

# CIP

G U I D E

A guide to the comprehensive interpretive planning process used by  
the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service

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JUNE 2001 EDITION

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# CIP Guide

National Park Service interpretive planners Richard Kohen and Kim Sikoryak have developed a powerful, comprehensive process for planning parkwide interpretive programs. The resulting *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* (CIP) describes and implements an interpretive program that maximizes interpretive opportunities and facilitates visitor exploration of the meanings inherent in the park's resources. The program is strategically developed, justifiable, clearly articulated, and inclusive.

Any organization that provides interpretive services to the public can benefit from this practical process.

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# Welcome

This publication describes the comprehensive interpretive planning process used by the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service (NPS). This process provides an effective framework for strategically envisioning, organizing, justifying, and delivering interpretive services that achieve the desired outcome of interpretation.

The NPS defines the desired outcome of interpretation — interpretation’s mission — as *increasing visitor understanding and appreciation of the significances inherent in park resources*<sup>1</sup>. Interpretive services provided to the public offer *opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in the resources of parks*.<sup>2</sup> This comprehensive interpretive planning process helps parks describe and implement a desired future interpretive program to accomplish the mission of interpretation.

When discussing the idea of this publication with interpreters, we have been consistently asked to:

- Describe the process of comprehensive interpretive planning *in detail*, explaining its components, their interrelationships, and the extent to which a park might choose to address them in a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP);
- Apply comprehensive interpretive planning to the work performed by *interpretive managers* so that the development, maintenance, and operation of the interpretive program is accomplished effectively and efficiently, better achieving the desired outcomes of the program; and
- Apply comprehensive interpretive planning to the work performed by *frontline interpreters* so that their abilities to effectively and efficiently design and deliver individual interpretive services is enhanced, better achieving desired outcomes.
- Describe the integration of comprehensive interpretive planning with the performance-based program for training interpreters (the Interpretive Development Program of the NPS), and the public law that holds federal agencies accountable for performance in achieving desired outcomes (the 1994 Government Performance and Results Act).

We have endeavored to address these concerns throughout this publication. Please write or call us if you would like to offer ideas about improving the way comprehensive interpretive planning is presented in this publication. Contact information appears at the back of this publication.

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<sup>1</sup> A paraphrase of Long-Term Mission Goal IIb, *National Park Service Strategic Plan, 2000-2005*, based on the Government Performance And Results Act of 1994.

<sup>2</sup> A paraphrase of Module 101 — *Fulfilling the NPS Mission: The Process of Interpretation*, Interpretive Development Program (IDP), National Park Service.

## A few definitions

Although *park* is used herein as a generic reference to National Park System sites, this process is equally applicable to museums, nature centers, zoos, historic districts, state and local parks, and other sites that preserve and interpret natural and cultural heritage.

We define *visitors* as *all people who experience the park's interpretive program*. This includes interaction with the park in a personal way — whether people are physically in the park or visiting remotely through virtual technology, other media, or curriculum-based instruction. *Visitors* includes the concepts of publics, customers, audiences, tourists, students, web-surfers, life-long learners, etc.

The term *interpretation* is used inclusively. It includes interpretive services delivered personally, non-personal interpretive services (media), and services occurring in an educational setting (usually curriculum-driven but not always, including lesson plans, traveling trunks, self-guiding materials, long-distance learning materials, etc.).

The terms *park manager* and *superintendent* are used interchangeably, as are the terms *interpretation manager* and *chief of interpretation*.

## Using this guide

This guide is composed of narrative sections and the actual handouts used in the interpretive planning workshops employed by this process. These handout pages are topped by a black banner; all such pages are designed to be printed directly from this guide. Many of the handouts include example statements from large and small parks, in various regions of the country, possessing a variety of natural and cultural resources. Note: Where actual statements from parks have been reproduced, these are the most current statements available to our office at the time of publication. The parks cited might now be using updated statements. Some handouts also include criteria to ensure the most useful outcome of their associated exercises. Please feel free to use any parts of this publication that will be useful for your particular situation. We ask that you credit the National Park Service when reproducing this work.

Text from two of our other stand-alone publications is reproduced as part of this publication. The text of *Interp Guide* has been reproduced herein as the “People need parks” chapter, establishing the overall framework within which interpretation operates. The text of *Theme Guide* has been incorporated into the chapter, “The first workshop builds the foundation of the CIP,” providing an essential description of thematic interpretation and linking significance statements, primary interpretive themes, subthemes, and interpretive services.

Another associated publication is *CIP Guide Planner's Assistant*. This companion publication contains such things as a planner's checklist for use when the project is initiated, an invitation letter template to solicit stakeholder participation, an agenda for each workshop day, a sign-in sheet template, etc. The intent of this publication is to provide additional tools aiding those who are conducting this comprehensive interpretive planning process.

For more information on our publication series, “Essential Tools for Interpreters,” please see the information at the back of this publication. •

# People need parks

Our nation is founded on the principle that people are happiest and society works best when individuals are guaranteed the greatest freedom in their quest for personal enrichment consistent with the preservation of our shared natural and cultural heritage. The defining American challenge is to balance that independent drive to succeed with the equitable and sustainable use of resources necessary to assure the same benefits to others, including our descendents.

The National Park System is a microcosm of this essential American philosophy. The founding legislation of the National Park Service directs it to provide for public use and enjoyment of park resources in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. Thus, the challenges of managing park resources are a direct reflection of the challenges facing the nation and, indeed, the world.

The natural and cultural resources of the national parks are, by definition, among the most significant in the nation. Their greatest value is calculated not in dollars, but in importance; they are among the best places to explore our national and personal identity and character. Parks serve to rejuvenate our spirits, challenge and strengthen our beliefs, and provoke contemplation and discussion of our past, present, and future. They move us to become better stewards of each other and the world around us. National parks, along with museums, nature centers, state parks and historic sites, zoos and botanical gardens, universities and schools, and other places that interpret natural and cultural heritage, provide opportunities to explore self, society, and the world in which we live.

## **Interpretation's mission**

From time immemorial, societies have relied on the power of *story* to explore, clarify, and share the ideas, meanings, and values that collectively constitute culture. People use the allegorical and metaphorical properties of story to capture the essence of who we were, who we are, and who we wish to be. People visit parks because, consciously or unconsciously, they seek a personal connection to the stories found in these powerful special places. Providing opportunities for people to forge deeper connections to these meaningful places is the mission of interpretation.

## **Themes explore meanings**

In the profession of interpretation, stories flow from interpretive themes. Interpretation uses themes to connect tangible park resources to the larger ideas, meanings, and values of which they are a part. *Thematic interpretation* is the profession's communication framework that provides opportunities for people to increase their understanding and appreciation of the significances inherent in park resources. This fundamental framework ensures that the core stories of a place are accessible to those who seek them.

## the **places**

All cultures embrace the idea that there exist places of special importance. These places rejuvenate our spirits, challenge and strengthen our beliefs, and provoke contemplation and discussion of our past, present, and future. They embody our shared heritage. They define our character as a people.

## the **mission**

People yearn to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in these special places. Interpretation is the profession whose mission is to provide opportunities for people to forge deeper and more meaningful connections.

## the **stories**

Although each place holds many meanings, each place also possesses a core set of overarching stories. These stories prompt individuals, groups, and societies to explore each place in more depth, time and time again. The interpretive program uses interpretive themes to tell the stories of these special places.

## the **operation**

Thematic interpretation — interpretive services based on the exploration of a place's core stories — is the fundamental framework of the profession. A strategic, comprehensive interpretive planning process uses this framework to drive the development, management, and implementation of all interpretive services.

## the **interpreters**

It is critical to the accomplishment of the interpretive mission that professional interpreters develop and conduct interpretive services. Such professionalism is developed through a program of instruction that embodies interpretation's best practices and requires demonstration of fundamental interpretive skills.

## Interpretation provides opportunities

Interpretive programs provide access to core stories by offering interpretive services to the public. *Effective interpretive services* provide opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in the resources of parks. These services are specifically planned, designed, and conducted by interpreters to encourage people to discover more about the park and form their own conclusions about the ideas and meanings inherent in its resources.

Interpretive services are most effective when they are planned comprehensively. Comprehensive interpretive planning is conducted by the park's interpretive staff and other stakeholders, who together establish a long-range vision for the program to best achieve the mission of interpretation. The park's staff continues the process by determining the short-range actions necessary to achieve that vision, and by assembling a reference database to assist in managing the program. This process includes all interpretive services: those delivered personally and non-personally (media), regardless of provider. It considers diverse audiences and multiple points of view, and addresses all those who experience park interpretation — in park and off site. These elements are integrated by design and mutually support achieving desired outcomes. The process produces a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan — the strategic underpinning of the park's interpretive program. All interpretive and educational activities performed by the program are based on it and coordinated by it. It forms the overall vision and basis for decision-making relating to the park's interpretive function.

## Standards of the profession

The Interpretive Development Program (IDP) of the National Park Service describes standards and best practices for its interpreters and others who provide interpretive services in the National Park System. This program's content is widely applicable to all places that interpret natural and cultural heritage. It provides a path for the development and demonstration of the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to accomplish the interpretive job. This competence-based program produces highly skilled individuals that effectively plan and deliver interpretive services to the public. It focuses interpreters on the mission of interpretation (*increasing understanding and appreciation*); it develops sound interpretive methodology (*interpretive services that provide opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in park resources*); and it provides a framework for accomplishing the mission (*thematic interpretation that is planned comprehensively and implemented professionally*).

*For more information, visit the National Park Service's Interpretive Development Program Internet site at <<http://www.nps.gov/idp/interp/>>. There you will find a complete description of the IDP, its philosophy and structure, modules and component plans, submission procedures, and more.*

## More meaningful park experiences

Effective interpretation leads to park experiences that are more meaningful for visitors. The best interpretation effectively combines the philosophy of Freeman Tilden's masterful work, *Interpreting Our Heritage*; an outcome-driven focus (mandated for federal agencies through the Government Performance and Results Act); the competency-based rigor of the standards and best practices in the Interpretive Development Program; and the structured, yet flexible framework of

thematic interpretation and comprehensive interpretive planning. This new synthesis greatly enhances the ability of interpretation to make park experiences more meaningful to people — fostering stewardship of our shared human heritage within and beyond park boundaries. •

# Planning for the interpretive function of parks

## Visionary plans

The broadest, most expansive aspect of interpretive planning in the National Park Service occurs in the “parkwide planning” process. Parkwide plans define the overall vision of how the park will operate. The park’s *General Management Plan* (GMP) broadly defines visitor experience goals and recommends how best to provide opportunities to meet them. It describes how the interpretive program fits into the larger park management picture.

The park’s *Strategic Plan* — also a parkwide plan — describes desired outcomes of park operations and criteria to measure their achievement. This plan represents a specific data-gathering and reporting system mandated by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). This law mandates that government agencies concentrate on the *outcomes* of their activities rather than just the materials (staff, facilities, and tools) that make those activities possible.

## Implementation plans

Based on the visionary parkwide planning documents cited above, implementation plans describe how various park functions will successfully implement the vision for park operations. Each implementation plan provides direction for all management decisions regarding a specific park function (like interpretation) or major development (such as a visitor center complex).

### **The Comprehensive Interpretive Plan is the implementation plan for the park function of interpretation**

The CIP is the implementation plan that defines the parkwide interpretive program. All interpretive activities are based on it and coordinated by it. The resulting interpretive program facilitates — in the most effective and efficient way — an exploration of the park’s significances and meanings while promoting the protection and preservation of park resources.

Implementation of the CIP directly affects the achievement of broader park management goals. The interpretive program that is based on a CIP increases visitor understanding and appreciation of the National Park System, and helps the public forge personal connections to the parks — connections that often last a lifetime.

## Hierarchy of planning related to the park function of interpretation

**Visionary plans** are the broadest level of park planning. They are the broadest scope of planning for visitor experience and interpretation at a park. At this level, interpretation is an element of the larger whole. *These plans include:*

**General Management Plan**  
(GMP)

**Strategic Plan**  
(5-year GPRA plan)

**Implementation plans** are function-driven, programmatic plans based on the visionary parkwide plans above. The CIP is the implementation plan for the function of interpretation. It implements the interpretive aspects of visitor experience described in the above plans, and describes all aspects of the park's interpretive program. It is the basis for all decisions regarding interpretation. Central to the CIP is the desired future interpretive program, a strategic overview embodying the long-range vision of the interpretive program (as driven by the framework of thematic interpretation).

**Comprehensive Interpretive Plan**  
(CIP)

**Individual service plans** and **service-group plans** are simply plans for services (singly and as groups). Based on the broad program overview of the desired future interpretive program in the CIP, all services are individually described in detail. Organizationally, some may be described as parts of *groups of services* (based on the type of service, such as publications or wayside exhibits). Planning for groups of services can significantly aid in their coordinated funding and development. *Services that may be suited to service-group plans, for example, include the park's:*

**Audiovisual Plan**

**Exhibit Plan**

**Education Plan**

**etc.**

**Specific preparations** are planning efforts conducted by the individual interpreter. As components of individual service plans and service-group plans, this narrowest scope of interpretive planning describes the individual's actions in developing, delivering, and performing interpretive services. All actions of the individual interpreter implement the desired future interpretive program described in the park's CIP.

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**Personal interpretive services (services delivered in person).** *Examples of specific preparations might include planning for:*

*an interpretive talk*

*information desk functions*

*a ranger-guided walk*

*etc.*

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**Non-personal interpretive services (media).** *Examples of specific preparations might include planning (writing, editing, design, and fabrication) of:*

*a particular film*

*a particular exhibit*

*a particular site bulletin*

*etc.*

## **Individual service plans and service-group plans**

The CIP defines what the interpretive program will accomplish during the following 5-10 years. The desired future interpretive program — a component of the plan — defines primary interpretive themes and audiences, and the interpretive services that will best enable those audiences to explore those themes. The future program is described as both an overview and as a detailed account, using only as much detail as necessary to ensure justifiable decisions.

This detailed account is described by a set of individual service plans, each of which records details regarding a specific interpretive service offered to the public. In addition, some interpretive services are grouped according to their service type, such as wayside exhibits, curricula, or audiovisual services. The resulting service-group plans (such as a *wayside exhibit plan*) provide useful frameworks for the development of types of services and the securing of funding for their development. This level of service planning or project planning occurs as part of the implementation of the CIP.

## **Specific preparations**

The interpreter responsible for providing a specific interpretive service must make preparations to successfully achieve the desired outcomes of providing that service. This is the individual level of interpretive planning — the level that ultimately implements the CIP and the parkwide vision of visitor experience above it. Specific preparations include such individual actions as writing the outline for an interpretive talk, authoring a park's page on the World Wide Web, writing a lesson plan, designing a bulletin board, etc. •

# A brief overview of CIP components

The process of comprehensively planning an interpretive program includes establishing a long-range vision for the program and determining the short-range actions necessary to achieve that vision. The process concurrently develops all personal interpretive services and non-personal interpretive services (media), regardless of provider. It considers diverse audiences and multiple perspectives, and addresses those who experience park interpretation in park and off site.

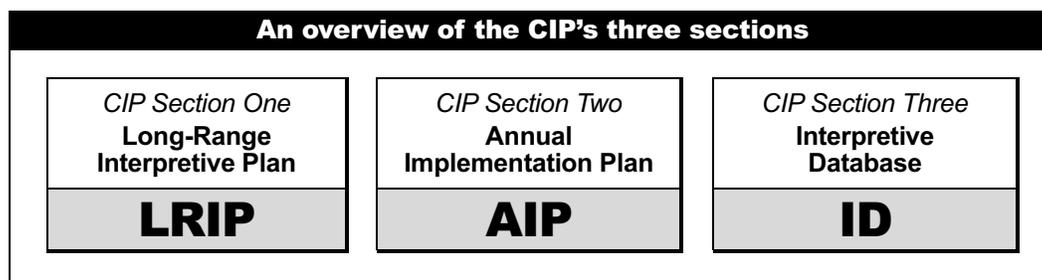
The process produces a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) — the strategic underpinning of the park’s interpretive program. All interpretive and educational activities performed by the program are based on it and coordinated by it. It forms the overall vision and basis for decision-making relating to interpretation. It is a working blueprint from which the park’s interpretive program is built and its operation managed.

## CIP components

National Park Service policy states that each park shall have a CIP that includes a long-range vision of the interpretive program, an annual component to implement the vision, and a reference database. Completion of all three sections is critical to ensuring that interpretive resources are coordinated and focused on achieving management’s vision for the park. The three principle sections of the CIP are titled:

- Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP)
- Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
- Interpretive Database (ID)

Policy does not specify a particular format for these three sections, nor that specific elements be addressed other than in broad outline. The spirit and intent of comprehensive interpretive planning is that all parts be customized to best address each park’s needs and conditions.



## A brief description of the LRIP section

This section describes the foundational information that will guide the development of the desired future interpretive program. The long-range vision of the interpretive

program and the actions needed to achieve it complete this section.

### **A brief description of the AIP section**

This section is a one-year operating plan for the interpretive program. It is a working blueprint describing what interpretive services will be offered to the public this year. It includes budget and staffing information, actions and challenges, and a comparison of last year's program with this year's program.

Each year, more of the services identified in the desired future interpretive program (located in the LRIP) will be brought on line. Existing services will also be modified to better reflect the long-range vision. The offering of existing, modified, and new interpretive services implements the long-range vision in annual increments until the long-range vision is achieved.

### **A brief description of the ID section**

This section contains references to materials that support the interpretive program (such as the park reading list, funding proposals, various reports, etc.). At an early stage in the planning process, the park staff is encouraged to begin assembling the ID. This work can proceed independently of the other two sections and is relatively straightforward since it is usually an exercise in compiling existing information. •

# The Intermountain Support Office approach to, and process for, developing CIPs

The remainder of this publication describes our specific approach to comprehensively planning interpretive programs. The following tenets are presented to encourage a deeper understanding of our approach:

- We believe in being forthright and unambiguous. Therefore, our process is explained in this publication in detail, so that it can be compared to other processes and easily customized as needed. We believe this best serves the customer.
- The *complete integration* of all aspects of the profession of interpretation — from philosophy, to training, to desired outcomes, to methodology, to reporting requirements — is essential. Only through such integration will the park’s interpretive program be equipped to most successfully achieve its potential. That’s why we designed our comprehensive interpretive planning process to build on the strengths of the NPS Interpretive Development Program (IDP) and the outcome-based approach of GPRA. We have specifically designed our process to develop a CIP *that implements the IDP at the programmatic level*.

The IDP offers the clearest and most current vision of the profession of interpretation. Together with the advent of comprehensive interpretive planning, and additionally shaped by GPRA, an integrated, holistically-crafted profession has emerged. Rooted in this vision of the profession, our approach emphasizes thematic interpretation by presenting park significances through interpretive services based on primary interpretive themes, offered to diverse audiences, inclusive of multiple points of view. It maximizes the diversity of presentations while consistently focusing on facilitating an exploration of the meanings of the place. It produces a practical plan to be used by both the interpretive manager and all individuals performing interpretation. It produces CIPs that retain their usefulness over time as conditions change.

- Comprehensive interpretive planning not only engages core-team members in the interpretive planning process, but also equips them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to continue with implementation after the first CIP is signed and enacted. Such fostering of employee development in “real-world” situations serves to continue the integration of all aspects of the profession of interpretation, and remove barriers by increasing skill levels “across the

board.”

- Deciding how to most efficiently and effectively achieve desired outcomes is aided by a structured approach, as well as the flexible application of that structure, as conditions warrant. Employing the appropriate balance of structure and flexibility produces useful plans.
- The best way to strategically develop a vision for the program is to focus on the future first, then determine how to get from here to there based on the reality of existing and anticipated conditions. Focusing on the current program’s structure can turn planning into a self-justification exercise rather than strategically identifying and targeting desired outcomes.
- Successful planning empowers group participants to use a logical process to write the park’s plan, rather than the group simply providing information to a planner who writes the plan and later presents it to the park.
- The process works best when decision-makers are involved participants rather than the recipients of a planner’s “recommendations” because involving them provides real-time feedback to ideas generated throughout the process, fostering managerial “buy-in” and understanding.
- As much as is practical, decisions should be made during the course of the process rather than delaying them. This aids in the resulting CIP being a statement of intent (“This is the interpretive program we intend to conduct in the future.”), carrying much more weight than a list of recommendations that are simply proposed or suggested for “the future.”

Our process implements this approach in an organized manner to most efficiently and effectively facilitate visitor exploration of the meanings of the place, through an interpretive program that is based on a strategic blueprint — the CIP — which implements the philosophy and best practices of the profession of interpretation. The process is structured around two workshops, the first of which generates all of the foundational material (central to this is the set of primary interpretive themes) needed for the development of the desired future interpretive program, which is developed as the main work of the second workshop.

## **The first workshop generates foundational material, especially primary interpretive themes**

The first workshop generates material that will be directly applied in the second workshop. The first workshop primarily focuses on the significance of the park’s resources and the development of primary interpretive themes. This set of themes is *the* critical element in thematic interpretation. This set of primary interpretive themes will drive the development of the interpretive program and the set of services provided to visitors to facilitate their exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources.

Stakeholder participation is critical to the success of the first workshop. Their participation provides expert understanding of multiple views regarding resource significances, the park’s overall mission, the role of interpretation, the specific mission of the interpretive program, and more. The term “stakeholders” refers to those individuals and groups that have a significant stake in how the park’s interpretive program is managed. These interested parties often include cooperating associations, friends groups, concessioners that provide interpretive or educational services to park visitors, chambers of commerce, affiliated cultures, non-governmental conservation and historical organizations, schools and universities,

museums, other agencies (federal, state, local), and other park partners. “Stakeholders” also includes park management, subject-matter experts from all divisions of the park staff, park concessions specialists, media specialists, interpretive planners, and others.

## **The second workshop develops the draft desired future interpretive program**

The second workshop involves only the core planning team: usually the park manager, interpretive staff, and representatives from the cooperating association and those concessions that provide interpretive services. During the second workshop, the core team actually develops the first draft version of the desired future interpretive program, based on the primary interpretive themes and other foundational elements from the first workshop. Additionally, explanation is provided in this workshop regarding the three sections of the CIP, and how an integrated approach to each section will keep the AIPs firmly grounded in the LRIP’s vision, while streamlining the annual planning process.

## **The CIP springs from the process and its participants, not the interpretive planners**

Essentially, the first and second workshops “write the plan.” Everything occurring in the workshops is recorded by the interpretive planners in an archive file — a record of the process and the various versions and edits that occurred. After the second workshop, the latest version of each of the components is transferred to a draft LRIP.

The recordation tends to not need additional, extensive editing or writing of whole sections. The very character of the process — maximizing the synergy of the interpretive experts and decision-makers concurrently involved in the process to make meaningful operational decisions throughout the process, determining what it is they intend to do and how to get there from here — reduces the amount of lengthy narrative description in the plan. Also, because existing conditions are not stressed as a point of departure, but instead are referenced in determining how to achieve the desired future interpretive program, core teams often decide that lengthy narrative descriptions of existing conditions are not useful in their CIP.

## **Our approach capitalizes on subject-matter expertise and clearly-defined roles**

We believe that a wide variety of stakeholders are *the* subject-matter experts regarding the park’s resources, regarding the place. Stakeholders live at or near the park, have studied it, are culturally affiliated with the site, have extensive knowledge of the place, etc. They bring all of that information, insight, and expertise to the planning process. This is an invaluable contribution.

The interpretive planners, on the other hand, could *never* credibly possess that breadth and depth of knowledge. They instead become familiar with the park by reviewing documents, talking with park staff in preparation for the workshops, and briefly experiencing the park when arriving on site to conduct the workshops. Although this may seem unusual to some of the participants — especially those who care most deeply about the park and want nothing more than for the planners to fully

and completely share in that experience — it is a system that achieves the desired outcomes of the process by focusing on which roles best fit those involved throughout the process. The interpretive planners need only know enough about the park to know what kinds of questions to ask participants, why, and when. The planners' primary role is to guide the participants through the comprehensive interpretive planning process, explaining the various components, their interrelationships, the reasons for each component, how they are used in this process, and *how they apply to this park*. They are the subject-matter experts regarding the planning process; stakeholders are the subject-matter experts regarding park resources and significances.

This set of roles fosters “buy-in” from all of the stakeholders. The planners have no agenda and are *perceived* by the participants as having no agenda. The stakeholders, and later just the core planning team (who are responsible for actually managing interpretation in the park), drive the plan. The park is responsible for designing, implementing, and ensuring the continuing usefulness of its CIP. It is also the responsibility of park staff to demand that the interpretive planning assistance they are receiving matches their needs, and initiate any necessary course correction in this regard.

## **Our approach is designed to equip interpreters with planning knowledge, skills, and abilities**

Those involved in this process will understand interpretive planning when the process is completed. This is an intended result of the process. It is very important for one reason: The planning continues in perpetuity even after the first CIP is signed and implementation has begun. As time goes on, changing conditions will require new decisions from the interpretive manager, and the front-line interpreters as well. By participating in this comprehensive interpretive planning process, participants will be better prepared to respond to such changes in ways leading to justifiable and clearly-articulated decisions that continue moving the interpretive program toward the common vision. They'll better understand how their individual decisions affect all parts of the program.

## **The LRIP section**

Section one of the CIP, the LRIP, is never viewed as a stand-alone plan, but always to be accompanied by the other two sections of the CIP: the AIP and ID. The LRIP is composed of several essential components:

- Foundational information
- Desired future interpretive program — Program overview
- Long-range schedule of actions

Foundational information is used to guide the development of the desired future interpretive program. It includes a wide range of subject matter: a description of those aspects of visitor experience affected by interpretation, management goals for interpretation, an exploration of support for the interpretive program provided by other park functions, stakeholder suggestions for improving the interpretive program, a description of the significances inherent in the place, primary interpretive themes, and more. All of these elements are discussed, issues are raised, and solutions voiced so that the development and implementation of the desired future interpretive program will be successful. Stakeholders play a vital role in shaping the desired future interpretive program by collaboratively establishing this foundation.

The desired future interpretive program embodies the long-range vision of the

interpretive program. It describes primary interpretive themes, interpretive audiences, and the interpretive services that provide opportunities for visitors to explore the meanings of the place. The relationships of these elements are strategically displayed in a program overview.

The long-range schedule of actions is a list of actions that need to be accomplished to successfully implement the desired future interpretive program. These actions develop and support the interpretive services the park intends to offer, as described in its desired future interpretive program.

The LRIP is updated by park staff as conditions warrant. If major modifications to the LRIP are determined to be necessary, thought should be given to the cycle of the current CIP and at what time stakeholder participation should again be invited to fully review and update the plan.

## **The AIP section**

While the LRIP section is estimated to be useful for 5-10 years before a major update with stakeholders is needed, a new AIP (section two of the CIP) is written each year. Annual Implementation Plans progressively implement the long-range vision, initiating more of the desired future interpretive program each year. Successive AIPs are developed directly from the LRIP, and follow virtually the same structure:

- Foundational information (*repeated from the LRIP, lending context to the AIP*)
- Annual interpretive program — Program overview (*a year-specific portion of the LRIP's desired future interpretive program*)
- Annual schedule of actions (*a year-specific portion of the LRIP's long-range schedule of actions*)
- Additional year-specific information

Like the LRIP, the AIP is updated by park staff as park circumstances change. Any of these changes that may have an effect beyond the current year are used to update the LRIP. This ensures that the LRIP remains relevant and an up-to-date base for subsequent AIPs.

The annual interpretive program is developed from the LRIP's desired future interpretive program. It duplicates all of the services that apply to the coming year and does not include those that do not pertain to the current year.

The annual schedule of actions duplicates those actions slated for the current year in the LRIP's long-range schedule of actions, with increased detail, and does not include actions that do not pertain to the current year.

Additional year-specific information that can be useful in the AIP includes: staffing and budget data, an analysis of the previous year's interpretive program, and any management emphases that will influence the interpretive program this year.

### **Integration with the park's Strategic Plan**

The LRIP and AIPs directly support the park's Strategic Plan. Because streamlining an operation maximizes effectiveness and efficiency, the material in the CIP should be developed by the park staff to be integrated with the park's *Strategic Plan* and companion *Annual Performance Plans*. We suggest that all interpretive activities be reported via GPR Mission Goal Iib (*Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations*) as the most appropriate place to address interpretive operations.

## **The ID section**

The third section of the CIP, the ID, contains information that directly supports the interpretive program, such as individual service plans. It also serves as a reference database for information such as the park reading list, research documents, other planning documents, funding proposals, media evaluations, education reports, and the like. The database is most useful if constructed as a computer file (facilitating information searches). A printed copy of the database is often stored with some of the original documents and materials to which it refers.

Development of the individual service plans occurs in conjunction with development of the desired future interpretive program in the LRIP. However, development of the reference components in the ID is often only an exercise in compiling existing information and, therefore, can proceed independently of the other two sections. Work on the reference aspects of the ID is often initiated at an early stage in the planning process.

## **Graphic depictions of the approach**

The comprehensive interpretive planning process described above is graphically depicted on the following two pages:

- A detailed view of the CIP's three sections, and their components; and
- A detailed view of the comprehensive interpretive planning process

These two illustrations serve as introductions to the subject matter addressed in the remainder of this publication. •

**A detailed view of the CIP's three sections and their components**

*CIP Section One*  
**Long-Range Interpretive Plan**  
**LRIP**

**Introduction to the CIP as a whole, and the LRIP section in particular.**

**Participant list and thank-you note to stakeholders.**

**Foundational information:**

The mission of interpretation and its role in park operations.

Set of significance statements.

Set of primary interpretive themes.

Management goals for the interpretive function of the park.

Issues and influences affecting the interpretive operation.

Stakeholder-voiced issues and suggestions for improving the interpretive operation.

Resource-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Visitor-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Park and interpretation libraries — Actions for improvement.

Interpretive image collection — Actions for improvement.

Interpretive object collection — Actions for improvement.

Museum collection and archives used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Partnerships in accomplishing the interpretive mission.

The role of cooperating association operations in the park's interpretive program.

Audiences for use in strategic interpretive planning.

Visitor experience considerations for use in strategic interpretive planning.

Operational considerations affecting the desired future interpretive program.

**Desired future interpretive program — Program overview.**

**Long-range schedule of actions necessary to implement the desired future interpretive program.**

*CIP Section Two*  
**Annual Implementation Plan**  
**AIP**

**Introduction to the AIP section of the CIP.**

**Foundational information:**

The mission of interpretation and its role in park operations.

Set of significance statements.

Set of primary interpretive themes.

Management goals for the interpretive function of the park.

Issues and influences affecting the interpretive operation.

Stakeholder-voiced issues and suggestions for improving the interpretive operation.

Resource-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Visitor-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Park and interpretation libraries — Actions for improvement.

Interpretive image collection — Actions for improvement.

Interpretive object collection — Actions for improvement.

Museum collection and archives used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement.

Partnerships in accomplishing the interpretive mission.

The role of cooperating association operations in the park's interpretive program.

Audiences for use in strategic interpretive planning.

Visitor experience considerations for use in strategic interpretive planning.

Operational considerations affecting the annual interpretive program.

**Annual interpretive program — Program overview.**

**Annual schedule of actions necessary to implement this year's interpretive program.**

**Analysis of the previous year's interpretive program.**

**Annual budget and staffing.**

*CIP Section Three*  
**Interpretive Database**  
**ID**

**Introduction to the ID section of the CIP.**

**Individual service plans:**

*ISPs are located in the ID for convenience. They provide detailed descriptions of the services comprising the **desired future interpretive program (in the LRIP) and the annual interpretation program (in the AIP)**. ISPs become more complete over time as each individual service is initiated and updated.*

**Potential references:**

Annual funding proposals

Basic park reading list

Cooperating association/park *Scope of Sales Statement*

Education reports

Grant applications

Interpretive cyclic maintenance database

Interpretive talk outlines

Service-group plans:  
*Wayside Exhibit Plan, Education Plan, Audiovisual Plan, Publications Plan, Exhibit Plan, etc.*

Media evaluations

Operations evaluations

Other plans affecting interpretation:

*General Management Plan, GPRA Strategic Plan, Resource Management Plan, Position Management Plan, Historic Furnishings Report, Historic Resources Study, Ethnographic Overview, etc.*

Research reports

Servicewide Interpretive Report (SIR)

Servicewide media inventory (MIDS)

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for library use, interpretive images use, interpretive collection (props) use, etc.

Visitor survey data

Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) Report

## A detailed, sequential view of the comprehensive interpretive planning process

Scope of Work and workshop preparations	First workshop	Between workshops	Second workshop	Completing the CIP	Approval and implementation of the CIP
Usually 2 - 12 months	Usually 3 days	Usually 2 - 8 weeks	Usually 3 days	Usually 4 - 20 months	Start of next fiscal year
<i>Participants</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Participants</i>
<b>Park</b> (management, interpretive manager)	<b>Park</b> (management, interpretation, and all other divisions)	<b>Park</b> (interpretation staff)	<b>Park</b> (interpretation / core CIP development team)	<b>Park</b> (interpretation / core CIP development team)	<b>Park</b> (management, interpretation, and all other divisions)
<b>Support office (SO)</b> (interpretive planners)	<b>Support office</b> (interpretive planners)	<b>Support office</b> (interpretive planners)	<b>Support office</b> (interpretive planners)	<b>Support office</b> (interpretive planners)	<b>Support office</b> (interpretive planners)
	<b>Stakeholders</b> (includes partners)	<b>Stakeholders</b> (included as needed)	<b>Partners</b> (providing interpretive services)	<b>Stakeholders</b> (includes partners)	<b>Stakeholders</b>
<p><b>Initial request, CIP introduction, and workshop preparations</b></p> <p><i>The park contacts the SO to request assistance in developing a CIP.</i></p> <p><i>SO adds request to its internal prioritization process.</i></p> <p><i>SO approves park request; SO and park discuss CIPs.</i></p> <p><i>SO sends planning materials to park; park sends planning documents to SO.</i></p> <p><i>Park and SO develop tentative schedule and Scope of Work.</i></p> <p><i>Park arranges meeting logistics and invites participants; SO and park prepare.</i></p> <p><i>Park may begin to compile the CIP's Interp. Database (ID) section.</i></p>	<p><b>Workshop overview</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Introduction:</b> <i>Mission of interpretation</i> <i>Comprehensive interpretive planning</i> <i>CIP section: LRIP</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Foundational information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Statements of significance</b> <i>Thematic interpretation (IDP Module 101)</i></li> <li>● <b>Primary interpretive themes</b></li> <li>● <b>Desired visitor experiences</b></li> <li>● <b>Stakeholder issues and suggestions</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Next steps in process</i></p> <p><b>CORE TEAM ONLY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Management goals for interpretation</b></li> <li>● <b>Issues and influences</b></li> <li>● <b>Operational considerations</b></li> <li>● <b>Interpretive library</b></li> <li>● <b>Interpretive image collection</b></li> <li>● <b>Interpretive object collection</b></li> <li>● <b>Museum collection and archives</b></li> <li>● <b>Resource-focused research</b></li> <li>● <b>Visitor-focused research</b></li> </ul> <p><i>CIP section: ID</i></p> <p><i>Next steps in process</i></p>	<p><b>Refinement of significance statements and primary interpretive themes</b></p> <p><i>SO compiles the information gathered during the first workshop in the process <b>Archive</b> file.</i></p> <p><i>SO sends the compilation to the park in electronic format.</i></p> <p><i>Park edits and refines draft statements.</i></p> <p><i>Park sends refined statements to SO for review and preparation for second workshop.</i></p> <p><i>Park and SO make arrangements and prepare for second workshop.</i></p>	<p><b>Developing the desired future interpretive program</b></p> <p><i>Review and edit statements of significance and primary interpretive themes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Interpretive audiences</b></li> <li>● <b>Visitor experience considerations</b> <i>Synthesized from GMP, Strategic Plan, and desired visitor experiences from first workshop</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Potential locations for interpretive opportunities</i></p> <p><i>Potential personal and non-personal interpretive services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Interpretive partnerships</b></li> <li>● <b>Desired future interpretive program — Program overview</b> <i>Brainstorming for each theme-audience combination</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Individual service plans (ISPs)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Cooperating association operations</b></li> <li>● <b>Long-range schedule of actions</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Next steps in the process presented</i></p>	<p><b>Completing the CIP</b></p> <p><i>SO compiles the Archive of the information gathered in both workshops.</i></p> <p><i>SO creates first-draft LRIP from the process Archive.</i></p> <p><i>SO creates first-draft LRIP from the process Archive.</i></p> <p><i>SO creates first-draft ID for the park.</i></p> <p><i>SO sends to park electronically:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Outline of next steps in process;</i></li> <li><i>Archive file;</i></li> <li><i>draft LRIP file;</i></li> <li><i>draft ID file.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>With ongoing assistance from the SO, park staff:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Reviews all for accuracy;</i></li> <li><i>Makes decisions regarding operational considerations;</i></li> <li><i>Refines program overview;</i></li> <li><i>Refines long-range schedule of actions;</i></li> <li><i>Writes individual service plans;</i></li> <li><i>and completes other sections of the LRIP.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Park sends LRIP draft(s) to stakeholders for review and comment.</i></p> <p><i>Park completes LRIP and ID sections of the CIP.</i></p> <p><i>Park creates Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) section of the CIP from the completed LRIP.</i></p>	<p><b>Approval of the CIP</b></p> <p><i>Superintendent approves all three sections of the CIP.</i></p> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <p><i>Formal implementation of the CIP begins at the beginning of next fiscal year: Park and interpretive partners provide the services in the first-year AIP, basing all interpretive operations on the CIP.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing evaluation of individual services begins.</i></p> <p><i>Actions are accomplished to successfully and completely implement the desired future interpretive program.</i></p> <p><i>The park updates the LRIP, AIPs, and ID as needed so that the CIP remains relevant to the interpretive operation.</i></p>

**Note:** "Italicized text" represents individual steps in the planning process or explanatory matter; "● Buleted, bold text" represents steps that relate directly to the components in the CIP (see the previous illustration, "A detailed view of the CIP's three sections, and their components.").

# Initiating the CIP planning process

## **Applications for assistance from the Intermountain Support Office are solicited and prioritized annually**

Any park that does not currently have a strategic, comprehensively planned, long-range vision for its interpretive program, arrived at through a process involving stakeholders, needs a CIP. Once a park has determined the need for a CIP, the park interpretive manager contacts the Intermountain Support Office (SO). Options for assistance are discussed. Parks are often directed to the annual SO call for work requests (made each summer in preparation for the federal fiscal year, beginning in October) and to periodic calls from the Harpers Ferry Center Department of Interpretive Planning. The call for work requests includes criteria to which the parks respond to ensure that the work most critical to the achievement of the interpretive mission in the region is accomplished first. When it is determined that a park's request for assistance can be accommodated by the SO, the following activities occur.

## **A Scope of Work is generated**

The park's interpretive manager, superintendent, and the SO planners begin the planning process by collaboratively establishing a common set of expectations, roles, and responsibilities. This agreement takes the form of a *Scope of Work* — essentially a contract between the park and SO. It includes what will be done and why, when it will be accomplished, who will do it, what it will cost, and who will pay for it.

This collaborative effort begins with a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the interpretive planners and leadership of the park's core planning team. The Intermountain Support Office approach uses a team of two interpretive planners to conduct the planning process. No matter what process is used or from what office or park the planners emanate, we recommend that the interpretive planners be from outside the park. Although a park can perform such planning internally, an outside perspective is useful and often results in ideas that might not be voiced by park staff. Non-park employees also approach the task without the perceived or actual agenda or bias that may be attached to park employees.

Interpretive planners should be experienced interpreters who are specifically trained in interpretive planning philosophy and methodology. The primary goal of interpretive planners is to assist a park in determining what the interpretive program will consist of in the future, and how to effectively move the program from where it is to where the park has determined it needs to go. Successful interpretive planners possess strong skills in applying philosophy to “real-world” situations, team facilitation and consensus-building skills, leadership skills, problem-solving and analytical skills, technical and interpretive writing skills, and a thorough understanding of personal-service and media applications in various park settings.

A member of the park staff — usually the interpretive manager of the park —

leads the *core planning team*. This team is responsible for editing, refining, and finalizing the CIP, achieving its approval, and implementing it (including keeping it up to date so that it remains relevant to interpretive operations). The park superintendent and SO chief of interpretation and education approve the Scope of Work.

*For more information, please see the appendix “Scope of Work template for parks in the Intermountain Region.”*

## **An exchange of information begins**

Concurrent with development of the Scope of Work, additional information is transmitted in both directions: The planners request park documents that provide background information on the park and specific information regarding the interpretive program; the planners send information about the planning process to the park. Customization of the planning process for the particular situation of the park is discussed and enacted. Additionally, the following also occurs:

- Compilation of the ID often begins during this period.
- A tentative schedule for the first and second workshops is established.
- Meeting and travel arrangements are made.
- Stakeholders are discussed and the park superintendent selects and invites those who will attend the first two days of the first workshop.
- The Scope of Work is finalized and signed by all parties.

## **A brief meeting occurs the day before the first workshop begins**

The next step in the planning process is for the planners to travel to the park for the first workshop. On the day of arrival, the planners meet with the superintendent and park interpretation manager to discuss last-minute arrangements, potential challenges during the workshop, the status of parkwide planning as it affects interpretation (Do the GMP and Strategic Plan, as written, still offer useful guidance for the interpretive operation? Or is there recent, updated information that needs to be considered?), and other workshop- or process-related questions. The planners relate that the workshop includes an introduction exercise that they will conduct, so the opening of the meeting may be as brief as the superintendent desires, followed by the interpretation manager saying a few words, then introducing the planners. The planners also remind the superintendent that the question, “What does Management expect Interpretation to accomplish for the park?” will be asked in open session at the beginning of the third day to help establish the sideboards within which the interpretive operation functions now, and will function in the future.

If time allows, the planners briefly experience the park firsthand. This is useful, but not critical, since the stakeholders will be the park resource experts for the project rather than the planners serving this function. The next morning, the first workshop begins. •

# The first workshop builds the foundation of the CIP

The first workshop is conducted by the team of two interpretive planners. The location for the workshop is usually in or near the park, and functions most effectively if participants are not interrupted by daily business. The first workshop includes stakeholders and park staff (who are themselves internal or NPS stakeholders). The optimal number of participants is 15-30 to assure diversity of perspectives and process manageability. Many of the workshop sessions include generating new information as well as reviewing existing information.

All workshop sessions are recorded on flipchart paper pads by the planners to enhance the visibility of the process's collaborative nature and to maintain a common focus on the work at hand. This also provides participants a real-time ground-truthing opportunity to ensure that what is being heard and recorded by the planners is what the participants are really intending to convey; participants are encouraged to voice corrections.

The meeting room contains tables and chairs, and a great deal of wall space. Room practicality is far more important to the success of the workshop than the quality of the room's ambiance or the views from its windows. Tables and chairs are ideally arranged in a large "U" shape, facing the wall that has the most space for hanging flipchart sheets. Two flipchart easels with paper pads attached are centered in this space. The planners usually sit at a table adjoining one of the ends of the semicircle.

Before the workshop begins, three questions are clearly written on a flipchart paper pad:

- Who are you? (*name*)
- Who do you represent? (*group or affiliation*)
- Why is this park special or important to you?

## **Welcome and introduction exercise**

The workshop begins. After the planners are introduced, the first planner begins by displaying and reading aloud the three questions written on the paper pad. The planner then answers these questions, modeling what is desired of the participants. The planner then asks the nearest participant to address these questions. Each participant in turn will do the same.

This type of sharing is both informative and, frequently, emotive. The third question specifically provides an opportunity for participants to express strongly-held personal views about park significances. This is an important first step in the workshop as it provides a forum for individuals to grow more familiar with each other, and initiates a cohesive group dynamic. Nothing said is recorded, enhancing the safety of this opportunity to speak from the heart. This step also establishes some informational and experiential groundwork among the participants since common

viewpoints often emerge — sometimes from unexpected sources.

Lastly, the other planner will also address these questions, then transition into a discussion of the significance of the place, drawing on what was said in this exercise and leading into the next topic.

## **An overview of the first workshop is presented to participants**

The second planner continues, remarking on the exercise: This place is significant to each of you, both for very different reasons and many reasons held in common. Expanding this idea, this place is significant to the American people — both collectively and, as was just voiced, as individuals. That’s why it has been added to the National Park System. It is one of the places that embodies America’s collective natural and cultural heritage, and as such, it possesses significance for the public. Parks preserve and interpret places of significance.

(At this point, the relevant portions of NPS enabling legislation, or the mission statement from the NPS Strategic Plan, is read aloud to participants to provide agency context. The mission statement from the Strategic Plan: “The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.”)

Interpretation is a critical function of the park. The role of interpretation is to facilitate an exploration of those significances, of those meanings, to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of them. *(See the following page for a handout describing the mission of interpretation. This handout is referred to frequently by the planners throughout the workshop.)*

How is this accomplished? The interpretive program provides interpretive services with the express goal of providing opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in the resources of these places. Effective interpretation results from thoughtful, comprehensive planning — the methodical assessment of desired outcomes and how best to achieve them.

That brings us to the purpose of this workshop. This workshop will build the foundation of the interpretive program that will be conducted here in the future. Each participant will play an important role in shaping the interpretive program that will be conducted here over the next 5-10 years.

Comprehensive interpretive planning results in a CIP, a blueprint for the interpretive program. (A brief overview of park planning and the philosophy and components of the CIP are presented to provide context for the workshop. Participants learn that they are participating in what will become the foundation of the LRIP section of the CIP.)

The planners then present information about the workshop structure: They distribute the day’s agenda, comment sheets for those who may wish to communicate with the planners in writing, and a sign-in sheet for recording those who are present. Meeting logistics (lunch and break schedule, restroom and telephone locations, etc.) are briefly discussed and “rules of the road” — consensus guidelines for discourse throughout the workshop — are solicited and posted. Last, a “parking lot” sheet is posted to record participant ideas or questions that are best addressed later in the workshop.

## Exploring meanings through story

From time immemorial, societies have relied on the power of *story* to explore, clarify, and share the ideas, meanings, and values that collectively constitute culture. People use the allegorical and metaphorical properties of story to capture the essence of who we were, who we are, and who we wish to be.

People visit parks because, consciously or unconsciously, they seek a personal connection to the powerful stories found in these special places. Providing opportunities for people to forge deeper connections to these meaningful places is the mission of interpretation.

**The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.<sup>1</sup>**

**The mission of interpretation is to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of the significances of park resources.<sup>2</sup>**

**Interpretive services provide opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the meanings inherent in the resources of parks.<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Text excerpted from *Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden, University of North Carolina Press, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrase of Long-Range Mission Goal IIb, *NPS Strategic Plan (2000-2005)*.

<sup>3</sup> Paraphrase of the *NPS Interpretive Development Program, Module 101: Fulfilling the NPS Mission — The Process of Interpretation*, April 2000.

## **This place possesses inherent significances**

The significances of the park's resources are first mentioned at the outset of the workshop when the participants address why this place is special or important to them. This "speaking from the heart" lays the foundation for the discussion of resource significances. The plural of "significance" is used often because invariably, every park elicits multiple significances that vary from individual to individual and from group to group.

So, what's significant about a particular place? Why is it special? Why is it important? Compared to what? Who's to say? In America, we all have a say. We have a say as individuals when we talk to a neighbor or take our families to visit a place of special importance to us. We have a say when we participate in interest group activities and, indirectly, we have a say when such groups represent our interests, whether we participate or not. We have a say as a national culture through our representatives in government. As a nation, as states, as localities — we attach special importance or significance to certain places because of their distinctiveness, their contrast to other places.

This idea extends beyond America, of course. Nations have also gathered together from time to time to signify that particular places — some of which are in America — are of such importance to the global community that they are worthy of special worldwide recognition and attention. This idea of *place*, and the attachment of meaning to place, is a fundamental human trait. We ascribe significance to special places because of what existed there, what occurred there, what exists there today, or what may exist there in the future.

The whole of park management has always been about place and the many meanings attached to place, meanings ascribed to a place by people. Management serves to retain or restore the characteristics of place so that present and future generations will have the same opportunities to experience it as we have, and as those who preceded us have had. Interpretation is a function of management. Everything interpretation has done, does today, and will do tomorrow revolves around the core denominator of *place*. This is where the interpretive job begins.

### **Natural and cultural resources — an artificial distinction**

The discussion of place would be incomplete if it did not include the terms *natural resources* and *cultural resources*. As people study the world around us, and develop new methods and disciplines, it has often been useful to continually divide the world more and more narrowly to study its pieces in greater depth. So it is with the management of especially significant places.

In the quest for increased knowledge, it has been habitual to identify *natural resources* as resources primarily significant due to their lack of disturbance by people, while defining *cultural resources* as those resources that are primarily significant due to their associations with human action and manipulation. It is important to remember, however, that no cultural resource is divorced from the natural world — and no natural resource is free of associated ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values assigned to it by people.

To a great extent, this division of resources into natural and cultural has been useful for the purposes of academic study, but can be harmful to a holistic exploration of what resources in parks mean, to whom, why, and how these meanings are changing or not changing. Interpreters need to reintegrate resource knowledge to best facilitate the exploration of those resources and the meanings they hold. To comprehend only the pieces without the context of the greater whole is to limit

opportunities for people to forge deeper and more meaningful connections to shared heritage.

### **Interpretive themes explore multiple meanings inherent in the significances of park resources**

The significances of a place are embedded in its tangible and intangible characteristics. It is these elements that people find attractive, interesting, and engaging enough to want to experience. These significances caused the place to be set aside and managed for the enjoyment of all. These significances are what people want to explore, understand better, and appreciate more.

Since the desired outcome of interpretation is to provide opportunities for people to explore the meanings of a place — to enhance their own understanding and appreciation of the significances inherent in the park’s natural and cultural resources — the development of interpretive themes must flow from those significances. The significances ascribed to a park are described in a set of *significance statements*. NPS documents containing the set of significance statements include general management plans, strategic plans, CIPs, and many other planning documents. The amount of detail, and the format of the information, may vary from document to document.

Workshop participants usually review, edit, and sometimes add to the existing set of statements. It is noted in the workshop that statements of significance represent a broader scope of functional interests than just the function of interpretation. Even though the edited statements are technically just a recommendation to management (to consider updating the existing set of statements at the next available opportunity), they are an essential part of this interpretive planning workshop as they serve in forming a common understanding of the significances of park resources.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing park resource significances.*

## **Fundamentals of effective thematic interpretation**

### **A group exercise**

The fundamentals of thematic interpretation describe how people, things, and ideas are interconnected, and interpretation’s role in facilitating an exploration of those connections. Below is a group exercise to prompt an engaging discussion of the fundamentals. Participants in this exercise need not have any previous knowledge of interpretation. The presentation of these foundational concepts of thematic interpretation provides the necessary contextual framework enabling participants to draft primary interpretive themes later in the workshop.

The boldface text in quotation marks is intended to simulate language used by the interpretive planners; the other text indicates actions of, or instructions to, the planners.

# Developing the set of significance statements

## How are significance statements defined?

Significances of place are expressed in a *set of statements*. Significance statements clearly describe the distinctiveness of the combined resources of the place (natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, inspirational, etc.). They embody the power of the place through a factual representation of what makes the place special. They are facts placed in relevant context that makes the facts meaningful, summarizing the essence of the importance of the park's resources to our natural and cultural heritage. Significances may evolve over time as a result of discoveries or other updates to knowledge about the place.

## How are they used?

In *park planning*, the set of significance statements focuses park management actions on the preservation and enjoyment of those attributes that most directly contribute to the importance of the place.

In *interpretive planning*, statements of significance comprise the core values — the central importance — upon which the park's primary interpretive themes and consequent interpretive program are built. They are the bedrock of thematic interpretation.

## How are significances expressed?

Significance statements are usually written as single sentences, and often use such descriptions as largest collection, most diverse representation, most authentic, oldest, best remaining example, etc. These broad statements of facts-in-context are sometimes supported by a hierarchy of more specific statements that detail what makes park resources special, valuable, and meaningful.

## What is a useful set of statements?

The following questions should be asked about draft statements of significance to ensure their quality and usefulness:

- Do the statements *clearly describe* the importance of resources (using enough detail, but not too much detail)? Are they understandable?
- Do the statements go beyond just a *listing* of significant resources and *include context* that makes the facts meaningful?
- Do data and consensus substantiate the statements?

- Do the statements reflect current scholarly inquiry and interpretation, including changes that might have occurred since the park's establishment?
- Do the statements describe why the park is important within a local, state, regional, national, or global context?

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**Examples.** *The following statements are excerpts from the complete sets of significance statements for each park cited. They, therefore, only address a portion of each place's significance.*

**The attack at Washita was the first implementation of a strategic policy adopted by the U.S. Army to strike encampments of Plains Indians in winter when they were most vulnerable.**

Washita Battlefield National Historic Site

**There are seven species of sea turtles in the world, all of which are threatened and three of which are listed as critically endangered in the IUCN Red Book. Padre Island National Seashore is the only area on the Texas coast where nests from all five species of sea turtles that occur in the Gulf of Mexico have been documented. More Kemps Ridley sea turtle nests have been found at the National Seashore than anywhere else in the United States. The Gulf of Mexico, Laguna Madre, and the Mansfield Channel provide important habitat for these five species of sea turtles.**

Padre Island National Seashore

**The monument has outstanding research potential because the petroglyphs are numerous, have retained their integrity, are an outstanding example of Rio Grande style, and are close to other associated archaeological resources.**

Petroglyph National Monument

**The unusually high degree of approachability to the park's active volcanism affords opportunities for fundamental and detailed research not duplicated (or even approached) in any other park in the world, offering relatively safe experiences with lava flows, fountains, and other products of active volcanism.**

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

**Old Dorchester, located at the furthest inland navigable point on the Ashley River, served as a strategic commerce center in colonial South Carolina.**

Old Dorchester State Historic Site

## **Meanings are explored through tangible, intangible, and universal elements of story**

First step:

On a flipchart easel with paper pad, leaving enough space at the top of the sheet for a title to be added later, the trainer writes *see, feel, hear, smell, taste*.

The trainer provides a water bottle or similar tangible object.

The trainer asks the participants to pass the object from person to person, responding to the following question as they pass it.

**“Can you name a physical characteristic that you can ascribe to this object: some aspect that you can see, feel, hear, smell, or taste?”**

On a flipchart, the trainer records participant responses to this question.

*(Responses might include: • Plastic • glass • hard • solid • embossed • ridged • tinted • heavy • light • wet • liquid • sloshing sounds {or other sounds} • bubbles • half full • object is labeled • etc.)*

Second step:

The trainer recovers the tangible object.

On a second flipchart, leaving enough space at the top of the sheet for a title to be added later, the trainer writes *ideas, meanings, beliefs, values*.

Once again, the trainer asks the participants to pass the object from person to person, participants responding to the following question as they do so.

**“Can you name an idea, meaning, belief, or value that this object can represent?”**

On the second flipchart, the trainer records participant responses to this question.

*(Responses might include: • Manufacturing • advertising • merchandising • portability • sustainability • life-giving • life-sustaining • rare • precious • purity • necessity • responsibility • conservation • water rights • etc.)*

Third step:

On the first flipchart, the trainer writes the title *Tangibles*.

On the second flipchart, the trainer writes the title *Intangibles*.

## **The essence of interpretation**

**“What do interpreters do?”**

The trainer allows time for participant reflection and response.

**“Interpreters tell stories. Humans communicate through story. You communicate through story.”**

*(Examples: • You told stories this morning when introducing yourselves. You told stories during lunch. • How do we teach children about the world? Through story. • Remember returning to school, “What did you do on summer vacation?” Stories. • Monday morning at work, “How was your weekend?” Stories. • Talk with spouse when you get home, “How was your day?” Stories. • How do you celebrate holidays — with family? Stories. • How many of you watch television? You watch stories. • Read newspapers? Listen to the radio? Songs? Go to movies or watch videos? Stories.)*

**Stories and culture**

**“Stories are the way we survive. How do stories help us survive?”**

The trainer allows time for participant reflection and response.

*(Responses might include: • To learn • teach • entertain • persuade • metaphor for greater truth {Aesop’s fables} • tradition • perpetuate system of meanings and values {society, civilization} • re-live the event • children ask for same stories over and over • some visitors want same information each visit and will tell the interpreter that any new information is wrong because it’s different.)*

**“We use stories to connect to, explore, clarify, and share the meanings, ideas, and values that collectively constitute our culture and our world.”**

**How stories work**

The trainer displays a clean sheet on each of the flipcharts.

On the first flipchart (used for tangibles), the trainer lists several tangible components of a story like Cinderella — *stepmother, pumpkin, mice, glass slipper*, etc.

**“What story do these tangible elements suggest to you?”**

The trainer allows time for participant reflection and response.

The trainer then discusses how the tangible elements alone do *not* make a story. Intangible elements are a necessary, critical ingredient in storytelling and, in fact, are the real reasons for telling stories in the first place. Humans use stories to explore ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values.

**“What is the meaning of the Cinderella story?”**

*(Responses might include: • Never give up hope • Goodness will win out in the end • Good things come to those who wait • Friends are key to overcoming adversity • The importance of timeliness • Believe in possibilities • etc.)*

On the second flipchart (used for intangibles), the trainer records participant responses. The trainer should encourage participants so that at least three or four responses are forthcoming.

**“Which of these is the right answer?”**

The trainer allows time for participant reflection and response.

The trainer discusses the idea that “all answers are right” if they have meaning for the participant. The trainer goes on to explore the notions of personal sovereignty and multiple points of view.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing the tenets of effective interpretation, including the sovereignty of visitors and multiple points of view.*

**“An effective story connects tangible elements to the ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values that define human experience — a story’s intangible elements. This is especially true of the intangibles that can be categorized as *universal concepts*.”**

On the second flipchart, the trainer writes *universal concepts*.

Discuss the idea of universal concepts: intangibles that, in one form or another, are common to all people. The concepts are universal — family, adversity, responsibility, love — although the values individuals associate with them may vary widely.

**“The parts of stories that have the greatest value are intangibles, especially universal intangibles, because they connect with the widest range of people.”**

**“Interpreters use interpretive themes to craft stories that connect the tangible resources of parks to the intangible ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values that make those parks significant.”**

**“That’s why it’s called *thematic interpretation*.”**

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*For more information about the fundamentals of interpretation, visit the Internet site <<http://www.nps.gov/idp/interp/>> where a complete description of the NPS Interpretive Development Program, its philosophy and structure, modules and component lesson plans, submission procedures, etc., can be found. Module 101 of the IDP, “Fulfilling the NPS Mission: The Process of Interpretation,” focuses specifically on the fundamentals of interpretation.*

# Tenets of effective interpretation

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## DEFINITION

“**Visitors**” are all those who experience the park’s interpretive program — whether visiting the park in person, or experiencing it through remote means such as via the Internet, a brochure, an article, a film, through a curriculum, etc. Visitors pursue park experiences to find something of value for themselves.

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## Visitors’ rights

The park’s interpretive program and staff promote, protect, and respect the rights of all visitors. This is critical to the achievement of the interpretive mission: to provide opportunities for people to explore the meanings inherent in the resources of the park, strengthening their own intellectual and emotional connections to them. All visitors have the right:

**To have their privacy and independence respected.**

**To retain and express their own values.**

**To be treated with courtesy and consideration.**

**To receive accurate and balanced information.**

## Universal design

The park’s interpretive services are designed to be as universally accessible as possible to best meet the varied physical and cognitive needs of interpretive audiences.

## Hierarchy of sophistication

The park’s interpretive program treats subject matter in a range of ways — from simple-and-basic to complex-and-advanced — to best meet the varied interests of interpretive audiences.

## Range of interpretive services

The park’s interpretive program includes a range of personal and non-personal interpretive services to best meet the varied learning styles of interpretive audiences, offering a variety of interpretive experiences.

## Multiple points of view

The park’s interpretive program treats subject matter from a variety of perspectives to aid in accuracy and relevance to varied interpretive audiences.

# Applying interpretive fundamentals: Developing interpretive themes

## Interpretive themes enable people to explore the meanings of park resources through story

Now that some of the interpretive groundwork has been laid, the application of that groundwork can begin. The set of significance statements represents what is important, special, and distinctive about the park's resources — in a factual format. These significances need to be translated into story language to enhance the opportunities of visitors to explore the meanings of the place. These stories are interpretive themes, upon which the park's interpretive program is built.

## Organization and characteristics of interpretive themes

Interpretive themes operate at two levels: as primary interpretive themes and subthemes. Primary interpretive themes are the overarching, biggest stories about the place, based on its described significances. Subthemes are the smaller stories that nest within the primary interpretive themes. They tend to be narrower in scope than primary themes. Subthemes are the specific themes used to develop interpretive programs and services. Their narrower scope encourages the exploration of specific ideas in greater depth.

Characteristics that are common to both levels of interpretive themes include the following:

- All interpretive themes are based on the significances of park resources.
- All interpretive themes are the cores of stories used to explore the multiple significances of the park's resources to the public.
- All interpretive themes connect park resources to the larger ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values of which they are a part.
- All interpretive themes are best stated as single sentences that include tangible and intangible elements. Sentence structure forces theme writers to focus their ideas. (An interpretive theme is never stated as a topic. While topics can be useful in organizing a body of work, topics alone do not provide interpretive focus. Since topics are written in one or several words — such as geology, Southwest history, wildlife, architecture, etc. — their meanings are too ambiguous to be useful. Sentence structure ensures more complete and coherent development of related ideas. Sentences enable an interpretive theme to connect tangible resources with meanings, ideas, and values in ways that increase the relevance of these significances to visitors. That, in turn, helps interpretation facilitate an increase in visitors' understanding and appreciation of the park's resources.)
- All interpretive themes contain universal concepts, allowing a wide and diverse range of people to all find personal paths of connection to the stories of the place.
- All interpretive themes provide opportunities for people to explore the meanings of the place, without telling people what park resources should mean to them.

## **Developing primary interpretive themes from significances**

Since the desired outcome of interpretation is to provide opportunities for people to explore the significances of a place — to enhance their own understanding and appreciation of the significances inherent in the park’s natural and cultural resources — the development of interpretive themes must flow from those significances.

Primary interpretive themes are the primary stories that allow people to explore the most important significances of the park’s resources. They are translations of factual significance statements into overarching park stories. They are usually written as a set of *primary interpretive themes*. All primary interpretive themes within the park’s set are of equal priority and importance — they are all larger in scope than any of the subthemes which flow from them. Each park in the National Park System has a CIP that contains the park’s set of primary interpretive theme statements. Other documents, such as general management plans and strategic plans, may also reproduce this set of statements.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing primary interpretive themes.*

## **Complete sets of park significances and primary interpretive themes**

The following pages contain actual sets of significance statements and primary interpretive themes from large and small parks, in various regions of the country, possessing a variety of natural and cultural resources. Although the significances and primary interpretive themes are the most current available to our office at the time of publication, the parks cited might now be using updated statements.

*Following the workshop handout describing primary interpretive themes, three workshop handouts contain complete sets of park significances and primary interpretive themes.*

## **Universal concepts are essential components of both primary interpretive themes and subthemes**

Universal concepts are powerful because in just a word — love, family, war, honor, education, sacrifice — so many different meanings are instantly accessed. Using universal concepts in both primary interpretive themes and subthemes *is* interpreting from multiple points of view, a tenet of the NPS Interpretive Development Program. That’s part of the tremendous effectiveness of using universal concepts in interpretive work — it enables a wide range of people with diverse life experiences to become engaged in the place, in the program, in the exhibit.

It should be noted that including universal concepts does not, in itself, guarantee that an interpretive theme will be useful. Simply using words that convey universal concepts is usually too broad an approach — unless you really intend to focus on everything those words represent, which is probably impossible. Context is also an important consideration that should not be overlooked when developing interpretive theme statements. An example:

Residents sacrificed their homes and lands for the creation of a national park near a majority of the United States population.

The universal concept of *sacrifice* is very powerful, but appears above without much explanatory detail or context. Such ambiguity may lead interpreters to misunderstand the underlying significances of this interpretive theme. They may be

# Developing the set of primary interpretive themes

## How are primary themes defined?

Primary interpretive themes translate factual significance statements into overarching park stories to facilitate an exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources. All primary themes are of equal priority in communicating the most important significances of the park's resources to the public.

## How are they used?

In *interpretive planning*, the set of primary interpretive themes forms the foundation of the park's interpretive program, built upon the bedrock of the significances inherent in park resources.

## How are primary themes expressed?

Primary interpretive themes are best written as single sentences. Although primary themes are based on park significance statements, there need not be a one-to-one relationship between statements of significance and primary interpretive themes. However, the *set* of primary theme statements must represent the entire *set* of resource significances.

## What are useful primary interpretive themes?

The following questions should be asked about a draft set of primary interpretive themes to ensure the quality and usefulness of the themes:

- Are the primary interpretive themes grounded in the park's statements of significance?
- Does the set of primary themes convey the *complete set* of significances?
- Do the themes go beyond just a *restatement* of the facts; do they include tangibles, intangibles, and universal concepts?
- Are these primary themes critical to accomplishing the desired interpretive outcome of increasing visitor understanding and appreciation of the significances of the park's resources?
- Are the themes complete, understandable sentences?

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**Examples.** *The following statements are excerpts from the complete sets of primary interpretive themes for each park cited. They, therefore, only address a portion of each place's significance.*

**The attack at Washita was controversial at the time it occurred and remains controversial today: the United States military and many civilians hailed it as a victory in the struggle to reduce Indian raids on frontier settlements; Indians and many whites labeled the attack a massacre — unprovoked and unjust.**

Washita Battlefield National Historic Site

**The unique combination of environments and conditions at Padre Island National Seashore (the largest section of undeveloped barrier island in the world; its location and associated ocean dynamics; rare coastal prairie; a complex, dynamic dune system; a hypersaline lagoon; high biotic diversity and integrity; etc.) provides rare opportunities to understand the complex and critical processes and interactions that sustain the living world.**

Padre Island National Seashore

**The symbols connected to this place — petroglyphs, land grant deeds, Christian crosses, livestock brands, and inscriptions — provide opportunities to explore the ownership, control, and use of land, resources, identity, and ideas in the ongoing history of the American Southwest.**

Petroglyph National Monument

**The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.**

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

**The social, political, economic, and religious forces that framed the founding and evolution of colonial Dorchester provide opportunities for us to explore how communities survive and prosper through human interdependence.**

Old Dorchester State Historic Site, South Carolina

**Established during the Progressive Era in American history, Colorado National Monument is emblematic of our nation's first conservation movement, during which concerned citizens like John Otto worked with vision and perseverance to have recognized and preserved for future generations those special lands and values that comprise our American heritage.**

Colorado National Monument

# Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

## SET OF SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park features Mauna Loa and Kilauea, two of the most active volcanoes in the world.

Mauna Loa — measured from its base deep beneath the surface of the sea to its peak — contains more material by volume than any other mountain on Earth.

The unusually high degree of approachability to the park's active volcanism affords opportunities for fundamental and detailed research not duplicated (or even approached) in any other park in the world, offering relatively safe experiences with lava flows, fountains, and other products of active volcanism.

The long history and collaborative nature of the research performed by the USGS Hawai'i Volcano Observatory and others at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park have made Mauna Loa and Kilauea among the most studied and best understood volcanoes in the world.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park provides critical living space in a wide variety of ecological zones for the highly endemic native biota, much of which is threatened or endangered, requiring active management of native and non-native species.

The diversity and importance of the cultural resources in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park — and the protection of natural features and processes afforded by national park status — combine to make Hawai'i Volcanoes critically important to the perpetuation of traditional native Hawaiian religion and culture.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park encompasses the largest expanse of Hawaiian natural environment managed as wilderness, with the associated wilderness values of natural sounds, lack of mechanization and development, natural darkness, and opportunities for solitude.

The park's resources are so rare, valuable, and inspirational to all the people of the world that the United Nations has declared the park an International Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage Site.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park protects the most extensive tract of protected montane tropical rain forest in the NPS.

The structural complexity and isolation of the Hawaiian Islands and their active volcanic setting makes them a world-class living laboratory of biogeography and evolution. The protected status of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park lands offers important opportunities for this work to continue.

## SET OF PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

**The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery of and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.**

**The journeys of the Hawaiian people, who continue to inhabit these rich and diverse lands, include cultural clashes, adaptations, and assimilations that provide enduring lessons about human resourcefulness, interdependence, and respect for the life of the land.**

**In Hawai'i, active volcanism created an isolated home for a few immigrant species that gave rise to a rich yet fragile endemic biota; due to the accelerating change brought about by human actions, much of that unique heritage continues to be lost to extinction, challenging all of us to learn from the past and work together to preserve the remaining native plants and animals.**

**Kilauea, the home of Pele, is sacred to many Native Hawaiians: it is a place of birth and the well-spring of many spirits and forces; the active volcanism, the features of the terrain, and the plants and animals that live there are all important to Native Hawaiian sense of identity, unity, and continuity.**

**Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park provides an opportunity for people to experience the values of Hawai'i's diverse wilderness; the park's designation as a World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve attests to its importance as a benchmark for monitoring environmental change.**

# Washita Battlefield National Historic Site

## SET OF SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

The attack at Washita was the first implementation of a strategic policy adopted by the U.S. Army to strike encampments of Plains Indians in winter when they were most vulnerable.

The attack at Washita was a milestone in the struggle of the Great Plains tribes to maintain the freedom of their traditional lifeways.

The attack at Washita greatly impacted two prominent individuals: Chief Black Kettle, widely known for his pursuit of peaceful co-existence with whites, lost his life; Lt. Col. George Custer, already known for his exploits during the Civil War, gained a reputation as an aggressive Indian fighter.

Washita has special significance for the Cheyenne people who regard the site as hallowed ground because of what transpired there.

The cultural landscape of the Washita site possesses a high degree of integrity.

The attacks at Sand Creek, Washita, and Little Bighorn document the escalation of hostilities between whites and Plains Indians resulting from the failures of the treaty system.

## SET OF PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

**The attack at Washita was a clash between two cultures whose beliefs were so different and incompatible that violent conflict was inevitable.**

**The attack at Washita was the first implementation of a strategic decision by the U.S. Army, who had been unsuccessful in engaging Indian combatants, to launch a “total war” campaign against the Southern Plains Indians by striking winter encampments when Indian communities were most vulnerable.**

**The attack at Washita was controversial at the time it occurred and remains controversial today: the United States military and many civilians hailed it as a victory in the struggle to reduce Indian raids on frontier settlements; Indians and many whites labeled the attack a massacre — unprovoked and unjust.**

**Chief Black Kettle’s life was filled with irony: he was a major proponent for peace, signing three treaties between 1861 and 1867, yet he was attacked twice, at Sand Creek and Washita.**

**General Philip Sheridan felt that Lt. Col. George Custer’s aggressiveness was key to the successful implementation of the Army’s new strategy against the tribes of the Southern Plains; Custer’s victory catapulted him into the public imagination as a great Indian fighter and, ironically, encouraged the headstrong behavior that led to his demise at Little Bighorn.**

**The attack at Washita and the resulting death of Chief Black Kettle were pivotal events in the evolving relationships between the Cheyenne people, white settlers, and the U.S. government.**

**The hallowed ground of Washita provides opportunities to understand the resiliency of the human spirit and the struggle of societies to maintain cultural identity.**

# Chiricahua National Monument

## SET OF SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

Chiricahua National Monument contains one of the most spectacular and extensive areas of rhyolitic pinnacles and spires in the world.

Chiricahua National Monument protects part of the Sierra Madre “sky island” complex — one of the three major “megadiversity” areas found in the world where four major biomes intersect each other (Sierra Madre, Rocky Mountain, Chihuahuan Desert, and Sonora Desert).

Chiricahua National Monument is a Congressionally mandated wilderness area.

Chiricahua National Monument preserves exceptionally clean air and low levels of light and noise that enhance biodiversity, scenic viewsheds, and night sky viewing.

Chiricahua National Monument preserves the transition from prehistoric peoples to Chiricahua Apaches to 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneer settlers to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (Faraway Ranch) including an Army encampment used during the Geronimo campaign, a homestead, a working cattle/guest ranch, and related artifacts.

Chiricahua National Monument contains one of only two known monuments created by Buffalo Soldiers.

Chiricahua National Monument preserves the location of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp as well as CCC-built stone structures and trails listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## SET OF PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

**Begun with an afternoon’s violent deposition of white-hot ash, the spectacular rhyolite formation of Chiricahua National Monument has been sculpted by erosion through the ages, and continues to be sculpted today as a living work-in-progress.**

**Chiricahua National Monument is centered at a crossroads of four major environments (Sierra Madre, Rocky Mountain, Chihuahuan Desert, and Sonora Desert), providing opportunities to explore and study a surprisingly accessible wilderness of richly diverse plant and animal life where natural processes continue relatively unaffected by human influence.**

**The lack of major human enterprise and development, and the history of rural lifestyles, have protected the land in and around Chiricahua National Monument and its wilderness character of clean air, low noise, and clear night skies, all of which contribute to opportunities for rejuvenation and contemplation.**

**The rich and enduring heritage of the land in and around the Chiricahua Mountains is a testament to how the area’s inhabitants have left their mark on the land and, in turn, have been changed by it.**

led, through the theme's ambiguity, to associate a range of ideas with this theme that may not relate to the park's resources. A better description of this idea would be something like this:

Established at the height of the Great Depression, and created through the displacement and disruption of many individuals and communities, Shenandoah National Park is an outstanding example of how people collectively struggle to balance the rights of individuals with the needs of society as a whole.

Although the universal concept of sacrifice is absolutely represented in this interpretive theme, the word itself is not actually used. Instead, the idea is developed much more fully to add detail and context, creating a much richer opportunity for dialog about all of the ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values related to this universal concept, and the park resources that make this one of the best places in the nation to discuss these particular ideas.

### **Developing subthemes from the park's set of primary interpretive themes**

A subtheme is derived from a primary interpretive theme, is narrower in scope, and deeper in its treatment of the particular aspects of the resources it addresses. Like primary interpretive themes, subthemes link tangible resources to intangible ideas and meanings, and include universal concepts to increase interpretive effectiveness. Usually, the highest level of NPS planning document that contains subthemes is the CIP, where subthemes are sometimes included to clarify and expand upon primary themes. As the central ideas around which specific interpretive services are developed, subthemes are also found in service-group planning documents of all types (exhibit plans, wayside exhibit plans, education plans, etc.) and documentation for specific preparations (individual service plans and outlines for interpretive talks, guided walks, site bulletins, exhibits, etc.).

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing subthemes.*

### **Developing interpretive services from subthemes**

Interpretive services are always developed from interpretive themes. That ensures that the direct linkage from resource significances to the story format of primary interpretive themes to the depth and focus of subthemes remains intact. Consciously building an interpretive service around the framework of a well-crafted primary interpretive theme also prevents the desired outcome of the service from being overshadowed or deflected by interpretive medium, technique, or personality. Exploring meanings remains the central goal — and maximizes the value of the interpretive service toward fulfilling the mission of interpretation.

Ideas for specific interpretive services flow from interpreters' familiarity with park resources. Initial inspiration may spring from many sources: an often-asked question, a dramatic viewshed, a new discovery, etc. Regardless of origin, the design and presentation of every interpretive service must be driven by the strategic decision to tell a story that provides opportunities for people to explore meanings.

*Following the workshop handout describing subthemes, three workshop handouts describe the linkages between primary interpretive themes, subthemes, and interpretive services.*

# Developing subthemes

## How are subthemes defined?

Each subtheme is derived from a primary interpretive theme, is narrower in scope, and deeper in its treatment of the particular aspects of the resources it addresses. There is no end to the number of useful subthemes that can be derived from a sound primary interpretive theme. Like primary interpretive themes, subthemes link tangible resources to intangible ideas and meanings, and include universal concepts to increase interpretive effectiveness. Subthemes are the driving elements in the development of specific interpretive services.

## How are subthemes used?

A subtheme gives additional guidance and direction at the level of individual service plans and specific presentations. Because it is narrower in scope than a primary interpretive theme, a subtheme provides a more useful focus for the exploration of ideas afforded by a given interpretive service.

Subthemes are essential to the development of specific preparations — the actual activities or media available to visitors. Since effective story moves from the specific to the general, interpreters regularly employ subthemes (which are routinely narrower in scope) to help visitors connect with a significant aspect of park resources. Sometimes specific preparations address one, or even all, of a park's primary interpretive themes. But when that is the case, the treatment is necessarily introductory in nature, and is intended to lead visitors to other services and resources. An introductory park brochure or general park video are examples of such introductory services.

Subthemes are valuable because they allow specific interpretive services to achieve greater depth. Proceeding from a narrow focus, the interpreter can help visitors explore more subtle and complex aspects of specific park resources. This allows understanding at a more sophisticated level, and helps visitors extrapolate their new knowledge from the specific to the general. Because all subthemes are derived directly from primary themes, the set of services offered the public necessarily supports understanding and appreciation of resource significances — the intended outcome of the program.

## How are subthemes expressed?

Like primary interpretive themes, subthemes are best written as single sentences.

## What are useful subthemes?

The following questions should be asked about each

draft subtheme to ensure its quality and usefulness:

- Has the subtheme been derived from a primary interpretive theme?
- Does this theme go beyond just a restatement of the facts; does it include tangibles, intangibles, and universal concepts?
- Is this theme useful in accomplishing the desired outcome of increasing visitor understanding and appreciation of the significances inherent in the park's resources?
- Is the subtheme a complete, understandable sentence?

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**Examples.** *The following statements were written by the authors for the purposes of instruction only and may not represent actual subthemes used by the park.*

### Primary theme (one of five in the set):

**The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.**

### Subthemes of this primary theme:

**The unusually high approachability to the park's active volcanism not only affords opportunities for personal exploration, but for fundamental and detailed research that benefits us all.**

**Landforms created by the volcanic activity of Kilauea and Mauna Loa sensationally demonstrate the role of volcanism in shaping and reshaping Earth's surface, and deepens our understanding of other planetary bodies.**

**Earthquakes, tsunamis, ash and debris fallout from eruptions — consequences of volcanic activity — have at times been disastrous for humans, but have also provided opportunities for people to thrive.**

**A civilization-enriching aspect of science is introducing and testing new ideas: Mauna Loa and Kilauea exemplify the theory that volcanic activity above a fixed hot spot in the Earth's interior built the Hawaiian Islands, a relatively new idea.**

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

# Primary themes, subthemes, and interpretive services

## Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

### Set of Primary Interpretive Themes

The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.

The journeys of the Hawaiian peoples, who continue to inhabit these rich and diverse lands, include cultural clashes, adaptations, and assimilations that provide enduring lessons about ...

In Hawai'i, active volcanism created an isolated home for a few immigrant species that gave rise to a rich yet fragile endemic biota; due to the accelerating change brought about by human actions, ...

Kilauea, the home of Pele, is sacred to many Native Hawaiians: it is a place of birth and the well-spring of many spirits and forces; the active volcanism, the features of the terrain, and the ...

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park provides an opportunity for people to experience the values of Hawai'i's diverse wilderness; the park's designation as a World Heritage ...

#### Example Subtheme

The unusually high approachability to the park's active volcanism not only affords opportunities for personal exploration, but for fundamental and detailed research that benefits us all.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to an **interactive computer station** that graphically demonstrates how fundamental volcanic research benefits other scientific inquiries with which visitors are familiar, such as studies into dynamic global change like plate tectonics or climate patterns like the El Niño/La Niña effect.

#### Example Subtheme

Landforms created by the volcanic activity of Kilauea and Mauna Loa sensationally demonstrate the role of volcanism in shaping and reshaping Earth's surface, and deepens our understanding of other planetary bodies.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to an **illustrated program** that shows varying landscapes of Earth, and then shows landscapes of other planets and moons (as mapped and photographed by NASA). Inspiring music might accompany the imagery, followed by an interpreter-led discussion about the similarities and differences in these landscapes.

#### Example Subtheme

Earthquakes, tsunamis, ash and debris fallout from eruptions — consequences of volcanic activity — have at times been disastrous for humans, but have also provided opportunities for people to thrive.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to a **guided hike** across the flank of Kilauea, on a trail that transects a place of cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. The interpreter might draw visitors' attention to plant species that thrive in this environment, then discuss the connections of human populations to this place, and their successful lifeways.

#### Example Subtheme

A civilization-enriching aspect of science is introducing and testing new ideas: Mauna Loa and Kilauea exemplify the theory that volcanic activity above a fixed hot spot in the Earth's interior built the Hawaiian Islands, a relatively new idea.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to an **interpretive talk**. Starting with the idea that the Hawaiian Islands are probably the best example on Earth of hot-spot volcanism, the interpreter might expand into procedures of scientific inquiry (hypotheses, testing, improved hypotheses), and end by asking about the benefits/detriments of science to society.

etc.

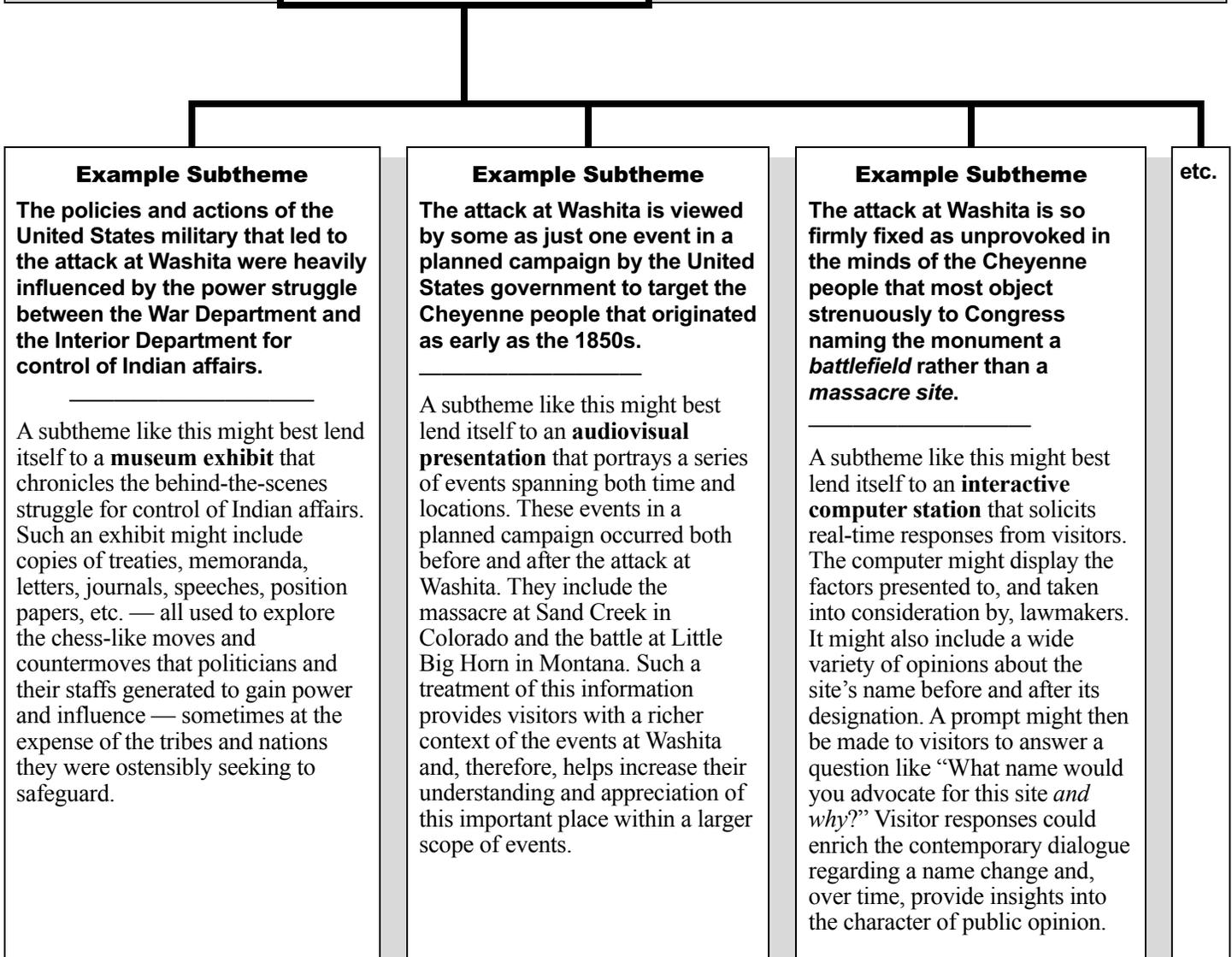
Note: Subthemes were written by the authors for the purposes of instruction only and may or may not represent actual subthemes used by the park.

# Primary themes, subthemes, and interpretive services

## Washita Battlefield National Historic Site

### Set of Primary Interpretive Themes

The Washita was a clash between two cultures whose beliefs were so ...	The attack at Washita was the first implementation of a strategic decision by the U.S. Army, who had ...	<b>The attack at Washita was controversial at the time it occurred and remains controversial today: the United States military and many civilians hailed it as a victory in the struggle to reduce Indian raids on frontier settlements; Indians and many whites labeled the attack a massacre — unprovoked and unjust.</b>	Chief Black Kettle's life was filled with irony: he was a major proponent for peace, signing three treaties ...	General Philip Sheridan felt that Lt. Col. George Custer's aggressive ness was key to the ...	The attack at Washita and the resulting death of Chief Black Kettle were pivotal events in the evolving ...	The hallowed ground of Washita provides opportunities to understand the resiliency of the ...
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Note: Subthemes were written by the authors for the purposes of instruction only and may or may not represent actual subthemes used by the park.

# Primary themes, subthemes, and interpretive services

## Chiricahua National Monument

### Set of Primary Interpretive Themes

Begun with an afternoon's violent deposition of white-hot ash, the spectacular rhyolite formation of Chiricahua National Monument has been sculpted by erosion through the ages, and continues to be ...

Chiricahua National Monument is centered at a crossroads of four major environments (Sierra Madre, Rocky Mountain, Chihuahua Desert, and Sonora Desert), providing opportunities to explore and study a surprisingly accessible wilderness of richly diverse plant and animal life where natural processes continue relatively unaffected by human influence.

The lack of major human enterprise and development, and the history of rural lifestyles, have protected the land in and around Chiricahua National Monument and its wilderness character of clean air, low ...

The rich and enduring heritage of the land in and around the Chiricahua Mountains is a testament to how the area's inhabitants have left their mark on the land and, in turn, have been changed by it.

#### Example Subtheme

The fascinating plant and animal communities that thrive at the mouths of the canyons in Chiricahua National Monument provide insights into the special richness of life where different environments meet.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to a **guided hike** that places visitors directly in these transition zones so rich with life. Special equipment loaned to visitors, such as **audio headset devices**, might enhance their experience. These devices enable the interpreter to directly interact with visitors while diminishing the overall auditory impact such a hike may have on the biota — therefore enabling visitors to experience more of the biota, especially the rich and diverse avian life for which Chiricahua National Monument is well known.

#### Example Subtheme

The desert and foothill environments at the park offer opportunities for U.S. visitors to get to know many plants and animals known mostly from Mexico, and to consider the factors limiting the home range of species.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to a self-guiding trail's free **trail guide** and/or **biota checklist**. Both media provide an opportunity for visitors to personally explore and seek out particular biota. The range of information they include extends beyond that needed for identification only; they also include Mexican names, stories, ranges, life cycles, etc., associated with selected species.

#### Example Subtheme

Plants and animals face special challenges at Chiricahua due to the proximity of mountains and deserts; their success at meeting these challenges speaks to us of the resilience and persistence of life.

A subtheme like this might best lend itself to a series of **wayside exhibits** along park overlooks and trails. These exhibits might capitalize on more than the ability to address the biota at the particular site of each exhibit; they might also graphically depict how the biota have met these challenges through a range of adaptations tailored to the different environments experienced in the park.

etc.

Note: Subthemes were written by the authors for the purposes of instruction only and may or may not represent actual subthemes used by the park.

## **How thematic interpretation works**

Thematic interpretation is both a philosophy and a process. To be successful, thematic interpretation must begin with an understanding of the significances of a place, of a park. This understanding is expressed in the set of significance statements that are then translated into a story format that provides opportunities to explore those significances, to forge personal connections with them. This is accomplished through the development of the set of primary interpretive themes, which gives rise to subthemes. Subthemes are the framework around which specific interpretive services are built.

*Following the subtheme handouts, please see the workshop handout that provides an overview of how thematic interpretation works.*

## **Participants draft primary interpretive themes**

The first workshop focuses on developing the park's set of primary interpretive themes. Therefore, the level of detail in the presentation of subthemes is usually limited. Although actual subthemes are usually not drafted at this time, good ideas about the core stories that might later be turned into subthemes are usually voiced as a natural part of developing primary interpretive themes. The generation of actual subthemes is usually the exception to the rule. In all of this, the more important idea to convey is how significances lead to primary interpretive themes, which lead to subthemes, which lead to the development of interpretive services.

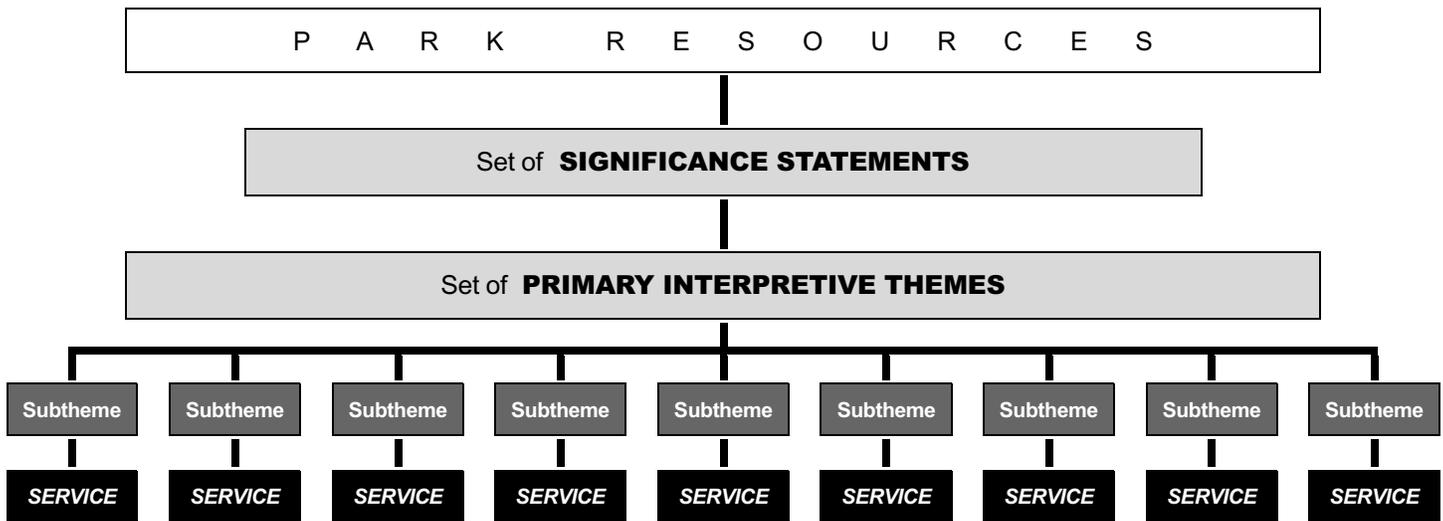
After the information on interpretive themes is presented to participants, the next step in the workshop is to actually develop the draft set of primary interpretive themes. Workshop participants usually draft them without reviewing existing themes, thus ensuring that the thematic interpretation philosophy of the IDP is incorporated into the work: Primary themes devolve from park significances and are constructed as described above. If appropriate, existing themes can be reviewed later to make sure that all important concepts are included in the draft set of primary themes.

During the first day of the first workshop, participants usually voice many important ideas about the place, but lack time to begin synthesizing them into actual theme statements. The planners ask the group's permission to continue working on them overnight, presenting them to the group the next morning. This is the usual flow of events. The next morning, after the planners present the participants' ideas in the form of synthesized, draft primary interpretive themes, work on them continues. The development of well-written primary interpretive themes is one of the most important activities of this stakeholder group. Sound primary themes are critical to the process of developing an effective interpretive program.

## **Checking for course corrections**

At the conclusion of each workshop day, the planners and leader of the park's core planning team discuss the day's events to ensure that the park is receiving the information it needs and that the process as a whole is on track to the park's satisfaction. Adjustments are made by the planners in response to park concerns and/or suggestions, as well as their own observations.

# How thematic interpretation works



## How does thematic interpretation work?

Thematic interpretation is a progressive flow that begins with the resources of the park and ends with the comprehensive program of interpretive services offered to visitors. It is an unbroken chain that cumulatively builds on the significances of the park, and why this specific place is one of the best places to explore a particular set of meanings, as represented by the significances of those resources.

Significances are translated into story format in the largest, most overarching sort of way through the development of primary interpretive themes. The smaller stories that nest within these, the stories that are more narrowly focused and offer a more in-depth treatment of the meanings of a place — subthemes — are derived directly from the set of primary interpretive themes.

Each subtheme lends itself to specific kinds of expression (interpretive services) that will best facilitate visitors' exploration of the park's resources and their meanings. In the diagram above, each service block may be a wayside exhibit, park brochure, film, specific interpretive talk episode, etc.

## Are tangible and intangible elements, and universal concepts always included in interpretive themes?

The construction of interpretive themes includes tangible and intangible elements, and universal concepts. Universal concepts enable a wide range of

people with diverse life experiences to become engaged in the place, in the program, in the exhibits. Tangibles, intangibles, and universals find expression not only in the interpretive themes, but also in the interpretive services that are themselves crafted from interpretive themes.

## Interpretation is more than instruction; it fosters exploration.

The work of interpreters substantially differs from that of academicians. Professors often see their job as possessing answers — in fact, the *right* answers — which students must dutifully seek, receive, understand, and accept. Interpreters look at their job as providing opportunities for people to explore the ideas and meanings inherent in places and arrive at their own conclusions about them. This important concept was clearly articulated years ago when Freeman Tilden established that “The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.” as one of his six principles of interpretation. (*Interpreting Our Heritage*, University of North Carolina Press, 1957.)

This concept lives on in current interpretive philosophy, which consciously intends to more fully respect the individuality and independence of the visitor, and works toward providing that person with more tools for continued personal growth. This is an important tenet of the NPS Interpretive Development Program.

## Desired visitor experiences

**Who visits this place?** A brief discussion of the current demographics and trends in visitation set the stage for discussing why people visit, and the experiences they desire from their visit.

**Why do people visit this place?** Discussion continues with this question, leading to the idea that *visitors are seeking something of personal value for themselves*, another IDP concept. This could relate to natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, inspirational, and other experiences and values, and always involves intangibles. Interpretation facilitates these desired visitor experiences by providing orientation, interpretation, and formal education.

### Developing statements of desired visitor experiences

Visitor experience statements describe how the interpretive program facilitates physical, intellectual, inspirational, and emotional experiences for visitors. These statements represent visitors' desired experiences. With regard to educational programs, these statements can also describe what educators, teachers, and students will experience when participating in the program, including preparation, follow-up, and evaluation.

The desired outcome of park operations is to manage visitor-resource interaction so that opportunities exist for the widest range of visitors to forge connections with park resources while ensuring that those resources remain unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. An understanding of desired visitor experiences helps interpretation facilitate the attainment of those connections.

**What do visitors want to do, see, and experience during their park visit?** Participants respond to this question by writing several statements (each on legal-sized paper) from the perspectives of their constituencies and that of the general visitor. The statements are posted and read aloud by the planners. Statements deemed by consensus to be essentially the same are lumped together, with the most clearly expressed statement on top. If consensus cannot be reached, statements are left separate for ranking. Workshop participants then rank the statements using a nominal group process to indicate those statements they believe are most accurate for most visitors.

This begins with the planners handing out a limited number of self-adhesive ranking dots to each participant, usually about a third as many dots as experience statements. Each participant places dots on the ideas that the participant thinks most need to be kept in mind as the desired future interpretive program is developed. The participant may use one or more dots per statement.

After all of the participants have placed their dots on the statements, the dots received by each statements are counted, producing a consensus ranking of the statements. This prioritization of the statements provides a sense of which ideas most need to be actively addressed as the desired future interpretive program is developed in the second workshop. In the second workshop, these statements and those from the park's General Management Plan will be distilled into a set of *visitor experience considerations*, based on the relative ranking of ideas. These considerations will help guide the development of the desired future interpretive program.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing desired visitor experience statements.*

# Developing desired visitor experiences

## How are desired visitor experiences defined?

*Visitor experience statements* describe how the interpretive program facilitates physical, intellectual, inspirational, and emotional experiences for visitors. *Desired visitor experiences* describe the experiences visitors would like to have when visiting the park. With regard to educational programs, these statements can also describe what educators, teachers, and students will experience when participating in the program.

## How are desired visitor experiences used?

The desired outcome of park operations is to manage visitor-resource interactions so that opportunities exist for the widest range of visitors to forge personal connections with park resources while ensuring that those resources remain unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

In interpretive planning, *visitor experience considerations* are synthesized from visitor experience information gathered through the general management planning process, specific park visitor studies, and the statements gathered in the first workshop of the comprehensive interpretive planning process. Visitor experience considerations guide the interpretive program in developing interpretive services that facilitate the connections visitors want to make with the resources of the park. Specifically, visitor experience considerations will be useful in determining what interpretive services might be most appropriate, why, where, and to what extent.

## How are desired experiences expressed?

Statements of desired visitor experiences must meet certain criteria to be useful in the planning process: They must not conflict with resource significances, primary interpretive themes, park purpose, NPS mission or policies, special mandates, or civil law. The statements emphasize expected outcomes or conditions and are written in present tense as complete sentences. The statements are ranked by the workshop participants to indicate relative value to the interpretive planning process — What do the workshop participants think visitors would want to tell the core team as they develop the desired future interpretive program?

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**Examples.** The following statements are excerpted from the complete sets of desired visitor experiences of several parks.

**Visitors of all backgrounds feel welcome and able to use park resources.**

**Visitors will be inspired.**

**Visitors leave with the idea that it is valuable to preserve and interpret history even if it is emotional, unpleasant, and controversial.**

**Visitors experience several hours hearing only natural sounds (no noise from internal combustion engines).**

**Students come and learn through hands-on experiences.**

**Visitors have the opportunity to see wildlife in a natural setting.**

**Visitors can choose from a variety of interpretive media (brochures, videos, and waysides).**

**Each visitor leaves the park understanding biological diversity and natural processes.**

**Visitors contemplate their own role and responsibility in the stewardship of natural and cultural resources.**

**Visitors hear the Cheyenne language spoken (in interpretive devices and by live interpreters).**

**Visitors have access to objects that will help them form a connection with the park.**

**Visitors have opportunities for solitude.**

**Visitors are able to talk to a ranger during park hours.**

**Visitors have opportunities to make self-discoveries.**

## **Stakeholder-voiced issues and suggestions for improving the interpretive operation**

Each stakeholder is provided an opportunity to voice their expectations and desires in partnering with the park, and their participation in, or ideas for, improving the park's interpretive program. Discussion of current issues, successes, and challenges leads to a greater depth of understanding between partners and can lead to innovations in operations and the relationships that underpin them. The planners go around the room, providing each stakeholder with an opportunity to comment. This is often followed by an open forum for discussing ideas and concerns. The planners record stakeholder comments on the flipchart pad.

## **Closeout of the initial participation of the large stakeholder group**

Closeout of the large stakeholder group includes reviewing any notations on the posted parking lot sheet that have not yet been addressed by the planners, and addressing them to the satisfaction of the participants. An explanation of the subsequent steps in the planning process, and the opportunities that stakeholders will have later in the process to review drafts and continue their participation, is presented. The planners also hand out the example program overview located later in this publication as a means to discuss how the foundational work accomplished in the first workshop will be used by the core planning team to develop the park's desired future interpretive program in the next workshop. The stakeholders are thanked for donating their valuable time to participate in this planning process.

## **The core planning team continues the first workshop**

The last day of the first workshop is usually devoted to issues that are agency-specific or internal to park administration or operations. Participants are therefore more limited than the first days, and usually include just the core planning team. The day's discussion is recorded on flipcharts. The topics for discussion include the following.

## **Determining the set of audiences for use in strategic interpretive planning**

A set of audiences must be defined so that the interpretive efforts of the park can most effectively facilitate their exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources. As parks work through this process, several common categories usually emerge: general public, participants in formal education (curriculum-driven) programs, and non-English speaking/reading visitors. Additional audiences may also be identified. Audiences identified for interpretive planning purposes are listed in the park's CIP. This set of interpretive audiences becomes the second major component (primary themes being the first) needed for developing the desired future interpretive program.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing the development of interpretive audiences for strategic planning purposes.*

# Developing the audience set for interpretive planning

## How are audiences defined?

A set of audiences must be defined so that the interpretive efforts of the park can most effectively facilitate their exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources. For the purposes of strategic interpretive planning, audiences are best defined by considering two central questions, the responses to which ultimately determine the set of audiences for which the park will plan interpretive services.

**Why do we interpret to some audiences differently than we do to others?** Factors to consider include the life experiences of the individual or group, level of education, learning styles, language, socioeconomic status, cultural traditions, time available for interaction, etc.

**At what point does a particular segment of the visiting public become so large, so important, or so distinct from the general park visitor as to warrant interpretive services targeted specifically to their needs?** (By definition, these services are *less effective* for the general public.) What criteria do we use to determine these points? Consideration of this question includes a review of current and future visitor profiles and their categorization for strategic interpretive planning purposes.

Considering all of the above, the basis for categorizing interpretive audiences (for strategic planning purposes) lies in whether or not a particular audience requires communication in a way distinct from that of the general park audience. A balance must be struck between communicating effectively with a greater number of specific audiences, and the limited resources available to the park's interpretive program.

## How are interpretive audiences used?

The set of interpretive audiences comprises the second major component (primary interpretive themes being the first) needed for developing the desired future interpretive program.

## How are interpretive audiences expressed?

Interpretive audience categories are usually written as brief titles followed by explanatory notes that provide additional, detailed information. These notes serve to avoid misunderstandings.

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**Examples.** The following example categories are complete sets of interpretive audiences for each park cited.

**General audience** (including families).

**Park neighbors** (including Hispanics, Native Americans, and Anglos).

**Students** (K-12 school students, college students involved in curricular programs).

**Non-English speaking visitors** (including German, French, Spanish, Japanese).

Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

**General audience** (includes English-speaking and Spanish-speaking visitors).

**School groups** (curriculum-driven and other groups).

**Affiliated American Indians** (15 tribes).

**Non-English speaking visitors** (languages: German, French, Italian; ordered by numbers of visitors).

El Morro National Monument

**General audience.**

**Organized educational groups.** (K-3, 4-6, 7-12, College)

This category includes organized groups with specific accessibility challenges and organized groups of Native Hawaiians requesting services in the Hawaiian language.

**Others who interpret the park.** This category includes bus tour operators (drivers and directors), cruise ship operators, lodging providers, etc.

**Non-English speaking audiences.** These are, in order of numbers visiting the park: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, German, Spanish, French, ethnic Hawaiian.

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

## **Management goals for the interpretive function of the park**

This session is the one referenced in the initial meeting with the park manager the day before the first workshop begins. The question: What does Management expect Interpretation to accomplish for the park?

Discussion begins with the manager's response and narrows to include how this interpretive planning process relates to desired outcomes and evaluation of interpretive services, the park's Strategic Plan, the annual Servicewide Interpretive Report (SIR), divisional and individual workplans, the relationship of interpretation to the goals of the other park divisions, and related topics. The park's statement(s) of purpose (from the GMP or park Strategic Plan) are read aloud by the planners, and reviewed by the group as an additional guiding element in the development of the park's desired future interpretive program.

## **Issues and influences affecting the interpretive operation**

The previous session usually flows naturally into a discussion of issues and influences affecting the interpretive program. Because no interpretive program exists in a vacuum, a discussion of the forces that have a bearing on the program provides context for development of the desired future interpretive program. Issues often include topics like long-range Servicewide initiatives, critical resource issues, issues related to staffing and funding, employee development, use of technologies, dynamics of neighboring communities, concerns of stakeholders not voiced previously, etc.

## **Resource-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement**

Discussion includes research needs, access to and management of research information, and the role of resource-focused research in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Visitor-focused research used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement**

Discussion includes research needs, access to and management of research information, and the role of visitor studies and sociological research in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Park and interpretation libraries — Actions for improvement**

Library materials include books, magazines, periodicals, maps, and related materials not part of park archives. Discussion includes acquisition needs, access to and management of library resources, standard operating procedures, cataloging, storage concerns, and the role of library information in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Interpretive image collection — Actions for improvement**

Interpretive images include slides, prints, negatives, electronic image files, videotapes, films, and related materials not part of park archives. Discussion includes acquisition needs, access to and management of the collection, electronic image generation, manipulation, and storage, standard operating procedures, cataloging, and the role of the image collection in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Interpretive object collection — Actions for improvement**

Interpretive objects are items used in the performance of interpretive services, such as props, replicas, equipment, or other materials that will degrade and be consumed by use over time. Discussion includes acquisition needs, access to and management of the collection, storage, standard operating procedures, cataloging, and the role of the object collection in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Museum collection and archives used in the interpretive operation — Actions for improvement**

The museum collection and park archives are composed of accessioned items for use only in a non-consumptive manner. The collection may include artifacts, rocks and fossils, journals, furniture, weapons, rare books, machinery, paintings, mounted animals, historic maps, transportation equipment — a wide range of objects. Artifacts from the collection are frequently used in exhibits if the exhibit can protect them from degradation; otherwise, replicas are used for public display. Discussion includes acquisition needs, access to and management of the collection and archives, storage, standard operating procedures, cataloging, and the role of the collection and archives in supporting the interpretive program. Improvement suggestions lead to action items in the long-range schedule of actions.

## **Discussion of the ID and the status of its compilation**

At this point in the process, most of the foundational information gathering has been completed and attention is shifted to the ID section of the CIP. Although the ID was previously discussed with the interpretation manager during the pre-workshop period, this is a good time to present this information to the rest of the core team. Discussion includes what the ID is, its relationship to the other two CIP sections, its use and potential formats, and the status of its compilation.

## **The next steps in the process**

Discussion of the ID widens to include the other two sections, and the remainder of the process to comprehensively plan the park's interpretive program. Depending on time and interest, specific attention may be paid to the program overview and its relationship to individual service plans, both of which will be discussed in more detail in the second workshop. Planners preview the second workshop and the subsequent steps that will result in a completed CIP, and answer any questions the team may have regarding the process or the resulting CIP. Example CIPs from other parks are usually provided to the group to foster an increased understanding of what will result from this process, as well as copies of *CIP Guide*, which will be referenced extensively in the second workshop.

The planners then discuss what tasks need to be accomplished before the second workshop begins, who might do what, and when (based on the dates set for the second workshop and the schedules of the various core team members).

Travel arrangements, meeting room logistics, schedules, and other miscellaneous details for the second workshop are discussed as needed.

This concludes the first workshop. •

# Work performed between workshops

## **Length of the interval between workshops**

The scheduling of both workshops, and the length of the interval between them, is influenced by the scheduled events and responsibilities of the park's interpretive staff and the availability of stakeholders and planners. The interval between workshops may be as short as several weeks or as long as several months. If the interval is shorter than several weeks, there is usually not be enough time for the first workshop's content to be fully absorbed by all involved, nor enough time to perform the work that needs to occur between workshops. If the interval is longer than several months, too much of the first workshop's content is forgotten, requiring that an increased percentage of the second workshop be spent on reviewing the content of the first workshop, thereby lessening the amount of time and attention available to be focused on new work.

## **The sequence of events between workshops**

### **The planners initiate the archive file**

During this interval, the planners initiate the generation of an electronic archive file of all workshop proceedings. At this point, due to time constraints, the planners usually only input the information from the first workshop that will be used directly in the second workshop. This includes the set of draft significance statements, set of draft primary interpretive themes, visitor experience considerations, and management goals for the interpretive operation.

### **The core team refines significances and primary interpretive themes**

The planners then send a portion of the archive — usually the set of draft significance statements and set of draft primary interpretive themes — to the park's interpretation manager. The planners send this information to the park as soon as possible so that the park can use the maximum amount of time between workshops to refine this information: editing, checking facts for accuracy, improving the clarity of the concepts that need to be conveyed through the themes, etc. The core team takes the lead in doing this, with assistance from the planners as requested. Stakeholders (including those that may not have attended the first workshop) may also be involved at this stage of the process, at the park's discretion.

### **Preparations for the second workshop**

The core team sends the refined significances and primary interpretive themes back to the planners before the second workshop. This gives the planners an opportunity to

review them and add them back into the archive as the next version of these respective elements. The planners will then make handouts from the archive of the elements that will be used in the second workshop, including: the set of draft significance statements, set of draft primary interpretive themes, visitor experience considerations, and management goals for the interpretive operation.

During the interval period, both the park staff and planners will make logistics, travel, meeting room, and other miscellaneous arrangements and preparations for the second workshop. •

# The second workshop develops the desired future interpretive program

The second workshop is conducted by the same team of two interpretive planners. Like the first workshop, the location for the second workshop is usually in or near the park, and functions most effectively if participants are not interrupted by daily business. The second workshop includes the core team, composed of park interpretive staff, park manager, cooperating association staff, and concessioners or others who provide interpretive or educational services to park visitors. The optimal number of participants is 5-10 to assure diversity of perspectives and process manageability.

All workshop sessions are recorded on flipchart paper pads by the planners to enhance the visibility of the process's collaborative nature and to maintain a common focus on the work at hand. This also provides participants a real-time ground-truthing opportunity to ensure that what is being heard and recorded by the planners is what the participants are really intending to convey; participants are encouraged to voice corrections.

The meeting room contains tables and chairs, and a great deal of wall space. Room practicality is far more important to the success of the workshop than the quality of the room's ambiance or the views from its windows. The tables and chairs are ideally arranged in a large "U" shape, facing the wall that has the most space for hanging flipchart sheets. A flipchart easel with paper pad attached is centered in this space. The planners usually sit at a table adjoining one of the ends of the semicircle.

## **Welcome**

The workshop begins. In this setting, introductions are rather informal due to the familiarity of the core team members with each other, and now with the planners, and the relatively small size of the group.

## **The mission of interpretation is reiterated**

Interpretation is a critical function of the park. The role of interpretation is to facilitate an exploration of the significances, the meanings inherent in the resources of parks, to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of them. *(CIP Guide is distributed to those participants who don't already have one; the participants are then directed to the page designed as a handout describing the mission of interpretation.)*

## **Management goals for the interpretive function of the park are reviewed**

Next, elements of the GMP that address visitor experience (in the broadest sense) and interpretation's role in park operations is explored. The park's statement(s) of purpose (from the GMP or park Strategic Plan) are read aloud by the planners.

The park manager's response to the question asked in the first workshop, "What does Management expect Interpretation to accomplish for the park?", is discussed (*a handout made from the archive aids this discussion*).

This session re-establishes the broad framework within which the desired future interpretive program will operate.

## **Comprehensive interpretive planning and the structure of the CIP are reviewed**

The interpretive program provides interpretive services with the express goal of providing opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the ideas and meanings inherent in the resources of these places. Effective interpretation results from thoughtful, comprehensive planning — the methodical assessment of desired outcomes and how best to achieve them. Comprehensive interpretive planning results in a CIP, a blueprint for the interpretive program. The components of the CIP are reviewed to provide context for the workshop.

## **An overview of the second workshop is presented to participants**

This workshop will develop the draft desired future interpretive program. Each participant will play an important role in shaping the interpretive program that will be conducted here over the next 5-10 years.

To establish more specific workshop context, participants are directed to the *CIP Guide* illustration, "A detailed view of the comprehensive interpretive planning process." The planners highlight what's been accomplished in the process to date and then look forward to what will be accomplished in this second workshop. Participants are asked to reference the examples of a "Program overview" and "Individual service plans," located later in this publication.

The planners then present information about the workshop structure: They distribute the day's agenda, comment sheets for those who may wish to communicate with the planners in writing, and a sign-in sheet for recording those who are present. Meeting logistics (lunch and break schedule, restroom and telephone locations, etc.) are briefly discussed. A "parking lot" sheet is posted to record participant ideas or questions that are best addressed later in the workshop.

## **The set of significance statements is reviewed and modified**

Continuity between the first and second workshops continues with a review of the current set of draft significance statements (*a handout made from the archive*). They are reviewed and, if necessary, modified by the group to ensure a common

understanding of the significances of the place. At this point in the process, this session is usually very brief.

The interpretation manager will forward this information to the park manager, encouraging the management team to consider updating the significance statements in other park documents. Because the significance statements represent all park functions, not just interpretation, this set cannot be finalized by this group alone, but serves to define a common vision regarding the park's resource significances.

## **The primary interpretive themes are reviewed and finalized**

The group then reviews the draft set of primary interpretive themes as modified by the core team between workshops (*a handout made from the archive*). Discussion of this set often results in additional editorial comments and finalized wording.

The group also places these themes in an order that most clearly promotes their being understood by readers. This is not a prioritization exercise, as they all remain primary interpretive themes — central to the visitor's exploration of the meanings inherent in the resources of the park; it is simply an ordering exercise. Ordering choices often include ordering by chronology, larger concepts to smaller concepts, smaller concepts to larger concepts, etc. The group then assigns each theme a letter designation (theme A, theme B, etc.) as an abbreviation key to facilitate their use throughout the workshop, and later for operational uses.

## **Visitor experience considerations are synthesized for use in strategic interpretive planning**

The desired visitor experiences elicited in the first workshop, and those found in the park's General Management Plan, are reviewed (*a handout made from the archive and GMP*). The group synthesizes these statements into a more useful set of statements that serve as the core set of visitor experience considerations for the interpretive planning process. Visitor experience considerations are fewer in number, are more focused, and are more easily applied than their source materials to the development of the desired future interpretive program.

## **Which locations (for offering interpretive opportunities) will be most suitable to successfully facilitate an exploration of the inherent meanings of the place?**

Participants review brief lists of location types for offering interpretive opportunities (services) that may best facilitate an exploration of the significances of park resources. The group customizes these lists to their particular park situation. Many of these locations will be *places in the park* that offer exceptional access to significant tangible resources or facilities. *Off-site locations* often include places conducive to a positive remote experience with the resources of the park. The exercise of customizing these lists of potential locations prompts a continuing consideration of locations and their individual merits as important elements in developing the desired future interpretive program.

*Please see the following page for a workshop handout describing location types that are potentially suitable for any park.*

## **Which types of interpretive services will be most suitable to successfully facilitate an exploration of the inherent meanings of the place?**

Participants review lists of personal and non-personal interpretive services. *Personal interpretive services* are those services that are conducted, performed, or presented by one or more interpreters. *Non-personal interpretive services* are not personally presented, as in the case of exhibits, publications, films, etc. These services are often referred to as interpretive *media*.

The review of these lists is a starting place for the core planning team to consider which types of services are particularly well-suited to facilitating an exploration of the significances of park resources. This discussion also establishes a dialogue regarding the terms or labels of various types of services. This can sometimes vary, and a common understanding of terms among the group is desirable. The group customizes these lists to their particular park situation. The exercise of customizing these lists of potential interpretive services prompts a continuing consideration of interpretive service types and their individual merits as important elements in developing the desired future interpretive program.

*Following the workshop handout describing location types, please see the workshop handout describing interpretive service types that are potentially suitable for any park.*

## **Partnerships in accomplishing the interpretive mission**

Participants discuss and identify park partners that currently, or potentially, support and/or deliver interpretive services, and describe their desired future roles. Partners include cooperating associations, friends groups, concessioners, educational institutions, other agencies, state entities, etc. — even other divisions within the park. What assistance should be solicited, expected, and negotiated from each partner is discussed. Assistance may range from equipment to staffing to special events assistance, etc. An associated handout depicts how a strategic approach to interpretive partnerships may be graphically displayed. This approach aids in identifying gaps and highlighting opportunities for further partnering.

*Following the workshop handout describing interpretive service types, please see the workshop handout describing the development of a strategic view of the park's interpretive partnerships.*

# Identifying locations for interpretive opportunities

## **How are interpretive locations defined?**

*Interpretive locations* are those locations that have been identified as potentially being the most suitable for successfully facilitating an exploration of the meanings inherent in the place. Potential locations for interpretive opportunities are generally places in the park that offer exceptional access to significant tangible resources or facilities. Off-site locations often include places conducive to a positive remote experience with the resources of the park.

## **How are interpretive locations used?**

The review of the generic location types below, and the exercise of customizing these potential location lists to this particular park, prompts a continuing consideration of locations and their individual merits as important elements in developing the desired future interpretive program.

## **How are interpretive locations expressed?**

The generic lists provide a useful format for briefly stating types of locations in the park and off site where effective interpretation of this park's significant resources may be more likely to occur. Interpretive locations are essential elements on the program overview table of the park's desired future interpretive program.

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## **Examples of potential locations in the park.**

Various places in and around the visitor center.

Ranger stations, contact stations, entry stations.

Park education facilities.

Overlooks or other places for viewing distant vistas or other significant resources.

Sites containing significant resources.

Boat ramps.

Campgrounds and amphitheaters.

Trails and trailheads.

Concessioner facilities.

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## **Examples of potential locations off site.**

Various places used to access the Internet (home, school, business).

Various places used to view films (home, library, school).

Schools, universities (formal and non-formal education).

Community sites requesting interpretive media or presentations.

Museums, zoos, nature centers, etc.

Locations of partners' resources or facilities, including concessioners.

# Identifying suitable types of interpretive services

## How are interpretive services defined?

*Personal interpretive services* are those services that are conducted, performed, or presented by one or more interpreters. *Non-personal interpretive services* are not personally presented, as in the case of exhibits, publications, films, etc. These services are often referred to as interpretive *media*. Interpretive services that are most suitable for inclusion in the interpretive program are those services that have been identified as potentially being the most successful in facilitating an exploration of the meanings inherent in the place.

## How are interpretive services used?

The review of the generic service types below, and the exercise of customizing these potential services lists to this particular park, prompts a continuing consideration of interpretive services and their individual merits as important elements in developing the desired future interpretive program.

## How are interpretive services expressed?

The generic lists below provide a useful format for briefly stating which types of interpretive services may be most effective for interpreting the resources of this park, and which services may be inappropriate or less effective for this situation. Interpretive services are essential elements on the program overview table of the park's desired future interpretive program.

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## Examples of interpretive services delivered in person.

### Fixed-station interpretation

### Roving interpretation

### Guided walks

### Scheduled talks

### Evening activities

Campfire programs, sky observation programs, etc.

### Demonstrations

### Interpretation in period dress

Living history interpretation, first-person

Living history interpretation, third-person

Theatrical performances

### Special activities & presentations

After-hours open house

Workshops with the public

Public lecture series and seminars

Special events (i.e. March for Parks)

Storytelling

Artists in Residence Program

## Education

Visits to groups and classrooms

Parks-as-Classrooms programs

Day trips to the park

Teacher workshops

Multi-day, in-park programs

Elder hostel

Student mentoring

## Outreach

Programs for groups (service clubs, senior centers, etc.)

Recruiting

## Children's interpretation

Junior Ranger program

Children's walks and talks

Puppet shows

## Information desk and telephone enquiries

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## Examples of interpretive services delivered non-personally.

**Publications** (Site bulletins, park map & guide, newspapers, junior ranger publications, press releases, newsletters, in-flight magazines, educational books, etc.)

### Interactive computer stations

### Wayside exhibits

### Museum exhibits

### Self-guided trail markers and publications

### Website

### CD-ROM

### Curricula and teacher's guides

### Radio, TIS (Travelers Information System)

### Auto tour audio systems

### Video tapes and discs

### Student information packs

### Traveling trunks

### View tubes; telescopes

### Audio wand walking tours

### Films, IMAX, slides

### Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

### Donation boxes

### Information signing

### Bulletin boards

### Trailhead registers

### Kiosks

### Cooperating association sales items

### Interpretive messages attached to sales items

### Maps and other wayfinding elements

### Responses to enquiries via mail, e-mail

# Identifying interpretive partnerships

## How are interpretive partnerships defined?

Interpretive partnerships support and/or deliver interpretive services in conjunction with the park. Partners include cooperating associations, friends groups, concessioners, educational institutions, other agencies, state entities, etc. — even other divisions within the park. Assistance from partners may range from equipment to staffing to special events assistance.

## How are interpretive partnerships used?

Review of the generic partners list below, and customizing these lists to this particular park, prompts a continuing consideration of what types of partners are needed and what assistance they may provide as important elements in developing the desired future interpretive program.

## How are interpretive partners described?

The generic lists below provide a useful format for briefly stating which types of partners, and assistance, may be most effective for interpreting the resources of this park. The table below illustrates how a strategic approach to interpretive partnerships may be graphically displayed. This aids in identifying gaps and highlighting opportunities for further partnering.

### Examples of interpretive partners.

Archeological/historical societies  
 Chambers of commerce  
 City parks and recreation departments  
 Community colleges

Conservation organizations  
 County and local libraries  
 County sheriff's offices  
 Departments of public safety  
 Elder hostel  
 Elected officials  
 Other divisions within the park  
 State departments of transportation  
 State game, fish, wildlife divisions  
 State historic preservation offices  
 State natural history associations  
 State offices of tourism  
 State parks  
 Universities, schools, and district education offices

### Examples of assistance interpretive partnerships might provide.

Advocacy  
 Distribution of information  
 Donating funds or supplies  
 External perspectives, viewpoints, advice  
 Fundraising  
 Labor for service projects  
 Providing experiences not appropriate in the park  
 Providing facilities and equipment  
 Research  
 Sharing resources  
 Special events assistance  
 Special projects  
 Specialized materials and equipment  
 Staff (front-line or support personnel)  
 Training

### Strategic display of interpretive partnerships

Partner	Types of assistance provided by park partners						
	<i>Advocacy</i>	<i>Distribution of information</i>	<i>Donating funds or supplies</i>	<i>External perspectives</i>	<i>Fundraising</i>	<i>Labor for service projects</i>	<i>Provide alternative experiences, etc.</i>
A			•		•		
B	•					•	•
C, etc.	•			•	•	•	

## Introducing the desired future interpretive program and the program overview

The desired future interpretive program *is* the long-range vision — the master blueprint — of the CIP. Located in the LRIP section, it is displayed as a *program overview* table, graphically depicting how diverse audiences will be provided with a variety of interpretive opportunities to facilitate their exploration of the meanings inherent in the place, through the park’s set of primary interpretive themes and the services which make them accessible to visitors. The program overview outlines the desired future interpretive program that the park and its partners *intend to conduct*.

The program overview table enables the entire program to be viewed at a glance. This format enhances the visibility of programmatic gaps and redundancies. It helps all interpreters better understand the entire interpretive operation and how their individual efforts contribute to the whole. (It is often used in seasonal training for this reason.) The program overview usually includes some interpretive services that are currently conducted, and some interpretive services that will be initiated and conducted at a later date; all interpretive services are labeled to indicate what year the park intends to initiate them.

The operational details that underpin the interpretive services depicted on the program overview are described in a set of *individual service plans* (ISPs). These are located in the ID section of the CIP, and will be discussed in more detail later in this publication.

## Developing the desired future interpretive program

As development of the desired future interpretive program begins, the planners summarize the work accomplished to date that has brought the group to this stage of the process:

- **Park management** has provided guidance on what is expected of the desired future interpretive program, and the environment within which it will operate.
- A strong foundation has been built with **stakeholders** as they explored the significances inherent in the resources of the park, and produced an improved **set of significance statements**.
- A well-crafted **set of primary interpretive themes** has been developed to provide visitors with interpretive opportunities that facilitate an exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources.
- Participants are reminded that *visitors* includes “all those who experience the park.” Consideration of what visitors are seeking from their park experience led to the development of **visitor experience considerations**, which will help guide the selection of interpretive services and locations.
- A useful set of **audiences for use in strategic interpretive planning** has been identified, which will help guide the selection of interpretive services and locations.
- An initial determination has been made regarding which **locations** for offering interpretive opportunities may be most suitable to successfully facilitate an exploration of the inherent meanings of the place.
- An initial determination has been made regarding which types of **interpretive**

**services** may be most suitable to successfully facilitating an exploration of the inherent meanings of the place.

- A useful discussion of current and potential **interpretive partnerships** has enhanced understanding of what types of support and/or interpretive services partners may provide in conjunction with the park, which will help guide the selection of interpretive services and locations.

### **Operational considerations affecting the desired future interpretive program**

In addition to the above foundational information, a number of issues frequently need to be resolved in a holistic way and incorporated into the park's strategic approach to interpretation. Many of the challenges to be resolved are often intimately interrelated: Most options for addressing each one have fundamental ramifications regarding the others. Situations vary widely; resolution of these issues can occur at any stage of the process from here forward, but issues that will significantly affect the development of the desired future interpretive program are best resolved before that program is drafted. Summarizing the most prominent of these issues in the LRIP can be useful in documenting their interconnection and evolution, prompting their resolution.

## **Developing the program overview**

As mentioned previously, the program overview is formatted as a table. The table includes: primary interpretive themes, audiences for whom the interpretive opportunities will be tailored, and interpretive services paired with the locations where they will be made available to visitors.

*Please see the following page for an example program overview, used as a workshop handout in the first workshop.*

### **Program overview components**

Primary themes are listed along the vertical axis (left side of the table) as *row headings*. Below the themes are two additional rows. "Orientation and Safety Information" represents non-thematic, critical information that needs to be made available to visitors. Like themes, it is important to develop appropriate communication strategies to effectively communicate orientation and safety information to diverse audiences. "National Park System and National Park Service Mission" presents what interpreters need to communicate to citizens about their National Park System. In addition, it can be used to address agency-specific information that needs to be presented to visitors regarding the park's resource management practices (such as prescribed burning) and the relationship of these practices to the National Park Service's mission.

Interpretive audience categories are placed along the horizontal axis (top header area of the table) as *column headings*.

Interpretive services and their locations are placed in the interior cells of the table. Interpretive opportunities can be facilitated by a wide range of interpretive services (personal and non-personal) at a wide range of locations. The combination of one interpretive service and one or more locations connects a primary interpretive theme to an interpretive audience, describing a communications link between an audience and the meanings represented in a primary interpretive theme.

## Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

### Desired Future Interpretive Program, Program Overview *(draft, partial)*

<b>PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES</b>	<b>AUDIENCES</b>			
	<b>1: General Audience.</b>	<b>2: Organized educational groups.</b> <i>(Grades K-3, 4-6, 7-12, college).</i>	<b>3: Others who interpret the park.</b> <i>(Bus tour operators, drivers, directors; cruise ship operators; lodging providers; etc.)</i>	<b>4: Non-English speaking audiences.</b> <i>(Japanese, Chinese, Korean, German, Spanish, French, ethnic Hawaiian.)</i>
<p><b>A: The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.</b></p>	<p>e6 <b>Interpretive talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Jagggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast.</p> <p>e6 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes.</p> <p>e6 <b>Wayside exhibits</b> <sup>FY2004</sup> at Parkwide (to be specified in the Wayside Exhibit Plan).</p> <p>e5 <b>Site bulletin (Dynamic Volcanism)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jagggar, via mail.</p> <p>e5 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jagggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.</p> <p>e5 <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jagggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site.</p> <p>e5 <b>Illustrated talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, KMC.</p> <p>e5 <b>Films/videos</b> <sup>FY2005</sup> at KVC, Jagggar, VH, CA sales.</p> <p>e4 <b>Website</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jagggar.</p> <p>e4 <b>Exhibits</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, Jagggar, ECS, end of Hwy 130.</p> <p>e2 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets.</p> <p>e2 <b>Nature trail brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Pu'u Hulu Hulu, end of Chain of Craters Road, Mauna 'Iki, Chain of Craters Road extension, Kilauea 'Iki, Sandalwood Trail, Halema'uma'u Trail.</p> <p>e0 <b>Junior Ranger program</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC....</p>	<p>e7 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes.</p> <p>e6 <b>Curriculum (includes Teachers' Guide)</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Ed Ctr, AEC, CA sales.</p> <p>e5 <b>Interpretive talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Jagggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast.</p> <p>e4 <b>Travel trunks</b> <sup>FY2004</sup> at Schools.</p> <p>e4 <b>Films/videos</b> <sup>FY2005</sup> at KVC, Jagggar, VH, CA sales.</p> <p>e4 <b>Exhibits</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Ed Ctr, AEC.</p> <p>e3 <b>Website</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jagggar.</p> <p>e3 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets.</p> <p>e3 <b>Cultural presentation for Hawaiians</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide.</p> <p>e2 <b>Interpretive demonstrations</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Jagggar, VH, KVC, eruption sites.</p> <p>e2 <b>Illustrated Talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, KMC</p> <p>e1 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jagggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.</p> <p>e1 <b>Field seminars</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at AEC, parkwide.</p> <p>e1 <b>CD-ROM</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, CA sales.</p> <p>e0 <b>Portable exhibit</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Schools.</p> <p>e0 <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jagggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site....</p>	<p>e7 <b>Training program leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined).</p> <p>e4 <b>Site bulletin (Good Behavior Guiding)</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Entry, via mail, by hand via Concessions Specialist.</p> <p>e3 <b>Park information updates</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, bulletin boards in tour offices, VH staff lunchroom, Vernon's in Kalapana, via FAX, via email.</p> <p>e2 <b>Publication (Guide's Guide to HAVO)</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Entry, via mail, by hand via Concessions Specialist.</p> <p>e2 <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jagggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site.</p> <p>e2 <b>Field seminar for tour leaders</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at AEC</p> <p>e1 <b>Orientation tour (modeled on Ed Bonsey's)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide.</p> <p>e0 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets.</p> <p>e0 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jagggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.</p> <p>e0 <b>List of suggested reading and media resources</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, via mail, by hand via Concessions Specialist.</p>	<p>e5 <b>Translations of videos</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, CA sales.</p> <p>e4 <b>Translation of site bulletin (Dynamic Volcanism)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jagggar, via mail.</p> <p>e4 <b>Translation of park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jagggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.</p> <p>e3 <b>Website with pages in other languages</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jagggar.</p> <p>e1 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets.</p> <p>e1 <b>Informal contacts via other languages (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jagggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site.</p> <p>e0 <b>Interpretive talk or hike in Hawaiian</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide.</p>
<p><b>B: The journeys of the Hawaiian peoples, who continue to inhabit ...</b></p>	<p>e7 <b>Cultural Festival</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KMC, coastal areas, off site....</p>	<p>e6 <b>Interpretive talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Jagggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast....</p>	<p>e7 <b>Training program including cultural sensitivity leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined)....</p>	<p>e7 <b>Translation of site bulletin (Hawaiian Culture)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jagggar, via mail....</p>

<b>C: In Hawai'i, active volcanism created an isolated home for a ...</b>	e8 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide (including research/RM burn sites)....	e7 <b>Service projects</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide....	e6 <b>Training program including biodiversity and NPS film leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined)....	e7 <b>Translation of site bulletin (Diminishing Biota)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail.
<b>D: Kilauea, the home of Pele, is sacred to many Native Hawaiians: it ...</b>	e7 <b>Interpretive talks</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Jaggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast....	e7 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes....	e7 <b>Training program including service work leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined)...	e8 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets.
<b>E: Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park provides an opportunity for ...</b>	e7 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes....	e7 <b>Guided hikes</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes....	e7 <b>Training program leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined)...	e7 <b>Translation of site bulletin (Spectacular Wilderness)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail....
<b>Orientation and Safety Information</b>	e8 <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site. e7 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners. e6 <b>Site bulletin (Safety)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail. e6 <b>Bulletin boards</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, ECS, picnic areas, campgrounds.... <i>Note: All personal services include incidental orientation and safety information.</i>	--- <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site. --- <b>Website</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar. --- <b>Exhibits</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC, Jaggar, ECS, end of Hwy 130. --- <b>Site bulletin (Safety and the NPS), for education groups</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, Ed Ctr, AEC, Keokealani, Nialulani, via mail.	e7 <b>Training program leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined).. e7 <b>Site bulletin (Safety)</b> <sup>FY2004</sup> at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail. e4 <b>Publication (Guide's Guide to HAVO)</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Entry, via mail, by hand via Concessions Specialist. e3 <b>Orientation tour (modeled on Ed Bonsey's)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide. e3 <b>Field seminar for tour leaders</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at AEC....	--- <b>Informal contacts via other languages (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site. --- <b>Website with pages in other languages</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar. --- <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets. --- <b>Translation of park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners....
<b>National Park System and NPS Mission</b>	e8 <b>Films/videos</b> <sup>FY2005</sup> at KVC, Jaggar, VH, CA sales. e7 <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets. e7 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners. e5 <b>Media tours &amp; press relations</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Parkwide, off site.... <i>Note: All personal services include incidental System and Service information.</i>	--- <b>Informal contacts (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site. --- <b>Website</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar. --- <b>Exhibits</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Ed Ctr. --- <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets. --- <b>Portable exhibit</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Schools....	e7 <b>Training program leading to certification</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at (Undetermined).. e7 <b>Publication (Guide's Guide to HAVO)</b> <sup>FY2003</sup> at Entry, via mail, by hand via Concessions Specialist. e7 <b>Films/videos</b> <sup>FY2005</sup> at Ed Ctr, loan by mail or by hand for use in tour offices. e2 <b>Park brochure</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners....	--- <b>Informal contacts via other languages (includes roving)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site. --- <b>Website with pages in other languages</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar. --- <b>CA sales items (publications)</b> <sup>FY2002</sup> at CA sales outlets....

The interior cells of this draft program overview table contain five kinds of information:

**“e#” Ranking indicators** — The “e-numbers” represent the relative ranking of each service-location(s) pair, based on the anticipated effectiveness of this service. • Service-location(s) pairs prefaced by three dashes “---” were added to the list after the ranking of the theme-audience combination was completed, or the list was so short that the park decided not to rank the services.

**Bold text** — indicates a type of interpretive service.

<sup>FY2002</sup> — The superscript number indicates the fiscal year that the interpretive service will be made available to the public.

**“at Place”** — Text following “at” describes the location(s) where the service is, or will be, offered.

**Abbreviations** — CA: Cooperating Association; KVC: Kilauea Visitor Center; ECS: Eruption Contact Station; AEC: ‘Ainahou Education Center; KMC: Kilauea Military Camp; VH: Volcano House; Ed Ctr: Park Education Center (formerly the park manager’s residence).

Example service-location(s) pairs	
Interpretive service:	Location(s):
Interpretive talks	at Amphitheater, off site.
Website (teacher's resource page)	at Internet.
Wayside exhibit (elk viewing)	at Sunflower Meadow parking area.

### Theme-audience combinations

Primary themes convey information that is *critical* to the facilitation of visitor understanding and exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources. Therefore, each primary interpretive theme *must* be made accessible to each audience by at least one service-location(s) pair. The number of service-location(s) pairs for each theme-audience combination differs. For example, the draft program overview from Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park identifies more than 14 service-location(s) pairs for the combination of *Theme A - Audience 1*, but only 7 pairs for the combination *Theme A - Audience 4*. This does not mean that Audience 1 is less important than Audience 4. It *does* mean that for various reasons, the core team has decided (at least at this draft stage) that more than 14 service-location(s) pairs are necessary to effectively provide Audience 1 access to Theme A, and 7 pairs are necessary to effectively provide Audience 4 access to Theme A. The outcome-driven nature of this approach to planning determines what interpretive services are needed to best accomplish the stated outcomes, and ranks them via a justifiable decision-making process (described below).

Example theme-audience combination	
	General Audience
Theme A	<p>Interpretive talks at amphitheater, off site.</p> <p>Website (teacher's resource page) at Internet.</p> <p>Wayside exhibit (elk viewing) at Sunflower Meadow parking area.</p>

### Brainstorming service-location(s) pairs for each theme-audience combination

After the planners convey these structural ideas to the workshop participants, the next step is to address each theme-audience combination individually. This begins with the brainstorming of service-location(s) pairs for the combination Theme A – Audience 1. The planners solicit ideas from the participants without analysis, judgment, or critical review. The participants will perform such a review later in the process — when they rank the brainstormed ideas. The brainstorming of service-location(s) pairs, and their subsequent ranking by the group, is the process used to methodically create the contents of the program overview table's interior cells.

Throughout this exercise, the planners continually prompt the participants with a single question:

## **What types of interpretive services, at what locations, will most effectively facilitate the understanding and exploration of Theme \_\_ by Audience \_\_?**

This question focuses the participants on the effectiveness of each potential chain of theme-audience-service-location(s). The distinct attributes of each primary interpretive theme, interpretive service, location, and audience must be considered — and *are* considered by virtue of this question — as participants voice these communication strategies. Attributes, to name only a few of each, include: *Theme* complexity, associated resources, interrelationships with other themes, information sequencing, etc.; *interpretive service* availability, visitor access, required proximity to a specific resource, maintenance, cost, etc.; *location* of specific resources, resource integrity, viewsheds, facilities, access, visitor flow, potential impacts, etc.; *audience* knowledge, values, languages, experiences, new or returning visitors, recreation- or curriculum-driven visitation, etc.

### **Informal criteria used by participants to brainstorm service-location(s) pairs**

The core team is composed mostly of interpreters, and often represents anywhere from decades to hundreds of years of combined experience in the profession of interpretation. As participants brainstorm service-location(s) pairs, they draw heavily on this extensive experience. They use it to internally clarify, describe, and characterize the multiple meanings in the primary interpretive theme, the types of interpretive services and how effectively they work under varying conditions, the park's resources as they relate to this theme, and the audience.

Each participant weighs all of this information through an internal dialogue, using an internal set of criteria, to make value-based decisions. These criteria often include considerations like:

- To what degree can this theme be made accessible to all ages, and how might that affect the weighing of various service-location(s) pairs?
- Does this service-location(s) pair have good potential for increasing visitor understanding and appreciation?
- How well does this pair lend itself to presenting the thematic material from multiple points of view?
- Does this pair offer good opportunities for universal accessibility?
- How well does this pair offer opportunities for the theme to be presented within a hierarchy of sophistication, thereby serving a wider range of ages, learning styles, and preferences of presentation within this audience?
- How well does this pair provide ways for the story to relate to audiences from a range of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds? How universal are the “universal” elements of the theme?
- How well does this pair capitalize on locations rich in tangible resources? How will those resources be impacted?
- How many visitors does this pair reach, and how does this compare to other service-location(s) pairs?
- Does this pair effectively communicate with several audiences or only a single audience?
- How well does this service-location(s) pair fit into a school curriculum?
- How complex or simple are the logistics for a group to access this pair?
- How much initial cost, then ongoing maintenance costs, does this service-

location(s) pair require, including staffing considerations?

- How well does this pair attract visitors to under-utilized locations, enabling overused locations to recover from use fatigue?
- Does this service-location(s) pair affect future staffing decisions? Are specialized skills required to maintain this pair?
- Who can most successfully provide this type of service (NPS or partner such as the cooperating association, concessioner, others), and how will that impact operations?

As the brainstorming begins and participants start to voice service-location(s) pairs that they believe will be highly successful, they begin to construct internal shortcuts as their internal criteria evolve. The case-by-case consideration of criteria like those above — both of the ideas they themselves voice, and those ideas voiced by others in the group — establishes precedents that streamline future decision-making for each individual, and ultimately, for the group as a whole as they share these thoughts with each other.

**Typical brainstormed list of service-location(s) pairs  
for a particular theme-audience combination**

**Park brochure** at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.

**Wayside exhibits** at Parkwide (to be specified in the Wayside Exhibit Plan).

**Interpretive demonstrations** at Jaggar, VH, KVC, eruption sites.

**CD-ROM** at KVC, CA sales.

**Illustrated talks** at KVC, KMC.

**Traveler information system** at Eruption site.

**Guided hikes** at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes.

**Informal contacts (includes roving)** at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site.

**CA sales items (publications)** at CA sales outlets.

**Films/videos** at KVC, Jaggar, VH, CA sales.

**Junior Ranger program** at KVC.

**Exhibits** at KVC, Jaggar, ECS, end of Hwy 130.

**Nature trail brochure** at Pu'u Hulu Hulu, end of Chain of Craters Road, Mauna 'Iki, Chain of Craters Road extension, Kilauea 'Iki, Sandalwood Trail, Halema'uma'u Trail.

**Website** at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar.

**Guest speakers** at KVC, KMC.

**Site bulletin (Dynamic Volcanism)** at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail.

**Interpretive talks** at Jaggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast.

**Using helper lists to check the brainstormed set  
of service-location(s) pairs**

After a brainstormed list has been generated of the service-location(s) pairs the participants believe will most successfully enable this audience to understand and explore this primary interpretive theme, *helper lists* are referenced. Helper lists are references that help the process stay on track. They help the planners and participants by prompting ongoing consideration of the many factors involved in developing an effective interpretive program; they serve to ensure that nothing important has been accidentally overlooked. Some helper lists are displayed on flipchart sheets hung on

the wall (usually information generated during this second workshop), others are workshop handouts. Helper lists include:

- The mission of interpretation
- Management goals for the interpretive function of the park
- Visitor experience considerations
- Locations for offering interpretive opportunities
- Types of personal and non-personal interpretive services
- Partnerships in accomplishing the interpretive mission
- Operational considerations affecting the desired future interpretive program

Checking the brainstormed list of service-location(s) pairs (for the combination Theme A – Audience 1) against these helper lists can result in additional pairs being brainstormed, or other modifications or deletions being made to the brainstormed list. This is an important step in introducing and applying the helper lists, and completes the brainstorming phase in preparation for the next step — ranking.

### **Ranking the brainstormed set of service-location(s) pairs to prioritize them in the order of anticipated effectiveness**

Now that the brainstorming for this particular theme-audience combination has been completed in the workshop, a consensus ranking process is initiated. The basis for the ranking is to select those service-location(s) pairs that are most likely to be successful for this theme-audience combination. The question is asked again:

**What types of interpretive services, at what locations, will most effectively facilitate the understanding and exploration of Theme \_\_ by Audience \_\_?**

Participants will once again use their internal criteria, and the dialogue that has occurred as the brainstormed list was generated, to respond to this question. Participants rank the brainstormed list using a nominal group process. The planners distribute a limited number of self-adhesive ranking dots to each participant, usually about a third as many dots as service-location(s) pairs. Each participant places one dot on each pair they believe best responds to the above question, until their allotted dots are exhausted.

After all of the participants have placed their dots on the brainstormed flipchart list, the dots received by each service-location(s) pair are counted, producing a consensus ranking of the list. This prioritization provides a sense of which pairs are more likely to be effective, which moderately effective, and which least effective for this theme-audience combination.

Following the ranking of the first theme-audience combination (Theme A – Audience 1), participants repeat the brainstorming and ranking steps for each of the other theme-audience combinations, then for the two theme-like responsibilities of interpretation (communicating orientation and safety information; communicating National Park System and National Park Service mission information). During this process, service-location(s) pairs are often brainstormed that have applicability to a theme-audience combination that has already been addressed. These pairs are then copied back to each theme-audience combination the participants deem appropriate. These other combinations are noted as pairs that were added *subsequent* to the ranking of that combination's pairs — and therefore have no dot score — but should still be considered when the interpretive manager and core planning team refines this list later in the process.

**Typical list of service-location(s) pairs for a particular theme-audience combination, following the ranking process**

- e6 **Wayside exhibits** at Parkwide (to be specified in the Wayside Exhibit Plan).
  - e6 **Interpretive talks** at Jaggar, KVC, VH, eruption sites, satellite broadcast.
  - e6 **Guided hikes** at Summit area, Chain of Craters Road, lava tubes.
  - e5 **Site bulletin (Dynamic Volcanism)** at KVC, ECS, Jaggar, via mail.
  - e5 **Park brochure** at Entry, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Ed Ctr, for sale by partners.
  - e5 **Informal contacts (includes roving)** at KVC desk, Jaggar, eruption sites, trails, overlooks, special events off-site.
  - e5 **Illustrated talks** at KVC, KMC.
  - e5 **Films/videos** at KVC, Jaggar, VH, CA sales.
  - e4 **Website** at Internet, outside KVC, Jaggar.
  - e4 **Exhibits** at KVC, Jaggar, ECS, end of Hwy 130.
  - e2 **CA sales items (publications)** at CA sales outlets.
  - e2 **Nature trail brochure** at Pu'u Hulu Hulu, end of Chain of Craters Road, Mauna 'Iki, Chain of Craters Road extension, Kilauea 'Iki, Sandalwood Trail, Halema'uma'u Trail.
  - e1 **Interpretive demonstrations** at Jaggar, VH, KVC, eruption sites.
  - e0 **CD-ROM** at KVC, CA sales.
  - e0 **Highway information system** at Eruption site.
  - e0 **Guest speakers** at KVC, KMC.
  - e0 **Junior Ranger program** at KVC.
- 
- **Visitor guide (park newspaper)** at KVC.
  - **Field seminars** at AEC, parkwide.
  - **Media tours & press relations** at Parkwide, off site.
  - **Bulletin boards** at KVC, ECS, picnic areas, campgrounds.

## Remaining work to be performed in the second workshop

At this point (usually either the end of the second day or the morning of the third day), the remaining work of the second workshop is all instructional. Each of the following subjects is addressed to provide guidance as the process moves forward.

## Guidelines for refinement of the draft desired future interpretive program

The program overview is not yet complete, or finalized. Composed of theme-audience combinations that include ranked sets of service-location(s) pairs, the desired future interpretive program now has to be looked at on a holistic level. Criteria like those cited above — as well as budget figures, staffing realities, etc. — are useful in critiquing the entire program once the initial draft program overview is completed. Such a critique is a necessary next step, and can highlight gaps or overextended attention to a particular audience or theme. The desired outcome is a well-balanced, value-based interpretive program that accomplishes the mission of interpretation at the park, and that can actually be accomplished with resources that are, or will be, available.

This refinement work is usually accomplished by the park's interpretation manager, with ongoing input from the core team. It begins when the planners add the second workshop's material to the archive file, construct the first complete draft of

the LRIP, and send these back to the park.

**Indicating service initiation dates on the program overview**

As part of the refinement process described above, the draft program overview should be reviewed from the perspective of *when* the park intends to bring each of the service-location(s) pairs on line. When will each be initiated? The anticipated year each service will initially be made available to visitors should be indicated on the program overview. For example, the draft program overview from Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park identifies initiation years of each service with a superscript (for example, <sup>FY2002</sup>). The planners provide a placeholder for the actual dates in whatever style is requested by the park.

Typical long-range schedule of actions in an LRIP		
<b>FY2002</b>	<b>New film</b>	<b>Write the script</b> (conduct relevant research; write first draft; consult with affiliated cultural groups and other stakeholders; revise draft using stakeholder comments).
<b>FY2003</b>	<b>New film</b>	<b>Film on site</b> (shoot <i>north ridge</i> in April; shoot <i>Craggy Meadow elk herd</i> in October).
	<b>Wayside exhibit (elk viewing) at Sunflower Meadow parking area</b>	<b>Update the panel’s thematic content</b> (research evolution of elk management practices; rewrite text; select appropriate artwork).
<b>FY2004</b>	<b>New film</b>	<b>Finalize and produce</b> (finalize script, edit photography, add sound track, perform other post production, procure copies).
	<b>Wayside exhibit (elk viewing) at Sunflower Meadow parking area</b>	<b>Design, fabricate, and install.</b>
<b>FY2005</b>	<b>New film</b>	<b>Begin public presentations in October.</b>

**Long-range schedule of actions**

As the initiation dates of services are considered, it is especially important to address the service-location(s) pairs which do not yet exist — interpretive talks that are not currently being presented, lesson plans which haven’t yet been written, no existing waysides in that location, existing media does not address primary themes, etc. — because *future* interpretive services usually require more work to initiate than any adjustments required by services currently available. For example, if the core team determines that a film should be developed and made available to the public four years from now, major actions written into this long-term schedule may include scripting next year, shooting the following year, and finalizing the film’s development in the third year.

The long-range schedule of actions, located in the LRIP, describes major actions like these — actions needed to fully and successfully implement the desired future

interpretive program. In addition to actions generated during refining of the desired future interpretive program, action items that were generated in the first workshop are also added to the long-range schedule. This may include any actions regarding stakeholder comments and suggestions, issues and influences, or issues related to research, libraries, interpretive images and objects, the museum collection and archives, etc.

## Individual service plans

As the interpretation manager and core team refine the desired future interpretive program, the concurrent development of individual service plans can begin.

*Individual service plans* (ISPs) are the operational backbone of the interpretive program, providing logistical and other details that the interpreters performing the work must know to successfully do their jobs. Each chain of theme-service-location(s)-audience on the program overview is represented on an ISP, described in detail.

Individual service plans should contain only the type and depth of information deemed useful by the manager. The function of ISPs is to record the information that will help interpretive program managers and staff make informed operational decisions, articulate the reasons for those decisions, understand the nature of each service, and streamline annual reporting (such as for GPRA and SIR). This detailed information is also useful for assessing the many elements of the interpretive program as they are developed and evaluated over time.

In some cases, an ISP might represent a single service. In other cases, an ISP might represent a group of services. A single ISP might document a wide range of complex information, presented by a variety of individuals, all communicating the same primary theme to the same audience. If the service is an interpretive talk, many different interpreters might present these talks over a given year. The content of their talks ties into the same primary interpretive theme, but each talk is distinct. The titles of each talk might be recorded to provide a shorthand reference to the thematic content being presented to the visitor. Some parks request talk outlines from individual interpreters, which may then be referenced in the associated ISPs. A talk notebook containing all such outlines may be referenced in the Interpretive Database. Such a resource can be very valuable in training. Or an ISP might be much simpler and more narrowly focused than this. In the end, ISPs simply make the machinery of the interpretive program work, and work together.

Although individual service plans provide an opportunity to detail all aspects of the parkwide interpretive program — including those that don't yet exist but are slated for future development — care should be exercised in the expenditure of staff time and effort. For example, generating a detailed ISP for a particular exhibit for which there is not yet any funding may not be the best use of staff time. However, at least the first year's ISPs need to be generated for the CIP so that the first Annual Implementation Plan is accurate and useful. Any existing interpretive services that were not mentioned during the development of the program overview — either through inadvertent omission or simply because they were not valued as being one of the best ways to facilitate the exploration of a particular primary interpretive theme by a specific audience — should be identified and appropriate consideration given to rehabilitation, discontinuance, or removal of the interpretive service.

*Please see the following three pages for handouts representing example ISPs associated with the draft program overview from Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. The authors developed these examples using varying levels of complexity and formatting styles to indicate the wide breadth of possible approaches to the development of ISPs.*

## **ISPs and ongoing evaluation**

The park's interpretive program is dynamic, not static: Changes regarding audiences, funding, resources, technology, etc. continually occur. To maintain the relevance and usefulness of the ISPs, they should be re-evaluated as significant new information becomes available. Ongoing evaluation should occur as a routine practice. Specific information should be gathered about each service-location(s) pair, as time and funding allow, so that course corrections can be based on reliable information.

## **Service-group plans**

It can be useful to group multiple ISPs that describe the same type of interpretive service. Individual service plans for wayside exhibits are an excellent example of what is to be gained by thinking of them as a service group. Waysides are usually designed several at a time (by site within the park, or the entire park at once) and funding is procured for the *group* of exhibits, in response to a funding proposal that groups them as a single project. The park's ISPs for wayside exhibits identify the primary interpretive themes made accessible by the waysides, may identify the subthemes for each panel or subgroup of waysides, which audiences they are intended to serve, and their locations.

Taken together, the ISPs for the park's wayside exhibits form the nucleus of a *service-group plan* for waysides. With the addition of appropriate information and formatting, these ISPs are further developed into a *wayside exhibit proposal*. The wayside exhibit proposal forms the nucleus of a complete *wayside exhibit plan*, the planning document needed for wayside production. Service-group plans are often referenced in the ID section of the CIP.

## **The role of cooperating association operations in the park's interpretive program**

At this point in the second workshop, participants discuss a specific interpretive partner, the park's cooperating association, and its contributions to the interpretive program. Discussion centers around how the cooperating association, in conjunction with park staff, decides what products and services to sell to the public in support of the interpretive program, subject to approval by the park superintendent. These decisions should be made on the same basis as the development of the desired future interpretive program: with primary interpretive themes and audiences determining strategies for communication through sales items. A useful tool for making these decisions, the Scope of Sales Statement is similar to the program overview and ISPs described above. A detailed description

**Example individual service plan (ISP) for a wayside exhibit**

*Key information from the program overview:*

<p>Primary Interpretive Theme A:  <b>The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>General Audience</b></p> <p><b>Wayside exhibit.</b> <i>(This service will be further developed when the park conducts the planning necessary for a parkwide Wayside Exhibit Plan. This ISP, therefore, remains conceptual.)</i></p> <p><b>Halema'uma'u Trail.</b> <i>(Location is approximately one-eighth mile from the east trailhead.)</i></p>
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**Operational Details**

Date this service will become available for visitor use: **FY2004**

**Management's Interpretive Intent:**

To be determined.

**Critical Resource and Visitor Safety Issue(s):**

Visitors should be cautioned to remain on the trail for their safety, and the safety of the fragile biota adjacent to the trail.

**Subject:**

Crater origination process.

**Orientation:**

Northeast.

**View:**

Overlooking the crater.

**Purpose:**

To explain the geologic processes that make craters, and the continual evolution of a crater once it's made.

**Comments:**

The trail will have to be enlarged to allow for adequate traffic flow while the wayside exhibit is being used by other visitors.

**Potential Graphics:**

Historic photographs of the crater, and illustrations of associated geologic processes.

**Exhibit Base:**

36" or 42" x 24" low profile, final size to be determined by actual content; 30° angle, in-ground, dark brown.

**Staff Time Commitment:**

To be determined; will occur as part of the parkwide wayside exhibit planning effort.

**Servicewide Interpretive Report (SIR) Category:**

(Not applicable.)

## Example individual service plan (ISP) for interpretive talks

	<i>Key information from the program overview:</i>
<b>Primary Interpretive Theme(s)</b>	<b>A: The approachable, active volcanoes of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park allow first-hand discovery and connection with one of the most fundamental forces of our world — in both its creative and destructive roles.</b>
<b>Interpretive Service(s)</b>	<b>Interpretive talks.</b> (Note: Already conducting this service as part of the existing program, but need to revise talk content for FY2002 to reflect new primary interpretive themes.)
<b>Location(s)</b>	<b>Jaggar, Kilauea Visitor Center (KVC), Volcano House (VH), eruptions sites.</b>
<b>Audience(s)</b>	<b>1: General Audience.</b>

### Management's interpretive intent and critical resource issues related to this individual service

<b>Management's Interpretive Intent</b>	To facilitate visitor understanding of how societies can benefit from, and be harmed by, the Earth's dynamic geological processes, especially volcanism. Facilitate visitor understanding and appreciation of the long-lasting affects these events can have on societies and the evolution of their perspectives of the world in which we live.
<b>Critical Resource and Visitor Issues</b>	Visitor safety information should be emphasized, especially for the talks at the eruption sites where first-hand, up-close experiences are available to visitors.

### Key operational details

<b>Presenters</b>	Park interpretive staff (by twos at the eruption sites for safety reasons).
<b>Service Availability</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> 3 talks daily between 9:00 and 3:30, March 1 -October 31. <b>At eruption sites:</b> 2 talks daily at 10:00 and 2:00, year-round as weather permits.
<b>Service Duration</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> 15 minutes each. <b>At eruption sites:</b> 30 minutes each.
<b>Maximum Audience Size</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> 25 visitors. <b>At eruption sites:</b> 35 (more when wind is calm).
<b>Support Materials</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> None. <b>At eruption sites:</b> Backpacks equipped with first-aid supplies, park brochures (for maps).
<b>Logistics</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> 15 minutes of travel time (use loop road) before/after each. <b>At eruption sites:</b> Minimum of 45 minutes travel time before and after each talk.
<b>Staff Time Commitment</b>	<b>At Jaggar, KVC, VH:</b> 45 minutes per presentation, plus appropriate preparation/developmental time. <b>At eruption sites:</b> 2 hours per presentation, plus additional time for roving when the schedule allows, plus preparation/developmental time.

### Key information for annual GPRa reporting requirements

<b>Servicewide and Park-Level Long-Term Goal</b>	<b>Ib1: Visitor Understanding and Appreciation</b> — 60% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of the park they are visiting.
<b>Park's Annual Goal</b>	<b>Ib1:</b> By September 30, 2005, 87% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of the park they are visiting.
<b>Indicator-Measure-Condition</b>	<b>Ib1:</b> Understanding / Percentage / Understand.
<b>Staff Cost</b>	\$ 19,400 (Includes salary and benefits)*
<b>Materials &amp; Supplies, Cost</b>	225 (Includes examples of handicrafts, backpacks, radios, first aid kits, etc.)*
<b>Service Cost for FY2000</b>	\$ 19,625 (Staff cost plus cost of materials and supplies)*
<b>FTE for Service, FY2000</b>	0.83 (Full-time equivalency: one full-time position = 1.0 FTE)*

### Key information for the annual Servicewide Interpretive Report (SIR)

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>Personal Services — Formal Interpretation</b>
<b>Number of Presentations</b>	1,200 *
<b>Number of People Served</b>	36,000 *

*\*These are estimates; they will be replaced with actual data as it becomes known throughout the year, or at the end of the fiscal year.*

**Key Information from the Program Overview**

**Primary interpretive themes.** This service includes all themes (A through E), plus orientation and safety information, and information on the National Park System and NPS mission.

**Interpretive service.** Translation of the park brochure. SERVICE AVAILABILITY IS ONGOING.

**Distribution locations.** Entry stations, KVC, via mail, Jaggar, ECS, KMC, VH, AEC, Educational Center, and at outlets run by partners (provided to partners at cost).

**Audiences.** Non-English speaking audience. Languages include Japanese, Chinese, Korean, German, Spanish, French, and Hawaiian.

**OPERATIONAL DETAILS**

**Management’s interpretive intent.** Translations of the official park brochure.

**Medium.** Publication in site bulletin format.

**Service availability.** 43,000 copies of the park brochure translation are available for distribution this fiscal year:

Japanese	15,000
Chinese	8,000
Korean	6,000
German	6,000
Spanish	5,000
French	2,000
Hawaiian	1,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>43,000</b>

**Support services and materials.** Full-color English language version. Contract services of professional translators (four hours per language).

**Logistics.** Distribution boxes at the locations mentioned above are replenished as part of the daily check of handouts; partners are contacted once a month for re-orders.

**Staff time commitment.** Annual update and reprinting of translations requires 12 hours staff time of a GS-9 Park Ranger (Interpretation).

**GPRA reporting.** Costs are made available for annual GPRA reporting; estimated cost\* for this fiscal year is \$5,700.00, including staff salary and benefits.

**Servicewide Interpretive Report (SIR).** The following information meets the SIR requirements for this interpretive service:

Program Category is	<u>Non-Personal Services — Park-Produced Publications</u> .
Number of Presentations is	<u>43,000</u> .*
Number of People Served is	<u>43,000</u> .*

\*These are estimates; they will be replaced with actual data as it becomes known throughout the year, or at the end of the fiscal year.

of this document is located in the appendix, “The role of cooperating associations in accomplishing the interpretive mission of parks.” This information can also be found in the *NPS Reference Manual to Director’s Order 32: Cooperating Associations*.

## **Connecting individual efforts to the operations described in the CIP**

The CIP describes the park’s desired future interpretive program at the strategic level (program overview) and the tactical level (set of ISPs). These two levels provide direction and guidance — a framework — upon which an individual interpreter’s duties are founded. However, every aspect of every duty is not specified in detail in either of these two levels, nor should it be. This level of detail can be considered a third level in the hierarchy: specific preparations (project work) by individual interpreters and general duties.

Each project has its own unique tasks, materials, costs, schedules, etc., that need to be taken into account by the individual interpreter. Likewise, each interpreter has assigned duties that may or may not vary in some degree from those of other interpreters. Both kinds of specific details change rapidly and frequently. They are very much part of specific, individual planning efforts, which should dovetail with and be guided by the park’s comprehensive interpretive planning, but are not part of the CIP *per se*.

Regarding individual interpretive programs, such as specific interpretive talks, ISPs focus the staff’s efforts on making thematic interpretation available to specific audiences, by providing specific interpretive services at specific locations. Since primary interpretive themes are critical to visitors’ understanding and exploration of the resource’s meanings, but there are myriad subthemes that could be used to facilitate this exploration, the ISPs for interpretive talks usually only specify the primary interpretive theme. They usually don’t detail subthemes or specific talk outlines to be used by the interpreter. Specific talk titles, objectives, outlines, and program content are usually not recorded or referenced in ISPs. These things are usually specific to the interpreters giving the talks and the resource conditions at that time, and are generally planned by the individuals conducting the service. (The exception may be visitor use assistants or others whose jobs are to present interpretive talks based on outlines or scripts prepared by others. In this case, those outlines or scripts may indeed be referenced in the ISP.)

Some of the information associated with these interpretive talks, however, still needs to be recorded. Log sheets still need to be completed; schedules still need to be made; outlines and scripts may need to be written (benefiting future interpreters). This operational information is necessary for statistical analysis, performance reviews, supervision, etc. The park folds this information into the CIP in a way suited to that park’s situation. For example, one of the procedures a park might want to initiate is to require interpreters to make notations on log sheets regarding which *primary interpretive theme* their interpretive talk addressed (through their talk’s subtheme), and their categorization of the *audience* for each episode of conducting an interpretive talk, or other service.

Something many parks already do is maintain a notebook of interpretive talk outlines. Such a notebook can reproduce the primary interpretive theme, subtheme, talk title, presenters, goals, and objectives of individual talks, as well as information like specific logistical considerations or support materials. Some parks generate several such notebooks (one for talks, another for illustrated programs, another for guided walks, etc.). The notebooks can be organized by primary theme, audience, etc., via tabbed subsections.

Such resources are tremendously valuable for new interpreters that come to the park and often need ideas in a hurry to meet presentation responsibilities and schedules. They can also be a source of “canned” presentations if the park employs

park guides, volunteers, or others whose developmental level or responsibilities may include presenting such programs, but not developing them. These types of resources are referenced in the ID section of the CIP.

## Annual Implementation Plans

Discussion in the second workshop now turns to the steps that will occur following the completion of the LRIP section — namely the creation of the first Annual Implementation Plan. The creation of AIPs is accomplished by opening, then saving the electronic LRIP file under a new name. This new file is then customized to create the upcoming year’s AIP. The advantages of this streamlined process are many:

- It provides an appropriate opportunity for the long-range aspects of the CIP to be re-examined annually.
- It ensures that the long-range vision is still the driving force behind the annual interpretive program, which progressively implements that long-range vision (the desired future interpretive program).
- It reduces the time necessary to create an AIP because the bulk of the work has already been accomplished in the initial development and subsequent maintenance of the LRIP section, much of which carries over to the AIP with little change.

Editing the duplicated file to address only the coming year’s program is relatively easy and usually includes deleting, adding, and modifying information:

### Developing the AIP: Deletions

- Delete the service-location(s) pairs on the *desired future interpretive program* (program overview) that are not relevant to the coming year, thereby turning it into the *annual interpretive program* (program overview) for the coming year.
- Delete the tasks on the *long-range schedule of actions* that are not relevant to the coming year, thereby turning it into the *annual schedule of actions*.

### Developing the AIP: Additions

- Add the *annual operating budget* based on the *annual interpretive program* — interpretive services that the park intends to provide in the coming year.
- Add an evaluation of the current year’s *annual interpretive program*, and compare it to the *annual interpretive program* for the coming year.

### Developing the AIP: Modifications

- Modify the *annual interpretive program* (program overview) to account for new or changed management emphases, changes in staffing, training, funding, etc. Revise the program as actual budget information is generated during the year.
- Modify the amount of detail in the *annual schedule of actions*, as needed, including adding deadlines, identifying lead staff for each task, partners involved, special recruiting efforts, etc. (The *annual interpretive program* and the *annual schedule of actions* should dovetail with the Annual Performance Plan section of the park’s Strategic Plan, and its associated workplans).

### Typical annual schedule of actions in an AIP

<b>FY2002</b>			
<b>New film</b>	<b>Write the script:</b>		
	Conduct relevant research.	<i>December</i>	Jeanette
	Write first draft.	<i>March</i>	Laura
	Consult with affiliated cultural groups and other stakeholders.	<i>March</i>	Steven
	Revise draft using stakeholder comments.	<i>September</i>	Laura

- Modify the *issues and influences* section to update changes in issues, or issues that management specifically needs to emphasize in the coming year, etc.
- Modify the ISPs in the ID section of the CIP, accounting for all of the above as appropriate.

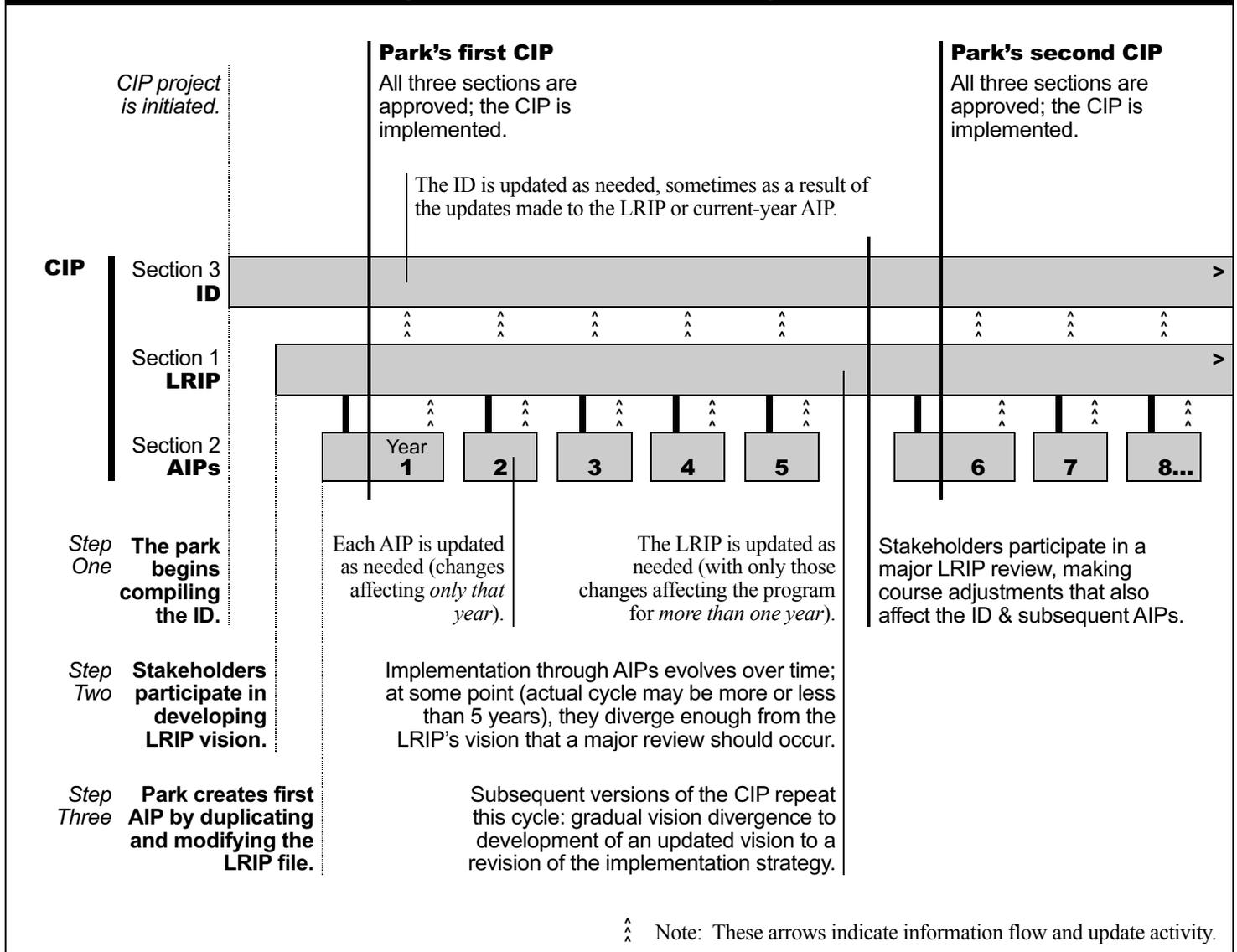
Throughout the year, changing circumstances will influence the actual interpretive program conducted by the park and its partners. As this occurs, the AIP should be modified (updated) to reflect these changes, to the extent deemed useful by the park’s interpretation manager. Those changing circumstances that will influence the interpretive program not only in the current year, but in subsequent years as well, should also prompt relevant updating of the LRIP. By virtue of this feedback method, the LRIP will remain a relevant and useful foundation for developing each year’s AIP. Judgment should be exercised so that the LRIP continues to preserve the vision of the desired future interpretive program, while remaining relevant to current circumstances.

Subsequent AIPs are not based on the prior year’s AIP; they are always based on the up-to-date LRIP. Using the LRIP as the master file each year for forming the coming year’s AIP keeps the annual interpretive program firmly grounded in the consensus vision founded with stakeholders.

## **Revision cycles of a CIP**

The CIP extends five to ten years forward from the time of initial planning. During this period, minor updates to the plan will be made to accommodate changing circumstances at the park. Minor updates may be made periodically or on an as-needed basis.

The CIP should undergo a major revision when it becomes obvious that the upcoming Annual Implementation Plan will diverge so widely from the LRIP that a major review of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan section is required to reestablish a consensus vision. Although there is no way to predict this cycle — the cycle of major course corrections to the CIP, with stakeholder participation — we recommend the park align the stakeholder review of the CIP with other major park



planning efforts, if possible. The review of the park's Strategic Plan occurs every five years, offering just such an opportunity. The difference between the initial start dates of the park's Strategic Plan and CIP will, of course, have some bearing on the feasibility of this suggestion.

### The next steps in the process — Discussion of the remaining tasks to complete the CIP

The planners discuss what subsequent tasks need to be accomplished for the generation of a completed CIP, and answer any questions the team may have regarding the process or the resulting CIP. Example CIPs from other parks are usually reviewed again, now that the team has brainstormed their own program overview and can better understand how all of the elements of the process will contribute to their specific CIP.

At this point, the schedule of remaining tasks to complete the CIP is reviewed, and tentative dates and responsibilities are established. The table below depicts the

<b>Completing the CIP — Schedule of tasks</b>				
<b>CIP Section</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Tasks and actions</b>	<b>Primary responsible</b>	<b>Tentative due dates</b>
(Archive), <b>LRIP, ID</b>	<b>Post-workshops starting place.</b>	Transcribe the information gathered in both workshops, (create Archive), create draft LRIP from Archive, customize ID template, and transmit these 3 files to park.	SO planners.	
<b>LRIP</b>	<b>Program overview.</b>	Meet, edit, strategize, complete.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>ID, LRIP, AIP</b>	<b>Individual service plans (ISPs).</b>	Meet, design or customize format, write ISPs for coming year, edit, complete.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>LRIP</b>	<b>Long-range schedule of actions.</b>	Meet, strategize actions based on program overview and other elements that have identified action items, strategize, write, edit, complete.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>LRIP</b>	<b>Review and incorporation of comments.</b>	Reviews may occur at any time, but this point in the process is a milestone and a good place for review. Park incorporates comments as appropriate.	SO planners. Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>LRIP</b> (subset)	<b>Review and incorporation of comments.</b>	Stakeholders review and comment on <i>significances, primary interpretive themes, visitor experience considerations, and stakeholder issues and suggestions</i> elements of the draft LRIP, plus any additional elements the park deems appropriate. Park incorporates comments as appropriate.	Stakeholders. Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>LRIP</b>	<b>Review and incorporation of comments.</b>	Second review and comments. Park incorporates comments as appropriate.	SO planners. Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>ID</b>	<b>Cooperating Association Scope of Sales Statement</b>	Collaboratively develop a <i>Scope of Sales Statement</i> that supports the park's interpretive program. Reference this completed document in the ID.	Park staff and Cooperating Association staff.	
<b>LRIP</b>	<b>Completion of the first CIP section.</b>	First working version of the LRIP completed.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>AIP</b>	<b>Completion of the second CIP section.</b>	First working version of the AIP is created from the completed LRIP. Adjustments will be necessitated when actual budget is determined after fiscal year begins.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>ID</b>	<b>Completion of the third CIP section.</b>	First working version of ID completed.	Core team (park interpretive staff).	
<b>CIP</b>		CIP completed and approved. <b>Implementation begins.</b>	Park manager. <b>Interpretation manager, staff, partners, and stakeholders.</b>	<b>Fiscal Year:</b> _____

usual milestones in the process for which scheduling is often useful.

This concludes the second workshop. All of the follow up work between the planners and the core team will now occur via telephone, electronic mail, and traditional mail. •

# Post-workshop sequence of events to complete the CIP and begin implementation

Within several weeks of the second workshop's conclusion, the planners create three electronic files:

- The planners transcribe the remainder of the workshop-generated information into the **archive** file. This file is a comprehensive archive of the planning process — including multiple versions of some material — and serves as a permanent record of the full range of ideas generated during the planning activity.
- The planners create the **first draft LRIP** by customizing the planners' master file template for LRIPs (copying appropriate excerpts of the archive file into this file).
- The planners create the **first draft ID** by customizing the planners' master file template for IDs.

These three files are then sent to the park via electronic mail. Files are written in Microsoft Word<sup>®</sup>, a format that the park staff themselves use for word processing, to facilitate ease of updating and other manipulation, such as graphically enhancing the LRIP for fundraising purposes.

The planners' continuing role is to serve as editors and sounding boards during completion of the CIP. The core planning team's primary task is to continue development of the LRIP. Once the LRIP is drafted, all planning participants should be given an opportunity to comment, at the park's discretion. Reviews of drafts often includes stakeholders that were not present in the workshops. Comments are incorporated and the LRIP is completed. The ID is also completed during this period.

Developing the first AIP from the LRIP occurs next. The AIP describes the interpretive services to be provided, and actions to be accomplished, in the coming year, driving the individual workplans of the park's interpretive staff.

The park manager is the approving authority for the park's first CIP and subsequent versions. Implementation of the CIP occurs when the first AIP is put into use.

The CIP should be no more complex than needed to make justifiable decisions and clearly articulate their rationale. It must be kept current to retain its relevance to operations. The park decides on what periodic basis they are going to re-evaluate the CIP, and to what extent. They review the LRIP at least annually, as the basis for each AIP. Updating and strengthening the CIP in response to changing conditions and evaluations of the interpretive program is straightforward and direct, and offers an opportunity to reinvigorate the program and staff. The format of the CIP facilitates

ongoing, minor updates; care should be taken not to overcomplicate it or include in the design any elements that would serve as hindrances to keeping it relevant to current park operations. This does not preclude duplicating the LRIP and modifying it (in whole or in part) at any time for a *secondary* use, such as a document designed for a fundraising campaign or other initiative, complete with photographs, multiple colors, special binding, etc.

## **In conclusion**

This approach to interpretive planning — rooted in a holistic view of the profession, comprehensive in nature, inclusive of stakeholders and multiple points of view — leads to increased understanding and appreciation of the place, better protection for park resources, more effective partnerships, solutions to management problems, and tighter compliance with the letter and spirit of the Government Performance and Results Act. To the greatest extent possible, it ensures that the interpretive program offers interpretive services that provide opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections to the meanings inherent in the resources of parks — connections that often last a lifetime. •

# Appendix One: Scope of Work template for parks in the Intermountain Region

## Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for {Parkname}

### **Introduction and purpose**

{Parkname} has requested assistance from the interpretive planners of the Interpretation and Education Team, Intermountain Support Office (SO), to conduct a comprehensive interpretive planning process with the park. This project has been approved by the SO through its annual prioritization process for work requests.

National Park Service policy states that each park shall have a *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* (CIP) that includes a long-range vision of the interpretive program, an annual component to implement the vision, and a reference database. Completion of all three sections is critical to ensuring that interpretive resources are coordinated and focused on achieving management's vision for the park. The three principle sections of the CIP are:

- Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP)
- Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
- Interpretive Database (ID)

This Scope of Work identifies how the process will develop the park's CIP. This document has been developed collaboratively by the park staff and planners, and outlines what will be done, who will do it, when it will be accomplished, and what it will cost.

### **Process structure and participants**

The process consists of pre-workshop preparations, two interpretive planning workshops that accomplish the majority of the CIP development work, and post-workshop refinement and completion of the CIP.

#### **Pre-workshop preparations**

Meeting arrangements are made, stakeholders are invited, and information is exchanged between the park and planners.

#### **The first workshop builds the foundation of the CIP**

The first workshop is three days long and conducted in or near the park. Stakeholder participation is critical to the success of the first workshop. Their participation provides numerous, diverse subject-matter experts, and fosters an understanding of each other's views, the park's mission, the role of interpretation in that vision, the specific mission of the interpretive program, etc. The term "stakeholders" refers to those individuals and groups that have a significant stake in how the park's interpretive program is managed. These interested parties often include cooperating associations, friends groups, concessioners that provide interpretive or educational services to park visitors, chambers of commerce, affiliated cultures, non-governmental conservation and historical organizations, schools and universities, museums, other agencies (federal, state, local), and other

park partners. “Stakeholders” also includes park management, subject-matter experts from all divisions of the park staff, park concessions specialists, media specialists, interpretive planners, and others. The optimal number of participants is 15-30 to assure diversity of perspectives and process manageability.

The preceding list of potential stakeholders is provided as a guideline; the park staff develops the list and makes the appropriate arrangements for stakeholder participation, with input from the planners. Invitations for attendance are generally issued by the superintendent; an invitation template is available from the planners.

**Stakeholders not on the core team only attend the first two days of the first workshop.** The core team attends the workshop all three days. It is composed of park interpretive staff, park manager, cooperating association staff, and concessioners or others who provide interpretive or educational services to park visitors.

### **The second workshop develops the desired future interpretive program**

The second workshop will be also be three days long and conducted in or near the park. The second workshop includes only the core team. The optimal number of participants is 5-10 to assure diversity of perspectives and process manageability. This workshop applies the information generated in the first workshop, developing the draft desired future interpretive program.

### **Post-workshop tasks**

The planners prepare draft documents following the second workshop, transmit them to the park, then continue to assist the core planning team with the remaining tasks necessary to complete the CIP.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Near-term collaboration**

The planners work collaboratively with the park staff to arrive at a common expectation of the process, set up and conduct the two planning workshops, and generate the initial follow up work. Usually within several weeks of the second workshop’s conclusion, the planners create three electronic files:

- The planners transcribe the workshop-generated information into the **archive** file. This file is a comprehensive archive of the planning process — including multiple versions of some material — and serves as a permanent record of the full range of ideas generated during the planning activity.
- The planners create the **first draft LRIP** by customizing the planners’ master file template for LRIPs (copying appropriate excerpts of the archive file into this file).
- The planners create the **first draft ID** by customizing the planners’ master file template for IDs.

These documents are delivered in a word-processing format that is useful to the park, usually Microsoft Word 97<sup>®</sup> unless specified otherwise.

#### **Long-term collaboration**

The planners’ continuing role is to serve as editors and sounding boards during completion of the CIP. The core team’s primary task is to continue development of the LRIP. Once the LRIP is fully drafted, all planning participants should be given an opportunity to comment, at the park’s discretion. Review of drafts often includes stakeholders that were not present in the workshops. Comments are incorporated and the LRIP is completed. The ID is also completed during this period.

Park staff develop the first and subsequent AIPs from the LRIP. The AIP describes the interpretive services to be provided, and actions to be accomplished, in



# Appendix Two: The role of cooperating associations in accomplishing the interpretive mission of parks

*The Scope of Sales Statement — an opportunity for parks and cooperating associations to work together to achieve shared goals*

## **Purpose and value of the Scope of Sales Statement**

The *Scope of Sales Statement* is a cooperative planning document usually prepared by the association's executive director and the park's cooperating association coordinator (often the chief of interpretation). It is a strategic document critical to the development of a sales line that meets the needs of the public, the association, and the park.

## **Components**

### **Statement of relationship**

This component states the relationship between the cooperating association and the National Park Service. It references the documents that govern the roles of the two partners (the Standard Agreement, *Director's Orders 32: Cooperating Associations*, and the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the cooperating association) and provides an opportunity for the association to state how its reasons-for-being connect with the park's reasons-for-being. It outlines the current sales operation and describes how that function relates to the interpretive function of the park.

### **Park significance statements**

These statements identify the significant resources and associated values that make the park special and capture the park's essence.

### **Park purpose statements**

These are the stated purposes (often indicated directly in the park's enabling legislation) for which the park was established.

### **Primary interpretive themes**

These are the ideas about the park's resources that are critical to public understanding and exploration of the meanings inherent in park resources.

Park significance, purpose, and primary interpretive themes are part of a park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, and are periodically updated as part of that planning process. Cooperating associations are integral partners in that process. By cooperating in the development of the basic assumptions that underlie the park's interpretive program, and by analyzing its own operation based on those same assumptions, the association is best able to identify, influence, and facilitate park interpretive goals, as well as meet its own.

### **Strategic evaluation of the sales line**

The strategic evaluation process is a "two-layer" process enabling in-depth

analysis and strategic improvement of an association’s sales line.

**Themes, audiences, and services table (layer one).** This table provides an overview of the sales line with each sales item placed according to the primary interpretive theme(s) it addresses and the audience(s) it serves.

*Themes.* These are the primary interpretive themes stated in the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. “Orientation and Safety Information” and “National Park System and National Park Service Mission” are also included as universal subjects for all parks. Note that visitor convenience items, sold under a concession permit, are a separate class of sales items that are not related to a park’s interpretive themes and so are not part of this evaluation process.

*Audiences.* These are the audiences for which strategic interpretive planning crafts distinct communication strategies; they are also stated in the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. Marketing considerations may suggest additional audiences. These may vary from park to park but should include the audiences for which distinct interpretive services are needed, such as:

- General audience
- Young adults
- Children
- Non-English speaking audiences
- Teachers and other educators
- Non-traditional park users or other special populations

*Services.* In the first and best sense, association sales items are really interpretive services that visitors to the park (and others in the case of mail order sales) can purchase, use in the park, and take home with them. Note that a given sales item can appear in more than one cell on the table if it interprets more than one theme and/or serves more than one audience.

<b>Strategic evaluation process — themes, audiences, and services</b>				
Mountainshore Natural History Association / Mountainshore National Park <sup>3</sup>				
<b>PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES</b>	<b>AUDIENCES</b>			
	1: General audience	2: Young adults	3: Non-English speaking audiences	4: Teachers and other educators
<b>Theme A</b> — Mountainshore National Park offers a rare opportunity to explore how humans have adapted to the wide variety of Pacific Northwest ecosystems.	(BK) <i>Indians and Mountain Men</i> (BK) <i>Pacific Northwest Ethnobotany</i> (GR) <i>Animals of the Mountains</i> (poster) (EL) <i>Sounds of the Forest</i> (audio tape) (EL) <i>Seashore Seasons</i> (captioned videotape) (TI) Fort Webfoot (model) (TI) Miwok Fish Hook (replica)	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.
<b>Theme B</b> — Text...	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.
<b>Orientation and Safety Information</b>	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.
<b>National Park System and National Park Service Mission</b>	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

<sup>3</sup> To make these tables more meaningful, a fictitious park (Mountainshore National Park) and its cooperating association (Mountainshore Natural History Association) are used as examples.

**Media types and price points tables (layer two).** A second layer of tables expand and analyze the contents of those cells generated in the overview table for which additional analysis is desired. This analysis allows strategic design or choice of products to appeal to the widest range of audiences by assuring variety of product types and price points. An example expanded from the completed cell in the overview table is shown in the table below.

*Media types.* A variety of media are offered for sale to accommodate different tastes and learning styles. The traditional types of media offered by cooperating associations are cited below. Other categories may evolve to expand this list.

- Books
- Graphic arts (posters, prints, etc.)
- Electronic media (CD-ROMs, video tapes, audio tapes, etc.)
- Thematic items (replicas, models, puzzles, etc.)

*Price points.* Ranges of price point categories may also vary according to audiences. Likely categories include:

- Less than \$2.00
- \$2.00 to \$4.99
- \$5.00 to \$9.99
- \$10.00 to \$50.00
- More than \$50.00

<b>Strategic evaluation process — media types and price points</b>					
Mountainshore Natural History Association / Mountainshore National Park					
<b>THEME A</b> — Mountainshore National Park offers a rare opportunity to explore how humans have adapted to the wide variety of Pacific Northwest ecosystems.					
<b>AUDIENCE 1</b> — General audience					
<b>MEDIA TYPES</b>	<b>PRICE POINTS</b>				
	Less than \$2.00	\$2.00 to \$4.99	\$5.00 to \$9.99	\$10.00 to \$50.00	More than \$50.00
<b>Books (BK)</b>			<i>Indians and Mountain Men</i>	<i>Pacific Northwest Ethnobotany</i>	
<b>Graphic arts (GR)</b>		<i>Animals of the Mountains</i> (poster)			
<b>Electronic media (EL)</b>			<i>Sounds of the Forest</i> (audio tape) <i>Seashore Seasons</i> (captioned videotape)		
<b>Thematic items (TI)</b>	Miwok Fish Hook (replica)			Fort Webfoot (model)	

Both layers of tables provide an easy, direct way to examine the degree to which the sales operation is assisting the widest range of audiences in the understanding and exploration of the primary interpretive themes. It is important for both partners to remember that the selection of specific sales items will also be influenced by the association's need to accommodate the realities of profitability, security, stock storage, and time criticality.

### **Selection process and criteria for specific sales items**

Parks and associations cooperate in suggesting and evaluating specific items proposed for sale. Some partners discuss the merits of specific items in face-to-face meetings, though most develop a simple evaluation form to expand and document the process. No standard evaluation form exists, but evaluation criteria should include:

- **Appropriateness:** How well does this product interpret park themes and serve audiences? Is this product sensitive to the culture(s) it represents or interprets?
- **Quality:** How well does the product provide opportunities to explore the park's themes? What is the level of craftsmanship or workmanship involved?
- **Accuracy:** Does the product reflect the best scholarship and knowledge?
- **Value:** Is the product a good buy for the customer at the suggested sales price?
- **Currency:** Is the product up-to-date?
- **Authenticity:** Special concerns regarding craft items are described in DO-32:

3.5.3d Craft items represented as being Indian-made shall be sold in accordance with the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-644 [104 Stat. 4662], 11/29/90.)

Public Law 101-644, states that it is unlawful to offer or display for sale or sell any good, with or without a Government trademark, in a manner that falsely suggests it is Indian produced, an Indian product, or the product of a particular Indian or Indian tribe or Indian arts and crafts organization, resident within the United States. The law allows severe penalties for individuals or organizations found to be in violation of the law.

Associations offering a product for sale as American Indian artwork or handicraft should confirm that the person who made it is a member of an Indian tribe. Associations that deal directly with the producer could retain a copy of the tribal document which acknowledges their membership, or at least note the artisan's tribal enrollment number. Associations that deal with intermediaries would be wise to have the intermediary guarantee that the item was produced by a member of an Indian tribe.

Associations can request a copy of P.L. 101-644 from the: *Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Room 4004, Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240, telephone (202) 208-3773.*

- **Advertising:** Is it secondary or incidental to interpretive value?
- **Prohibition regarding sale of original objects:** Are replica items clearly labeled?
- **Origin:** Sale of items made in the USA is encouraged, but not mandatory.
- **Conflict:** Would selling this item conflict with a preferential right-of-sale held by a concessioner?

### **Action plan for upgrading the sales line**

This section is a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the current sales line as indicated by the strategic evaluation process. It describes a strategy and timeline for enhancing the sales line to plug holes and strengthen weaknesses so that the greatest diversity of audiences are provided with the greatest variety of effective products consistent with the association earning a favorable rate of return.

The result is essentially a long-range strategy for evolving the *Annual List of Approved Sales Items*. This is the yearly listing of all items the association is authorized to sell. It is produced by the association executive director, submitted to the park cooperating association coordinator, and approved by the superintendent. No item can be sold without this approval. (Note that specific items can be approved at any time, not just once a year.) The annual list is maintained on file by the park and the association, and offers a look at where the sales line stands in relation to the long-range goals cited in the action plan.

### **Appendices**

Other information helpful in developing an effective and successful sales line can be included in appendices to the Scope of Sales Statement. These may include:

- **Visitation and Sales Statistics:** Includes traditional on-site visitors as well as “visitors” to park and association Web pages.
- **Sources List:** References expert talent available to assist the partners in improving sales selection and operation: authors, artists, designers, publishers, marketing analysts, etc.

### **Periodic revision of the Scope of Sales Statement**

The Scope of Sales Statement should be thought of as always subject to review and improvement. The executive director and cooperating association coordinator should work together to define a reasonable cycle for revisiting and updating the Scope of Sales Statement. It may be advantageous to synchronize its review with the major review of the park’s Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, which is expected to occur about every 5 years. The Scope of Sales Statement is referenced in the Interpretive Database section of the park Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. •



# Essential Tools for Interpreters

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**An introduction to the profession of interpretation as presented and conducted by the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service.** *This publication explores the relationships between people, places, and interpretation — a useful introduction for those interested in better understanding the profession of interpretation. June 2001 edition; 8 pages.*

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## Theme Guide

**A guide to the thematic approach to interpretation used by the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service.** *This publication addresses significances, primary interpretive themes, subthemes, and theme-based interpretive services. It includes numerous park examples — complete sets of significance statements and the primary themes derived from them. An excellent resource for frontline interpreters, seasonal training, and theme workshops, this guide is a useful tool for all those involved in managing and conducting daily interpretive operations. June 2001 edition; 56 pages.*

## Theme Guide

Abstract

**A brief description of the thematic approach to interpretation used by the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service.** *June 2001 edition; 8 pages.*

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## CIP Guide

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The publications in this series are designed to be electronically distributed and printed using Microsoft Word 6.0/95<sup>®</sup> or newer version. The electronic files are formatted as “Word 97-2000 & 6.0/95 – RTF (\*.doc).” Listed page counts are measured cover-to-cover. Updated publications are distributed as they are produced. Federal government agencies can download these files from the Intermountain Support Office Intranet page at “[http://im.den.nps.gov/den\\_interptools.cfm](http://im.den.nps.gov/den_interptools.cfm)”. Please direct inquiries and comments to the authors at:

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## About the Authors

**Richard Kohen** is the Lead Interpretive Planner for the Intermountain Support Office of the National Park Service. He entered the Service in 1991 and worked in the areas of cultural resources, park planning, and ranger activities before joining interpretation in 1995. With a background in communication arts — theater, music, art direction, illustration, graphic design, typography, and sculpture — he draws from a rich palette to craft solutions to interpretive communication challenges. His special skill in organizing and clearly depicting processes is valuable in helping others achieve their desired outcomes.

**Kim Sikoryak** is a 25-year veteran with the National Park Service and has worked as Chief of Interpretation and Interpretive Specialist at parks and regional offices in Oregon, California, Hawaii, Colorado, and New Mexico. Kim's varied background in secondary and college education, public radio and television, field biology, and theater provides him with an opportunity to view interpretive challenges and opportunities from diverse, and sometimes unusual, perspectives. Since 1997 he has worked with Richard Kohen to develop a set of essential tools for interpreters that are tightly focused on outcomes, yet intimately tied to operational realities.



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June 2001, February 2000, April 1999, October 1998.

**CIP Guide** is updated periodically in response to the evolving nature of the profession. This publication was written electronically using Microsoft Word 2000<sup>®</sup> and type families CG Times, Arial, and Arial Black. The file was formatted as version "Word 97-2000 & 6.0/95 – RTF (\*.doc)," and was designed to print two-sided on a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5 Si NX printer.

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