

In Closing: A Wish for Yellowstone's Future

Like many Americans, Rosalynn and I have benefited greatly from our time in Yellowstone. It has been our great pleasure to visit the park several times with our family, where among other things we have enjoyed some wonderful fly fishing for the park's rainbows and native cutthroats.

But Yellowstone serves us on many levels beyond what it gives us during our all-too-brief visits there. Most of us, when we visit the park, think of our own immediate interests, whether as anglers, photographers, hikers, or any of the many other enthusiasts who find the park so fulfilling. But as this report has suggested, Yellowstone offers the world much more than the vacation of a lifetime. The park has become a great repository for biological rarities, including several endangered species and a host of micro-organisms that are changing our world.

More than that, the park is a repository of great ideas. For more than 125 years, Yellowstone has been the teacher and we have been the students. The park has helped us reconsider our relationship with nature, whether we were struggling to understand the complex interactions of predators and prey or the very fabric of life on this planet. As much as Yellowstone has done for our recreational needs, and for our scientific ambitions, it has done even more for our imaginations.

All Americans, whether they ever visit the park or not, share in the bounty of Yellowstone's gifts. I join with all of Yellowstone's other friends in celebrating this millennium, and in urging all who read this to ensure that Yellowstone continues to thrive, teach, and give, long into the future.



*The Honorable Jimmy Carter
Former President of the United States*