"That Congress declares that the national park system, which began with establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, has since grown to include superlative natural, historic, and recreation areas in every major region of the United States, its territories and island possessions; that these areas, though distinct in character, are united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expression of a single national heritage; that individually and collectively, these areas derive incremental quality through their inclusion jointly with each other in one national park system preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people of the United States."

“Loving our parks to death” has become a popular expression for the troubled state of natural and cultural resources within the National Park System. The annual 273+ million visitors often unintentionally cause resource damage that cumulatively adds up to significant resource degradation. In Zion National Park the number of visitors hiking The Narrows route has risen so dramatically in the last decade that park managers now impose a day-use limit by issuing 80 first-come-first-served permits to control visitor use and decrease resource impacts. In Mesa Verde National Park visitors may no longer tour the Cliff Palace on their own, but must travel with a ranger; years of cumulative impacts at the Cliff Palace have weakened ancient walls, built up harmful oils on ruins’ surfaces, and decreased site integrity by creating new trails.

In the last five years resource violations on National Park Service lands have increased 123 percent. In 1993, 16,644 resources violations were investigated by park staff, ranging from the purposeful cutting of live trees to the theft of Native American pottery and Civil War relics. Crimes against natural resources include poaching, collecting and damaging wildlife, plants, minerals, and fossils. At Petrified Forest National Park, studies show that approximately 12 tons of petrified wood have been removed by park visitors yearly either as souvenirs or black market sales items. Cultural resource crimes range from removing petroglyphs at Petroglyph National Monument in New Mexico to defacing historic structures with graffiti at General Grant National Memorial in New York City.

The National Park Service is addressing the problems by:

Creatively designing trails, signs, and exhibits to explain the impacts visitors have on resources and the difference visitors can make by cooperating with temporary closures, visitor-use allocations and park warnings signs.

Increasing visitor and community resource awareness through park interpretive programs, environmental education courses taught at local schools, and presentations to clubs, boards, and committees.

Adopting an innovative program called the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection Plan that addresses visitors’ expectations while attempting to safeguard the parks’ natural and cultural resources. The plan uses the principles of Limits of Acceptable Change, developed by the U.S. Forest Service, that identifies visitor experience and resource conditions consistent with a park’s purpose and significance.

Continually inventorying and monitoring parks’ sensitive natural and cultural resources. Managers are then able to make informed decisions, based on data rather
than intuition, about resource impacts caused by both the growing numbers of park visitors and increased resource “crimes,” whether intentional or unintentional.

Participating on a number of special interagency task forces that deal with the *Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979*, which specifically addresses the loss of Indian artifacts, the protection of paleontological resources, and the crime of wildlife poaching.

Working with local, state, tribal, federal, and international agencies to jointly fight resource degradation on public lands while assisting with the creation of legislation that will offer further protection to fragile natural and cultural resources.
Role of Private Enterprise in the Parks

Private companies are drawn to the national parks to fill the needs for both visitor and park services. By welcoming the private sector as a partner in park operations, the National Park Service broadens the economic base of the region in general and the communities surrounding the parks in particular.

The establishment of a park may create many business opportunities. Private businesses provide a wide variety of visitor services, and also supply parks with necessary goods and services. These may range from office supplies and materials for daily use to asphalt and major construction projects. The private sector also benefits from contracted work, which may vary from professional architectural and engineering design, road repair, and cultural resource surveys to the painting of campground picnic tables. Private businesses also work directly in the parks, furnishing visitor services such as food, lodging, and recreation. In 1993, the 656 park concessionaires grossed over $657 million. (Approximately 2.5 percent went in fees to the general fund of the Treasury.) Twenty-eight of these concessions were authorized to work in more than one park. Collectively the company profits were over $40 million and, at peak, they employed over 20,000 people. Companies ranged in size from Yosemite Concessions Service in Yosemite National Park, grossing $92 million (net $5.9 million) to a Cherokee Boys Club that delivered wood to a campground in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, grossing around $3,000 a year (in connection with a refuse contract.)

In addition to concessions, over 1,200 commercial use licenses were issued in 1993 for businesses which went into or through a park. For example, some of the companies outside Yellowstone National Park are licensed to rent snowmobiles to individuals for trips into the park. Other licensed companies provide services that range from horseback riding and photography to providing boat repairs at marinas; in all cases their base of operations is outside the park.

The National Park Service also contracts for a variety of work to be done in the parks. Contracted work includes everything from road repair to equipment purchases. In FY 1994 the National Park Service contracted with the private sector for work totaling over $349 million. A sample of this in 1994 was the National Capital Region’s 370 contract actions totaling over $10 million and its 11,500-plus small purchases, which totaled more than $13 million. This included purchases from office supplies to materials such as asphalt and gravel. Contracts through the Denver Service Center in 1994 totaled more than $91.5 million. Examples included reconstruction of the historic vessel Friendship at Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Massachusetts, and architectural and engineering contracts for mapping vegetation in various parks across the United States.
Federal Laws and the National Park Service

The National Park Service is dedicated to conserving 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 Service is also responsible for managing a great variety of national and international programs designed to help extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK ACT OF 1872 - This act set aside public land for public enjoyment, and opened the way for the creation of the National Park Service.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ACT OF 1916 - "...[T]he fundamental purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

GENERAL AUTHORITIES ACT OF 1970 - All areas administered by the National Park Service are included in one National Park System.

REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK ACT AS AMENDED IN 1978 - This reasserted the system-wide high standard of protection prescribed for national parks and monuments for the common benefit of all the people of the United States, to protect their high public values and the purposes for which each unit was originally established.

A variety of Federal laws give the Secretary of the Interior conservation, recreation and resources management responsibilities that are delegated to the National Park Service. These include:

AMERICAN INDIAN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT OF 1978 - Declared policy to protect American Indian religious freedom, and directed federal agencies to administer their programs in light of that policy.

ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1906 - Established a permitted archeological excavation and research program and authorized Presidential designation of national monuments.

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT OF 1979 as amended - Supplemented the 1906 Antiquities Act with clearer definitions and penalties.

CLEAN AIR ACT, Amended, 1990 - Established a nationwide program for the prevention and control of air pollution and established National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

CLEAN WATER ACT OF 1972 as amended - Set objectives for restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.
ECONOMIC RECOVERY TAX ACT OF 1981 as amended - Provided federal preservation tax incentives to encourage rehabilitation of historic buildings.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, Amended, 1983 - Requires federal agencies to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out does not jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species, or result in the destruction or adverse modifications of critical habitat.

HISTORIC SITES, BUILDINGS, AND ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1935 - Declared national preservation policy and established a national landmarks program.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND ACT OF 1964 - Provided grants to state and local governments for acquisition and conservation in perpetuity of park lands, and development of outdoor recreation facilities. It also provided funding for land purchases by the National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, and federal land managing agencies.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT, 1969 - National Charter for environmental protection. The act requires systematic analysis of major federal actions that include a consideration of all reasonable alternatives and describe impacts.

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966 as amended - Established the federal-state-tribal partnership in designating and caring for the nation's historic properties.

NATIONAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACT OF 1963 - Declared a national policy to support recreation activities; the National Park Service provides national leadership and coordination of this public-private partnership.

NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT OF 1968 as amended - Established the National Trails System, including Historical, Recreational, and Scenic Trails; the Park Service provides national leadership and coordination for the public-private partnership program.

NATIONAL TRUST ACT OF 1949 - Chartered the private National Trust for Historic Preservation, an important historic preservation partner supported in part by NPS-administered funds.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT OF 1990 - Defined Native American ownership and control of native cultural items, required federal agencies to inventory the Native American human remains and associated funerary objects under agency control, and provided for native repatriation of these materials by descendants and culturally affiliated Native Americans.

REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1933 - This act transferred a number of the national memorials, parks, and monuments to the Park Service, virtually doubling the size of the agency overnight.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT OF 1968 as amended - Established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; the Park Service maintains the National Rivers Inventory and provides national leadership and coordination.

WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964 - Established the National Wilderness Preservation System as an overlay designated by Congress, which can be applied to any qualified federal public land, recognized the pristine, undeveloped condition of these lands, and statutorily assures they are maintained in that condition.
Ecosystem management is based on the awareness that natural and cultural resources and the environmental processes that affect them are fundamentally influenced by society and vice versa. Often, regional economic prosperity is linked to environmental integrity. As part of ecosystems, the resources protected in national parks are not isolated from the surrounding environment and communities, but are inextricably linked to them.

Long-term sustainability of the environmental, societal, and economic systems on which parks and their surrounding human communities depend, requires a collaborative and participatory approach that integrates scientific knowledge and maintains flexibility in order to make adjustments over time. National park staff members seek to develop partnerships with their neighbors (both public and private) to identify common interests, develop common goals, and devise compatible solutions to issues of individual or common concern. Working together, partners can pool their scientific, educational, and technical skills and apply them throughout the ecosystem to meet a variety of challenges to both public and private interests.

Where this involves outreach and assistance efforts by NPS employees, it does not imply greater federal government control in local affairs or interference with private rights. Rather, it provides for open, honest, and locally focused cooperative stewardship among private landowners, business leaders, and every level of government.

In summary, ecosystem management is a long-term, cooperative venture conducted by local partnerships of public and private members, in which national parks can join to protect, restore, and sustain the environmental, cultural, and economic values of these unique and often environmentally sensitive areas.
Science and Research in the National Parks

National parks serve as laboratories for the study of physical, biological, and cultural systems and their components. Because they often represent unique and/or minimally disturbed environments, and because of their protected status, parks are particularly valuable for long-term studies. Information gained through park research is critical for park management itself, contributes to general scientific knowledge, can strengthen National Park Service (NPS) positions when challenged in court, and has applications in neighboring communities if not to regions or broader areas. From the genetics of recently discovered lifeforms to the lifeways of prehistoric people, there is still much to be learned from our national parks. Information from the parks already has yielded technological developments that have benefitted humankind in the medical and physical sciences, and the fields of sociology, anthropology, and environmental engineering.

To support park science, the National Park Service established on-going cooperative relationships with universities across the United States, which are now being administered by the National Biological Service (NBS). The NBS will become a principal partner in NPS science research relating to natural resources. Another agency of the Department of the Interior, the U.S. Geological Survey, is pledging $2 million of its FY 1996 monies for a Science in the Parks project, to review geological mapping and the mapping of geological hazards in parks.

NPS scientific research projects include the following:

Since 1987, a study of predator-prey relationships in Denali National Park and Preserve has focused on wolves and caribou and provided resource managers across northern North America and Russia with information about the sustainability of these populations.

The Shared Beringian Heritage Program includes bilateral United States and Russian studies in ethnography, archeology, historical architecture, geology, ecology, paleoecology, paleogeography, and wildlife biology in the Bering Strait area, stimulated by planning for the proposed Beringian Heritage International Park.

Enzymes from the microscopic *Thermus aquaticus* from the geyser basin hot pools in Yellowstone National Park were used to perfect methods for artificially duplicating DNA, which today is a billion-dollar industry.

Mammoth Cave researchers have used hydrologic and biological studies to document groundwater susceptibility to pollution. These studies have helped local communities develop a regionwide water quality management program. Also at Mammoth Cave, the exceptionally well-preserved archeological resources have helped researchers understand early human use of the cave as well as early domestication of plants.
National Park Service (NPS) units are created in two ways: an act of Congress or a presidential proclamation.

When Congress creates an addition to the National Park System it determines the name, approximate boundary, and designation (park, monument, historic site, etc.) for the new area and makes reference to the general concepts under which it will be managed.

Usually establishment of a new national park unit begins with a special resource study conducted by the National Park Service. New areas designated by Congress often result from NPS studies conducted at the direction of Congress, through authorization or appropriations, or from previous NPS planning priorities. The Park Service determines if an area is appropriate based on the answers to the following questions:

**National Significance**—Is the area an important and nationally significant natural, cultural, or recreational resource to the entire nation?

**Suitability and Feasibility**—Is the area suitable and feasible as a park under NPS management? Suitability – does it represent a resource type or theme not already adequately represented in the national park system, or not adequately protected by another managing entity? Feasibility – is the area of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection and efficient administration at reasonable cost?

**Requirement of Direct NPS Management**—Is the area a candidate for alternative protection by other agencies or the private sector? Is it currently managed appropriately by another agency? If so, does the National Park Service need to become involved?

These NPS studies can justify the addition of only those areas that are deemed appropriate and necessary. The majority of NPS special resource studies show that while an area may be important to a local community or region for its natural beauty or cultural history, it does not pass the test of national significance, or it is receiving adequate preservation by another public or private group. Approximately 175 new area studies were conducted by the Park Service between 1970 and 1990; about 25 percent of these became new national park units.

Over the years Congress also has established a number of new park areas without benefit of a study or input from the National Park Service.
Under the 1906 Antiquities Act, the president has the authority to designate national monuments on land currently under federal jurisdiction. President Theodore Roosevelt made the first use of this in 1906 to declare Devils Tower in Wyoming a national monument. It was last used by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 to declare 11 new national monuments in Alaska and to expand two others. In 1980, President Carter rescinded his proclamation after Congress passed legislation creating new national park areas in Alaska. Over the years, nearly 100 NPS units were added as national monuments to the National Park System by presidential proclamation. Many of these units have since been redesignated by Congress as national parks or national historical parks, or otherwise incorporated into the system. The latest units to be changed from presidentially proclaimed monuments to national park status were Death Valley and Joshua Tree, CA on October 31, 1994.
Welcome to the National Parks. At the 360+ units of the National Park System, people can find a predictable sense of comfort and a common set of standards as they travel across the nation, making park visits the highlight of a vacation.

Every park has its own brochure describing the park, its programs and significance, and also how to get the most enjoyment from a visit. Upon arrival to the park a visitor can learn more about the diverse cultural and natural resources in that particular park at a visitor contact station (a visitor center in many cases).

Visitor contact stations often have interpretive/educational exhibits and many have videos or slide presentations with interesting park facts. Parks provide other programs that include living history dramas, guided hikes, campfire talks, and seasonal festivities. Activities and services at parks vary greatly, depending upon the size and type of park visited.

At the relatively small Booker T. Washington National Monument in Virginia, visitors are greeted at a visitor center and can get a park brochure and see interpretive exhibits. They can also walk through historic buildings and a living history farm, have a picnic, or take a self-guided nature hike.

Yellowstone National Park includes miles of scenic roads, hundred of miles of trails, many campgrounds, and a number of museums and visitor centers. People can hike, ride horses, fish, and view wildlife and scenic vistas. Private businesses within the park provide numerous services to the visitor including lodging, restaurants, guided fishing trips, gas, and souvenir shops.

Visitors to Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia can feel they are walking in the footsteps of the nation’s founders. They experience the thrill of being where the Constitution was created and of touching the Liberty Bell. They can delight in exploring Benjamin Franklin Court and his print shop with its voices from the past.

Wherever visitors travel within the National Park System, National Park Service employees will be available to assist them—be it a ranger, maintenance person, or another professional wearing the familiar green and gray uniform and wide brimmed hat. These employees help offer an enjoyable and safe visit to the many visitors who come each year to experience the treasures under the National Park Service’s care.
The Economic Benefits of Visitation to Our National Parks

According to the Department of Commerce, tourism is the third largest retail industry in the United States. Due to the high economic benefit of tourism, the National Park Service developed the Money Generation Model (MGM) to measure the economic effects of direct and indirect expenditures by visitors in and around park sites. The total amount of direct expenditures is compiled through the aggregate sum of individual parks, attendance, duration of stay, and daily expenditure rates, which includes visitor expenditure in local communities on meals and lodging. Indirect or induced expenditures refers to expenditures made by businesses in local communities to service visitors. Direct federal expenditures and salaries are separate from this formula. The Money Generation Model uses locally based factors, such as local employment rates, to estimate taxes and jobs created annually by visitor expenditures.

In 1993, 273 million visits to our national parks created over $10 billion in direct and indirect expenditures within parks and surrounding communities. These expenditures generated over 200,000 jobs. Several examples of the benefits of visits to national parks in 1993 are:

Visitors to Yellowstone National Park produced over $725 million in expenditures, creating 16,163 jobs.

At Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Site visitors spent over $11 million and created 227 jobs in Baltimore.

Visitors to Big Bend National Park, which spans over 774 thousand acres along the Rio Grande River at the Texas-Mexico border, produced over $76 million in expenditures creating 1,674 jobs in the local economies.

Frederick Douglass National Historical Site, the home of the famous 19th Century black civil rights leader, attracted visitors who spent over $1 million creating 24 jobs for local people.

For FY '93 the National Park Service’s operating budget was an estimated $1 billion, while visitor expenditures totaled over $10 billion, thereby giving the American taxpayers a 10-to-1 return on their investment in our national parks.
Coast to Coast Diversity: The National Park System

GENERAL DIVERSITY: The National Park System includes 368 vastly diverse units with more than 20 different titles that embrace over 80.7 million acres across the country. The National Park System represents significant aspects of our country’s historic, cultural, professional, natural, and recreational heritage.

HISTORIC DIVERSITY: The National Park System commemorates the pioneering efforts of homesteaders, miners, and ranchers across the country. The diversity of individual park areas ranges from the first shots of the Revolutionary War to the individuals who carried on the fight for freedom.

- Homestead National Monument of America, Nebraska
- Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park, Alaska
- Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana
- Minute Man National Historical Park, Massachusetts
- Women’s Rights National Historical Park, New York
- The National Park of American Samoa
- Minute Man National Historical Park, Massachusetts
- Women’s Rights National Historical Park, New York
- The National Park of American Samoa

CULTURAL DIVERSITY: The National Park System celebrates the nation’s cultural diversity by commemorating American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska Natives, African Americans, Spanish pioneers, and European and Asians immigrants who were integral to the development of our country.

- Chaco Culture National Historical Park, New Mexico
- Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park, Hawaii
- Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Alaska
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Georgia
- Chaco Culture National Historical Park, New Mexico
- Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park, Hawaii
- Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Alaska
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Georgia

PROFESSIONAL DIVERSITY: The system acknowledges the contributions of nationally significant individuals ranging from sculptors, writers, and performers to politicians, statesmen, and bankers.

- St. Gaudens National Historic Site, New Hampshire
- Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, North Carolina
- Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts, Virginia
- Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, Missouri
- Thomas Jefferson Memorial, District of Columbia
- Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site, Virginia
Natural Diversity: The National Park System recognizes the great natural wonders of our country and manages parks that range from the geysers of Yellowstone National Park and the granite domes of Yosemite National Park to the volcanoes of Haleakala National Park and the beaches of Virgin Island National Park.

Recreational Diversity: The system embraces 18 national recreation areas from the East Coast's Cape Cod National Seashore in Massachusetts to the West Coast's Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California. New River Gorge National River in West Virginia and Appalachian National Scenic Trail represent areas that are designated specifically for recreation—they are the nation's playgrounds.

Units of the National Park Service

(January 1995)

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Fee Reform

Fees are charged at many National Park System units across the country. Entrance fees (charged at 186 of the 368 units), range from five dollars a vehicle and three dollars a person to ten dollars per vehicle at Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, and Grand Canyon. In addition, recreational use fees for facilities such as campgrounds and boat launches also are charged at parks throughout the System.

In 1994, fees generated $76 million, amounting to five percent of the total National Park Service (NPS) budget. Although most of this revenue goes into the General Treasury, beginning in 1993, 15 percent was retained without further appropriation to offset the costs of fee collection.

The Department of the Interior has proposed the National Park Fee Management Act of 1995, which would broaden the Secretary’s authority to manage the fee program. The proposed legislation would remove existing caps on entrance fees and annual passports, remove prohibition of fee collection at many parks, authorize fees for commercial and non-recreational uses of parks, and establish a Park Renewal Fund. All new revenue generated through enactment of this legislation would be deposited into the Park Renewal Fund and be available to the Secretary without further appropriation. The Fund is designed to address critical infrastructure needs in parks such as utility service upgrades, interpretive displays, trail repair, and historic structure rehabilitation.

While other costs continue to increase nationwide, the cost of visiting parks has remained stable. The provisions provided in the proposed Fee Management Act would give the National Park Service the flexibility needed to operate the fee system efficiently and to increase revenue.

In 1976 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation released a study that found a majority of all demographic groups favored the user fee concept as oppose to a total reliance on general tax revenues. A 1982 General Accounting Office study noted that entrance fees have not been raised for more than 10 years. The GAO report found that by historical standards the fees were extremely low:

The 1916 auto permit prices at Yellowstone ($10), Yosemite ($8) and Mount Rainier ($6) were equivalent to $83.00, $65.00, and $50.00 in 1982 dollars. In the 1982 report, GAO recommended that the $2.00 vehicle fee be raised to $7.00 at units of the National Park Service.

Park entrance fees, when compared to those charged early in the century, have not begun to keep pace. Polls have shown that the American public is willing to pay reasonable entrance fees if the returns are used to benefit parks.
Concessions Reform

The Concessions Policy Act of 1965 encapsulates policies that date back to the infancy of the National Park Service. The first director, Stephen T. Mather, understood that many Americans would not visit parks if they did not offer facilities for lodging and dining. Hotel operators and restauranteurs, however, were reluctant to build facilities and conduct operations in parks that were relatively inaccessible to most Americans. Therefore, Director Mather lured these businesses into parks by offering them contractual incentives.

Mather gave the early concessionaires renewable long-term contracts. He charged concessionaires relatively low fees for their operating rights. In 1948 the Park Service offered another “carrot” to concessionaires by allowing them to claim compensable “possessory interests” in the structures they build on park lands, which generally appreciate, rather than depreciate, in value over the term of the contract.

As these incentives nurtured the development of concession operations, the policies they furthered became obsolete. By plane, train, and automobile, tourists now can travel to remote parks as easily as their grandparents were able to visit places like Niagara Falls or Cape Cod. The money they spent in concession operations (approximately $650 million in 1993) is persuasive evidence that Stephen Mather’s incentives no longer are necessary to make these financial opportunities attractive to the business community.

Ironically, the primary side effect of these policies is that these profitable business opportunities are, by and large, not publicly available to the business community. The almost automatic right of preference in contract renewal, coupled with the policies of awarding concessionaires long-term contracts, and of granting “sound value” possessory interest to concessionaires, has effectively thwarted competition for concessions contracts. Only 7 of the approximately 1,900 contracts that have been executed since the passage of the Concessions Policy Act of 1965 have been awarded to businesses that competed against an incumbent concessioner.

The lack of competition for concession contracts has hurt the American public in several ways. A contracting environment that is isolated from competition cannot ensure that only the best service providers are awarded contracts. It also reduces the full potential for the American public to receive a fair return for allowing concessionaires the valuable privilege of operating on park lands.

The 104th Congress presently is considering several bills that would significantly modify the Concessions Policy Act of 1965. The National Park Service supports the aims of the bills, which would restore the health of the concession contracting process by allowing market forces to play a greater role in the selection of concessionaires. They would...
substantially weaken the right of preference in contract renewal, limit the terms of con-
tracts to 10 years or less (except in exceptional circumstances), and reduce the value of
a concessioner's compensable interest in the construction of facilities on park lands.
Among other things, the bills also provide for the establishment of Special Accounts and
Park Improvement Funds that would make concessioner fees available to the Park
Service for use in park operations and maintenance.
Deb and Jay Liggett, Dual Career Couple, Superintendent Devils Tower, Wyoming, and Chief Ranger at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota, respectively

Deb and Jay Liggett have worked in many parks, though not always together. As newlyweds they both worked as seasonals at the Grand Canyon. However they were assigned different housing: Deb on the rim and Jay in the bottom of the canyon. “We stayed in good shape hiking in and out on our days off,” Jay said. After fifteen years, and seven parks later, they now live 255 miles apart. Deb works at Devils Tower in Wyoming and Jay at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota. “Why do we do it? It’s a job worth doing. The NPS is our life. Do we like living apart? No. If there was a better or easier way to do it, we would choose that route. But in order for us to work in jobs that are challenging, for a mission that’s ‘worth doing,’ we have to take risks. Each time one of us moves, we take a risk. So far we have been fairly lucky. The risks have paid off. Who knows what the next move entails . . .”

Diane H. Dayson, Superintendent, Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Site, New York

“I am second generation in the Park Service. My father was an interpreter and then a maintenance worker for 35 years, all over the New York area. He ate, slept, breathed the parks, and we got sick of hearing about it. He said NPS was home for him. I took a summer seasonal job but then said, ‘This is it; I’m outta here.’ I wanted something different. But I found that the Park Service was in my blood. They said it’s just like family, and it is.” (Her brother works in law enforcement at Gateway National Recreational Area, New York.) “I wasn’t sure what a government agency with all its traditionalism had to offer a woman and a minority. It has been a lot of sacrifices and balancing. But what better place than the Park Service? A lot of my friends make four or five times what I do. But their pressures are different and they’re not happy. I go out and enjoy the resource; I’m not trapped in an office.”

Steve Golden, Chief, Conservation Assistance Division, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Program, Massachusetts

“Steve Golden has the best job in the conservation movement” his local newspaper recently declared—and Steve wholeheartedly agrees. Steve has worked for the NPS 19 years and most recently for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Program. Steve has this to say about his job: “Every day I am in contact with people working to save their rivers, their trails, their open space lands, and eager for NPS help. From the South Bronx to the wilds of Maine, I have had the chance to hear the dreams of people struggling to make their communities better places in which to live and work. We are lucky that the NPS has the courage to work outside of confined boundaries and tight regulations as every day we win new friends by participating in the broad conservation agenda of the region. Although my family thinks of me as a bit of an outdoor nut, a grown up Boy Scout, I can’t imagine a closer fit between one’s vocation and one’s avocation.”
HABITATS, HEIGHTS AND HORIZONS

RON NAGATA, Chief of Resource Management, Haleakala National Park, Hawaii

Ron Nagata, Chief of Resource Management at Haleakala National Park, started as a park volunteer in 1976. During that time Ron spearheaded a creative, experimental fence building project in which he and his volunteer crew fenced in native life forms, and fenced out the non-native feral creatures that threaten them. The park, Ron explains, is critical habitat for 7 endangered bird species and 12 threatened and endangered plants. At Haleakala, Ron relates that although “tens of thousands of feral animals were removed, the void was quickly filled by animals from lands adjoining the park.” Innovative park managers planned, designed and constructed approximately 48 miles of both barrier and boundary fences. The feral animals were removed by resource management crews, allowing the native species to prosper. Ron anticipates that the fences will be maintained in perpetuity in order to favor native species.

MIKE SHIELDS, Chief of Maintenance, Denali National Park and Preserve, Alaska

“I joined the NPS in 1960 as a seasonal laborer, and in the ensuing years have been a Trails Leader, Ranger, Interpreter, General Foreman, Facility Manager and Chief of Maintenance. My career has taken me from Olympic to Grand Canyon, Big Bend (twice), Canyonlands, Natural Bridges, North Cascades, Sequoia-Kings Canyon, Rocky Mountain and now Denali. . . . Like most of my peers, I’m here to help preserve the premier examples of America’s natural and cultural heritage for today’s and tomorrow’s public, and to help educate that public to the enduring but often intangible values of this heritage. It is a calling, not just a job—a form of public service that invites willing subservience of personal interests to a longer and more lasting goal. It’s no easy task to attempt balancing the long-term protection needs of a finite resource against the virtually infinite shorter-term desires of the public owners of that resource, but I wouldn’t trade a bit of the last 35 years for any other task.”

YVONNE IRON, Secretary, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, Yellowtail, Montana

Yvonne Iron grew up in Bighorn Canyon country and has worked at Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area for ten years. Yvonne has this to say about “her” park: “Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area is part of my life. As I walk the canyon edge on the Om-Ne-A trail, I hear nature’s voice greeting me. Standing atop the canyon, the breeze on my face quickens my memory of the story of Chief Big Metal, who was rescued by bighorn sheep for whom the park was named. The spectacular Madison limestone and Amsden formations of the canyon walls form the Bighorn Lake, patiently waiting for me to launch my boat and exchange feelings of wonder. I value the peace and serenity that Bighorn Canyon offers me and my family. Bighorn Canyon balances the peace as it breaks the silence by the laughter of mountain water bouncing from cliff to cliff. What a joy!”
CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE AND MOTIVATED

KIMBERLY ANN VALENTINO, Chief of Interpretation, Freeman Tilden Award Winner, Alaska

Kimberly Ann Valentino received the 1994 NPS Freeman Tilden award, which recognizes employees for creative efforts in park interpretation and public education. Kim started as a NPS seasonal ranger in 1982 and worked in five different National Park areas before moving to Kotzebue, Alaska, a small community north of the Arctic Circle, where she became the Chief of Interpretation for three parks—Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Noatak National Preserve, and Kobuk Valley National Park. Kim became a vital part of Kotzebue community life by working with various native populations to create a “Kids’ Corner” at the Park Service information center for latchkey children. Kim also created vibrant interpretive and environmental education programs for the three parks. In northwest Alaska, an extremely isolated area, Kim’s accomplishments have proven to be exceptional examples of community-based interpretation. She lives her credo—“My life belongs to the whole community and it’s a privilege to do whatever I can. Life is a splendid torch, you’ve got to hold it up and make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”

SUSAN SPAIN, Landscape Architect, Denver Service Center (DSC), Colorado

During her six years as a landscape architect with the NPS Denver Service Center Susan Spain’s travels have taken her across the Pacific Northwest, Alaska, and even to Guam. She remarks, “It’s my task to provide spaces, places and services for visitors while minimizing impacts to sensitive resources. I’m responsible for maintaining or evoking the character of each place. The experiences we provide the visitors should help them understand, enjoy and protect parks. I love to research each new project—the issues and areas are never the same and I’m usually awestruck. When starting any project I look at it from the standpoint of the user and then think about how the unique attributes of the site (those characteristics that warranted its preservation) can be presented to the user. . . . In most cases I hope people don’t notice what I’ve done. I feel I have one of the world’s great jobs, something worthy of commitment. Most people are here because they love the mission of the NPS and feel personally responsible for our parks and want to leave them unimpaired for the next generation. It is not hard to care deeply about the work we do.”

DUERY FELTON, Curator, and TONY PORCO, Museum Technician, Museum and Archeological Regional Storage (MARS) Facility, Maryland

Duery Felton, a Vietnam veteran, has worked as the NPS curator for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial collection since 1987. People from the United States and around the world have been leaving items of personal significance relating to the Vietnam War at the memorial. These include boots, love letters, teddy bears, and insignias (making the MARS facility home to one of the country’s best insignia collections). The objects are saved because, although they are not all historic, they are history in the making. Duery and his co-worker, Tony Porco, explain that the collection is a “social collection”—the public decides what’s important. The 30,000–40,000 object collection grows daily, especially on holidays such as Veterans’ Day, Memorial Day, and Fathers and Mothers Days. Duery led the first major collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the NPS—an exhibit entitled “Personal Legacy: the Healing of a Nation.” This exhibit opened in 1992 at the National Museum of American History and during the initial six months between 75,000 and 100,000 people visited the collection. The present evocative collection is on display indefinitely.
KERRY GUNThER, Bear Management Specialist, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming

Kerry Gunther started working in Yellowstone in 1983 as a volunteer. Then Kerry spent five years as a seasonal ranger in the heart of bear country studying grizzlies for his Wildlife Biology masters degree. In 1989, Kerry and his staff were advised that a mother grizzly and her two cubs had been mingling with hundreds of visitors—a dangerous situation. The Bear Management staff was called upon to trap and relocate the bears. After one of her cubs was trapped, the sow forcefully attempted to free it. Kerry and his coworker were watching from the window of a nearby cabin when they made a slight noise that brought the sow charging towards them. Kerry recounts the story: “We stood flat against the wall . . . trying not to move or even breathe for fear the sow would come crashing in through the window. The sow circled the small cabin several times, then stopped in front of the window peering in. She repeatedly whooed, popped her jaws gnashed her teeth, and slapped the ground with her paws. She was aggressive and agitated.” A ranger was able to rescue the twosome by pulling his truck up to the door of the cabin. Later that day Kerry tranquilized the sow and successfully relocated her and her offspring into the vast Yellowstone backcountry.

BOB PANKO, District Ranger, Everglades National Park, Florida

At 18, Bob Panko started as a volunteer at Mount Rainier National Park. Four parks and 19 years later, Bob found himself at Everglades as the Pine Island District Ranger. In 1992, Bob acted as the initial Incident Commander for Hurricane Andrew. In the hours before the storm Bob was “lost in the actions of the moment: a frantic, yet well-orchestrated procedure” to secure the park, its people, and property. Bob and his family decided to stay in their 45-year-old house and wait out the storm. He recalls, “I questioned that decision once again as I sat with my family in the hallway in the eerie calm of the eye of Andrew.” In the end, “. . . despite awesome, frightful sounds my house survived . . .” In the following days, park rescue teams “found friends and coworkers sitting in their living rooms with no roof, in the rain, still trying to comprehend what had happened.” Bob remembers, “We saw people dipping water to drink from the shoulder of the road. We saw death. But we also saw a community of people, the people of the NPS, pulling together to do what they do the best . . . providing legendary service to help those in need yet still protecting our national heritage of park resources.”

STEVE YANCHO, Resource Management Specialist, Department of the Interior (DOI) Valor Award Winner, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Michigan

A NPS employee for 21 years, Steve has worked at Sleeping Bear Dunes since 1978. One day, while leading an interpretive tour of a lighthouse on Lake Michigan, Steve recounts: “It was a very windy day, which made for spectacular viewing of the large surf which was running past the island. Suddenly, we heard desperate screams for help from below, and saw two youths being swept along by the waves, into deeper water.” Although Steve realized that he was not a strong swimmer he also knew that, “if something did not get done quickly there could be disastrous results.” Steve raced down the circular staircase of the lighthouse, shed his shoes and radio and dived into the surf. One of the individuals made it to shore as Steve entered the water, but the other young man still struggled in the waves. When Steve reached him the 18 year old clung frantically to him, dragging them both to the bottom. Steve managed to push him away and swiftly swam to shore to get a log. He then swam back out through the pounding surf, pushed the log to the young man, and maneuvered them both to shore. As a result of these actions Steve was awarded the DOI Valor Award.
Caring for the American Legacy

"...for the benefit and inspiration of all the people..."

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
The Mission of the National Park Service

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

—from the Val Agenda Report
The Mission of the National Park Service

“The National Park Service is dedicated to conserving 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 Service is also responsible for managing a great variety of national and international programs designed to help extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.”

—from the Vail Agenda Report
The National Park Service

If you haven’t looked at us recently, you may be surprised at what you’ll find. You will still be awestruck at the majesty of the National Park System—the scenic, scientific marvels that spoke to the hearts and minds of the first European settlers who saw them. From that early sense of wonder sprang the idea of “saving something for tomorrow,” as a reminder of the world these settlers found when they came—a gift to their children and their children’s children.

The American people have recognized and kept this sacred trust. Their Congress has made the protection of our natural and cultural legacy the law of the land and entrusted the National Park Service with its care. We are the steward of America’s natural wonders and special places, the keeper of her historic treasures and diverse cultural traditions, and an educator of her citizens. We tell the stories of civil rights and Civil War, of invention, and of national shame and honor. Our mission is as vital today as it was in the beginning: to conserve and protect the nation’s cultural and natural heritage and to make those places and resources available for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.

Over the years, the American people have called on us to help preserve additional historic and cultural signs of who we are as a people, and how we came to be a nation. Rather than expand the System, Congress authorized us to form partnerships with others to protect resources all across America. These partnerships strengthen our work as a Service, and our work strengthens our partners. Together we become far more effective than either of us, separately.

In short, we have responded to pressing needs in innovative ways. “Working smarter” describes what we strive continuously to do. The way we have gone about it—ways that empower communities and organizations that seek and welcome our assistance—is part of what has made us, according to a nationwide Roper poll, “America’s favorite federal agency.”

Theodore Roosevelt views Yosemite National Park with John Muir in 1903. Muir discussed with Roosevelt the importance of legislation designed to preserve and protect Yosemite for all time. Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

At left, view of the Lower Falls of Yellowstone River from Lookout Point in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming.

The National Park Service was established "... to promote and regulate the use of the... national parks... which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

The National Park Service is . . .

Steward for National Parklands

The 360-plus units of the National Park System are the nation's most precious natural areas, cultural resources, and recreation sites. The parks, monuments, recreation areas, and historic sites are the special creation of the people, and they belong to the people—not just today, but in perpetuity. Together, these sites constitute our national memory, the database from which our nation's future history flows.

Images of green and gray uniforms and broad-brimmed ranger hats, smiles of "Welcome to Your National Park," and inspirational words about America's natural and cultural heritage are all part of the National Park Service. But we are more than rangers; we are a skilled cadre of employees, whose wide-ranging professional training and experience meet the complex demands of our mission. The deep respect and love our employees feel for the resources they protect and the people they serve results in a collective pride and dedication that underlies everything we do.

The uniformed park employees have earned their reputation as among the most courteous and helpful of all public servants. This is how the public sees us, and rightly so. But our usefulness (like beauty) goes deeper than public impression. Our professional readiness covers the full range of park needs, from education and law enforcement to fire fighting and search-and-rescue. The range of NPS personnel abilities usually represents several separate careers, yet Park Service employees do them all, and believe in doing them well.

The National Park Service is the nation's lead agency for the preservation of history and prehistory at the national, state, tribal, and local levels. Our job is as comprehensive as telling the story of the birth and growth of our nation at Independence National Historical Park, and as specific as helping protect the historic courthouse at Fort Smith, Arkansas.
The park maintenance worker may be almost invisible to the public because her work is done so well. But she and her fellow crew members maintain roads, repair historic buildings, and keep the drinking fountains flowing. The "behind the scenes," work of these employees is essential to park operations and park visitors alike.

In the public eye, nothing represents the National Park Service as does the ranger. The public expects rangers, above all, to be of help. They answer questions and present education programs. They are there to find you when you get lost, help you when you're hurt, rescue you when you're stuck, and enforce the law when you, or others, don't abide by it.
## The National Park Service: Working for America

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<td>Over 55</td>
<td>State and Tribal preservation offices</td>
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<td>Tribal preservation programs</td>
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### Providing Open Space and Recreation

### Working With Partners

The National Park Service, at a community's request, helps conserve the community's favorite streams, helps rehabilitate its recreation facilities, and helps connect its trails through grant programs and technical assistance.

We couldn't possibly accomplish all we do without the assistance of others. We are joined by enthusiastic volunteers, businesses, cooperating associations, and foundations; together we do the job.

In short, we are *here* for America!
Making a Difference in Several Important Ways

Our responsibilities are planted firmly in our natural and cultural past, but they also extend importantly into a future that will discover new meaning and values in the legacy we guard today. A large part of our effectiveness lies in this focus on the future, and on our willingness to be partners with those who already are responding to the changes in our world and the needs that come with them. We are the roots for our children and our grandchildren.

Managing National Park Lands

Two hundred seventy-five million visits a year and growing... all these customers can't be wrong! They visit the national parks each year as major vacation destinations, and increasingly as day and weekend excursions. The parks we preserve contain remnants of great ecosystems. In them are found some of the last refuges of endangered species and prime pieces of pristine wilderness in Alaska's national parks. But these places are only the highest profile, most scenically arresting parts of this nation's treasured heritage. We also are responsible for the sites that preserve and interpret our history and our culture, as well as for the operation of urban and rural recreation areas.

There's plenty to do within the national parks, and the nation is doing it all! For instance, 185 million citizens enjoy educational interpretive programs, 18 million visitors stay overnight, 350,000 parties head into the backcountry, 275,000 climbers scale rocks, and 98,000 mountaineers climb peaks. More than 25 percent of international visitors to the United States have a national park as part of their itinerary.

Our sites include a vast infrastructure. The "built" part of the National Park System consists of 15,000 buildings, 8,000 miles of roads, 5,000 housing units, 1,500 water/sewer systems, and 13,000 miles of trails.
Supporting the Creation of Regional Parks

State and local parks have been created through federal assistance—projects conceived and carried out by local areas to serve their own needs. These needs range from Little League baseball diamonds to large state parks to riverways purchased with federal grants and matching dollars from state and local levels.

In Delaware, Land and Water Conservation Fund monies were used to establish the entire state park system, including 26 miles of beautiful beaches that attract people from a five-state area.

Greenways—those “long skinny parks”—have emerged as key connectors in the park systems of the nation’s metropolitan areas. For example, an integral part of Chattanooga, Tennessee’s nationally recognized renaissance was the creation of a greenway system, developed over six years with Park Service assistance. By early 1995, 22 partners (ranging from national corporations and agencies to local governments and foundations) had contributed $2.9 million to establish a regional network of streamside trails, bike paths, and connecting natural areas.

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Grant Program supports recreation in urban areas and rewards creative thinking with “innovation grants.” Some results: a City-Fit program for health and fitness in New Rochelle, New York; Adapted Boating for people with disabilities in Oakland, California; and the Senior Citizens Maintenance Corps that hires vigorous part-time workers for parks in Revere, Massachusetts.

We share our expertise when others request it to help protect natural resources, from restoring abandoned coal mine sites, to mapping critical bobcat habitat, to offering advice on local river management plans, to connecting trails across the nation. We accomplish this through state agreements, university graduate projects, and making available our technical assistance.

Yellowstone National Park was able to work with the State of Montana’s Department of Environmental Quality to completely rehabilitate an abandoned coal mine from the late 1800s. The plan was prepared by park...
Conserving the Nation’s Cultural Heritage

Our work honors the history of all Americans. Start-up money available through the Historic Preservation Fund, tax incentives, technical assistance, and official recognition programs administered in partnership with the states, bolsters community preservation efforts. We advise communities on the many ways they can conserve their unique character and heritage.

In Yakutat, Alaska, NPS employees from Wrangell-St. Elias and Glacier Bay National Parks helped the Yakutat Native Association/Yakutat Tlingit Tribe obtain a $50,000 historic preservation grant. With this assistance, they formulated a historic preservation plan and ordinance for their village. The grant came from the Historic Preservation Fund program, administered by the National Park Service.
Mounted Ranger at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Photograph by Richard Frear

Providing Research, Education, and Interpretation

"... the National Register program has been a key—if not the key—component to effecting urban revitalization in Birmingham. Without it, historic buildings would not have been rehabilitated and the essence of Birmingham preserved. In addition, National Register designations have provided a critical stimulus to neighborhoods and neighborhood leaders by helping them to access a wealth of community pride and, therefore, tackle even their most severe problems."
—Pamela Sterne King, City of Birmingham, Alabama

The Four Corners Heritage Council represents the governors, the National Park Service, other federal agencies, Indian tribal governments, and private organizations within Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, to promote heritage resource tourism, preservation, interpretation, and educational programs. A key project of the Council is development and promotion of the Four Corners Heritage Trails as a set of distinct yet complementary touring routes that link the region’s world class heritage resources, including the Trail of the Ancients in southeast Utah, the San Juan Skyway in southwest Colorado, and the Masau Trail in New Mexico and Arizona.

We sponsor research in order to make informed decisions about protecting wildlife, repairing historic buildings, managing archeological sites, and providing the basis for more accurate and in-depth educational programs. From the genetics of recently discovered organisms to the lifeways of prehistoric peoples, there is still much to be learned from our national parks. Our research serves broader public needs as it is shared across park boundaries and produces unexpected scientific and economic bonuses for the nation. Over 1,500 interpreters and naturalists offered more than 50,000 educational programs, enjoyed by nearly 190 million people in 1993 alone.

Enzymes extracted from a microscopic creature, Thermus aquaticus, discovered in hot pools located in Yellowstone National Park, have cut from days to hours the time required to shortcut the DNA duplication process needed for certain medical diagnoses. This process also has countless applications in genetic engineering, forensics, and research. This tiny creature was ignored for years until Kary Mullis, an industrial biochemist, discovered the enzymes’ unique capabilities. “A decade later,” wrote the Denver Post, “Mullis had a Nobel prize for his discovery and Thermus was the star of a billion dollar industry.”
Glacier National Park in Montana has 50 glaciers with peaks ranging above 10,000 feet. Photograph by Richard Frear

Contributing to Local Economies

National Parks generate substantial economic benefits for surrounding local communities. Grants, technical assistance, and tax incentives have helped communities across the nation leverage additional public and private investment in conservation and recreation projects.

The 275 million visits result annually in an estimated $10 billion spent in the parks and surrounding communities. Visitors to Glacier National Park, for example, spend an estimated $79 million a year inside the park, and generate another $158 million in revenues in the region.

"The historic rehabilitation tax credit meant good jobs for people involved in the revitalization projects. In Philadelphia, there were 356 projects from 1978 to 1985, and that meant 8,640 construction jobs."

–Edward G. Rendell, Mayor of Philadelphia

The federal preservation tax incentives program, managed by the National Park Service, resulted in $16.5 billion privately invested in the rehabilitation of thousands of historic structures, and is recognized as one of the federal government’s most successful urban revitalization programs.
How We Do Our Work

Professional, Experienced Staff

Helping Communities Help Themselves

"We owe a debt of thanks to the workers and volunteers who watch over our national estate and who share their knowledge and enthusiasm with millions of visitors each year."

—Barbara Bush, former First Lady, on the occasion of the National Park Service's 75th anniversary

The National Park Service has a varied and experienced staff of national stature—rangers, natural resource managers, archeologists, historians, interpreters, landscape architects, engineers, and planners, who protect our land and legacy, conduct research, and educate the public. Our personnel, including facility managers, building trade craftsmen and women, and vital administrative and support staff, takes care of the parks and is available to outside clients whose projects dovetail with our own.

The nation has conservation goals that far exceed the capacity of the federal government to address through inclusion in the National Park System. Instead, the National Park Service supports these conservation goals through seed money, recognition programs and technical assistance to communities that seek our help.

Our technical assistance springs from long years of success in caring for the National Park System. Communities across the nation ask for and receive our help in establishing new trail systems, restoring degraded rivers in urbanized areas, and acquiring federal surplus lands for parks and recreation. We also assist communities with protecting historic and cultural places important to them. This assistance often results in better protection for related national park lands.

In south-central Kentucky, the National Park Service joined with local communities, the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to construct a regional sewer system to protect groundwater resources important to the cities, industries, and the subterranean aquatic environment. A $4 million NPS appropriation, when co-mingled with grants and loans from the states, the FmHA and the EPA, funded construction of a regional system that ensures economic sustainability for three small cities and protects the aquatic resources of Mammoth Cave National Park.

At the Yorktown Battlefield, Colonial National Historical Park in Virginia, the National Park Service is seeking to preserve all surviving features and reminders of the eighteenth century and to restore the scene as closely as possible to what it was in 1781.

Photograph by Richard Frear
Heritage areas are a new form of partnership to conserve settled landscapes—farmland, cities, and industrial areas—that tell the stories of how our country evolved. They are managed locally and the land is not owned by the federal government. The Service provides modest assistance for a set number of years to designated areas. Speaking of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the president of the Joliet/Will County Center for Economic Development states: "Being in the Corridor is one of our selling points. It's one of the amenities we can offer in terms of quality of life."

In Juneau, Alaska, a public-private ownership was able to revitalize the city's downtown after a survey supported nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. This effort resulted in rehabilitation of buildings, sidewalk improvements, and increased citizen participation in local planning.

"Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation has watched with great satisfaction the growing participation of communities in the Genesee Valley Greenway Movement. Our company is proud to work with partners such as the National Park Service and New York Parks and Conservation Association, who do so much good for the development of recreational opportunities and for the environment."

-Thomas Swartz, Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation

Partnering is a two-way street. We recognize the expertise and services of our partners and welcome their help in doing our work. These partners include volunteers, private businesses, park association, foundations, state, local, and tribal governments, and other federal agencies. New types of parks have been established—areas with multiple land owners managing for a common purpose—creating new partnerships. At Petroglyph National Monument, for example, the National Park Service, the State of New Mexico, and the City of Albuquerque have formed a joint ownership and management arrangement to preserve 12,000-year-old images of human prehistory.

75,000 volunteers in national parks and affiliated areas contributed $35 million worth of services in one year alone, from maintaining the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, to welcoming visitors at information desks, to monitoring biological research plots.
Spruce Tree House at Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado is the best preserved large cliff dwelling in the park. Photograph by Donald Waters

Cooperating associations and private businesses contribute millions of dollars to support projects in national parks, from such individual park support as providing bear-proof trash cans or handling the rental of interpretive tour cassettes, to such nationwide services as producing and selling publications and reinvesting proceeds in park management.

The Telephone Pioneers of America (TPA), 8,000 working and retired telephone workers, help us make parks more accessible to people with disabilities. Between 1992 and 1995 they completed 75 projects in 70-some parks—nature trails in Sequoia/Kings Canyon, interactive video interpretation of Golden Gate’s Alcatraz unit (inaccessible to the mobility impaired), and telecommunication devices for the hearing impaired in many national park sites.
Looking to the Future
By Continually Reinventing Ourselves

The National Park Service is an agency with a history, but it is not tied down by the past. We are finding new ways to do our work better and more efficiently. We are well into the process of downsizing our central and administrative functions, putting more of our personnel and funds into our widespread field areas. By moving our people into the field, we are trying to fulfill our mission of resource protection and public service in spite of declining resources and increasing demands. We continually strive to update and improve our professionalism in all the many disciplines we represent, and we are accelerating this on-going process to meet a new and demanding future.

Our efforts to attract and work as partners with outside cooperators has helped us transfer responsibilities for preserving cultural resources to the state and local levels, and in the process, to streamline our own work and empower local communities.

Great effort has gone into this endeavor, but we don't consider our work finished. The National Park System is living, tangible evidence of the best this Nation has been. With the growing participation of its owners—the U.S. citizenry—it will continue proudly to reflect the best of what this Nation is destined to become.

Opposite: Waterfalls and rhododendron on the trail to Alum Cave in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee.

All photographs not credited are by the National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center.
"That Congress declares that the national park system, which began with establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, has since grown to include superlative natural, historic, and recreation areas in every major region of the United States, its territories and island possessions; that these areas, though distinct in character, are united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expression of a single national heritage; that individually and collectively, these areas derive incremental quality through their inclusion jointly with each other in one national park system preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people of the United States."
