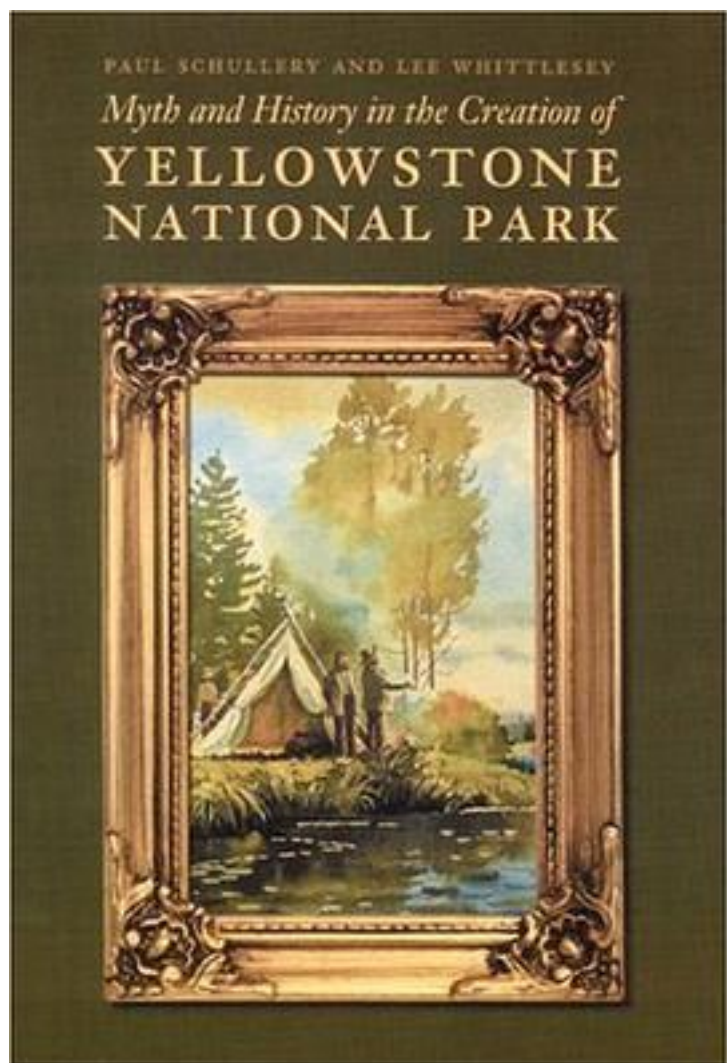


# Myth and History in the Creation of Yellowstone National Park



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Does a beloved institution need its own myths to survive? Can conservationists avoid turning their heroes into legends? Should they try? Yellowstone National Park, a global icon of conservation and natural beauty, was born at the most improbable of times: the American Gilded Age, when altruism seemed extinct and society's vision seemed focused on only greed and growth. Perhaps that is why the park's 'creation myth' portrayed a few saintlike pioneer conservationists laboring to set aside this unique wilderness against all odds. In fact, the establishment of Yellowstone was the result of complex social, scientific, economic, and aesthetic forces. Its creators were not saints but mortal humans with the full range of ideals and impulses known to the species. Authors Paul Schullery and Lee Whittlesey, both longtime students of Yellowstone's complex history, present the first full account of how the fairy tale origins of the park found universal public acceptance and the long, painful process by which the myth was reconsidered and replaced with a more realistic and ultimately more satisfying story. In this evocative exploration of Yellowstone's creation myth, the authors trace the evolution of the legend, its rise to incontrovertible truth, and its revelation as a mysterious and troubling episode that remains part folklore, part wish, and part history. This study demonstrates the passions stirred by any challenge to cherished national memories, just as it honors the ideals and dreams represented by our national myths. Paul Schullery is a writer and editor for Yellowstone National Park and an affiliate professor of history at Montana State University. He is the author of "Searching for Yellowstone", "Echoes from the Summit", and "Lewis and Clark among the Grizzlies", and many other books on nature and the American West. Lee Whittlesey is Park Historian for the National Park Service at Yellowstone National Park. He is the author of "Death in Yellowstone", "Lost in the Yellowstone", and "Yellowstone Place Names".

作者介绍:

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