

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Images of Rocky Mountain National Park
Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Research
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Colorado at Boulder and Denver
Effective Dates: 4/1/2005 - 7/31/2007
Funding Amount: \$10,017.00

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract:

This proposal addresses a key component of the historic resource theme studies on Rocky Mountain National Park (ROMO) through the production of a scholarly essay on the history and interpretation of images and supporting texts that have been produced to classify, describe, and promote the park since its inception. This project responds to an item on the park's 2004 Research Needs Solicitation List and is intended to accomplish within a two-year time frame a specific piece of that overall agenda. The proposed products may guide the management of the physical resources of the park and will provide information and materials to support the evolving interpretation of the history and public relevance of Rocky Mountain National Park.

University of Colorado at Denver researchers will trace how artists, photographers and writers have portrayed the park. The images will range from the early images of Albert Bierstadt and William Henry Jackson through a selection of representations produced in the twentieth century, including some of the recent images produced by participants in the Rocky Mountain National Park "Artist in Residence" program.

The essay will employ this iterative methodology of coupled image and text to consider these cultural conditions. By tracing them through chronological sequence, certain broader cultural moments will become evident. This study might reveal, for instance, the influence of new modes of transportation allowing better access, the rise of the postcard industry and its demise against the Kodak snapshot, or changing attitudes about elements within the parks' boundaries as they reflect popular interests in preservation and vernacular histories.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

As final products, an essay with relevant supporting images and texts will be prepared for publication with two supporting documents, a full bibliography and a selected list of images. These materials will not only offer a visual history of the park over time, it will allow the public to better understand the role of landscape images as they record and influence attitudes and behaviors. It should ultimately lead to other projects to create a more exhaustive catalogue of these images and to prepare an exhibition on this significant body of material about Rocky Mountain National Park.

Keywords: cultural resources, history, artists, Rocky Mountain National Park, University of Colorado at Denver

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Date Annual Report Received:
Date Final Report Received:
Publications, etc. on file: