accepted.

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Direct gives us a way to think about this sort of a continent framework. Very good. Good.

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Yeah. And I kind of influence their experience and that the, both wanting to get that, to their experience.

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And that, the, both wanting to go and get that, to, get that, sort, of, that, the, both, wanting, to, get, that, the, both wanting to go, get that, to, get that, to, get that certain, and, how are you, kind of, envisioning, keeping up with that, and, managing, that, the, Yeah, one of the things we've

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seen with social media is that these certain experiences go viral, you know, and suddenly everybody has to do it. And I sometimes roll my eyes at that because I would encourage people to sort of buck the trend and find their own experience.

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You know, if you want to see the sunrise, there's places other than Cadillac mountain, believe it or not, where the sun rises.

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And, and they're often, just as good of an experience or maybe even better. And you just gotta seek it out a little bit and not try to follow what everyone else is doing but you know, and you just got to seek it out a little bit and not try to follow what everyone else is doing. It out a little bit and not try to follow what everyone else is doing. But, you know, I think National Parks and John, you may have seen this in some of your research around the world have seen these places sort of go.

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Crazy with visitation when they're really not designed for that level of citation. There are bathrooms. Maybe they don't have the infrastructure. And because it's sort of gone by, on social media, these places have been altered or changed.

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And I think we want to prevent that. I definitely think it's gonna take some monitoring. That's gonna be required around social media to kind of catch some trends that might be happening that you can hopefully kind of respond to, but yeah, it can be in some cases a real challenge.

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Where you have unwanted effects. Based on these posts that just generate, I gotta do that.

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Now this person did this. Another person liked it or you know, it just can build on itself very quickly.

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Yeah. I think the other, the other thing that we can do is, with us on its head though too in terms of using maybe social media or other outreach efforts.

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In response. So again, I think we need to work with it because it's a reality, right?

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It's a reality that social media, it's gonna be more and more. Of our presence and how do we how do we work with it?

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Yeah, and I think it's, it, jumping on it, getting it early and saying, this is so great having to use other things to instead of kind of saying I think there's a way to look for that and I've seen some other Park services really jump into those friends early and say, okay, we're seeing this thing starting to happen.

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Let's jump in, and use this, and to be able to get folks to see other places. Out of just this one viral moment.

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So I think there's there's a little tricky side to that too and that is that, that's just one viral moment. So I think you can do that. A lot of work. Yeah.

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And I because a few on land and then maybe another 10,000 in, in, s025-47-3000 acres altogether.

1:16:08

Is a small market is the most heavily used park per acre. National Park per acre in the whole system. And I think when you you've got to still have a discovery factor people can go in and accidentally, you've got to still have a discovery factor, people can go in and accidentally or serendipitously find places and you don't really want to have a discovery factor.

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People can go in and accidentally or serendipitously find places and you don't really want to direct to come upon them so they don't suffer the same thing. It's an interesting management balance. That's right. Yeah.

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And of course, you know, I love reading, you know, some of the superintendents reports, from 1950 and they talk about how Cadillac mountain is overwhelmed with visitation or sand beaches.

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And they talk about how Cadillac Mountain was overwhelmed with visitation or Sand Beach was overwhelmed with visitation. And you could almost just change the year and sand beach was overwhelmed with visitation or sand beach was overwhelmed with visitation. And you could almost just change the year and not change anything else. And it would sound like it's totally relevant today.

1:16:59

And it was sounds like it's totally relevant today. And it was sounds like it's totally relevant today. And it was sounds like it was totally relevant today. You know, and it, but my point is a little bit is that, you know, our expectations have changed through time too, where in We also change and I'm, I don't know if that's good or bad in some cases, right?

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But, that those applications can change.

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Very good. Thank you. I don't have a question. I was just hoping that everyone, yeah, sure. Yeah.

1:17:39

Well, I first of all, I just because for coming this evening and sharing this conversation tonight. And you're time.

1:17:50

Can you, can I just say, I don't have to say after this, how many have read Edward Abbey?

1:17:56

Okay, so you know, and, his best book, my opinion, doesn't solve here.

1:18:02

He was lecturing in Desert Solves here. He was lecturing in Montana, a group about people like ourselves who care about the land and environment and, like to, act in it and, take care of it.

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And he, advised him this, he said, one paragraph of device. Do not burn yourselves out. Be as I am, a reluctant enthusiast, a part-time crusader, a half hired fanatic.

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So the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and attention. It is not enough to fight for the land.

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It's even more important to enjoy it. Well, you can while it's still here. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forest, climb the mountains, bag the peaks, run the rivers.

1:18:47

Really think of that yet sweet and lucid air. Sit quietly for a while and kind of like the pressure still is that lovely mysterious and awesome space.

1:18:56

Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head, in your head, firmly attached to the body, body active and alive.

1:19:04

And I promise you this much. I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies over those dust mounted men with their hearts in safe deposit boxes and their eyes hypnotized by just calculators.

1:19:16

I promise you this, you will outlive the bastards. That's a great both.

*The University of Maine in Orono is the flagship campus of the University of Maine System, where efforts toward racial equity are ongoing, as is the commitment to facing a complicated and not always just institutional history. The University recognizes that it is located on Marsh Island in the homeland of the Penobscot nation, where issues of water and its territorial rights, and encroachment upon sacred sites, are ongoing. Penobscot homeland is connected to the other Wabanaki Tribal Nations — the Passamaquoddy,*

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