



**CLIENT**  
National Parks Service

**SERVICES**  
Landscape Architecture  
Master Planning  
Environmental Assessment  
Rehabilitation  
Cultural Resources  
Preservation  
Outdoor/Pedestrian Component

**PROJECT DATA**  
Vistor Center  
Public Space  
Amphitheater

**PROJECT TEAM**  
National Park Service, Denver Service Center  
Mount Rushmore National Memorial  
Mount Rushmore Society  
DHM Design

**STATUS**  
Complete



Every planning and design decision to renovate the Visitor Center at Mount Rushmore National Memorial was evaluated and guided by a philosophy that fiercely resisted disturbing its natural and cultural resources. The designers incorporated a building and parking program forty percent greater than the existing facilities into a heavily vegetated mountain site without putting more pressure on the landscape setting.

The aptly designated “Shrine of Democracy” that overlooks the Black Hills of South Dakota had literally been loved to death over the last sixty years. Designed to accommodate 2,000 visitors per day, the quartet of presidents on Mount Rushmore watched everyone from tourists to history buffs to schoolchildren march through the gates at a rate as high as 5,000 visitors per hour. The visitor experience at the memorial was consequently deteriorating at an alarming rate, as issues of accessibility, maintenance, capacity and environmental strains escalated to a point where they did not meet acceptable standards. Three main design criteria were restated throughout the project: accessibility, reduction of visual impacts, and return of the prime viewing to the Memorial.

