

## Shmanners 419: National Parks

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**Travis:** Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:** And you're listening to Shmanners.

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear.

**Travis:** Ugh. This is—I feel like I can see the future, 'cause we're recording this on Wednesday. And this weekend we're gonna be at GenCon. So you'll definitely see me. You might even catch a wild Teresa running around.

**Teresa:** Maybe!

**Travis:** That makes it sound like you're, like...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Gone feral? Covered in mud.

**Teresa:** I'm unencumbered, or...

**Travis:** Like, you'll never find her.

**Teresa:** Or riding through the streets like Lady Godiva. [laughs]

**Travis:** She's a master of disguise. She's covered herself in feathers and leaves. You'll never find her. But we're gonna be in Indianapolis doing some GenCon events. Me, Dad, Griffin are doing, like, panels and Q&A, doing some signings. You can find all of that, [bit.ly/mcelroytours](https://bit.ly/mcelroytours), I think it's there.

**Teresa:** Yes, I think.

**Travis:** Or if you go to mcelroy.family you'll find it there as well. But that's not what we're talking about today.

**Teresa:** Not today.

**Travis:** Today we're talking about where you can park your car: the National Parking Lot Service—is that it?

**Teresa:** Nope.

**Travis:** It's that National Park Service. It's all the benefits you get from joining. It's all the perks you get.

[pause]

**Teresa:** "You can be a ranger," says Smoky the Bear.

**Travis:** Yeah. Well, I don't think that's what he said. I don't think Smoky was pointing at people like, "You can be a ranger."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Or was it more of an Oprah, "You get to be a ranger! You get to be a—" our kids don't know who Smoky the Bear is.

**Teresa:** I know.

**Travis:** We've talked about this many times, and I'm sure we've talked about it in the podcast, where PSAs—I looked it up and, like, PSAs, right? Were this thing... young'uns... where it was sometimes local, sometimes national commercials, basically, that were like safety and instructional things. Famously, like, McGruff the Crime Dog and Smoky the Bear, right? And they were, like... ad space that was donated or paid for by other people to fill those in, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** But now... kids don't really watch TV the way that we did, especially not like, local.

**Teresa:** Well, because they're all, like, streaming services and things like that.

**Travis:** Right. And PSAs were all on, like, your local, like, you know, whatever your NBC affiliate channel was, whatever your ABC, you know, CBS, Fox. But those, like, now you're watching the streaming one, or there's, like, ABC Network on your digital.

**Teresa:** Listen, they may still exist. We are not part of the generation that still watches, like, actual TV.

**Travis:** No, but I don't know if you know this babe—

**Teresa:** My parents—

**Travis:** —we do have a seven-year-old and a four-year-old who watch TV.

**Teresa:** No, no, no. You know what I mean. Like, people who watch cable television, watch actual, like, television on TV. If I need news, I look online. Right? But my parents, six PM every day, they turn on their news. They listen to, like, channel two or something. Right?

**Travis:** And they often take photos of things they see in the newspaper and send it to us from their phones.

**Teresa:** Yes, yes.

**Travis:** It's incredible. But my point—

**Teresa:** So what I'm talking about is that generation, the older generation, they still watch TV.

**Travis:** But my point—but my point—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** We're grabbing each other's shoulders to make points to each other. This is called bonding, folks. My point is that our children and people our children's' age don't get PSAs.

**Teresa:** I'm also saying that.

**Travis:** No, but you sound—it sound—you were agreeing with me, but using words that sounded like you were disagreeing with me.

**Teresa:** [through laughter] No I wasn't.

**Travis:** And you're bending my brain into pretzels.

**Teresa:** [through laughter] I'm agreeing with you!

**Travis:** Okay, cool. So our kids don't know who Smoky the Bear is. That's what that all boils down to. Anyways, that's gonna do it for us this week, folks.

**Teresa:** [laughs] No. Okay. We are gonna talk about Park Rangers specifically next week. But we needed to do, like, a background kind of, like, wash for the National Park Service today.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** We're doing it.

**Travis:** Home of Leslie Knope.

**Teresa:** It may not—aww, yeah, Leslie Knope.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Aww, I should've worn my Vote for Knope shirt.

**Travis:** Ugh.

**Teresa:** Didn't do it. Okay. Um, I did wear my Pawnee Goddesses shirt yesterday to the gym.

**Travis:** That's true.

**Teresa:** So...

**Travis:** "I am a female warrior." It's something—it's up in our kids' room. I can't remember all the words.

**Teresa:** It is. It's up there somewhere. Um... there has not always been... the National Parks. Not here, not really anywhere. Um, I think that the closest thing that I could think of was, like, private lands in England, right? Where, like, her Majesty's forests or whatever, right?

**Travis:** But even then, that wasn't—

**Teresa:** Were protected in a way.

**Travis:** Yeah, but that was just so the rich and royalty could hunt on them, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** It wasn't like, "We're keeping this serene, and we're keeping this safe." It was like, "Nah, this is just for me to destroy, however I want to."

**Teresa:** Or, you know, keep safe, if that's what you wanna do, right?

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** But it was—the idea of protected lands I think is—

**Travis:** Mm-hmm, for public consumption, yeah.

**Teresa:** Right, is what I think of. And so... we're gonna talk about a brief history of Bryce Canyon and, you know, 62 other amazing places.

**Travis:** Can I tell you? When you—you took a beat between Bryce and Canyon. And I thought it was a person.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And then you said Canyon. And I said, "Bryce Canyon. Could still be a person."

**Teresa:** Could still be a person. Um, it goes back a little further to westward expansion. We talked about this a little bit in our cowpoke episode, right?

**Travis:** Yeah. Also called Manifest Destiny.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** It sucks!

**Teresa:** Yes. But it happened.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Right? It was a bad deal.

**Travis:** I say it sucks, and somebody who's living in Oregon right now is like, "Hey!" But it was really bad for indigenous folk. Really bad, let's be honest, for the environment. Um, yeah.

**Teresa:** Because the way that we think about it now, right? The people who were there first had a better understanding of, like, keeping the land, right? Where the people who were moving from, say, like, the east coast, right? They didn't really understand those techniques. And so—

**Travis:** Ask any small town person now when tourists—like, if a tourist thing pops up in your town of, like, 500 people. And people start showing up

in droves to your, like, to your small town. Ask them how they feel about it. Let's say it's like that.

**Teresa:** So, although the people from the east, right? And, I mean, obviously other people from Europe and all over the world, when these different waves of immigrants came through, they discovered different, like, natural wonders, right? It was beautiful.

Um, and although people wanted more land, they wanted economic opportunities, they wanted to maybe, like, change their life, live as a different person—we talked about that too—it's pretty obvious that they were in for a rude awakening, right?

It's a very different landscape from the east of the Appalachian mountains through the middle of the country to the Rocky mountains, and then again to the coast.

**Travis:** Yeah. Yeah, you got a lot more desert, dry land. There's, like, a big hole right there in, like, Arizona, I think? There's a giant hole from Paul Bunyan's ax, as we all know.

**Teresa:** Of course.

**Travis:** And then there's parts that are real cold. Um, parts with a lot of snakes. Snake country.

**Teresa:** So many snakes. Also bison, right? Al—

**Travis:** Hmm, and half snake, half bison.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Also, natural—

**Travis:** Snison.

**Teresa:** —um, natural, like, mountain ranges, things like the mesas, and also new animals.

**Travis:** Radiator Springs.

**Teresa:** That—yeah. If you—what? Radiator—that's from Cars, right?

**Travis:** Correct, yeah.

**Teresa:** Okay, okay. Uh, bison, another new animal if you lived in the east that you would encounter into the west.

**Travis:** Not so much anymore!

**Teresa:** Some. There's some!

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** New settlers were captivated by the beauty in the new regions, right? And so there were also some enterprising newcomers who saw an opportunity.

**Travis:** What?

**Teresa:** Because they thought that, like, for example the redwoods were awesome. They thought that people would also think that, and they might pay to see redwoods.

**Travis:** I see.

**Teresa:** In 1855, a British man named James Hutchings along with two indigenous guides visited the Yosemite Valley in Central California. Hutchings began to write articles about the state's natural wonders, publishing an illustrated periodical called Hutchings Illustrated California Magazine.

**Travis:** [snorts] Catchy.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** I like—you know, it's... brief, is what I like about it. Nice and witty.



**Teresa:** So he told the world about the majesty of Yosemite, and the Sierra Nevada mountain range, and had beautiful descriptions of the landscapes that staggered the skeptics and silenced the croakers.

**Travis:** Oh!

**Teresa:** From this time forward, Yosemite can be considered the commencement of the visits of tourists.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Sure, man.

**Teresa:** And almost overnight—

**Travis:** Wait till that guy finds out about movies, though. It's gonna blow his mind.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Almost overnight, because it takes a long time for people to get places in 1855, um, Yosemite became an enormous destination. Right? Things popping up all over the place. And in fact, it became so popular that Abraham Lincoln made time at the height of the Civil War to put the park under federal protection in 1864.

**Travis:** Okay. I thought you were gonna say, at the height of the Civil War he found time to go visit.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** That he was like, "I've heard such good things. Everybody, everybody, stop fighting for, like, a week! I'm going camping. Bye-ee!"

**Teresa:** I mean, he felt the need to make federal protections of it, you know, because it was—people be people. So when they go places, they break things.

**Travis:** They break things, they take things.

**Teresa:** That's right. Um, John Hutchings, being the businessman that he was, he was not just a promoter of Yosemite, but also himself.

**Travis:** Yeah, it's right there in the name of his magazine.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. And once the land was granted to California, he made the claim that because the land would certainly not have gotten this status without him, that he was entitled to 160 acres of land within Yosemite.

**Travis:** That's a lot of land.

**Teresa:** He was like, "I made this place famous. It's mine.

**Travis:** Oh my god. Okay. And I bet, um, Yosemite, if it could talk it would be like, "I did not want to be. Get out."

**Teresa:** [laughs] "Leave me alone." And so Hutchings unsuccessfully sued. And even though he got a generous payment from the state to compensate for the loss, he was later banished from Yosemite Valley altogether because he was constantly challenging the building laws.

**Travis:** He was a jerk. Can I just say, too, I don't, um—I'm not an expert at the time period. But I'm also pretty sure his claim on, like, it, was probably just like, "I showed up and I didn't see anyone around, so I was like, 'This is mine now, and I can charge people to be here.'"

And people were like, "Hey, man. Um... no. It belongs to the state now."

And he was like, "Wha—hold on. But I said... but I—but I—I called first! I called shotgun on it? And, um, every time I walked out I said tick tock, seat lock. So, like, you guys can't take... ugh."

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** I don't like him. I don't like the name of his magazine. I don't like the way he does business.

**Teresa:** So—

**Travis:** I'm glad he's dead. There. I assume.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Yes.

**Travis:** This is 1852. And I'm glad he's dead.

**Teresa:** 1850s and '60s. He's definitely dead.

**Travis:** And I'm glad.

**Teresa:** Um, it—

**Travis:** And if any of his ancestors are listening, yeah, I said it. Because if he's alive he would be, like, 180 years old, and I don't think he'd be very happy about it. Wouldn't feel good.

**Teresa:** Now, being protected federally, the land being protected first federally and then given over to the state of California, does not make a National Park.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Yosemite was not the first National Park. The first National Park was Yellowstone. March 1st, 1872, President and Civil War general Ulysses S. Grant established Yellowstone as the very first National Park. The territory of the park extended both into Montana and Wyoming, and was declared to be used, quote, "As a public park for pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."

And to protect it from development, right? Is kind of, like...

**Travis:** Implied.

**Teresa:** Is the implied part, right?

**Travis:** Do you think—I assume that part of, like, the National Park—I bet that there was a discussion in the creation of it, right? Where it's like, yeah, we're gonna turn this place into a park, right? Into—and they were like, okay, but it goes into Montana and—what was the other one?

**Teresa:** Uh, Wyoming.

**Travis:** Montana and Wyoming. So which one of them? Is it split down the middle? And they're like, well, that doesn't make any sense. Uh, it belongs to us. It's, uh, the US—it's a US park. So federally—because I know that's how it works with, like—at least in Twin Peaks—when a crime crosses state lines and they're like, "Now it's federal," and the FBI has to show up and investigate. So that must have been it, right? Of like, the only thing that makes sense is to create, like, a federal organization to look over it, since it crosses state lines, right?

**Teresa:** Yes, yes.

**Travis:** Okay. That's what I think, yeah.

**Teresa:** It was the first step in the national park movement of the early 1900s

**Travis:** They shouldn't move national parks around!

**Teresa:** Wah wah.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Brought to us by President Teddy Roosevelt.

**Travis:** We'll talk about him in just a second. But first... how about a word from some other Max Fun shows?

[theme music plays]

[bell dings]

**Hal:** The following pro wrestling contest is scheduled for one fall. Making their way to the ring from the Tights and Fights podcast are the baddest trio of audio, the hair to beware, Danielle Radford!

**Danielle:** It really is great hair!

**Hal:** The Brit with a permit to hit, Lindsey Kelk!

**Lindsey:** The Queen is dead, long live the Queen!

**Hal:** And the fast-talking, fist-clocking Hal Lublin! See? I can wrestle and be an announcer!

**Danielle:** Get ready for Tights and Fights!

**Lindsey:** Listen every Saturday or face the pain.

**Hal:** Find us on Maximum Fun! Now ring the bell!

[bell dings]

[ad ends]

[music plays]

**Biz:** Hi. This is Biz. And this is the final season of One Bad Mother: a comedy podcast about parenting. This is going to be a year of celebrating all that makes this podcast and this community magical.

**Speaker 2:** I'm so glad that I found your podcast.

**Speaker 3:** I just cannot thank you enough for just being the voice of reason as I'm trying to figure all of this out.

**Speaker 4:** Thank you, and cheers to your incredible show and the vision you had to provide this space for all of us.

**Biz:** This is still a show about life after giving life. And yes, there will be swears. You can find us on Maximumfun.org. And as always, you are doing a great job.

[music and ad end]

**Travis:** Okay. Now, listen. Teddy Roosevelt... uh, according to the, like, ten page long book I read when I was eight years old—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —was awesome. But then as I got older and learned stuff, no. There's plenty of problematic things. But basically that's true of, um, anybody throughout history. But Teddy Roosevelt ain't exactly the, uh, shining, you know, standing-on-a-pillar hero everybody thinks.

**Teresa:** Yes, you're correct.

**Travis:** Okay. I just wanted to go ahead and state that. 'Cause we'll probably talk about how he set up National Parks and everything, and I don't want people to think that we're coming away from this like, "Yeah, hero for the ages. Deserves to be, uh, given sainthood," or whatever.

**Teresa:** Uh, no. He was a product of his time, first of all. And he had a lot of accomplishments, some good, some bad. This good one, though. He is often called the conservation president, because he did a lot of work to protect the American landscape from development.

Serving from 1901 to 1909, he signed legislation establishing five new parks. So we've got Crater Lake, Oregon. Wind Cave, South Dakota. Sully's Hill, North Dakota, which was later re-designated as a game preserve—preserve! That's important.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Mesa Verde, Colorado, and Platt, Oklahoma, which is now part of the Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so here is the thing that enabled him to do all of that. He was the one who enacted the Antiquities Act, June 8th, 1906. This is legislation giving Roosevelt and all succeeding presidents the ability to proclaim historic landmarks, historic or prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest in federal ownership as national monuments.

So if you thought it was important to American history, you could basically claim it.

**Travis:** I like that. I think. There's probably issues what that, I have to assume, with things with, like, land being taken from people. I mean, let's be honest. That has been a tool in—

**Teresa:** Eminent domain.

**Travis:** Yeah. That's been an issue forever, especially when we're talking about like, "Oh, this part is very important for national history."

And it's like, yeah, there's people living there? And, um, there's people that care about that land more than you do as a pretty place to look at.

It's like, "Yeah, but doesn't matter. It's ours now. Uh, so now, um, you can't live there anymore." But...

**Teresa:** This is a very sticky kind of, um... way of elevating a place, right? We want to protect it. We want to keep it nice. But are we the best at doing that? Also, what do we do about people already there? Things like that. I think that there's a delicate balance, and there are not—it's not always going to be a win-win solution, right?

**Travis:** Yeah. It's a delicate balance, and there's never been a president that has been as balanced as Simone Biles. Let's put it that way, right?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** A little bit more of that balance would be nice. But I will say this. This is also a time period, especially in America, where it was like—I mean, you have to remember, right? This is gonna seem like a nonsequitor. But there are very few mummies in existence 'cause people ate 'em 'cause they thought it was good for their health.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** You can listen to Sawbones on that, right? So if we're doing that to mummies, right? Think about stuff like the petrified forest, and the redwoods, and all of these things. You know, anywhere where there was, like, crystal formations in a cave and stuff like that.

**Teresa:** "This is cool stuff. It's mine now."

**Travis:** "I'm gonna destroy it. And take a piece home to show friends." Right?

**Teresa:** Yeah, and we don't want that.

**Travis:** Yeah. And so I do think that it was very important to have some sort of legislation that was like, "That's actually illegal now. This belongs to us and we have to protect it." I think there's overstepping though, right? Which is the issue.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. 1906, Roosevelt had proclaimed four new national monuments, including Devil's Tower, El Morro, Montezuma Castle, and the Petrified Forest. Two years later he would protect a large portion of the Grand Canyon.

Um, by the time he left the Oval Office, he had reserved six cultural areas and 12 national areas for future generations, thanks to the Antiquities Act.

**Travis:** Have you ever been to the Grand Canyon?

**Teresa:** No.



**Travis:** No. It's big, man. I don't know if you know this. It's real big! And, like, big in a weird way. Big—

**Teresa:** The closest I ever got was when we drove cross country to California and we stayed in Flagstaff, and we were like, "Let's go to the Grand Canyon?"

And then everyone around us was like, "That's, like, four hours out of the way. So that's, like, eight more hours of car trip for you two on your way to LA. Maybe just sleep in." [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah. That's what we did instead. 'Cause we did a Max Fun, uh, broadcast, right?

**Teresa:** That's right, yeah. I remember that.

**Travis:** From the Grand Canyon. And the thing that was wild to me—but it makes sense, right? Because it is an area that needs to be preserved and I'm totally cool with that. But the Grand Canyon you're like, "Oh, a huge tourist destination." Especially when thinking about, like, Flagstaff, right? 'Cause we're talking about, like, it's right there. It's... to get—

**Teresa:** Quote, "Right there." [laughs]

**Travis:** Right there. Like, our hotel that we stayed in—the, like, closest hotel to Grand Canyon is, like, an hour away.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** And the Flagstaff Airport—that's the thing that threw me off the most. Which is when you think about, like—I mean, the Grand Canyon is very big and very long, so it runs a long way.

But when I think about the Grand Canyon I think about, like, Flagstaff, right? Probably 'cause of our drive there. The Flagstaff Airport—hey, everybody. If you live in Flagstaff you already know this.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But it blew my mind. Because basically there's, like, one security, like, checkpoint, right? And you go through it. And then you're just, like, waiting in a room with, like, you know, probably ten rows of seats. And then when you are gonna go on the plane you just, like, walk out a door, walk across the tarmac, walk up steps, right?

But if you're past security and you need to go to the bathroom, the only bathrooms are on the other side, back through security. Gotta go back out, use the bathroom, then go back to security to get in.

As far as, like, food, there's a vending machine. It's just the littlest... sweet, sure, very nice people, airport. But you think, like, it's Flagstaff! Right there next to the Grand Canyon. I bet they get a lot of, uh—I hope they don't. For their sake I hope they don't get a lot of people through that airport. 'Cause I think it could maybe only hold 20 people at a time.

**Teresa:** Oh, maybe. Um, so... here is the problem with all of these newly established, federally protected landmarks and lands and things like that.

**Travis:** They need a way to protect them.

**Teresa:** But who's in charge of that?

**Travis:** Me!

**Teresa:** Mmm, no.

**Travis:** I wasn't alive.

**Teresa:** So during Roosevelt's time, about half of the total land area of protected places was administered to by the Agricultural Department. And that was later transferred to the jurisdiction of the Department Interior.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Other monuments were also overseen by the Forest Service branch of Agriculture. And others, interestingly, were looked after by the War Department?

**Travis:** I guess if it's, like, a war memorial.

**Teresa:** I guess. I guess so.

**Travis:** If it was like a land—like, if you set up, like, a landmark at Gettysburg, right?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I could see. It's like a War Department—I don't know.

**Teresa:** Yeah. But these—all of these departments created a lot of kind of bureaucracy and infighting about how we should do things, right?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** So...

**Travis:** And budgeting issues, I assume.

**Teresa:** ... you need a new agency.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** August 25th, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Act that created the National Park Service, which was a federal bureau of the Department of the Interior. Uh, it was responsible at the time for protecting 35 national parks and monuments, as well as any new ones that were signed into protection in the future.

It was named... [laughs quietly] the Organic Act. States that "The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the federal areas known as National Parks, monuments, and reservations by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments,

and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same, in such manner, by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations."

**Travis:** Oh my god. What?

**Teresa:** Whoa.

**Travis:** What is—what does that mean?

**Teresa:** The National Park Service is completely dedicated to the protection and education about these protected areas, so everyone can continue to enjoy them.

**Travis:** I looked it up, just in case anyone was wondering. Currently...

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, according to, I don't know, FWS.gov? [unintelligible] Forest and Wildlife Service? Maybe? Uh, there are 20,500 Plains Bison in conservation herds, an additional 420—nice—thousand in commercial herds, and—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —are no longer—what's wrong?

**Teresa:** [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** Are no longer threatened with extinction.

**Teresa:** Nice!

**Travis:** You're laughing 'cause I said nice?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Yeah. Just slipped it in the middle there.

**Teresa:** Yep.

**Travis:** 'Cause it took you, like, three seconds.

**Teresa:** Well, you just kept reading.

**Travis:** That's fair.

**Teresa:** Okay. So, today the National Parks system of the United States includes more than 400 areas and covers more than 84 million acres, in all 50 states, plus District of Columbia, plus American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, Saipan, and the Virgin Islands.

**Travis:** And I'm sure they do good work. But the best work that they do, the work that I really wanna talk about, is their social media presence.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I enjoy it immensely. Because it is not just—now, listen. Sometimes you get social media for, like, an organization or company or something. And they're like, "We wanna be weird and funny."

And they're trying so hard to be weird and funny that it's like, "Hello, fellow teens" kind of comedy, right?

**Teresa:** [laughs] Yes.

**Travis:** And you're like, "That's not a joke." And then you get the National Park Service.

**Teresa:** And by extension the Alt National Park Service accounts.

**Travis:** The National Park Service account posted a picture of a petrified, like, tree log, and wrote "[singing] At first I was a tree, now I'm petrified. Thinkin' all my wooden rings had turned to stone inside. I will survive, I will survive."

And that's great. Listen, that's great. But the one I like the most is a tweet that simply reads: "You know it's cold outside when you go outside and it's cold."

**Teresa:** [laughs] Here's—[laughs]

**Travis:** That, to me—I'd write that. That's peak anti-comedy to me. And to nail anti-comedy for a National Park Service tweet? [kiss]

**Teresa:** Here's one. "Bison may look friend-shaped, but they already have all the friends they want. Keep your distance and don't make it awkward."

**Travis:** "Trails often look more flat on the map."

[pause]

**Teresa:** Ahh.

**Travis:** Yeah, 'cause it's pa—yes! Oh my god. I enjoy them immensely. It's so good.

**Teresa:** So look them up, um, wherever you can find social memes. Oh, oh! Here's another one. "One does not simply become a master of karate. First you must accidentally walk into a spider web." [laughs]

**Travis:** Ah ha! Pretty good. Oh my god. It's just—they're so... oh my god. Here's one. "Big Appa? Just remember, jumping on a bison and yelling "yip" will not make it fly. But you will!"

**Teresa:** Ohh. That's good.

**Travis:** Oh my god. They're so dumb and I love 'em so much.

**Teresa:** They're so great. Please, please, everyone look them up. It's great.

**Travis:** What else, Tere—back! Back to the copy.

**Teresa:** So if you want to go to a National Park, here are some tips.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Okay. Make sure that you talk to a ranger first and ask specific questions about where you can safely view flora and fauna, and what times you're most likely to see them. Because it's not your—it's not their fault if you can't find it, right? It's a big place. Um, and if you go in expecting to see bison, right? And you don't go where the bison are, you're not gonna see 'em.

**Travis:** Also, I would say, as long as we're doing tip, just safety tip. Keep in mind that if you go to a National Park, right? That it's not the same as going to, like, your local park where there's, like, you know, a walking path a big, you know, field of grass and thing. Right? There's—it's out of doors. It's nature.

**Teresa:** Yes, yes.

**Travis:** There's animals. Um, there's, you know... things. Like, there's natural kind of dangers of, like, falling off the side of a cliff, or tripping over. Right? Um, and then there's also other people. So, I think we talked about this in our hiking thing too.

**Teresa:** Definitely.

**Travis:** If you're gonna go, tell somebody where you're gonna be, when you're gonna be back. If you're going on a hike or camping, make sure you give them, like, a detailed map of, like, where you're gonna be and what path you're taking. Make sure you take all the stuff with you.

**Teresa:** And research it thoroughly. There are a lot of people every year who suffer and die from dehydration.

**Travis:** And exposure.

**Teresa:** And exposure. Because they have not prepared well for the trail that they want to go on.

**Travis:** Yeah. If you're just, like, driving around—I mean, like, you're driving through. "Oh, look, it's Yellowstone!" And you go on a hike wearing sandals or whatever, that's a mistake. You should not do that. This is a thing you need to prepare for, a thing you need to plan for and be well equipped for.

**Teresa:** In that vein, make sure that you obey the speed limits to the letter. This is not like going five over is fine, because the road goes through their forest, right? That's what this is. And so the speed limits are there for a reason.

There are also a lot of designated pullovers, okay? So you don't just, like, put your blinkers on in the middle of the road or whatever. Um, every park with a scenic driving route will have little side lots that people can pull over to take pictures or enjoy the view. And if you are driving a larger vehicle, there's something called making dust, right? Or dusting the bikers or walkers on the road.

Um, so make sure you don't accidentally kick up dust by drifting onto a pullover and spraying a poor person with a cloud of dust.

**Travis:** Not cool.

**Teresa:** Right. And so stay on your designated through ways, whether it's a hiking trail or a road. Do not stray from the path. The paths are also there for a reason, right? They don't go through things that might be deemed to dangerous, or like, cross over white water, or anything like that, right?

Um, in Yellowstone specifically you need to stay behind where they tell you to stay behind. There are signs, of course. Because there are boiling pools of water and geysers, right? And the bison, and the moose, they don't care about you at all. [laughs]

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** They don't care about running through you, or anything like that. Um, like I said, obey all signs and barriers. Also obey signs about pets. Your



dog I'm sure loves hiking, but there are only specific places that allow pets, okay? So make sure that you do your research about that.

Again, don't camp in non-designated areas. This is all for your safety, right? So on these trails, they have, like, prepared spots that says, "This is the camping spot. This is where we will find you." Right?

Um, because if you go other places, you might not be found.

**Travis:** Also, along those same lines, make sure you know what you are allowed to bring in. And, like, sneaking in fireworks or setting out fires when, you know, there's, like, warnings about—"It's dry season, don't do it." That's not like, "Oh, what a buzzkill." That's like, "We don't want you to burn down a National Park." And so, obey those laws.

**Teresa:** Be mindful of your food. Pack everything in. Pack everything out. Right? And don't mess with anything on the trail, even if you think you're helping, right? Acadia National Park ran into some small issues where people were finding rock piles on the trail and dismantling them because they assumed that they were, you know, assembled by teenagers or whatever. But they didn't know that they were actually very specifically designed cairns, which are manmade stone structures that act as directional trail signals. And so, you know, you may have meant well, but just don't. Just don't.

**Travis:** I think "Just don't" is a really good kind of blanket statement? Especially also when it comes to, like, taking home souvenirs from the thing.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, just don't.

**Travis:** Find a gift shop, right? Or get a t-shirt. But like, don't take home parts of the petrified forest, right? Don't pick up crystals or cool gems that you find. That's nature, and it belongs in nature. And the thing about especially petrified wood, I don't know if you know this, it takes a long time for that to happen. It's not constantly being replenished.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** So if you take it home, it's just gone now.

**Teresa:** And we have covered the Leave No Trace kind of statutes or whatever. But if you see someone else touching something, mind your own business, okay?

**Travis:** Yeah, you're not—as I've often had to tell Bebe, you're not the grown-up here. There's a Park Service thing, right? Now, once again, if it's like no fireworks and you see someone carrying in a big armload of fireworks...

**Teresa:** Probably then. You can say—

**Travis:** You could alert a park ranger, right?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** You could alert somebody whose job it is to handle that thing. Not your job to be the grown-up there, right?

**Teresa:** Right. But there was recently some backlash, right? Because obviously this—most of these parks were inhabited by indigenous people, right? And so certain tribal nations or other indigenous scientific communities have permission within the Park Service to harvest things at a certain time of the year.

So if you see people, like, gathering moss or whatever, don't assume that you're helping by yelling at them, because you never know what they are doing. Um, and just leave people alone. Again, if you have a problem, you can go to a park ranger, and then they will tell you to mind your own business, 'cause they're—those people are doing what they're allowed to do. Right?

And don't be on the phone or video chat while on the trail, you know?

**Travis:** It's dangerous.

**Teresa:** Like, you need to be aware of your surroundings.

**Travis:** It's nature, man.

**Teresa:** How about just take pictures?

**Travis:** It's nature, man! Enjoy it.

**Teresa:** Yeah. And like I said earlier, make peace that you may not actually find the animal or whatever it is that you've come to take a picture of. They're doing their thing, and you are kind of, like, lucky if you find it.

**Travis:** Also make peace with the fact that, like, if you go into nature 'cause you're really stressed out, you might still leave nature really stressed out.

**Teresa:** Oh. Yeah.

**Travis:** Nature is not magical. You can enjoy that time, um, but man, nature's not always gonna fix you worrying about deadlines and stuff. You gotta look inward. You gotta figure that out on your own.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Nature isn't always there for you, you know what I mean?

**Teresa:** It might not fix you. But...

**Travis:** It's nice.

**Teresa:** ... you can certainly enjoy it.

**Travis:** And that's gonna do it for this week. Thank you everybody for listening. Thank you to our editor, Rachel, without whom we could not make this show. Thank you to our researcher, Alexx, without whom we could not make this show. And thank you to you for listening. I don't wanna make this show without you! I'm glad you're here! There's room for everybody! Come on in!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Thank you to Teresa for dealing with me during this episode. I love you so much.

**Teresa:** Thank you Travis for sneaking in that 420 joke.

**Travis:** You're welcome. Um, go check out, like I said at the beginning, [mcelroy.family](http://mcelroy.family). You're gonna find a lot of cool stuff there including, like, our schedule for upcoming shows. Every Tuesday, me and my brothers do a show over on our McElroy family YouTube channel called McElroy Family Clubhouse. You can go to [mcelroymerch.com](http://mcelroymerch.com), go check out all the merch. By the time you're listening to this, there's new August merch, so make sure you go check that out.

I'm gonna look that up while Teresa thanks all the people I've forgotten.

**Teresa:** Thank you to Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today.

As always, we are taking your topic submissions, your questions, your idioms, all sorts. Please send them to [shmannerscast@gmail.com](mailto:shmannerscast@gmail.com), and say hi to Alexx, because she reads every single one.

**Travis:** I can't find the merch stuff, but it's all gonna be there. So why—I don't—

**Teresa:** Yeah, you should go.

**Travis:** You should just go look. [Mcelroymerch.com](http://mcelroymerch.com). And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week.

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

**Travis:** You've been listening to Shmanners...

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners! Get it?

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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