

Opinion: This land is our land

By Nicholas Kristof, New York Times

The other day, my teenage daughter and I were idly browsing real estate porn, a monument to American inequality: a private island in the Bahamas selling for \$17.9 million; a 900-acre retreat in Washington State for \$11 million; and an 83-acre estate in Colorado for a cool \$100 million.

Then we snapped out of the covetousness, for we had just been enjoying a vacation on even more exclusive property, so valuable that no hedge fund manager could ever afford to buy or rent it.

We had been hiking day after day past pristine mountain lakes, serenaded by the babble of snow-fed streams, greeted by vivid wildflowers in alpine meadows. And it's all my land!

Of course, it's also your land. It's our extraordinary national inheritance, one of the greatest gifts of our ancestors – our public lands.

My daughter and I were backpacking a 210-mile stretch of the Pacific Crest Trail in central California, from Donner Pass to Yosemite. The cost? It was all free.

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