



# National Park Service Overview



## Leadership

### Director

Jonathan B. Jarvis

### Deputy Director

Peggy O'Dell

## Administration

The National Park Service (NPS) is a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The NPS manages the 401 parks of the National Park System.

The NPS also helps administer dozens of affiliated sites, the National Register of Historic Places, National Heritage Areas, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Landmarks, and National Trails.

## Mission Statement

On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the NPS. The "Organic Act" states that the fundamental purpose of the NPS "is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

## Website

In-depth information is available at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

## The Number of Parks

The National Park System covers more than 84 million acres and is comprised of 401 sites. These include 124 historical parks or sites, 78 national monuments, 59 national parks, 25 battlefields or military parks, 18 preserves, 18 recreation areas, 10 seashores, four parkways, four lakeshores, and two reserves.

Yellowstone National Park was established by Congress as the nation's (and the world's) first national park on March 1, 1872.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is the largest park with 13.2 million acres. The smallest site is the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial at 0.02 acres.

## Budget

The budget for fiscal year 2012 was \$3.0 billion. Annually, NPS sites generate 252,000 jobs for local economies and provide \$13 billion in local economic impact.

## Recreational Visits

1920	1 million
1940	17 million
1960	79 million
1980	198 million
2000	286 million
2012	282 million

## Visitor Services

The NPS maintains 909 visitor centers and contact stations. In 2008, 127 million people attended more than 605,000 special events and ranger programs in parks. More than 565,000 children participated in the "Junior Ranger" program.

## Employees & Volunteers

The NPS employs approximately 20,000 permanent, temporary, and seasonal workers.

They are assisted by nearly 221,460 Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs), who donate about 6.4 million hours annually. This is the equivalent of having about 2,600 more employees.

## Preservation

National parks contain:

- Habitat protection for 421 species of threatened or endangered plants and animals.
- 1.5 million archeological sites.
- 27,000 historic and prehistoric structures.
- 100 million museum items, including George Washington's inaugural coat and Carl Sandburg's typewriter.
- 17,000 miles of trails.
- The world's largest carnivore, the Alaskan brown bear.
- The world's largest living things, Giant Sequoia trees.
- The highest point in North America, Mt. McKinley (20,320 feet); in Denali National Park.
- The longest cave system in the world, Mammoth Cave National Park, with 400 mapped miles of caves.
- The country's deepest lake, Crater Lake in Crater Lake National Park, at 1,932 feet.
- The lowest point in the Western Hemisphere, Badwater Basin in Death Valley National Park, at 282' below sea level.



## Concessions

The NPS has approximately 600 concessioners at more than 120 sites. Concessioners provide visitors with food, lodging, transportation, shops, and other services.

They employ approximately 25,000 people. Gross revenues are about \$1.1 billion annually, and they pay the government \$66 million in franchise fees each year.



## Partnerships

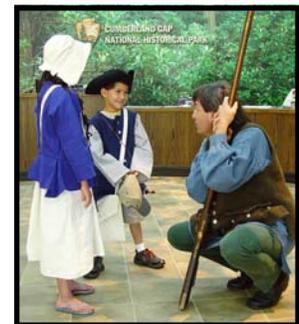
- Public support for America's national parks is a tradition as old as the parks themselves. Even before the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, citizens were stepping forward to protect special places that exemplify America's national heritage.
- Today, thousands of partners play a crucial role in advancing the NPS mission.
- More than 150 non-profit park friends groups contribute time, expertise, and approximately \$50 million annually to national parks across the country.
- The National Park Foundation, chartered by Congress, raises funds, creates partnerships, distributes grants, and increases public awareness. The Foundation has provided \$137 million in grants and program support in the past seven years.
- 65 cooperating associations enhance educational and interpretive experiences at the parks by offering programs and selling park-related retail items in their shops. The associations provide \$26 million to the NPS in annual contributions.



## Fees

133 NPS sites charge entrance fees, which range from \$5 to \$25. The money remains with the NPS and is used to enhance visitor services and facilities.

The *America the Beautiful-National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass* is an \$80 annual pass that provides access to federal lands managed by five different government agencies, including the NPS. Children under 16 are admitted to parks without charge. A \$10, lifetime Senior Pass is available for U.S. citizens 62 years and older. A free, lifetime Access Pass is offered for citizens with permanent disabilities.



## The Future

The NPS will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. As plans for this celebration move forward, the NPS remains committed to its original mission—to maintaining and protecting our national parks for the continued benefit and enjoyment of all Americans.

“Our long term prosperity depends on the faithful stewardship of the air that we breathe, the water we drink, and the land that we sow. That's a sacred trust.”

- Barack Obama, 2009