

Rocky Mountain National Park & our Sister Park Relationships

Ben Bobowski

Minds are like parachutes –
they only function when open.

- *Thomas Dewar*

Why have a sister park?

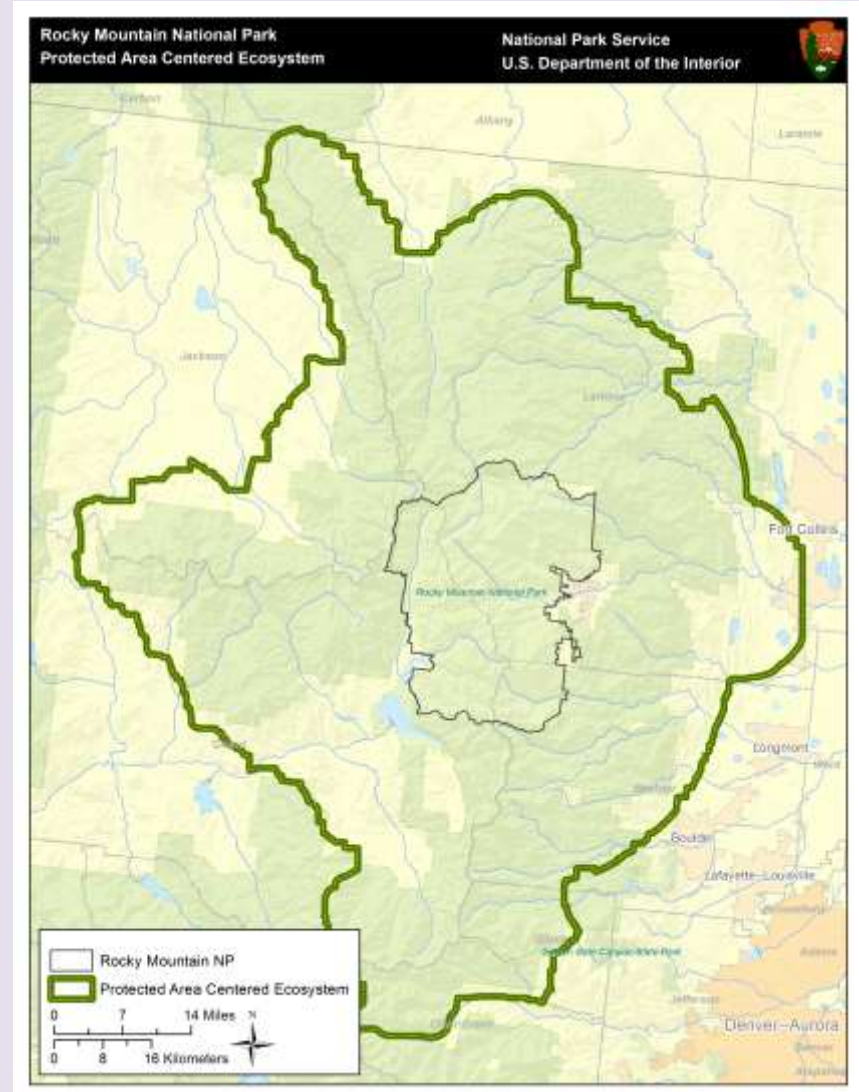
- The future of protected areas management is global in nature....
- Shared learning and shared conservation....

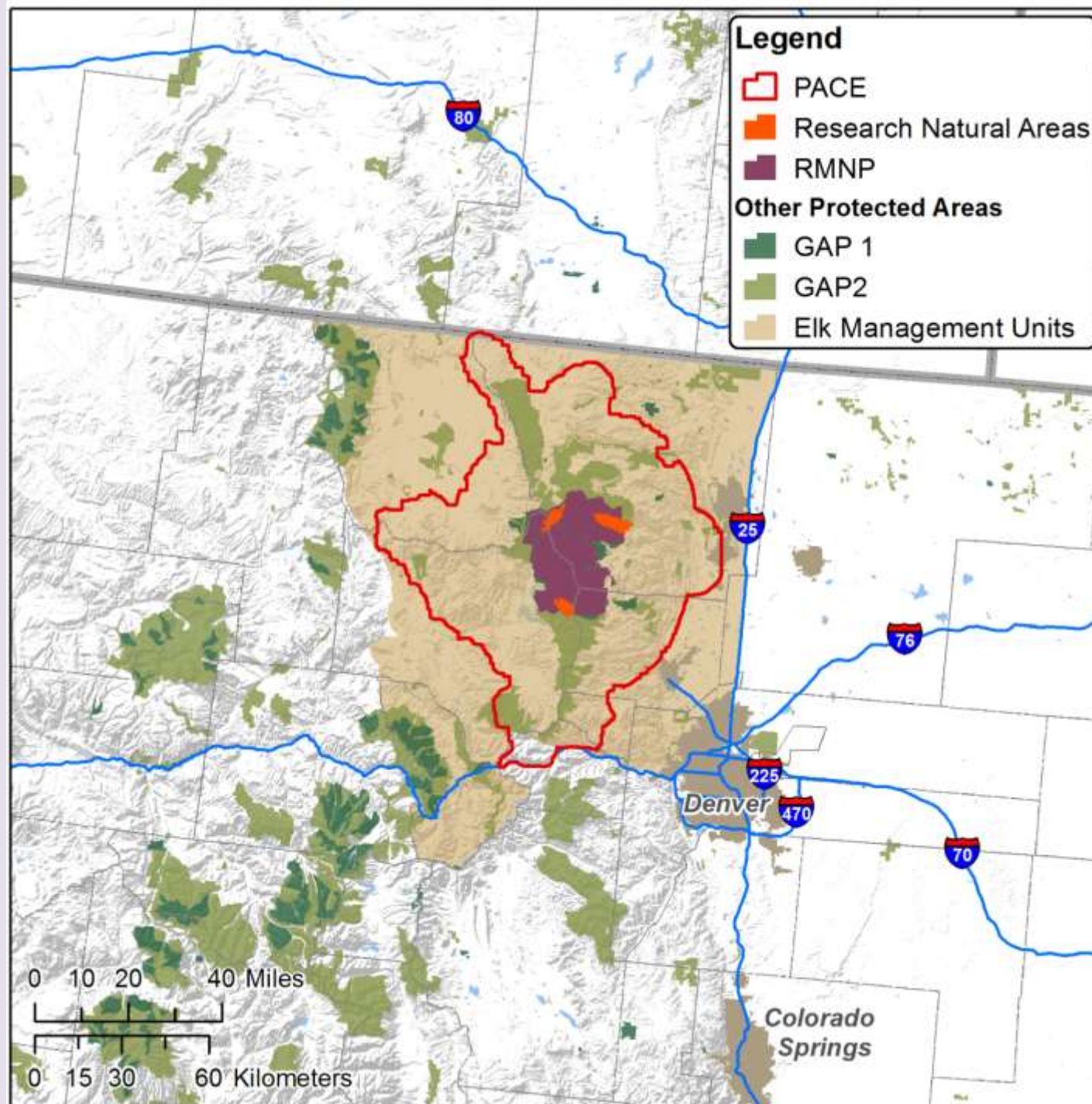
The Evolving Global Paradigm in Protected Area Management

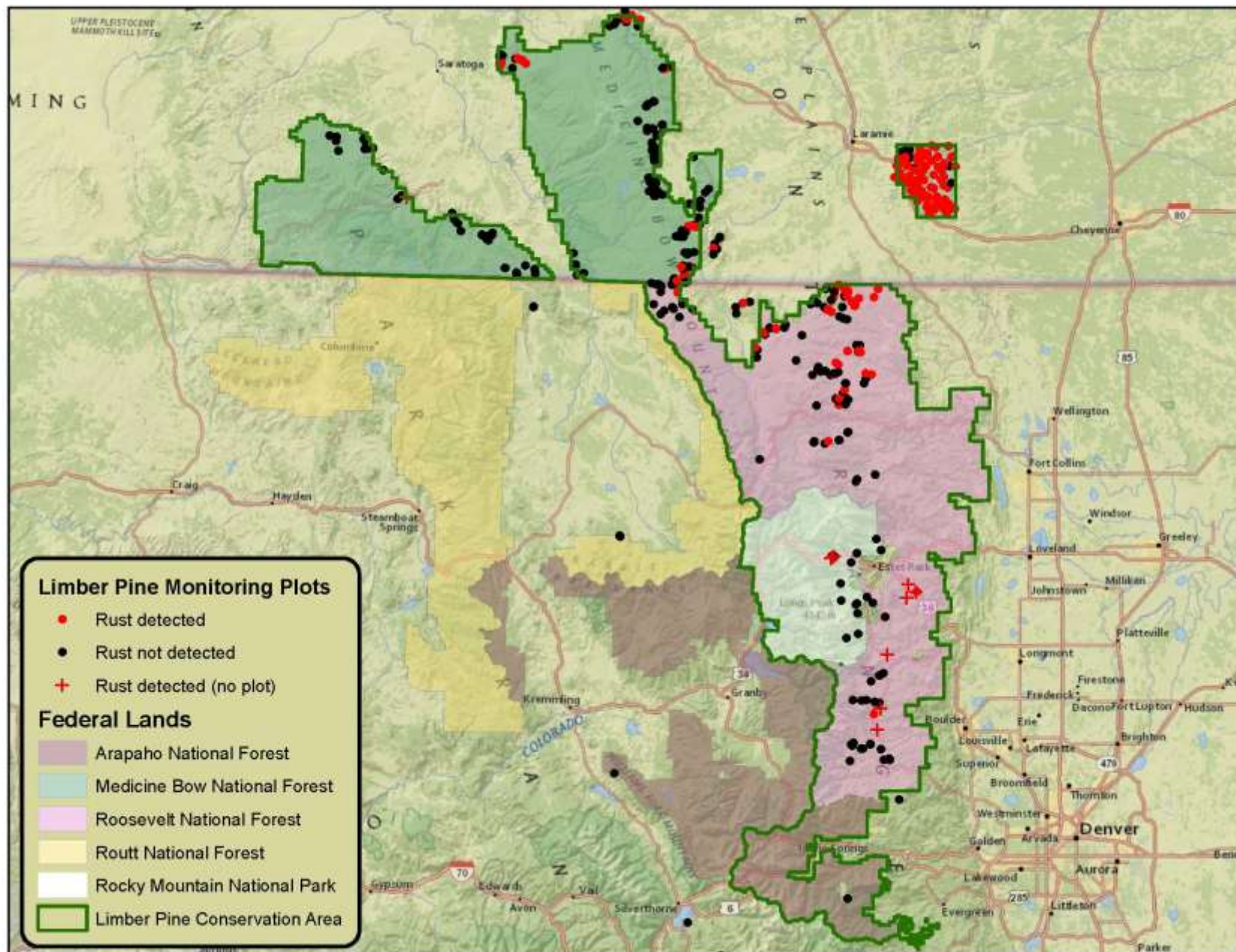
- Landscapes, seascapes, connectivity focus
- Cross-boundary management and collaboration
- Participatory planning and governance
- New approaches to conservation finance
- Environmental services, climate change
- Greater concern for human livelihoods, poverty
- Expanded recreation and tourism, health focus
- *Increased investment in capacity building*

Rocky Mountain National Park

- What is a Protected Area Centered Ecosystem (PACE)?
 - National Parks represent protected subsets of larger ecosystems.
 - PACE identifies the larger ecosystem, which may be less-protected or unprotected.
 - Identifying the PACE can help focus research, monitoring, and collaborative conservation attention.

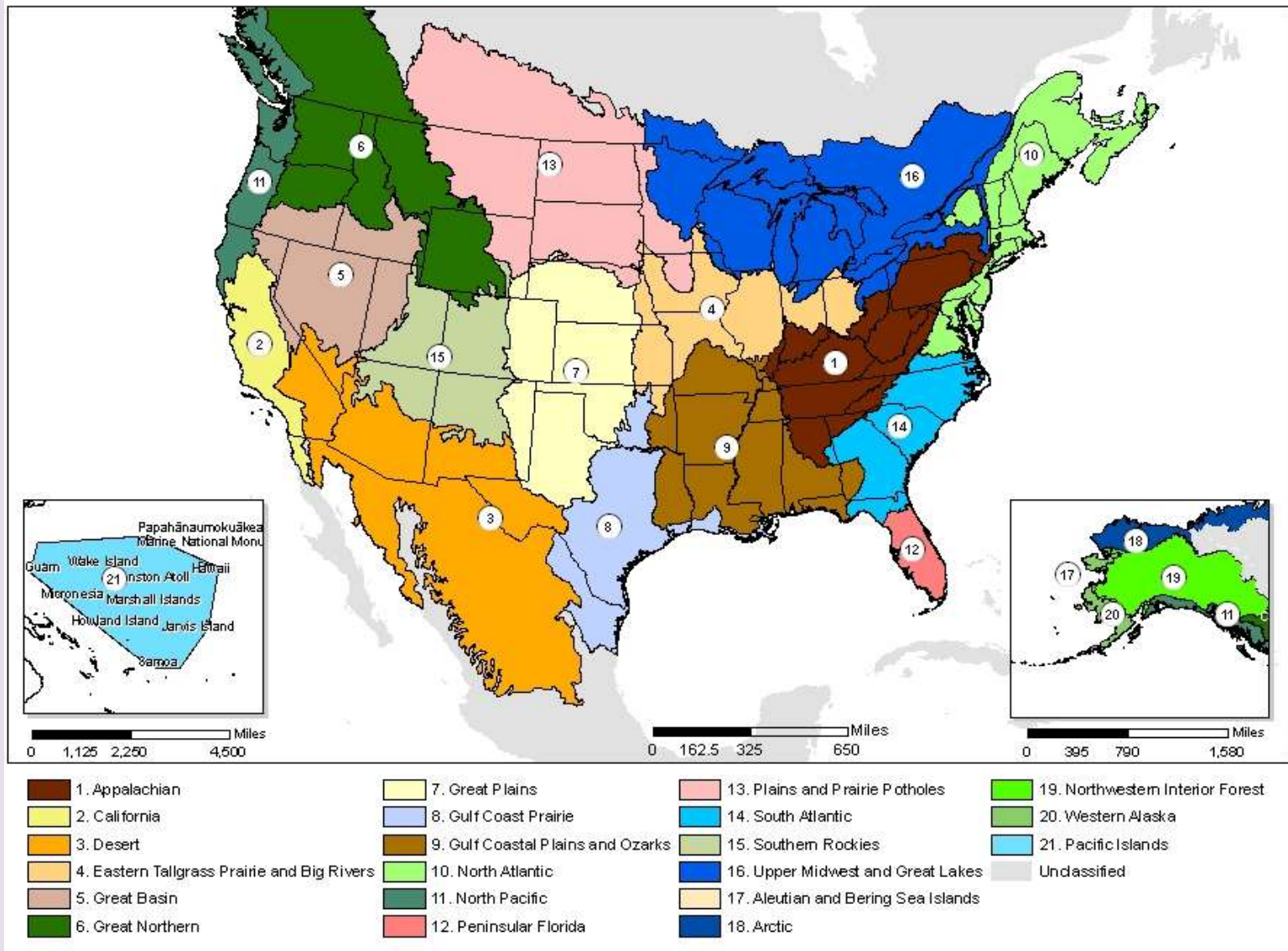






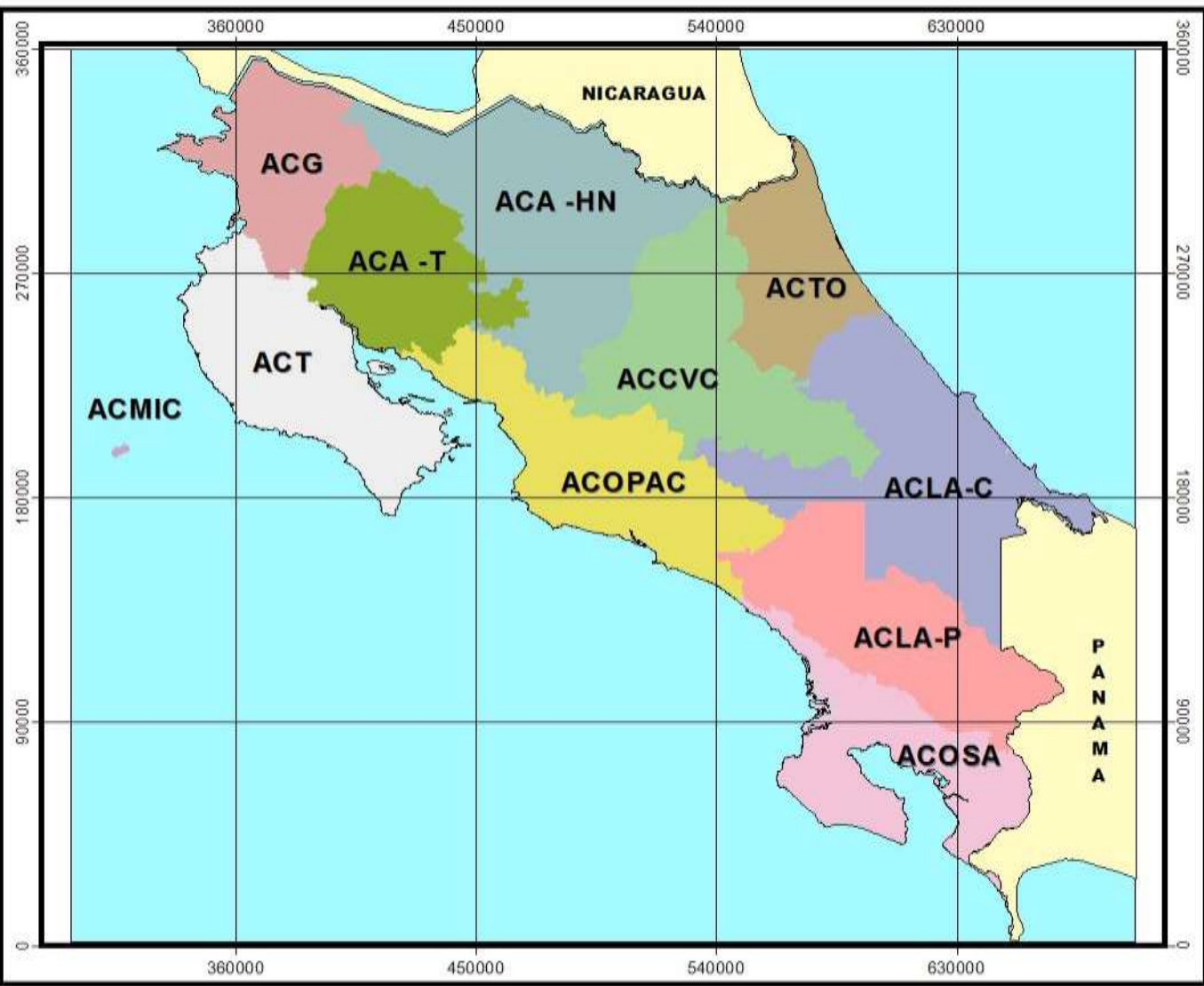


Landscape Conservation Cooperatives



[Secretarial Order No. 3289](#) establishes Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, which focus on on-the-ground strategic conservation efforts at the landscape level.

SISTEMA NACIONAL DE AREAS DE CONSERVACION



SIMBOLOGIA

- ARENAL - HUETAR NORTE
- ARENAL - TEMPISQUE
- CORDILLERA VOLCANICA CENTRAL
- GUANACASTE
- ISLA DEL COCO
- LA AMISTAD- PACIFICO
- LA AMISTAD CARIBE
- OSA
- PACIFICO CENTRAL
- TEMPISQUE
- TORTUGUERO

Fuente:
SINAC Areas de Conservacion

Sistema de Coordenadas
Lambert Norte

Elaboró:
Felipe Morera Vargas
SISINFO - ACAT
Octubre 2003.

Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía
Sistema Nacional de Areas de Conservación
Area de Conservación Arenal Tempisque



...as with any relationship

- It takes time to nurture
- Tangible benefits are shown over time as trust builds, shared visions evolve, and resources become available

***Technology is helpful for maintaining a relationship,
but the fullest experience and greatest learning is
obtained by physically visiting the other park***

- All aspects of going to other parks (e.g., travel, communication and language, culture, food, facilities, etc.) broadens one's viewpoint from previously held impressions and gives new energy to meeting the mission
- Issues that once seemed specific to one park or to one country are seen through a global lens and recognized as being common to many protected areas
- Creativity in problem solving is enhanced and the traditions of our respective agencies questioned

International Collaboration - How do we do this, financially?

- The premise of the sister park relationship is that each park hosts visits by their sister staff
 - Funding comes from a variety of sources
 - Costs are always significantly lower than expected because of mutual support
- Coordinate with many partners, particularly the State Department

A Sister Park Relationship: The Tatra Mountains of Poland and Slovakia and Rocky Mountain National Park, USA



ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

SISTER PARK RELATIONSHIP

2007 -



Tatras Slovakia

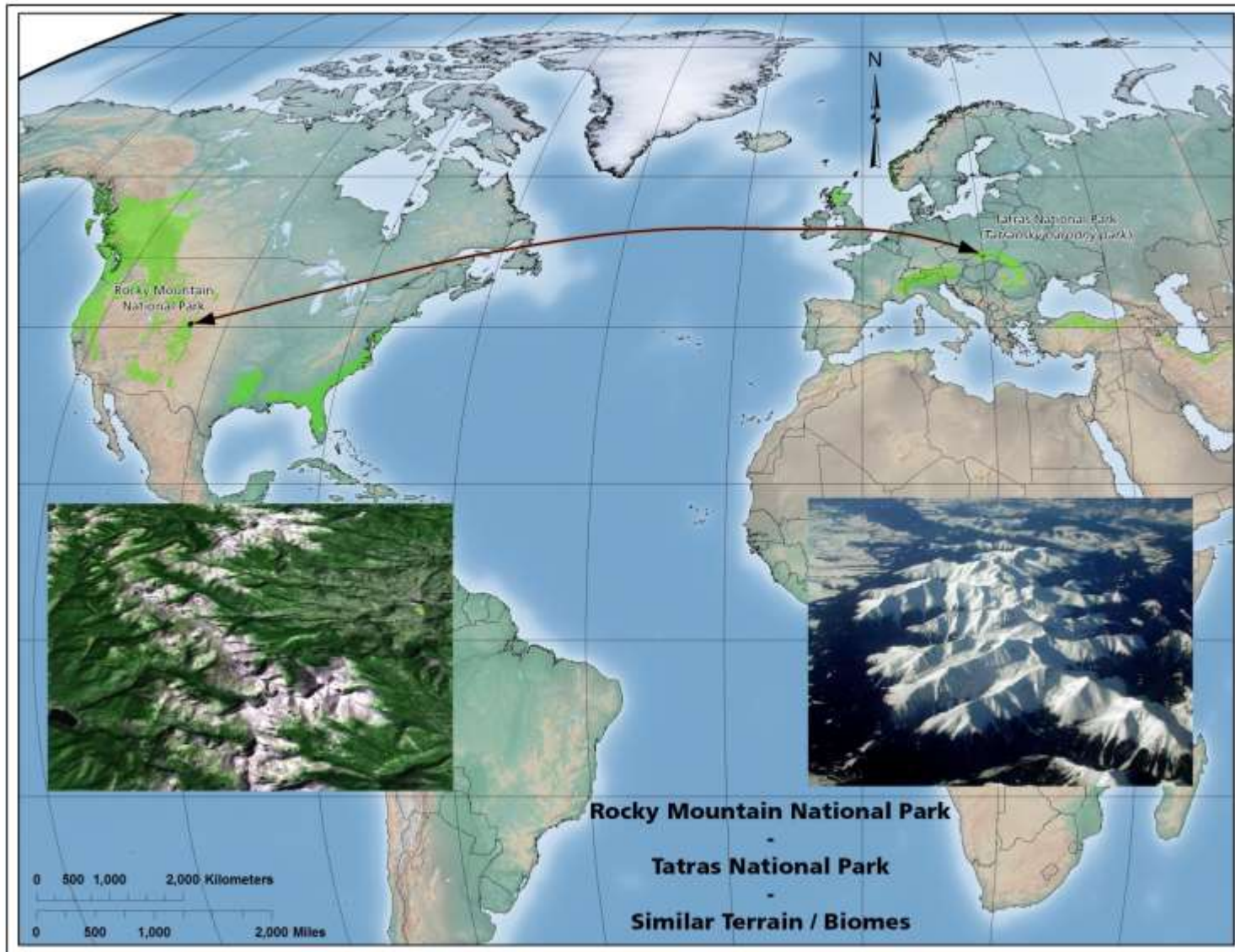


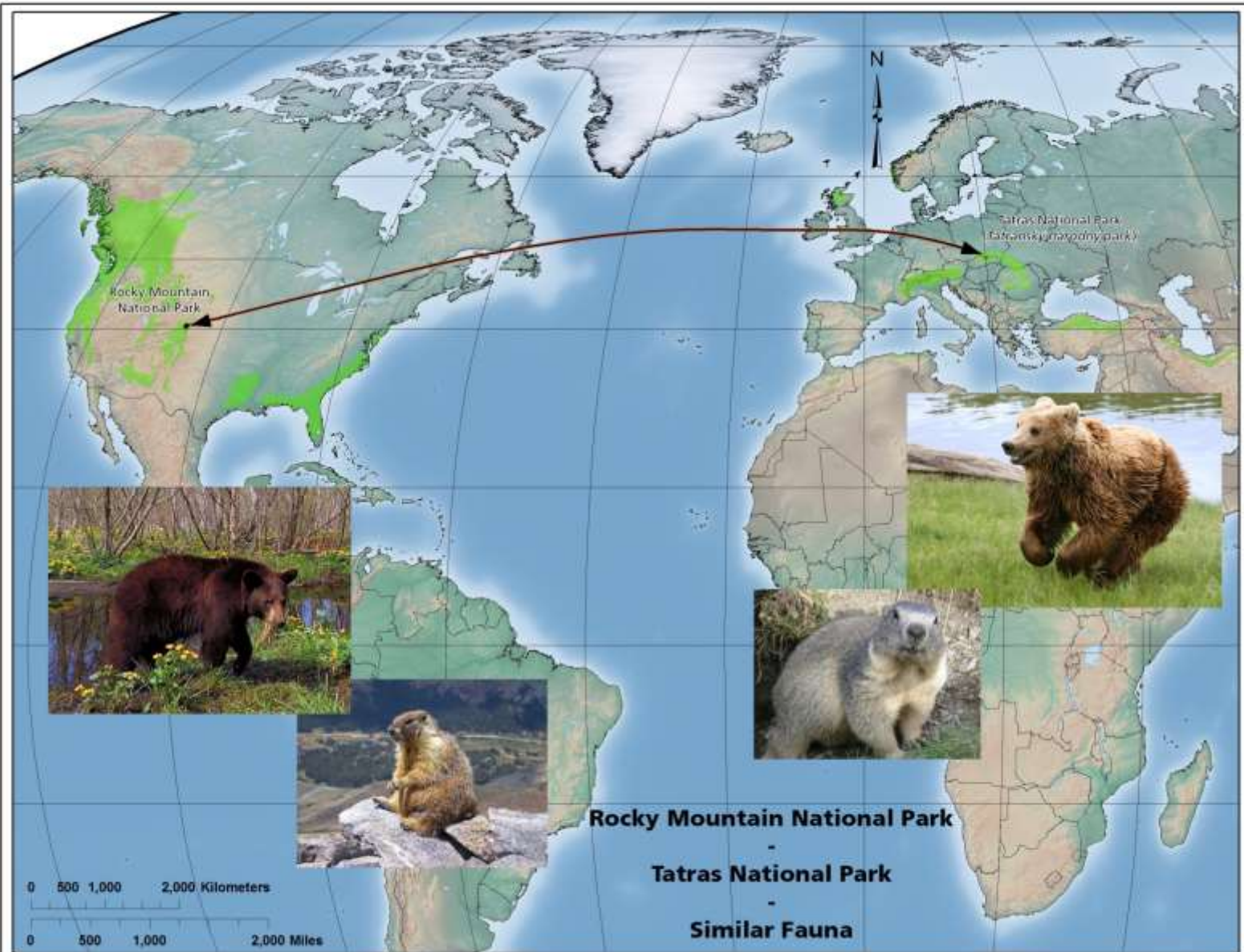
Rocky Mountain NP USA



Tatras Poland







Etymologically, the name 'Tatra' derives from an ancient Slavic root meaning 'rocky.' This plus much more is commonly shared between the parks.

- Biosphere Reserves
- Trails
- Visitation
- Species and Ecology
- Management issues

September 2007

The Signing Ceremony



- Photo (Center): Vaughn Baker, RMNP Superintendent, with The Honorable Victor Ashe, U.S. Ambassador to Poland and the Honorable Rodolphe “Skip” Vallee, U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia. NPS 2007*

2008

In honor of Earth Day



- Parks Management Conference held on April 21 and 22, at Magurski National Park.
- Staff visits to Rocky by both Poland and Slovakia

2009



Photo (Left): Dr. David Cooper (Colorado State University-CSU), Judy Visty (RMNP), Dr. Mark Fiege (CSU), and Vaughn Baker in Zakopane Poland as the first science team to participate in the sister park relationship.

Photo (Right): Cynthia Langguth, Jim Cheatham, and Jim Dougan in the Tatras as RMNP's first staff to stay for an extended staff exchange.

2010



- Initiated our First Scientific Exchange: coordinate with Colorado State University (CSU)
- Staff from Poland came for an extended exchange
- RMNP facilitated an international conference hosted by the State Department

2011



- Estes Park High School & ozone monitoring
- University of Colorado (Boulder) and University of Northern Colorado became engaged

2012 to present

- Numerous staff exchanges
- Trainings
- Science
 - Dr. Scott Franklin, University of Northern Colorado, who will examine the importance of clonal plants to community dynamics in the Tatras Mountains, Slovakia and Poland.
 - Dr. Robert Brunswig, University of Northern Colorado, who will work with universities local to the Tatras of Poland and Slovakia through a Fullbright Fellowship to advance our collective understanding of history and pre-history on the local park environments.
 - Dr. David Cooper, Colorado State University, who will continue work on land-use changes in alpine areas through an intercontinental comparison of alpine communities.

The Role of Media in Creating Images of Protected Areas





Gaining Public Support for a Protected Area by Working with Local Communities



Role of NGOs at US National Parks

- Advocacy
- Friend Raising
- Fund Raising
- Private Land Conservation
- Volunteerism

2012



Branding and Identity

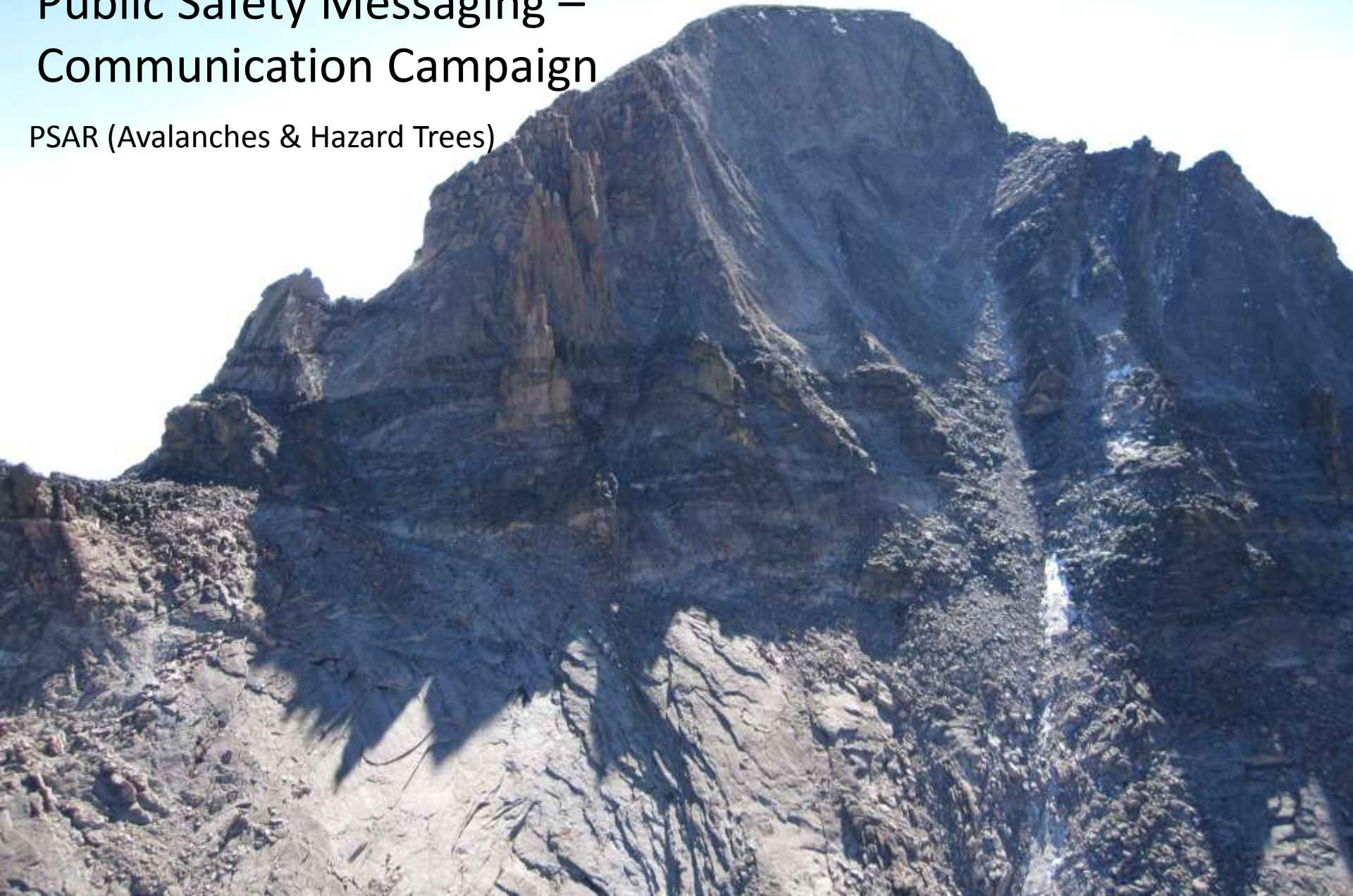
Znaki / loga parków narodowych



The Keyhole Route On Longs Peak

Public Safety Messaging – Communication Campaign

PSAR (Avalanches & Hazard Trees)





Tatrzanski
Park Narodowy



Stopień zagrożenia lawinowego (Avalanche Danger Level):

1



Stopień zagrożenia lawinowego (Avalanche Danger Level)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)
1 Niska Low	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)
2 Średnia Medium	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)
3 Wysoka High	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)
4 Bardzo wysoka Very High	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)
5 Ekstremalnie wysoka Extremely High	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)	Opis zagrożenia lawinowego (Description of avalanche danger)



Georgia *and* Tusheti National Park



A low-angle photograph looking up into a dense tropical forest. Sunlight filters through the thick canopy of green leaves, creating a bright, hazy glow in the center. The foreground is filled with dark, silhouetted branches and leaves, framing the central light. The overall atmosphere is serene and lush.

Costa Rica

Background



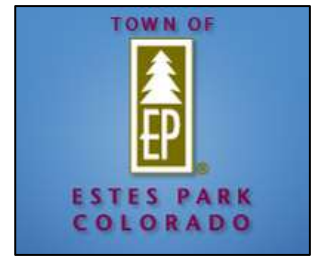
Sister Cities International



“Promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding a cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.”

- 1956: Pres. Eisenhower, People-to-People citizen diplomacy initiative.
- Long-term partnership between two communities in two countries approved by top-elected officials
- Diversity of activities can be carried out: municipal, business, professional, educational, cultural

Sister Cities Relationship



- Estes Park, Colorado (pop. 6,555) and Monteverde, Costa Rica (pop. 6,750)
 - Rocky Mt. NP has a representative on the Estes Park Sister Cities board.
 - 2010: developed three priorities for relationship development
 - One priority was species conservation



Objectives of this project

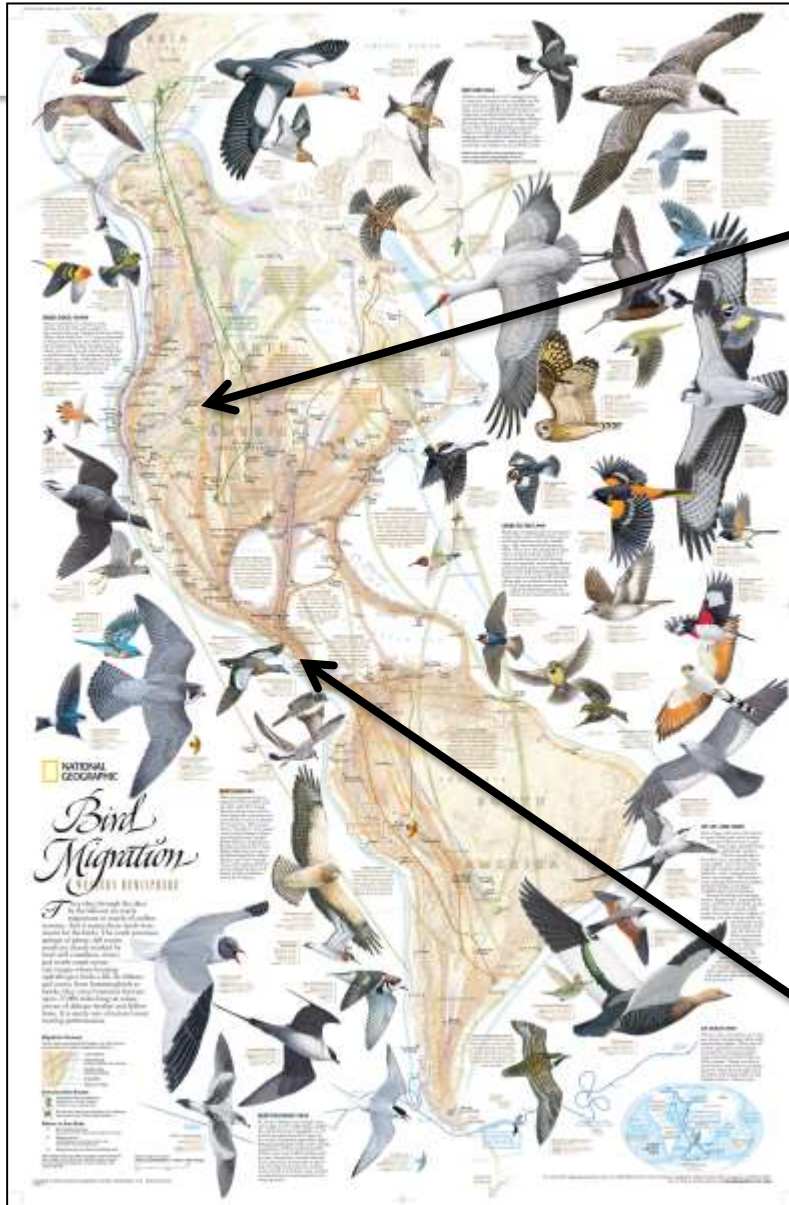
- To encourage positive relationships between gateway communities of protected areas
 - e.g., participation with Sister Cities organization of Estes Park
- To enhance species conservation through global partnerships
 - Education
 - Public relations
 - Collaboration

Both Areas Are Located Along the Continental Divide



There are more than 2100 miles (3380 km) of continental divide between Rocky Mountain National Park and Monteverde, Costa Rica.

Neotropical Bird Migration Patterns



Rocky Mountain National Park

Migratory bottleneck
over narrowing land
mass of southern Mexico
and Central America



- Concentrated species diversity
- Habitat conservation important in these areas

Monteverde, Costa Rica

Ecotourism



- Rocky Mountain NP receives about 3 million visitors per year, primarily during the summer months.
 - Bird watching is a recreational activity for ~500,000
- The Monteverde area receives about 135,000–200,000* visitors per year.
 - Almost all do some bird watching.



Protected Areas are not Islands

- Wildlife depend on a variety of habitats in different locations
 - Scale of variation depends on species
- An example in Colorado: Puma
 - Rocky Mt NP monitors and researches puma populations in collaboration with multiple state and federal organizations
- A larger-scale example: Migratory birds
 - Many species that breed in North America winter in Mexico, Central and South America.
 - Countless organizations are involved in management of species and their habitats.



A compelling need for collaboration to promote species conservation – ***TOGETHER NATURALLY***



Since 2012

- Migratory Bird Research Projects (3)
- Migratory Bird Monitoring 2014/15
- Shared Conservation Video (PBS)
- Science Exchanges (3)
- Biodiversity Workshop (1)
- Staff Exchanges (2)

We are advancing conservation and the long-term protection of the resources of ROMO on several fronts.

- Advancing Conservation in Like-Mountain Biomes through shared science and monitoring.
- Advancing our Understanding of Technology and Creative Outreach through staff exchanges.
- Advancing our Ability to Conserve Migratory Species through science and monitoring.
- Advancing our Ability to Engage Youth through science through shared youth science programming.

Our experience suggests that a sister park relationship is time well invested.

And, like many investments of relationship, the tangible benefits are shown over time as trust builds, shared visions evolve, and resources become available..

For those who have been fortunate to travel abroad the experience has been career-changing; for those who spend time with staff from another country, their careers have been significantly enhanced.

***The future of protected areas management is
global in nature.***

***We believe the more we as individuals, as parks
and as an agency embrace the sister park
concept, the more relevant and protected our
parks will be for future generations***