

Chuck Cushman

Founder and Executive Director

Chuck is, himself, a park inholder in Yosemite National Park. When his cabin and other private property owners in the community of Wawona in Yosemite were threatened with "Condemnation" (eminent domain) by the National Park Service in 1972, he organized the community to fight back and won. Others across the country heard about his success. They asked for his help in their own situations. And, as they say, the rest is history.

Chuck now works with many kinds of constituencies dealing with Federal, state and local government. He has helped organize numerous successful coalitions to deal with all kinds of threats from Congress and various Administrations over many years.

His first experience in politics was starting a non-profit foundation at a local school to help children with learning disabilities. That resulted in his appointment to Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley's Education Committee that dealt with the Los Angeles City Board Of Education. He eventually was elected the Committee Chairman.

After leading the successful effort to save Wawona in Yosemite, he organized a national association to help park inholders nationwide in 1978. That was the National Park Inholders Association. That effort was so successful that many other types of groups dealing with Federal land agencies asked for help. The name of the organization was changed to the National Inholders Association in 1980. Finally, after becoming involved in numerous Federal and state land issues, the name was finally changed to the American Land Rights Association in the mid 1990's.

In 1981 Chuck was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the National Park System Advisory Board. Examples of other participants at that time were Lady Bird Johnson and astronaut Wally Schirra, who worked with Walter Cronkite on the Moon landing broadcast.

Chuck is not only the founder of ALRA, but also the League of Private Property Voters (LPPV) and the Grassroots ESA Coalition. The League of Private Property Voters is a national coalition that publishes a scorecard on how Congress votes on private property and environmental issues.

Through numerous successful political battles over the years dealing with Congress and various Federal agencies, Chuck was nicknamed by the press as the "Desert Fox" and "Mr. Rent-A-Riot" as a result of his aggressive and successful efforts to protect landowners and permittees from overreaching Federal, State and other land-use controllers.

Chuck continues to be the executive director of the American Land Rights Association to the current day. He is also the coordinator of the League of Private Property Voters.