



Your
Booklet

about our

National Parks

and

National Monuments

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS

THE NATIONAL PARK IDEA

The "National Park Idea" began in our own United States. No other country in the world had thought of anything like it, but today, less than 100 years after the establishment of the first National Park, many other countries, after learning about ours, have established National Parks for their people.

Yellowstone was the first National Park. It was established in 1872. As early as 1869, the Folsom-Cook party went into the wild, rugged, and almost unknown Yellowstone region to see if the stories about the area heard from a few hunters and fur traders were true. They found it contained all the wonders they had heard of, and more – but no one would believe them. Then, in 1870, a group of men, known as the Washburn-Langford-Doan expedition, explored the region. They found it so magnificent that they proposed it should never be allowed to be owned by just a few persons, but should be kept for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people of the United States for all time. Others helped, and in 1872 Yellowstone was made a National Park.

Thus was born the National Park Idea. From this beginning has come the great National Park System of this country – now a priceless heritage of the American People.

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"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike." ----- John Muir

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WHAT ARE NATIONAL PARKS?

National Parks are large land areas which contain scenic and natural wonders so marvelous and magnificent that it is of national importance to keep them forever for the benefit, enjoyment, and inspiration of all the people, and not allow them to be destroyed.

The National Parks preserve portions of original America. They enable us to know what our country was like in the days of the pioneers. They contain beautiful forests, mountains, lakes, waterfalls, active and dormant volcanoes, glaciers, deep caverns and canyons, seacoasts; desert, arctic, and tropical lands.

For example, there is the **Everglades**, in Florida, the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in the United States; **Hawaii National Park**, on two of the Hawaiian Islands, where there are active and dormant volcanoes, rare plants and animals; **Mount McKinley**, in Alaska, having the highest mountain in North America, large glaciers, and rare wildlife; and **Acadia**, in Maine, with spectacular sea cliffs and coastline scenery, and the highest point on the eastern seaboard.

WHAT ARE NATIONAL MONUMENTS?

National Monuments are set aside to preserve parts of our country containing outstanding historic, prehistoric, and scientific objects and features. A few examples of National Monuments are:

HISTORIC: Fort McHenry, the successful defense of which in 1814 inspired the writing of our national anthem; Custer Battlefield, George Washington Birthplace, Statue of Liberty, Tumacacori.

PREHISTORIC: Aztec Ruins, Bandelier, Navajo, Canyon de Chelly, Montezuma Castle, and many others in the Southwest, Iowa, Georgia, and Ohio that preserve evidence of prehistoric Indian life.

SCIENTIFIC (of great interest because of the plant and animal life or geologic features): Rainbow Bridge, greatest of the world's known natural bridges; Arches, unusual results of erosion; Lehman Caves, caverns in limestone formations; Joshua Tree and Saguaro, unique desert plants and animals.

National Monuments usually are *not* as large as National Parks although this is not always so. There are several National Monuments which compare in size with the largest National Parks.

There are many interesting books about the parks and monuments. We hope you will read some of these. A list of a few, which may be in your school or public library, is sent with this booklet.



HOW MANY AREAS IN THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?

At the present time (October 1958) there are 177 areas in the National Park System. In addition to the National Parks and National Monuments there are National Historic Sites, National Memorials, National Parkways, National Battlefields, National Seashores, National Capital Parks, and others.

Collectively these separate areas make up what is called the **NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM**. All are administered by the National Park Service in accordance with laws passed by the Congress.

The number of areas in the System changes from time to time as areas are added, or sometimes abolished. A separate sheet enclosed with this booklet provides a summary of the number and different types of areas currently in the National Park System.

HOW ARE NATIONAL PARKS AND MONUMENTS ESTABLISHED?

A National Park is established only by specific act of the Congress. Usually a group of interested citizens suggests that the area be made a National Park. After thorough study, if it meets the very high standards of a National Park, legislation is introduced into Congress. It is then up to Congress and the President to determine if the area shall become a National Park.

A National Monument can be established by act of Congress or by Presidential proclamation.

Other types of areas are established only by acts of Congress, except that National Historic Sites may be established also by Presidential proclamation or designated by the Secretary of the Interior under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935.

ARE THERE ENOUGH PARKS?

The land occupied by the National Park System is less than 1% of the total land area of the United States and Hawaii — a very small acreage to be set aside for the benefit and enjoyment of more than 170 million people. The Bureau of the Census estimates that, at the present rate of increase, our population will be approximately 205 million by 1970.

Each year, more and more people visit the National Park System. In 1915, there were only about 335,000 visitors; in 1940, nearly 17 million, and in 1957, over 59 million. The National Park Service estimates that in 1966 there will be at least 80 million visitors. If the present rate of increase continues, however, this number will be reached at a much earlier date.

It is evident that, as our country continues to grow, we will require many more parks and recreational areas to meet the demands of the people. Many persons, conservation organizations, and state, county, and city governments, as well as the Federal Government, are interested in this need, and there is hope that more national, state, county, and city parks can be established before all the remaining open spaces are gone.

WHAT IS MISSION 66?

MISSION 66 is a 10-year Service-wide program planned for completion by 1966 (the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service). Through it the Service intends to achieve improvements in the many facilities and services required to provide adequately for the increasing millions of visitors, and to provide for the maximum enjoyment and understanding of our National Parks and Monuments while assuring the maximum protection and preservation of their unique qualities for the benefit of future generations.

WHO RUNS THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?

As with any large company with operations in many parts of the country, there must be a "parent" organization. In the case of the National Park System this is the National Park Service.

Before the National Park Service was set up, the National Parks and Monuments were looked after by several federal bureaus. This was not satisfactory, and as the National Park System grew larger, it became necessary that it be administered by a single agency. Therefore, the National Park Service was established by act of Congress in 1916, as a bureau of the Department of the Interior. In this act of Congress, the basic policy was laid down that the Park Service was to follow in caring for the National Park System. The "heart" of this law instructs the National Park Service to:

" * * * promote and regulate the use of the National Parks and the National Monuments * * * by such means * * * as to * * * conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner * * * as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

This act, the Antiquities Act of 1906, the separate acts of Congress establishing and pertaining to various areas of the System, and a few other related acts are the guides of the National Park Service in caring for the National Parks and the National Monuments.





HOW IS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ORGANIZED?

The man at the head of the Service is called the **Director**. His office, together with his staff, is in Washington, D.C.

For purposes of administration, the National Park System is divided into five regions, with a **Regional Director** and his staff in charge of each Region.

Each of the National Parks (and most of the other areas of the System) has a man in direct charge. This man is called the **Superintendent**. He, with his family, and the members of his staff and their families, live the year around at the park headquarters so as to be right on the spot to look after the park and its many visitors.

WHAT IS SOME OF THE WORK THAT MUST BE DONE IN A NATIONAL PARK?

Caring for a National Park or Monument is a big job. It is similar to operating a city or a large town. One of the most important tasks is caring for the needs and the safety of visitors.

Roads and trails must be built, and also electric, water, and telephone systems. There must be office buildings, museums, information centers, ranger stations, and quarters for employees. All of these must be kept in repair, requiring garages, paint, carpentry, and sign-building shops, and a wide variety of equipment.

Most parks and monuments have campgrounds for the many people who like to camp out, and it takes much work to build these and to keep them clean and repaired.

There is much other important work to be done. Some of it is told about below in the items about Park Rangers, Naturalists, and Historians.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGERS

Each National Park has a ranger force to help look after the park and the people who visit it. The Park Rangers are highly trained men who are educated in forestry and wildlife, and skilled in the ways of outdoor life. They protect the forests from fire and disease, patrol the parks to prevent hunting and acts of vandalism that would harm or destroy the features of the park, give information and assistance to visitors, and collect automobile entrance fees.

One of their most important duties is to guard the safety of visitors. They give first aid, and often rescue visitors who have become lost or hurt. Many times they have performed heroic feats to save the lives of visitors who have been badly injured while climbing, hiking, or in other ways.

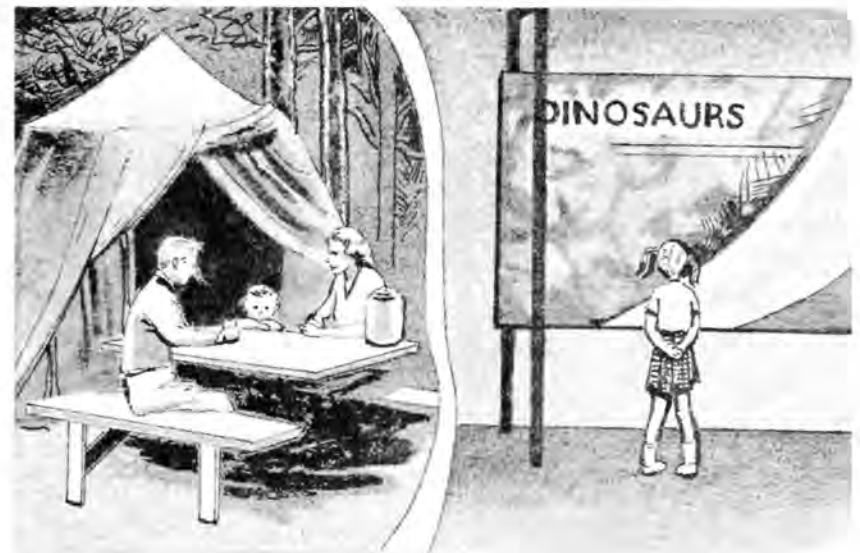
The National Park Service rangers are always ready and willing to help park visitors.

The Park Rangers, and also the Naturalists and the Historians, are assisted during the busy season by Seasonal Rangers, many of them teachers and college students who like to work in the parks during the summertime. Many start their National Park Service career with seasonal employment.

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"When the rest of the primitive is gone, we still shall have the National Parks."

---- Author Unknown.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATURALISTS AND HISTORIANS

Visitors to the parks ask about the history of the area, the wild-life, the flowers and trees, how the mountains and the canyons were formed, the Indians who might have lived there in early days, and many other questions. To explain these things to visitors, most parks have at least one Park Naturalist or Park Historian. The National Park Service calls this work of explaining the parks "Interpretation."

Park Naturalists and Historians are trained in geology, botany, zoology, archeology, history, museum planning and management, exhibit preparation, and many other fields.

The next time you visit a National Park you may meet a Park Naturalist or Historian in the museum, at an evening campfire talk, or on a conducted hike or a nature walk.

Park Rangers, Naturalists, and Historians all wear the National Park Service uniform.

WHY MUST THE NATIONAL PARKS BE PROTECTED?

The National Parks and all of the other areas of the System are ours to USE but NOT TO USE UP. They are the heritage of the American people, for all time, not just for today. Each generation is entitled to enjoy them, but only "in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future generations."

How can we use the parks without using them up? you may ask. This is one of the great problems the National Park Service must work on continually. The parks must constantly be protected from selfish groups which would USE THEM UP by logging the forests, hunting the wildlife, scarring the landscape with mining and grazing, or damming up the streams.

The parks must also be guarded constantly from acts of vandalism such as destruction of wayside exhibits, signs, campground tables, and buildings; cutting names and letters on rocks, trees, and buildings. Vandalism in the parks costs the Federal Government thousands of dollars each year. The vandal is more than thoughtless and selfish: through needless destruction of property and natural features he adds to the taxpayer's load, and directly detracts from every visitor's enjoyment of the parks.

The parks must also be guarded in every way possible against the tremendous wear-and-tear that comes from being visited and used by millions of people each year.

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"There is unremitting pressure from those who would turn a nimble dollar by picking the landscape to its bare bones." --- Sears

WHY YOU MAY NOT HUNT IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

All areas of the System are wildlife sanctuaries, so hunting, trapping, or molesting of wildlife is not allowed. All kinds of wildlife are protected. In 1872, when Yellowstone National Park was set aside, there seemed to be an abundance of wild animals. Since then, however, many birds and mammals native to America have disappeared or become very scarce. As wildlife has decreased, the areas of the System have become more and more valuable as wildlife refuges. Today there are some rare animals that find their best homes in the National Parks and Monuments.

We hope you will see many animals when you visit the parks, for it is a great deal of fun to watch animals living unconfined in their natural surroundings. We hope, though, you will not try to feed them. They are wild, and many of them can hurt you badly, particularly bears and deer. Also, it is not good for wild animals to be fed by people: it turns them into lazy beggars and often makes them sick.

WHY YOU MAY NOT PICK WILDFLOWERS IN AREAS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

Visitors may not pick wildflowers or collect rocks, plants, or other such souvenirs. Even those who live and work in the parks may not do these things. The park museums, of course, have specimens of plant and animal life, and sometimes colleges and other museums are allowed to collect specimens, under a permit issued by the Superintendent of the area, with the condition that such specimens be placed in a museum.

It would do little harm for just one person to pick a wildflower, or take home a rock or a pretty plant. But multiply that one flower or that one rock by millions and you can picture the result. The parks soon would lose much of their beauty and value to the people and the Nation.

A good way to collect souvenirs in the National Parks is with your camera.



PARK HOUSEKEEPING

Just as with a playground or a city park that is used by many, the National Parks soon become dirty and untidy unless constantly cared for. Keeping the Park System free of manmade litter is one of the Service's never-ending jobs, and very costly.

If every visitor would be careful not to throw trash around, the parks would be much more inviting, and the money spent on cleaning them could be better used. Even in the high mountains, one can see tin cans and other litter left by careless campers. This refuse should have been burned, buried, or packed out.

WHO CAN HELP IN CARING FOR THE NATIONAL PARKS?

The National Park Service needs the cooperation of every visitor. Every boy and girl can help greatly, in very important ways. One of these is to be a good housekeeper when in public places — don't be a litterbug! If you are in a campground, refuse can be burned or put in a trash receptacle. When driving in a car, put trash in a bag to be disposed of when you reach home. These bags can be made of large, heavy paper sacks, or they can be purchased.

You can be careful to do nothing that might start a forest fire. Remember SMOKEY BEAR'S warning: "Only you can prevent forest fires!"

You can take care not to carve your name on rocks or trees, not to pick or destroy any growing plant, not to damage any building.

There now is under way in this country a big campaign to keep public places free of trash and litter. This is called "KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL." Many youth organizations are joining with the states, the Federal Government, and conservation groups in this endeavor. We hope you too will contribute to making our country a more beautiful and enjoyable place in which to live.

When you visit the parks remember to KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AND GREEN.

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"God bless America — and let's save some of it."
---- Weldon Heald

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WHO OPERATES THE CAMPGROUNDS AND PICNIC GROUNDS?

The camping and picnic grounds are operated by the National Park Service. There is no charge for their use. Space cannot be reserved in advance, and for some campgrounds there is a limit on the time a camper may remain.

WHO OPERATES THE LODGES, STORES, SERVICE STATIONS?

When a park is located some distance from a town, as many are, it is necessary to provide certain accommodations in the park for visitors. Lodges or cabins, restaurants, stores, and gasoline stations are required. These businesses are run by concessioners who pay a fee to the Government for the right to operate in the parks and who in turn make a charge to visitors for the services or goods provided. The National Park Service has general jurisdiction over the concession operations.



NATIONAL PARKS AND NATIONAL FORESTS

National Parks are administered by the National Park Service, of the Department of the Interior.

National Forests are administered by the United States Forest Service, of the Department of Agriculture.

National Parks must, according to law, conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein so all of these will be kept, unspoiled, for the enjoyment of the people who will live in this country in the years to come. They are thus, in a way, great outdoor museums. The forests are not logged, wildlife is not interfered with, and there is no mining.

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"Trees give peace to the souls of men." ---- Wain

National Forests are set aside to protect, develop, and use the timber, water, range, and other resources in the public interest. Lumbering and grazing are permitted, under careful management. Mining is allowed, and also hunting in accord with State laws. There are about 150 National Forests. These occupy more than eight times as much land as the National Park System.

Both the National Parks and the National Forests conserve the water resources of the country; both provide free camp and picnic grounds. Both agencies have rangers, but those who work in the National Parks are called Park Rangers, and those who work in the National Forests are called Forest Rangers. Their uniforms are similar.

CONSERVATION

The National Park System and the Service play a very vital and special part in the conservation of our country's resources by protecting and preserving the precious scenic, scientific and historic resources that should be kept unaltered by man, as far as possible, for all time. This special type of conservation, which may be termed **preservation**, safeguards not only wilderness areas, wildlife, forests and other plant life, and irreplaceable scenic features, but many parts of our country connected with its early history such as Independence Hall, Fort Raleigh, Lincoln's birthplace, and battlefields of the American Revolution and the Civil War.

The National Park Service may be said to be the guardian of the superlative natural and historic resources of the Nation.

There are several conservation agencies in our Federal Government — each established for a particular purpose. There are the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and others about which you will learn in school. The particular type of conservation supervised and practised by each of these agencies is important to the Nation.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE