

Honorary Membership Nominations  
c/o Honors and Awards  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Nomination of Denis P. Galvin for ASLA Honorary Membership

Dear Members of the ASLA Honorary Membership Committee:

We, Amy L. Schneckenburger, FASLA and John J. Reynolds, FASLA, nominate Denis P. Galvin for Honorary Membership in ASLA.

Denis was raised in South Boston, a second-generation Irish immigrant community. His first job was selling cigarettes and hot dogs in the stands of Fenway Park. Much later, he successfully convinced the owners of Fenway Park to nominate the stadium to the National Register of Historic Places. It was accepted and remains the only major league ballpark in the nation on the Register.

He graduated from Northeastern University in 1961 with an engineering degree. He was in the first Peace Corps class, serving two years in East Africa. Denis returned to the U. S. in 1963 and began his storied 38-year career with the National Park Service (NPS, or Service). He worked as a civil engineer at Sequoia and Mount Rainier National Parks and in the Southwest Regional Office in Santa Fe. He was then chosen to be and excelled at being a training specialist at the NPS training center in Grand Canyon National Park onboarding new employees to the NPS.

In 1974 he was appointed Associate Regional Director for Operations at the Northeast Regional Office in Boston and two years later became the region's deputy director.

In 1978 he was appointed Director of the Denver Service Center, responsible for most of the planning, design and construction work for the entire NPS. He designed and implemented a system of cost allocation based on the model of prominent A&E firms. Revolutionary in the NPS, this led to the most responsible cost allocation and tracking system in the Service and set the standard for like work elsewhere throughout the NPS. Under Denis' leadership, the Denver Service Center work came to equal that of the best A&E firms nationwide. It employed more landscape architects than any single firm or agency in the world. It was the first office in the Service to hire post graduate scientists to advise and work on environmental impacts of proposed NPS actions and the first working GIS system in the Service was created and used there in planning for Yosemite National Park. Denis was known as an advocate for high quality professional work, and was highly respected in the Service and with the relevant committees of Congress.

In 1985 he became Deputy Director of the NPS and would serve in that position for a combined (non-consecutive) total of nine years, spanning the Reagan, Clinton, and George W. Bush administrations. He is the only person ever to be Deputy Director for three different administrations. During this period, he would often be called upon to serve as acting director as new administrations came and went. When not Deputy Director, he served as Associate Director over all planning, design and construction and land acquisition in the NPS.

Throughout his remarkable career, he retained a strong interest and expertise in NPS management policies, leading to creation of the first NPS Management Policies guiding decision-making in parks and offices of this highly decentralized agency. He repeatedly testified before the U.S. Congress on key issues related to parks and conservation. Guiding him was his belief that the NPS should be recognized

more as “stewards of heritage rather than managers of land.” Upon the occasion of Galvin's retirement in 2002, U.S. Congressman Nick J. Rahall II, said: "For many people, both within and outside of the National Park Service, Denis is 'Mr. Park Service.' It is heartening to see a civil servant who has exhibited such a love for his work.” Denis is only one of six people in the NPS to ever receive the Senior executive Service Presidential Rank Award.

Since his retirement in 2002, Denis has continued to work aggressively in support of parks and conservation. He remains exceedingly highly respected within the Service, the Congress and the conservation and historic preservation communities. Within the year, he will have served 16 years as a highly respected and influential member of the Board of Trustees of the National Park Conservation Association, and as an expert advisor to the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks.

He has served as member of the National Parks and Conservation Association’s Second Century Commission for the National Parks; as a member of the Federal Advisory Commission guiding the much needed and successful redesign of the grounds of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis led by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, and as expert advisor and consultant for the Ken Burns 2009 television documentary film, “The National Parks: America's Best Idea.” He is a contributor to the work of the Library of American Landscape History.

Other recognitions include:

- the national Pugsley Medal for his role in advancing parks and conservation.
- being named a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administrators.
- the George Wright Society George Melendez Wright Award for his lifetime of work on behalf of the national parks.

Letters of support for this nomination list some of his greatest contributions and achievements. In addition to those achievements listed elsewhere, Denis:

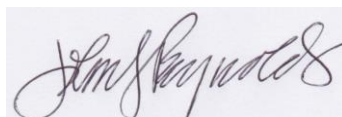
- Championed the Service’s Sustainable Design Initiative, introducing sustainability considerations in design and construction throughout the Service, which evolved to include official policy embracing these concepts Service-wide as well as the creation of the Office of Sustainability in the NPS Washington Office.
- Worked to create a system of National Heritage Areas in the NPS that has been so successful that Congress established a National Heritage Areas Service within the NPS in 2022, comprised of 62 areas throughout the United States.
- Led the creation of an education focus within the Service, which later resulted in legislation making education one of the purposes of the NPS.

Denis is one of the most respected individuals who has ever dedicated his professional life to the betterment of the national parks and the National Park Service.

His humble ambitions, incisive intelligence, honesty, ethical integrity, robust sense of humor, affable personality and remarkable accomplishments complement precisely the stellar community of past recipients and make him highly deserving of the distinction bestowed by Honorary Membership to the American Society of Landscape Architects.

*Amy L Schneckenburger*

Amy L. Schneckenburger, FASLA



John J Reynolds, FASLA

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RE: Honorary ASLA Membership Nomination: Denis Galvin

Dear members of the Honorary ASLA Membership Committee:

It is a pleasure to write in support of Denis Galvin's nomination for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).

Denis Galvin is a legend in the field of national parks and protected areas, arguably the most impactful National Park Service leader in the last 50 years— since the era of Director George Hartzog. In his capacity as Associate Director, Deputy Director and Acting NPS Director, spanning the period 1985 to 2001, Galvin was a problem solver, and he tackled almost every major policy and operational challenge that has confronted the National Park Service ((NPS).

Trained as a civil engineer, throughout his professional NPS career, Galvin championed thoughtful new design, historic preservation, and above all the importance of comprehensive interdisciplinary planning. When he was director of the Denver Service Center, he elevated the role of landscape architects and planners throughout NPS. As a landscape architect, I had the opportunity to work directly with him on the development of new urban national parks and national heritage areas that greatly expanded the reach of the national park system.

Galvin was a force both within and outside the agency, advancing forward thinking initiatives including *National Parks for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century- The Vail Agenda (1992)*, the National Park System's Advisory Board's *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century (2001)*, and the National Parks Second Century Commission's *Advancing the National Park Idea (2009)*. Based on this work, he was singularly influential in guiding the adoption by NPS of a *National Park System Plan (2017)*, the first such plan in 50 years.

As an agency leader, Galvin used his vast institutional knowledge, mastery of detail, and superb communication skills to build enormous professional credibility inside and outside NPS. He earned the respect of the oversight committees of Congress, and established extraordinarily strong and productive bi-partisan working relationships with key congressmen, congressional and committee staff members, other federal colleagues and park advocates. Upon his retirement in 2001, Congressman Nick Rahall praised Galvin as "one of the National Park Service's greatest resources, and his knowledge and judgment about national park issues is very much respected, both within the agency and here in Congress."

Even a partial listing of Galvin's signature accomplishments would have to include:

- establishing of the Natural Resource Challenge initiative (in response to Richard West Sellar's landmark book *Preserving Nature in the National Parks* ) which dramatically ramped up professional resources management capacity in the parks, and created the first national inventory and monitoring program.
- collaborating with the National Park System Advisory Board and its then chair Historian John Hope Franklin to produce *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century* (2001) laying out a foundational vision for a more modern and inclusive agency.
- setting up leadership programs for professional development and advancement including the intake and mid-level intake programs and the natural resource trainee program. (Former NPS Director Jon Jarvis was a graduate.)
- championing of the National Heritage Area program (now up to 55 areas) as a more flexible and inclusive tool to conserve lived-in cultural landscapes with high preservation values.

These programmatic accomplishments aside, Galvin was also responsible to the study and early development of a significant number of innovative national parks including Lowell, the Presidio at Golden Gate, and New Orleans Jazz.

In retirement, he has continued to exert a strong positive influence on US parks and park policies through his pivotal service as an advisor to the National Park System Advisory Board and the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, as a member of the National Parks Second Century Commission, and a trustee of the National Parks Conservation Association. Directors have repeatedly sought his counsel and it would be hard to name a single major conversation on the future of national parks when Denis Galvin has not been tapped.

In appreciation of his lifetime of service to the American landscape, the American people, and their national parks, I believe that Denis Galvin should be recognized as an honorary member of ASLA.

Sincerely

Rolf Diamant

Adjunct Associate Professor, Historic Preservation Program, University of Vermont  
National Park Service Superintendent (retired)

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RE: Nominations of Denis P. Galvin for Honorary Membership in ASLA

Dear Members of the Honorary ASLA Membership Committee:

We, Stephanie S. Toothman, Ph.D, Historian and former Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science, National Park Service (NPS); Charlie Clapper, Landscape Architect, and former Director of the Denver Service Center (NPS); and Heather Huyck, Ph.D., Historian and former Director of Office of Strategic Planning (NPS), support the nomination of Denis P. Galvin for Honorary Membership in ASLA.

Denis' thirty-eight-year career in the National Park Service has been documented in detail in the nomination submitted by Amy L. Schneckenburger and John Reynolds. Highlights of his long and distinguished career include serving as Associate Regional Director for Operations and Regional Deputy Director for the Northeast Regional Office (1974-1978), Director of the NPS Denver Service Center (DSC) (1978-1985), and NPS Deputy Director (1985-2002). In this letter, we would like to highlight his support and contributions to the planning and management of the cultural resources within the national park system.

During Denis' tenure at DSC, which is responsible for most of the planning, design and construction work for the entire NPS, the professional staff carrying out these responsibilities were supported and highly respected. They maintained a commitment to the principles established by the development of 'Parkitecture' that originally defined NPS 'parkscapes' – buildings designed with the purpose of blending into landscapes instead of imposing upon them through the use of native materials and reflecting the history, culture and environment of the park unit. Reinterpreted by the Mission 66 program, which was influenced by mid-century modernism, these principles continued to influence the design of new construction in the parks. In addition to hiring more landscape architects, during Denis' tenure the DSC cultural resource staff of historic architects, historians, and archeologists, which supported parks in documenting the history and character-defining features of a building or landscape to guide project design and compliance, was at its peak effectiveness. The GIS system created at DSC at this time has continued to evolve into an inter-disciplinary mapping of every park in the system. Denis also oversaw service-wide implementation of GPRA, a strategic planning program that provided a uniform system for establishing goals and actions, and recording accomplishments for all programs.

As Deputy Director from 1985-1994, Denis, in collaboration with NPS cultural program leaders including Jerry Rogers, Roland Bowers, Katherine Stevenson, Randy Biallas, and Hugh Miller, oversaw the expansion of the cultural resource programs with the addition of the cultural landscapes and ethnography programs. He supported through the budget process 'material weakness' evaluations that brought new funding to collections management as well as new regional positions for the new programs. In real dollars and staffing, as a result of these increases, the cultural resource programs across the service reached its greatest strength in numbers and resources during the forty years spanned by our careers.. He was an early supporter of the National Heritage Area program which finally has been formally authorized and includes 50+ heritage areas across the country. During his tenure, the importance of 'Parkitecture' was recognized through a national historic landmark program, which

resulted in the designation of parks such as Mount Rainier and its 1928 master plan, as NHLs.. After his retirement, Denis served as a peer reviewer for Ethan Carr's *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma (2007)*.

Two examples of Denis 'direct involvement in specific park projects illustrate his support for preserving cultural resources. The Federal Lands Transportation Program is one of the oldest partnerships between two federal agencies. Established in 1926, the Federal Highway Administration provides design and construction assistance for all major NPS roads. When the FHA required that the historic hand-laid stone guard rails at Shenandoah NP be heightened and strengthened, Denis was instrumental in negotiating an acceptable compromise – stone encased low Jersey Barriers – that maintained the historic character of the roads.

In 1990 Presidents Bush and Gorbachev signed a joint agreement looking toward designation of an international park linking Russia, Alaska, and the Canadian Yukon across Beringia. Denis was the NPS lead for years of negotiations between the United States and Russia to establish the park. Although the formal designation of an international park never happened, the Alaska NPS region now administers the Beringia Land Bridge National Preserve.

As noted by other supporters of Denis 'nomination, he is a passionate baseball fan of the Boston Red Sox and is credited with helping to convince the Red Sox ownership to add Fenway Park to the National Register of Historic Places. Director Jarvis joined the celebration of the listing on July 7, 2012, by throwing out the first pitch at Fenway. Friends of Denis 'note that he is equally passionate about jazz and see his 'fingerprints 'behind the authorization of New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park.

Throughout his entire career, Denis Galvin demonstrated strong leadership, fueled by his passion for the National Park Service mission, that inspired, and continues to inspire, those who worked for and with him. With his many contributions to supporting the NPS mission of preserving for present and future generations the natural and cultural resources of the national park system in mind, we recommend his nomination to the Honorary Membership committee.

Stephanie Toothman, Ph.D.

Charlie Clapper

Heather Huyck, Ph.D.



February 5, 2024

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It is my honor to support the nomination of Denis Galvin as an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Mr. Galvin spent his professional career working to preserve and protect the incredible natural and cultural resources of our country. Through numerous positions in the National Park Service: Professional Project Engineer, Director of the Denver Service Center, the NPS central office for planning design and construction, Associate Director for Park Planning Facilities and Lands, and Deputy Director of Operations for the National Park Service. Denis Galvin always worked to implement the mandate of the National Park Service to preserve the natural and cultural resources of our country while providing for appropriate visitor use.

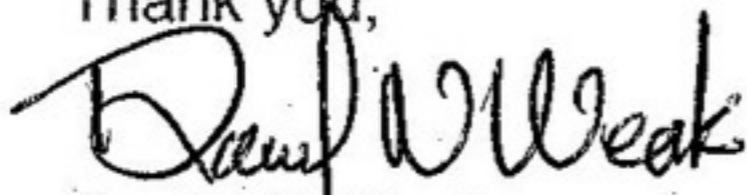
The NPS dual mandate often places development of facilities required for park management and accommodation of visitor use in conflict with preservation of the resources for which park areas were established. Denis Galvin, in his various positions of leadership, always worked to find the best solution to those problems. His record of success is perhaps unmatched over the past 50 years in the NPS.

Through his leadership vast tracks of federal lands have been protected, natural systems have been preserved and restored, irretrievable cultural resources have been preserved, and the natural history and cultural fabric of our country have been protected for future generations.

Mr. Galvin's commitment to our nation's natural and cultural history did not end with his retirement. His work continues through organizations such as the National Parks and Conservation Association to advocate on behalf of National Park System and park areas with communities, local, regional and state governments as well as Congress, and both Administrations.

Mr. Galvin's record of achievement deserves your consideration as an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Thank you,



Daniel N. Wenk

National Park Service Executive, Retired / Landscape Architect





NATIONAL PARK



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Dear Members of the ASLA Honorary Membership Committee:

The contact information for nominees Denis P. Galvin is:

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If you have any need for further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.  
A text to my number above or a call would probably be the most effective way to reach me quickly.  
Sincerely yours,

/sgd/

John J. Reynolds, FASLA