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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

This issue of the *Natural Resources Journal* encompasses a “very large array” of articles, to borrow the name of one of New Mexico’s wonders on the Plains of San Augustine southwest of Albuquerque and the title of National Park Service historian Richard Sellars’ history of the beginnings of the long esteemed and recently embattled agency for which he works. The “large array” in this issue runs the gamut from the economic evaluation of ecological services, a critical issue in the balancing of Forest Service multiple uses, to the real future of collaboration in environmental decision making. Some of these articles came across our threshold, as they say in the publishing world, “unsolicited” and others arrived from authors who previously had written for the *Journal*. But no article in this issue so embodies the spirit of this publication as does the Sellars’ article on the beginnings of the Park Service.

Sellars has long been the chief historian for the Southwest Region of the Park Service, located in Santa Fe. I’ve known Sellars and his great work at least since the mid-1970s. When I became editor of the *Journal* in 2000 or so, I started in on Sellars, encouraging him to write for the *Journal* on Park Service history. A lanky, older man with a soft southern accent and the manners to go with it, Sellars always expressed interest and pleaded lack of time. Finally, in May 2005 managing editor Susan Tackman and I caught up with Sellars in a small garden behind the Rare Book Room of the University of New Mexico’s Zimmerman library where Sellars was researching. His wife was with him and was helping him track down some documents. In between questions to him from her and some cajoling by Susan and me, we finally extracted from Sellars a promise to write the piece we now have. It represents the best of a lifetime’s devotion to the National Parks and a superb historian’s attention to ancient detail. History doesn’t get any better than Sellars’ work in this issue and we are proud to present it after pursuing it for almost a decade.

In their own ways the other articles in this issue represent the same marriage of passion, scholarship, and timeliness. Sellars embodies the real spirit of the *Natural Resources Journal* and so too do the other authors in this issue.

Em Hall