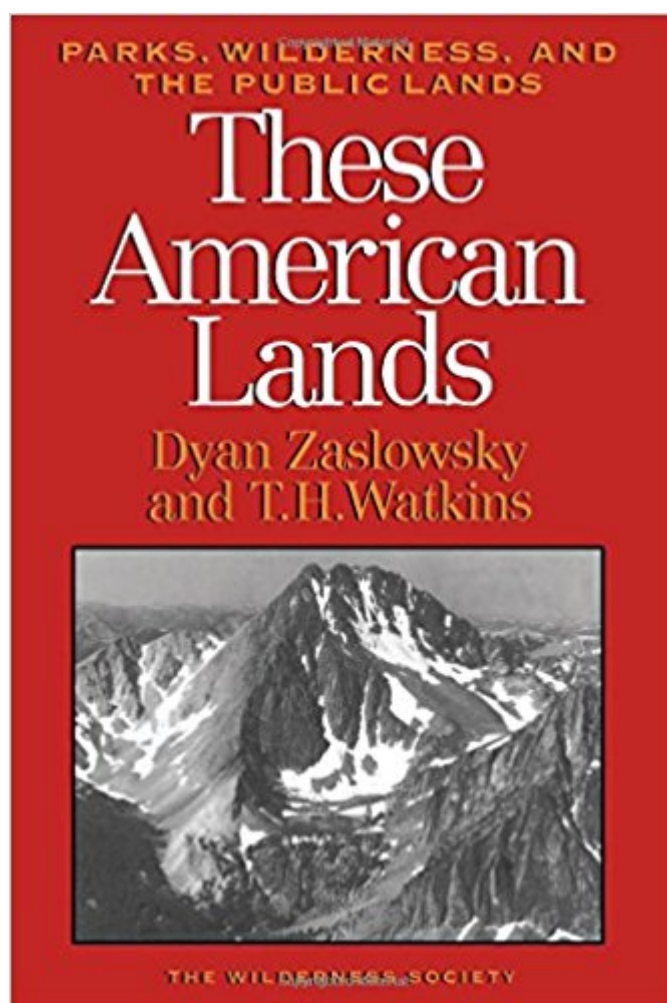


The book was found

These American Lands: Parks, Wilderness, And The Public Lands: Revised And Expanded Edition



Synopsis

Over 634 million acres of the United States -- nearly a million square miles -- are federally owned. "These American Lands" is both a history and a celebration of that inheritance. First published in 1986, the book was hailed by Wallace Stegner as "the only indispensable narrative history of the public lands." This completely revised and updated edition is an unsurpassed resource for everyone who cares about, visits, or works with public land in the United States. With over 75 pages of new material, the volume covers: national parks national forests national resource lands wildlife refuges designated wildernesses wild and scenic rivers Alaska landsnational trails Each chapter outlines the history of the unit of public lands under discussion, clarifies the resource use and policy conflicts that are currently besetting it, and provides a detailed agenda of management, expansion, and preservation goals.

Book Information

Paperback: 414 pages

Publisher: Island Press; Revised, Expanded ed. edition (July 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1559632402

ISBN-13: 978-1559632409

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #897,987 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #89 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Industries > Sports & Entertainment > Park & Recreation #1441 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Industries > Hospitality, Travel & Tourism #2140 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Economics > Environmental Economics

Customer Reviews

This book summarizes the types of US public lands - - national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, BLM lands, scenic rivers and trails. Like many other books, it treats all of Alaska's public lands together, regardless of type (park, forest, refuge). Each chapter includes a historical overview, a discussion of current management, and a section of advocacy making recommendations on how to improve management. The writing is clear and effective, and this would be a good place for anyone interested in an introduction to these lands. The book is organized in terms of preservation resources, and not chronologically or analytically. For example, the national parks come first. That

makes sense in terms of preservation, since the parks are the crown jewels of public lands in the United States. But chronologically, the history of land acquisition in the United States - - which Zaslow and Watkins discuss under the Bureau of Land Management in Chapter 3 - - shaped the national parks in important ways. Since Congress didn't want to appropriate money for national parks, only those lands not yet taken - - the "worthless lands" in Alfred Runte's formulation - - were available for being reserved as parks. Presidential power to reserve national monuments (and originally national forests) by unilateral proclamation also make more sense if you put the land question first. In historical terms, then, the BLM chapter should have come first. Why does this matter? Because the book's organization obscures problems of preservation by not telling the story right. Putting the parks first gives us a "heroic" narrative in which visionary people come up with ideas and then exercise leadership to carry them out.

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