

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

THE NATIONAL PARKS

Their purposes and management

FOREST SERVICE • U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

THE NATIONAL FORESTS



Millions of people annually visit National Parks and National Forests, or in some way benefit from them. Many visitors want to know more about these public lands, their purposes and management.

Both the National Park System and the National Forest System exemplify conservation—the wise use of our resources. In different, but equally important ways, each enriches the lives of the people of our Nation.

This folder briefly describes the National Park System and the National Forest System, the purposes for which each was established, and how each is managed for the benefit of all Americans.



NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM



The National Park System is composed principally of areas of land and water of exceptional scenic, historic, or recreational interest and value. In the National Parks, all established by acts of Congress, geological features and all plant and animal life are carefully protected. The law requires that they be administered to provide for public enjoyment "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." They are thus, in a sense, great outdoor museums. Only such developments are permitted as are needed for the protection and administration of the areas or required for the comfort and convenience of those who visit them for the recreation and inspiration they offer. Research into the interpretation of the natural phenomena of these areas is an important part of the Service's work.

All animal species receive equal protection, subject to sensible controls, virgin forests remain unlogged to go through their natural cycles, grazing is limited and is being steadily decreased, with the ultimate objective of elimi-

nating it completely; lands, with a few exceptions specifically authorized by Congress, are not subject to mineral entry; impoundment of lakes or streams for irrigation, hydroelectric power, or other purposes is opposed in accordance with the principle recognized when the parks and monuments were exempted from the provisions of the 1920 Federal Power Commission Act. The basic policy is to preserve nature as created while providing areas for visitor appreciation and intelligent use.

The National Park Service administers more than 200 areas in the 50 states and in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Three categories are used to classify park installations: natural areas, historical areas, and recreational areas. Each year these properties, covering some 26 million acres, are enjoyed by more and more people.

Today approximately 115 million annually visit the parks and forecasts indicate that this figure will reach 200 million in the 1970's.

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

The National Forest System comprises 154 National Forests and 19 National Grasslands in 41 States and Puerto Rico. These public lands are administered by the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As directed by Congress, renewable forest resources—water, timber, forage, wildlife, recreation—are managed under the principles of Multiple Use and Sustained Yield. Multiple Use means that resource management is coordinated so that areas of land produce a combination of values that best serves the American people. Sustained Yield means that resources are managed so as to provide services and products at a level of supply as high as can be sustained without harming the land's ability to produce. Under such management, the National Forests represent the Nation's largest tangible accomplishment in forest resource conservation.

Water from the forests irrigates millions of agricultural acres and is used for domestic and industrial purposes in hundreds of cities. Timber from the forests is manufactured into 5,000 products sold worldwide. National Forests and Grasslands provide habitat for millions of big and small

game, game birds, and fish, and produce forage for 1,300,000 cattle and 2,600,000 sheep. Forest recreation includes scenic drives, wilderness travel, picnicking, camping, hiking, skiing, swimming, boating and, subject to State conservation laws, some of the country's finest hunting and fishing. The National Forests are truly America's Playgrounds.

The Forest Service pioneered in wilderness preservation in 1924 when it set aside the Nation's first Wilderness. The initial 9.1 million acres of the National Wilderness Preservation System created in 1964 are in 54 National Forest Wildernesses, previously classified as Wilderness, Wild, and Canoe Areas. Another 5½ million acres of the National Forests, set aside in 34 Primitive Areas, are being studied for possible inclusion in the wilderness system.

The Forest Service has two other equally important responsibilities. It maintains nine regional forest and range experiment stations, an Institute of Tropical Forestry, and a Forest Products Laboratory. It also directs programs to encourage and support better management and protection of forest lands in State and private ownership.



PARK RANGER



VISITING THE NATIONAL PARKS

In carrying out the mandate which established the National Park Service, roads, trails, and campsites have been constructed by the Service where necessary. Other facilities, including hotels, lodges, cabins, and bus transportation, are provided in the larger areas by private concessioners. The Federal Government, itself, does not operate public accommodations or transportation.

Park rangers protect the parks from fire and acts of vandalism and perform many services for visitors. Park naturalists or historians give talks and conduct tours. Museums are found in many parks.

Regulations, which must be observed, are those of good manners and are for the protection of the natural features as well as for your safety, convenience, and enjoyment of the parks.

FOREST RANGER



VISITING THE NATIONAL FORESTS

Here are 186 million acres of the Nation's magnificent outdoors, open year around for public use and enjoyment.

National Forests are accessible by car and public transportation, and public accommodations are numerous in privately operated resorts and cities in or adjacent to the forests. The Forest Service provides nearly 5,000 campgrounds with space for more than 57,000 families. The regular season, May 30 to Labor Day, is extended in the milder climates from a few months to all year. Campfire permits are required in some forests, and in some designated recreation areas, moderate fees are charged.

Contributing to the visitor's enjoyment and understanding of the outdoors is the Visitor Information Service. Interpretive facilities include self-guiding auto tours and walking trails, campfire programs, roadside overlooks, signs and exhibits, and Visitor Centers.

Detailed maps, brochures, and campground directories are available for most National Forest areas. For further information write to the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.