



# 21<sup>st</sup> Century National Parks

Lessons from the Field on

## New Parks



# 21<sup>st</sup> Century National Parks: Lessons from the Field on New Parks

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## Forward

In the past 10 years, 25 new National Park Service units have been added to the system. These parks span the spectrum from large natural areas to small historical sites, often helping the NPS interpret a more holistic and multidimensional story of the country's heritage. In June 2016 the Stewardship Institute convened staff from most of the decade's new parks with regional and national support staff to discuss the challenges of new park establishment. They shared experiences, identifying opportunities for improving the way NPS goes about setting up new units. A number of recommendations emerged from that workshop and the Institute has spent the past year and a half developing a deeper understanding of the challenges facing new unit managers, the unique opportunity starting a park provides for the NPS and the community, and the important role that programs across the Service play in ensuring new unit success. This report summarizes some of what we have heard from those in the field, partners on the ground, and regional office staff.

*Today "all parks are partnership parks."*

*Gay Vietzke  
NER Director*

Most national parks today can be characterized as "partnership parks," contingent on strong community support. These partnerships, which are core to park establishment and operations, are innovative to many NPS staff and sometimes unfamiliar to the public.

Many of these partnerships are forged before the park is even established, in the earliest stages of park creation with agency leadership, regional planners, and national support offices involved. After authorizing legislation or proclamation, day-to-day nurturing of these partnerships and the activation of these new parks in the local community often falls to the superintendent, who may have other parks to manage or who may be entering into their first superintendency. It has taken significant effort on the part of regional offices, neighboring parks, and others to attempt to develop consistency in process and support for these new units and their superintendents. With each new challenge, processes have been improved, limiting the future needs for new unit superintendents to pioneer new paths or invent new wheels.

*The National Park Service would benefit from a system for standing up new park units that is more holistic, intentional, and proactive.*

Efforts in standing up new park units over the last decade have provided an unprecedented learning opportunity for the agency, allowing for the formulation of a system for activating new park units that is more holistic, intentional, and proactive. A consensus is emerging that the National Park Service needs to anticipate new parks with strong support

from regional teams, appointment of experienced park managers to the superintendent position, and budget provisions commensurate with the needs. Though each new park is different, the process of park establishment in most cases exhibits some universal characteristics and challenges.

Furthermore, partnerships have become increasingly important for all parks, not just new units. The experience of new park establishment, where often partnerships are central to success from the outset, can inform partnership development and maintenance in more established units. Conversely, many new parks benefit from lessons learned and established partnerships in older parks.

Every park is different, and to be useful any universal framework must be customized to an individual park situation. This report is a general framework of topics identified for further articulation and issues to be resolved setting up new parks and navigating new partnerships at all parks.

Rebecca Stanfield-McCown, NPS Stewardship Institute  
Brent A. Mitchell, QLF Atlantic Center for the Environment

### **Synthesizing What We Have Learned**

Nine of the 25 new parks authorized from 2008 to 2018 are in the Northeast Region. Gay Vietzke, who became the regional director in 2017, has first-hand experience in setting up new parks. Prior to becoming regional director, she served as superintendent at the National Mall and Memorial Parks, and oversaw Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument when it was created in 2016. With that experience Gay is taking a forward-looking approach to how the National Park Service establishes parks in the future.

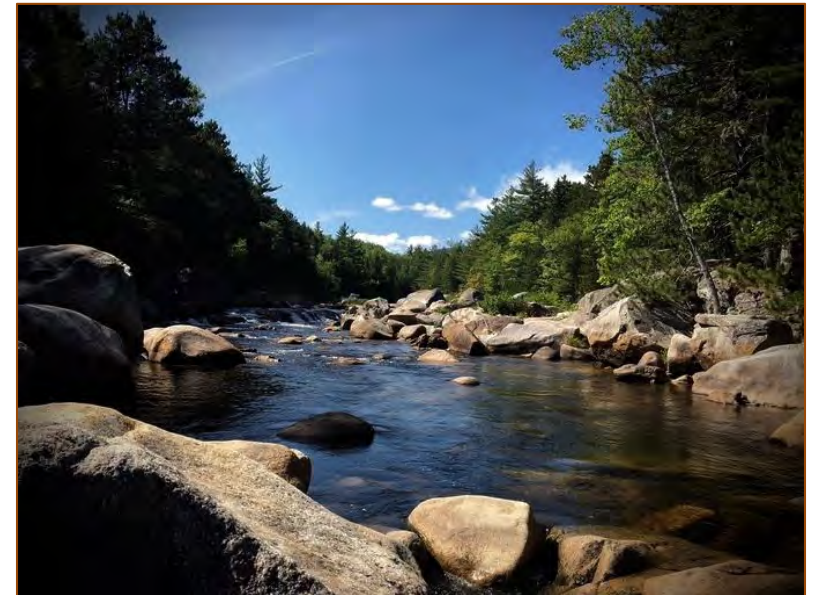
The Northeast Region is making “an effort to synthesize what we’ve learned in the past 5 years or so. I think [our focus is on] how we might organize things going forward. A lot of it is about managing expectations and providing some very clear guidance about who is going to be responsible for what, when -- which is something we have all experienced. That’s where a lot of energy has had to go. All sorts of folks, internal and external, have expectations about how the new units get started. ... It will be very helpful to have some kind of framework that shows” when and where decisions typically happen. This is “an effort to organize it, and again, the next time this should happen, have a way to use a general universal framework from the get-go. Of course, this would be customized to an individual park situation. But the framework will help create consistent expectations and understanding about when we’re going to need what resources, and use that as a way to have a conversation about what’s next” to establish the new park.

Gay Vietzke, Northeast Regional Director



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*Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument,  
Maine, established in 2016. (Photo: Christina Marts)*



Pullman, in South Chicago, was the first model, planned industrial community in the United States. Scene of a violent strike in 1894, this company town played an important role in the labor movement and ultimately the civil rights movement. More recently, many individuals and organizations came together to form the Chicago Neighborhood Initiative to preserve and interpret the heritage of this important place as a way to leverage economic development in the area.

The site “is about 203 acres,” says Midwest Deputy Regional Director Patty Trap. “That’s the Monument boundary. What we settled on [for NPS ownership] is the historic clock tower building, and we own less than one-third of an acre. The less we own but have the ability to put the arrowhead on ... is really the way to go these days. We’re choiring the community...people that love the architecture and stories of Pullman. And there’s no way the Park Service could do it on our own.”

## Parks for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Why? And Why Now?

Twenty-five (25) new park units have been designated in the 10 years to 2018 (see list in the Appendix). The system is likely to continue expanding in the future. Experience from standing up these new units presents an opportunity to improve how the National Park Service supports new parks in the future. This report draws from that experience to help guide frameworks for new park efforts going forward.

Those working firsthand with new-park<sup>1</sup> establishment as superintendents or regional planners (called new-park practitioners in this document) were trailblazers on a variety of topics. Many report that they had to develop new paths forward on everything from major issues such as how to manage partner expectations to the mundane, like how to establish basic internet connections at new park offices. Similarly, support structures at the national and especially regional level had to incorporate planning and budgeting for future parks into existing work and budget. Most seem to have to approach their work with something of a frontier mentality, setting out into unfamiliar terrain. All new-park practitioners garnered critical experience that should be collected and shaped to improve the activation process for future new parks. Going forward, the NPS seeks to ensure that people on the ground have a support network and understand the responsibility to work within that network.

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusion, this document uses hyphens in *new-park* when used as an adjective. A *new-park superintendent* may not be a *new superintendent*. In fact, many are already also superintendents of established parks as an additional role.

### Definition of Partnership Park

Many of these new parks are so-called “partnership parks,” contingent on strong community support—often in very material ways—at levels that are novel to some NPS staff and unfamiliar to the public. Generally, partnership parks have a partnership-forward operating ethic; the park, simply could not operate as efficiently without assistance from non-NPS entities. These entities may be state or local governments, nongovernmental organizations, businesses or individuals. Parks have always received such assistance, but the key here is that one or more elements of mission delivery are provided by non-NPS sources. The support provided to new parks varies widely in form, source and scale depending on the individual case. The common feature is that the National Park Service relies on partners as a prudent management practice and also to fill in gaps due to the limited resources available to new park units. The National Park Service has specifically and centrally highlighted partnerships in its mission statement since 2001.

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 Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Of course, partnerships are not just for new parks. Working outside boundaries and with support from



partners is an expectation of all parks. The difference in new parks is that partnership is expected from the beginning, offering opportunities for structuring the park to this operational reality.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Park Principles**

Running up to its Centennial the National Park Service developed a set of principles to guide its second century. First articulated in the [NPS Urban Agenda](#), these principles related in many ways to new parks and new partnerships.

**Activate “One NPS”** – The NPS does much more than manage 417 park units. It also serves communities and conservation through over 50 national programs like the National Register of Historic Places, the National Heritage Areas Program, and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. But these programs too often operate in isolation. 21<sup>st</sup> Century parks should develop internal partnerships and be prepared to present to the public all that NPS has to offer. (A directory of NPS programs is available on [nps.gov/urban](https://nps.gov/urban).)

**Nurture a Culture of Collaboration** – As described in this document, national parks are increasingly realizing a mandate (and necessity) to partner with others, from local community groups to large national organizations, and other government agencies. New parks are being established in this model, but the culture of the organization is still adjusting to this way of working.

**Be Relevant to All Americans** – Many of the parks established in the last decade celebrate the great diversity of the United States, and connect to heritage previously underrepresented in the system (e.g., Stonewall, African

Burial Ground, César E. Chávez, and Civil Rights monuments established in 2017). All parks should interpret their stories in culturally appropriate terms.

*“The opportunity to start a new national park is a once-in-a-lifetime thing.”*

*Ethan McKinley, First State NHP*



Y-12 workers change shifts at Oak Ridge, TN, part of the Manhattan Project National Monument.



## Sources and Methods

### Workshop

In June 2016 a sampling of new-park practitioners, both park superintendents and regional office support staff, came together to discuss the challenges of new park establishment. They shared experiences and lessons learned, surfaced new ideas and ways of doing business, and identified opportunities for improving the way NPS goes about setting up new units. A number of recommendations emerged, though all need to be refined through ongoing discussion and review. *This report is, a framework of topics identified for further articulation and issues to be resolved.*

### Workshop Objectives

- Explore promising practices from case studies of 21<sup>st</sup> Century park design and management;
- Identify tools and techniques for engaging communities, working with partners, and addressing complex and sensitive stories;
- Form a new-park superintendent cohort to provide continued support and learning opportunities to their peers and others and;
- Gain greater insights into the unique challenges facing new-park superintendents.

### New-Park Superintendent Cohort

As part of the support network for Northeast Region new unit superintendents, a cohort of park managers

connected through conference calls on a semi-monthly bases. In preparation for the workshop, the Institute team joined those calls to get a better understanding of the needs of new unit managers, what value they were looking for in the workshop, and other ways the group could be supported. The cohort's involvement was vital to the development of the workshop agenda. After the workshop, the cohort group was expanded to include regional office staff and new unit managers from across the Service. Based on the dialogue at the workshop, cohort calls were focused on specific topics such as identifying new park milestones, determining ways to enhance regional support teams, and exploring funding strategies for new units. The new cohort calls were facilitated by the Institute for the year following the workshop.



The main recommendations extrapolated from the workshop and explored by the cohort were:

- *Develop **orientation** opportunities for new-park superintendents;*
- *Identify **skills** required in establishing partnership parks, starting with a firm definition of “partnership parks.” Introduce those skills in training programs;*
- *Encourage **peer support** through regional and national cohorts of new-park staff;*
- *Establish mechanisms for communicating **community expectations** raised throughout the new-park life cycle;*
- *Organize **regional support teams** for each new unit, flexible and tailored to specific needs. Specify responsibilities of each team member;*
- *Rationalize new-park **budgeting**, projecting out from recent experience;*
- *Articulate a new approach to **planning** for new units, with low-cost, moderate complexity for compliance with statutory requirements; and*
- *Approach all of the above from a **national** perspective, implemented at regional level, with wide engagement of relevant staff across the Service.*

## **Interviews**

In the spring of 2018, the Stewardship Institute conducted interviews with eight people engaged in establishing new parks across the country. The objective was to obtain first-hand accounts of their experiences. Interviewees included six new-park superintendents and two regional office leaders in the Northeast and Midwest regions. Jennifer Jewiss, a partner from the Institute from the University of Vermont, conducted the interviews. Quotes from those interviews are used throughout this report.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony,  
Harriet Tubman Underground  
Railroad National Historical  
Park, MD

## Lessons Learned in Establishing New Parks

- Establish a Template and Adapt It
- Take a Team Approach
- The Superintendent is the Visible Tip of the Iceberg
- Establish Clear Lines of Support
- Choose a Superintendent Who Is Experienced and Entrepreneurial
- Don't Stretch Too Thin
- Every Park Is a Partnership Park
- Manage Expectations: Internally, and with Partners
- Match the Superintendent to the Need
- Pass the Baton



### Establish a Template and Adapt It

Each new park has unique operating realities, but there are common features in how they are realized. Rather than start each new park from scratch, each region should establish a template and adapt it to the circumstance. Regional templates and lessons learned should be shared internally to facilitate organizational learning.

*(see System Approach to Standing Up New Parks)*

### Take a Team Approach

Organize the template around a team of staff and partners at the site, regional and national levels. Each region should have a new-park strategy. Avoid the temptation to rely overmuch on a single individual, the new-park superintendent.

*(see Regional Office Teams and The Role of National Programs)*

### **The Superintendent is the Visible Tip of the Iceberg**

While the superintendent is clearly the face of the new park, and may be the only NPS staff person most people in a new park's community meet, he/she should feel, act, and appear as part of a larger team and not as a "Lone Ranger."

*(see Preparation and Support of New-Park Superintendents, The Role of Narrative in New-Park Leadership)*

### **Establish Clear Lines of Support**

Everyone involved in standing up a new park will need support to play their roles. Supervisors should ensure everyone knows their role on the team and how they are expected to support each other.

*(see Regional Office Teams, T-map for New Parks, ...)*

### **Choose a Superintendent Who is Experienced and Entrepreneurial**

A new superintendent arrives on-site with little in place and high community and political expectations. S/he should have served as a superintendent at another park or had equivalent leadership experience in order to know what should be in place and where to go for resources.

*(see Preparation of Support of New-Park Superintendents)*

### **Don't Stretch Too Thin**

Sometimes an established superintendent may be tasked to start a new park while continuing to supervise an existing park. Be sure there is sufficient support for the older park. On the positive side, the superintendent can often borrow staff and resources from one park to the next.

*(see Preparation and Support of New-Park Superintendents)*



### **Every Park is a Partnership Park**

All parks depend on partnerships to some extent, but it is a modern reality that the successful establishment of new parks is not possible without significant material support from outside the agency.

*(see Partnerships for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)*

### **Manage Expectations: Internally, and with Partners**

This may be the most important maxim. Communities often assume that infrastructure such as a visitor center will open soon after the park is official. Groups who have long advocated for a park expect action. Internally, different levels of the team may have unrealistic expectations of each other. Managers and superintendents must stay ahead of expectations and communicate effectively and frequently.

*(see Peer Support, Partnerships for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, The Role of Narrative in New-Park Leadership)*

### **Match the Superintendent to the Need**

With each park having a different suite of partners and specific needs, it is important to select the on-site staff person according to skills needed to manage the particular place and the particular time in the development of the park and partnerships.

### **Pass the Baton**

Staff coming in to the park must be briefed on any promises made to partners and the local community in order to manage expectations.

*(see Preparation and Support of New-Park Superintendents)*

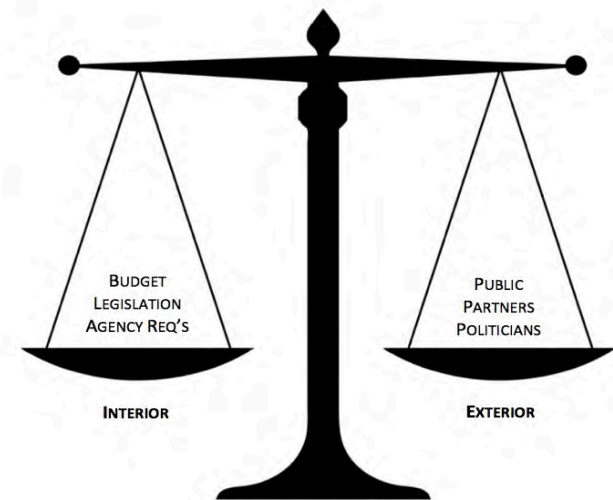


Of the many responsibilities of standing up a new park, superintendents and project managers consistently point to managing expectations as the most challenging. While true of all park partnerships, the challenge is particularly acute in new parks, where relationships and roles are first being established. Expectations are both external and internal, and necessary skills vary according to the kinds of relationship.

Though the site was proclaimed a national monument in 2012, the National Chavez Center (NCC) had operated the property and welcomed visitors since 2004. The monument itself is 105 acres. The National Park Service owns two acres, and has easements on another 9. "These two acres consists of the Memorial Garden where Cesar and Hellen Chavez are buried, the garden of the southwest and the adjacent visitor Center," says Superintendent Ruben Andrade.

"I think we need to do a better job at defining expectations at the beginning. Our partners were under the impression that after we became a national park site, there would be greater funds allocated to the site.

"Our Partners now understand that we are not going to get a million dollars in next year, they also know that the National Park Service is doing everything it can to provide resources to this park. In our region [Pacific West], we are set up in networks. This park is in the Sierra network, which is a cluster of parks: Yosemite, Devil's Postpile, Sequoia and César Chávez all willing providing assistance. Sequoia is our support park...we're connected at the hip."



## One NPS

### System Approach to Standing Up New Parks

#### *The Case*

The National Park Service should synthesize its organizational learning from the last decade of new park activations to create a workable template for standing up new park units that is holistic, intentional, and proactive. In general, new park authorizations are not surprises. It is important to use the time from park conception to designation to deliberately prepare for the start up phase of the new parks, with a special focus on establishing expectations for levels of support for and from regional teams, preparing new-park superintendents, and developing a realistic budget expectations. In most cases, the process of park establishment exhibits some universal characteristics and challenges. Thus NPS would benefit from a national effort that shares experience and peer support.

A first step is to better understand partnership parks, and capture lessons learned from experience over the past decade, as described in earlier sections. This will inform all of what follows in terms of preparing staff and providing support through the life cycle of new park establishment.

#### *Budgeting*

Budgets are naturally a concern of everyone involved in establishing new parks. Most of the public does not realize that the National Park Service does not often receive new

funding with the addition of a new park. Current practice is that each new unit gets the same initial budget, typically in the next budget cycle. Often the sum is only enough to cover the costs of a superintendent. Clearly, this area requires much further study. Workshop participants identified several points for future discussion and inquiry.

- Regional leadership and the Comptroller's office pull together recommendations on the budget pieces of new parks
- What are the rubrics that go into making the budget decisions?
- Identify the process so *“...there should be a cookbook.”* that each park can have some input
- What are the financial 5 year projections- business plan for new units?

Rational budgeting would plan for two futures. Both require different strategies.

1. A future of flat funding and no base operating increases service-wide
2. A future in which base operating increases become more regular and predictable

## *Evaluation*

The National Park Service now has considerable experience in standing up new parks in a partnership model. Most of the institutional knowledge is at the individual level and therefore not readily available to others. Now would be a good time to conduct an evaluation of new-park establishment, using a more developed definition of partnership parks. Such work might logically begin with a region that has seen the large number of new parks in recent years.

Managing—and especially establishing—a national park is not a one-person job, no matter how large the park. Once a park has been established, standing up a new unit should not be entirely on the shoulders of a superintendent, even when he or she is the only permanently assigned staff to that unit. Workshop participants strongly endorsed the idea of regional office support teams, like the ones now active in the Northeast Region. Regional and national level practitioners are critical to the establishment of parks and are often the individuals with knowledge of the institutional history and early outreach to community groups.

A small group discussed the topic of regional office teams in some detail. They concluded that the composition of such teams should be tailored to the needs of new park. Regions should clearly identify specific experts that act as a team, based on the anticipated needs of the new unit, evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Characteristics of a Regional Office Team

- Small (core team with experts on call)
- Stable (continuity and institutional knowledge)
- Authorized (holds power to provide the support needed)

The role of the team is to activate resources and to connect the superintendent (and others) to people who can help with all aspects of setting up a new unit. The roles and composition of the team may change as the needs of the evolving new unit change (see life cycle section). The team would also be in a position to evaluate progress and suggest course corrections if needed. Capacity should be built into each team member's portfolio so that it is not an added or additional duty.

## *Regional Office Teams*

Examples of expertise needed:

### Core team

- Lands/Realty
- Legislative Affairs
- Agreements
- Interpretation
- Public Affairs
- Regional Management
- Solicitor
- Superintendent / Unit Manager



*Ad Hoc* – Subject Matter Experts on call

- Communications/Friends groups
- Planning
- Facilities
- Resources
- Compliance
- Budget
- Information Technology
- Acquisition
- Enforcement
- Partnerships
- Agreements

### **Foundation Documents Team**

Practitioners suggest that a more focused team approach would be beneficial on the specific subject of formulating foundation documents. Comprised of park and region technical experts, this group would collaborate over a one-year time span, adapting experience from other parks to the specific circumstance of each new park unit.

Practitioners identified key elements of developing a foundation document:

- Scholars Roundtable
- Engagement of communities
- Scope vision
- Sketch business plan

### **Peer Support**

Perhaps the most relevant source of advice, ideas and insights for new-park superintendents are others who are

or recently were in similar positions. As the number of new partnership parks grows so does this cohort of experienced practitioners. The workshop emanated from initial communications among a cohort of practitioners in the Northeast Region, responding to their need for mutual



support. This group connected to national counterparts through the workshop event.

Practitioners are also discussing whether smaller groupings may allow for more frequent interaction. These groups might function like existing groups of parks that meet, collaborate, and share resources in some regions called subclusters in the Northeast; networks in Pacific West; and zones in the Midwest.

The Common Learning Portal is a new tool for sharing experience and lessons learned, and could provide an online platform for continued collaboration among practitioners.

### **The Role of External Partnership Programs**

As mentioned before, in addition to managing over 400 national park units across the United States and its territories, the NPS administers numerous national and regional programs that are available to state, local, and tribal governments; nonprofit organizations; businesses; educational institutions; and the general public. Another way to present the NPS community assistance programs is by community interest, specifically the recognition of nationally important places; funding and technical assistance for historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, and education projects; and career development opportunities for youth and professionals.



These programs fall under the following categories:

- National Designations
- Grant and Financial Assistance
- Project Assistance
- Investment and Property Acquisition Assistance, and
- Internships, Volunteer, and Professional Development Opportunities

See the Directory of National Park Service Community Assistance Programs (listed in the references) for more detail on 54 of these programs.

NPS also has internal support programs at national and especially regional level in budget, lands and acquisitions, planning, etc. Many should usefully be included in the regional support team for a new park but, if not, the superintendent should at least be aware of their role and how they could be engaged in standing up the new unit.

These external partnership programs can serve to enhance NPS presence in a community with a new unit, providing needed expertise and assistance to the new unit superintendent while also introducing a community to the wide breadth of NPS community programs.



Volunteer hike, First State National Historical Park, DE



A Pullman porter at work. Pullman National Monument, Chicago, IL

## Leadership

### Preparation and Support of New-Park Superintendents

Twenty-first century parks require 21<sup>st</sup> century skillsets. Practitioners reflecting on their experience say they would have benefited from more orientation to the job that lay ahead. With a better mechanism for sharing experiences and lessons learned, many felt that they would have spent less time duplicating efforts that had already been made at other new parks.

### Orientation

#### Content for New Park Leadership

Content areas:

- Lands
- Written agreements
- Jurisdictional issues/relationships
- State elected officials and agencies
- Local elected officials and agencies
- Congressional relationships
- Consultations: Gov't to Gov't
- Reporting/data-driven
- Content management: public information for park

Note: many of these skills are also listed for the composition of Regional Office Teams. Still, new-park superintendents themselves need to have some competency in these areas.

### *Bringing Staff Up to Speed on Park Genesis*

New-park superintendents often find themselves saddled with community expectations that were elevated during early phases of park conception. Often they are surprised to learn of promises that were made, promises they do not have the means or authority to keep. Practitioners identified the need for more specific information on how an area moved through genesis and pre-establishment phases to designation because they were not participants

in those interactions and negotiations. There is a clear need to develop some form of administrative record of the early phases of each new-park's life cycle. There are many forms this could take, including a basic "oral history," record of all news articles, and/or an administrative history focused on park establishment.

*"Being a new superintendent in a new unit is doing two things at the same time. I really think we have to be very intentional [if] we have a new superintendent at a new unit."*

*Darren Boch, Superintendent,  
Paterson Great Falls NHP*





Paterson, New Jersey, was founded by Alexander Hamilton as America's first planned industrial city. Paterson native Darren Boch had only been in the National Park Service for five years when he was assigned in 2006 to stand up the newly designated park.

"One of the things about being a new unit is you still have administrative requirements even if you don't have an administrative officer or budget person. You still have to do the things that you're required to manage the budget, to manage a program in your budget. So I had to quickly find people in parks that were close to me that would be willing to help. One thing led to another and different parks helped me. We've formalized it now, so I have what's called Resource Sharing Agreements with Morristown and Edison national parks for both budget support, administrative and agreements technical support. And agreements is a really important function, especially in a partnership park like Paterson.

### ***Transition Map for New Parks***

Incoming superintendents need a process to rapidly learn how the area that is now a national park has been managed in the past, and how it has been perceived. And as above, they need to understand park origins in order to transition the area to national park standards.

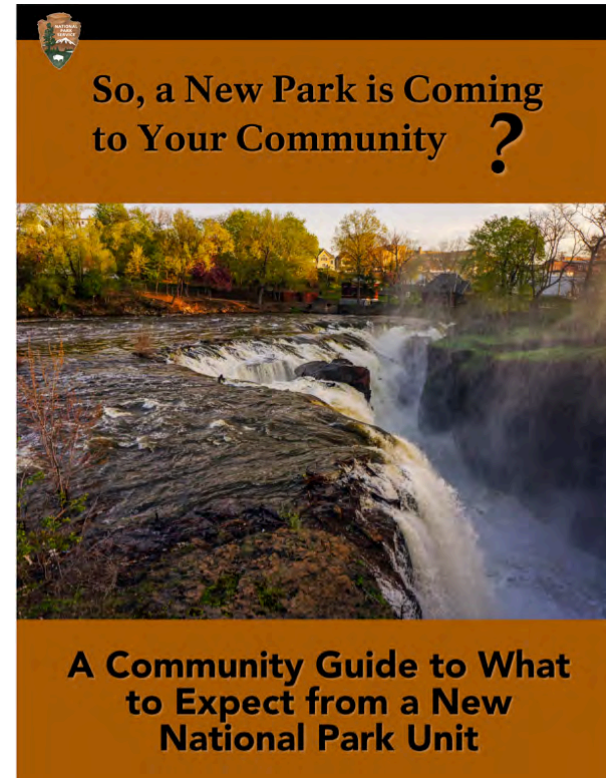
To help select the right superintendent and prepare them in their new position regional leadership might want to use the Transitional Management Assistance Program (TMAP). A TMAP is used by some NPS regions to take a “snapshot” of the most significant issues facing a park/office after the leader of that park/program leaves their post and before a new manager is hired. The TMAP process identifies the characteristics needed in the new manager and attempts to identify the significant issues that a new manager should be aware of as they transition into their new leadership role.

The TMAP team consists mostly of senior managers from NPS, mostly from the same region. The team uses questionnaires, interviews, personal observation, and methods such as the review of legislation, planning and management documents, and other administrative documents to identify significant issues.

### ***Developing New Park Narratives***

In order to manage expectations, many new-park staff have asked for assistance in explaining the establishment process to stakeholders. For while many communities

expect a new visitor center, that may not be feasible in the short term, and may not be a priority at all. Descriptions of how new partnership parks are developed, with examples from across the country, geared to a community audience, would be a valuable tool—especially if they can be tailored to be as relevant as possible to the case at hand. An NPS publication akin to what is provided to new citizens would be helpful. “So you have a new park in your community; here’s what to expect.”





### *Upper Management Support*

Some new-park superintendents have remarked that their standing within the community and with partners could have been enhanced by a more formal, public handoff of authority from higher levels of management. Though such authority should be implied by the job title, not every community will understand a superintendent's hierarchy within the NPS organization and many new unit practitioners reflected they could have benefitted from more validation from NPS leadership to community and other partners. The need for standing is not only externally facing; within regional offices new-park superintendents need support from those structures but often lack standing, recognition or support from some regional office staff on account of not being known or being dismissed for their inexperience or neediness. Strategies for meeting the specific park needs should be discussed and implemented, as appropriate.



Responsibility for a new park is often given to a superintendent who is already managing another park (or more!), and usually the parks are relatively proximal to each other. When in 2016 Frank Barrows was tasked to be the project lead for standing up the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, he was already Superintendent at Fort Stanwix National Monument, 70 miles away.

“Even though we don’t have permanent staff, I’m able to draw on staff here at Fort Stanwix, and at Women’s Rights National Historical Park, which is also nearby.”

The establishment of Harriet Tubman NHP is drawing internal support far beyond nearby park units. “The way we’re structured in the Northeast is we have built-in what they call sub-clusters” of parks, and that “has been really helpful because we have monthly calls.” The NPS’s Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, based in Boston, is helping with a Cultural Landscape Report. The Northeast Region Historic Architecture Conservation and Engineering Center is assisting with the preservation of park-owned facilities and the development of a historic structures report. The Park also has a core planning team in the regional office in Philadelphia. “Working with the Solicitors Office and our Agreements Specialists are an important part...of setting up all the agreements that are needed for us to collaboratively manage the site with our partner.”

## Partnerships for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks

### Management Models

Once a new park unit is formally added to the system, either through congressional action or presidential proclamation (for national monuments under the Antiquities Act), the National Park Service provides staff to establish the park. This staffing has generally taken one of three forms:

1. A superintendent is assigned exclusively to the new park
2. An additional duty for a superintendent at another unit(s); or
3. An interim leader (project director), a temporary position without all the authority of a superintendent.

Many practitioners are concerned that sometimes a new-park superintendent is also a new park superintendent; that is, an employee filling a superintendent job for the first time. Experienced superintendents report that they have found that standing up a new park requires different skills than serving as superintendent of a more established unit. All agree that stability in the early years is important; a superintendent needs time to really ground the park and develop needed relationships.

In many of the 25 new parks of the last decade, the superintendent of the new park also has responsibility for other park units at the same time. These superintendents admit that they must devote the majority of their time to the new park, which presents the question of what support

is needed for the other for the already established park since other staff at that park must also take on additional responsibilities.

In the Northeast Region, the following management structures have emerged—they all have a partnership component that may or may not be “front and center” in the management structure:

- Stand alone units (Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, First State National Historical Park)
- Stand alone unit with strong operating partner (Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park—Maryland unit)
- Paired units (Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, Harriet Tubman National Historical Park—New York unit, Coltsville National Historical Park, Stonewall National Monument, Fort Monroe National Monument)

### Context

#### The New Park “Ecosystem”

Though too often identified too closely with a superintendent, the environment and conditions that result in a new park constitute a complex “ecosystem” of stakeholders, decision-makers,

*“...to coordinate, to facilitate, to be a convener...”*



determinants and factors. In order to develop a systematic approach to standing up new park units it is important to understand that environment holistically. Though each site is unique, categories of common characteristics can be generally described. These are expressed here in bullet form (see the full-page graphic) as a reminder of the complexities of 21<sup>st</sup> century national parks.

In the partnership park model, local communities are very important. Often this is where the impetus for a national park originated. Communities often support a new park because they expect it will become an economic engine; they see opportunity in the NPS brand. These and other expectations must be realistic. The brand will not bring immediate tangible benefits, and can only enhance the attributes of the area, not create them. Many new-park superintendents point to the work of managing community expectations to be their biggest challenge.

It is in managing expectations that narrative can be important. Public narrative is the leadership practice of translating values into action. To lead is to accept responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty. Public narrative is a discursive process through which individuals, communities, and nations learn to make choices, construct identity, and inspire action. (see Ganz, 2013) Practitioners are looking for help in communicating what a national park can bring, how, and how quickly. Some of this work in developing narrative would be similar to all

parks and would therefore lend itself to a national project to develop new-park narratives.

Part of that narrative is that each unit of the National Park System does not stand alone. Many new parks are established along thematic lines, filling in the American story through places that explore our diversity and more completely tell our interpretation of history. It is

important that

communities

understand a new park's

role in the "cumulative

expression" of units of

the National Park System. This national significance is an asset in itself.

***"Partnering makes sense for a better future for ALL parks."***

***Kathy Abbot, Island Institute***

As noted elsewhere, once a new-park is designated, the superintendent is of course a key part of the new-park ecosystem. S/he is the main interface between the National Park Service and partners. As the face of the organization, how this person comports himself or herself makes all the difference in the many relationships upon which a partnership park depends. S/he must have or develop skills and competencies in effective partnerships and eventually bring on staff who can be effective in a networked environment.

As the name implies, in partnership parks partners are also an important part of the landscape. Partners include the obvious friends associations and advocacy groups, but also include local authorities, volunteers, and compatible

businesses. Partners are not only local but also often include foundations, especially the National Park Foundation, and sometimes national NGOs.

It is also important that partnership apply internally as well. Opportunities for more structured support from regional staff, national programs, and peers are described elsewhere in this report. New parks provide an opportunity and indeed necessity to demonstrate a OneNPS mindset, the simple yet elusive ideal of parks and programs collaborating as a unified Service that is a principle of the NPS Urban Agenda.

The new-park ecosystem includes the tools that can and must be wielded effectively in partnerships. Chief among these are relationships, at formal, institutional levels as well as individual relationships that make the institutional cooperation really work.

Budgets are of course an important part of the equation, and each new park must quickly assess budget needs and revenue opportunities. The scale of budgets required vary of course according to community and NPS expectations, infrastructure burdens, and local economies.



Freedom Riders National Monument, Anniston, AL



Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, Birmingham, AL



## COMMUNITY

• Volunteers • Foundation(s) • National Park Fdn

• Friends Groups • Advocacy Groups

### EXTERNAL



## PARTNERS

### INTERNAL

• Peers/cohorts • Regional Staff • System Support  
• Naysayers • National Support

• Economic Engine

• Expectations

• Pre Park History of Area

• Promises

• Perceptions

• Transition • Emotional Intelligence • Endurance

• Soft + Technical Skills • Work/life Balance

## SUPERINTENDENT



## PARK STAFF

### STAFF

• Lack of Staff  
• Superintendent Transition

• 2<sup>nd</sup> Staff Hire  
• Proxy "staff"

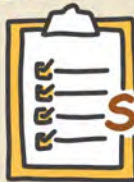
CUMULATIVE EXPRESSION-INDIVIDUAL+INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS-NATIONAL+COMMUNITY STORY  
WELCOME TO THE NEW NATIONAL PARK

• Funding

• Rhetoric

• Innovation-not  
Tradition-Bound

## SKILLS



• Narrative

• Brand-park's  
attributes + National  
Park Service

## INTRINSIC ASSETS



• Endowment

• Maintenance Backlog

• Infrastructure-  
Inherited + Envisioned

## SUPPORT



National Park Service  
Stewardship  
INSTITUTE



## Stages in Establishing a New Park

While the development of every new park unit is different, several consistent, progressive phases can be distinguished. Each stage has different requirements, different expectations—both internal and external—and different NPS personnel. (For example, rarely is a superintendent involved in the early phases, and often the superintendent has only a cursory understanding of what transpired.) Therefore, each phase has different requirements for preparation and support.

Three stages and several substages can be distinguished in the continuum that is the establishment of a national park. (Fig. 3)

1. Pre-establishment
  - a. Genesis
  - b. Gestation
2. Activation Phase / Establishment
  - a. Authorization
  - b. Partnership
  - c. Planning
3. Initial Operations
  - a. Implementation
  - b. Maturity

The phases may seem obvious but bear some inspection. Each phase has particular needs, thus it is important to parse them out to anticipate support going forward. The action plan for the new-parks group includes exercises to better identify the milestones and phasing that

demonstrate that one is moving through the new unit setup process in a timely manner and progression. This could take the form of a timeline mapping exercise - looking at the “ideal” or “common” timeline with milestones.

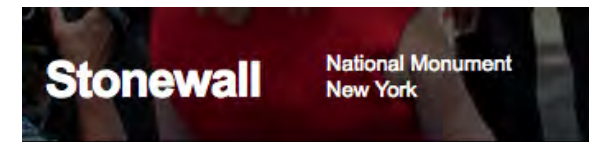
*“I understand the early stages of setting up a national park and identifying small things that you can do well that adds to what the community is already doing. ... just trying to identify and understand the landscape in a way where you can find where you fit into it.”*

*Frank Barrows, Superintendent, Harriet Tubman National Historical Park*



Sub-stage	Stage	NPS	Others	Years
Genesis	Pre-establishment	Genesis may result from a Theme Study	Community come us with Idea Narrative of the resource	1 - 10
Gestation		A Special Resource Study may be requested	Champion(s) emerge/advocate Investment of time &/or \$	
Authorization	Establishment	Legislation drafting assistance	Legislation or Proclamation	1 - 5
Partnership		Project manager/Supt. Tasked Partnership building Job 1 Managing expectations	Relationship building	
Planning		Facilitation of community Foundation document drafted	Friends group(s) and partnerships take shape	
Implementation	Institutionalization	General Management Plan	Leveraged resources	5 - 10
"Maturity"		Growth of budget, staff and programs	Joint programs	

*Figure 3. A summary of the stages of new park establishment. While every park is different, general patterns can be described, and are helpful in designing a support framework for future parks.*







Congress passed legislation in 2014 to authorize, but not yet establish, Coltsville National Historical Park in Hartford, Connecticut. Once established, the site will interpret the story of "The American System of Manufacturing," created by Samuel Colt, and the leadership of his widow, Elizabeth Colt, who had to assume ownership at the age of 35. James Woolsey, Superintendent at the Springfield Armory in Massachusetts, was tasked to oversee establishment of the new park.

"In [the new parks workshop at NCTC], one of the ideas that came out was putting together a formal regional kind of hit team that would be organized around the park and would meet and would regularly work towards goals." Coltsville now has such a regional support team. Members include a lands expert (the maintenance chief for the Northeast region); the legislative affairs staffer and the Associate Regional Director. "And then there are about 10 or 12 other people that are on call, including Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance. In our group, we have a standing once-a-month call and we go over whatever's going on in the park. And it's been fabulously helpful."

The Northeast Regional Office of the National Park Service has developed a “universal framework” for a new park unit support system which is now being used Servicewide. Organized in table form, the framework presents core questions for three stages: pre-establishment, activation phase, and initial operations. The following topics are presented, presumably with an expectation that they will be all be addressed by the new park. The framework also indicates whether the park, regional office, or both will take a lead role.

- Organization/Leadership
- Supervisory Leadership Program Support
- Establishment Requirements

- Understanding Legal Authorities
- Organization/Management Operating Concepts
- Budgeting
- Business Services
- Position Management Plan
- Community Relations/Managing Expectations
- Planning Needs
- Administrative and Data Systems Support
- Law Enforcement/ Jurisdictions
- Public Program/Delivery Concept
- Land Acquisition & Boundary
- Facility Infrastructure Program
- Resource Management Program

Northeast Region - New Park Unit Support System - Universal Framework

Topic	Core Questions/ Decision Points	Pre-Establishment/ Pre-ONPS Budget		Activation Phase Years 1 - 3		Initial Operations Years 3 -10	
		Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead
Position Management Plan	What is the appropriate staffing structure for this unit/ operational relationship to other units/ operational relationship to partners?	Preliminary operational strategy: staffing and support requirements and desired end state are defined for varying stages of park development.	NER	Position Management Plan (Scalable) for years 1 through 5 is prioritized, completed and approved	Park/ NER	Park continues to operate under present DRD approved position management plan; may occur at varying points in its implementation.	Park
		Resource sharing & partner resource opportunities are evaluated.	NER	Initiate implementation of initial limited position management plan with any sharing & partner resource opportunities	Park	Review and re-evaluate Position Mgt Plan Strategy with current operating models and funding limits	Park
Community Relations/ Managing Expectations	What messages are being conveyed to the community & vested stakeholders in both words and actions?	Messaging is consistent with what is expected and/or what the park is capable of at each stage of park development and closely monitored by Regional Comms. No surprises.	NER	Operational messaging is consistent with status of the park's current capability. Trending complex items in continued development are monitored and communicated through the regional office. No surprises.	Park/ NER	Messaging is consistent established bureau and regional protocols for a fully operational park unit or site.	Park
		NER Congressional and Legislative Affairs are fully engaged in all developmental activities of political interest.	NER	NER Congressional and Legislative Affairs monitors all complex continuing developmental activities of political interest.	NER		
Planning Needs	What planning needs must be met to advance the park's development?	Identifying/Setting priorities for new park unit (scalable) planning framework outline	NER	Foundation Document	Park/ NER	Unit Management Plan	Park/ NER
						Specific Resource Studies and or Plans as specified	Park



The framework is to be individualized as a new unit approaches authorization and covers the first 10 years. But when is a park no longer “new?” This is a question that comes up frequently, and the answer may inform how support is managed at regional level. It almost certainly is not a set number of years. Some parks will take longer to become truly grounded in their communities and partnerships, while others may start with a significant amount of material and community support.

The new-park unit support system framework is attached in the appendices.

*“My parents...were farm workers. This is a dream park for me. I got here and walked in the memorial garden where Mr. Chávez was buried and I got goose bumps. They have never gone away. We’re very fortunate that the Cesar Chavez Foundation was willing to donate this land and to have us share the story.”*

*Ruben Andrade, Superintendent, César E. Chávez National Monument*

### Questions to Understand 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks

New parks differ in scale, purpose, community dynamics, budget requirements, etc. To understand the support each one needs, and to learn from the experience of other new parks, it is useful to weigh the characteristics of each case against a variety of parameters. These include:

- *Designation* – Was the park created through Congressional legislation or Presidential proclamation of a national monument?
- *Superintendent* – Is the superintendent also responsible for other units?
- *Other start-up staff (FTE)* – How soon do additional staff come on board? What are their roles? Do their skills match?
- *Neighbor Park / Support Unit* – Does the new unit have proximity (geographic or thematic) to another, more established unit?
- *Scale* – How big is the park, in geophysical size but also other ways? Is it a serial site (e.g., Manhattan Project) and, if so, are the locations near each other?
- *Budget capability* – What is the potential for building a budget commensurate with need over the first 5-10 years? Are most funds likely to come from partners or from the NPS?
- *Partnership opportunities* – Are non-monetary sources of support forthcoming in the area?
- *Community(-ies)/stakeholders/neighbors* – Are local communities meaningfully engaged in the park? Is the diversity of the community reflected in that engagement?
- *Political influences* – Did the push to create a new unit emanate from the community? Were there political motivations?
- *NPS history* – Have NPS programs (RTCA, Heritage Areas) been active in the area?
- *Preservation of cultural resources* – How does NPS support preservation of cultural resources in the community that may contribute to the visitor experience?



## Appendices

### New Parks 2007-2018

Belmont-Paul Women's Equality NM  
Birmingham Civil Rights NM  
Blackstone River Valley NHP  
Castle Mountains NM  
César Chavez NM  
Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers NM  
Coltsville NHP\*  
First State NHP  
Fort Monroe NM  
Freedom Riders NM  
Harriet Tubman NM  
Honouliuli NM  
Katahdin Woods & Waters NM  
Manhattan Project NM  
Paterson Great Falls NHP  
Port Chicago Naval Magazine NM  
President William Jefferson Clinton  
Birthplace Home  
Pullman NM  
Reconstruction Era NM  
River Raisin NBP  
St. Genevieve NHP\*



Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument, Las Vegas, NV

Stonewall NM  
Tule Springs Fossil Beds NM  
Valles Caldera NPres  
Waco Mammoth NM

*\*authorized but not yet fully established*

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*(Positions listed are as of the time of the workshop)*

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# Northeast Region - New Park Unit Support System - Universal Framework

New Park Unit:		Project Manager/Unit-Site Mgr:		Park Champion:		Date	
Topic	Core Questions/ Decision Points	Pre-Establishment/ Pre-ONPS Budget		Activation Phase Years 1 - 3		Initial Operations Years 3 -10	
		Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead
Organization/ Leadership	Who is in charge?	Project Manager @ Start Up		Establish a dedicated Superintendent, Unit Manager or Site Manager		Dedicated Superintendent or Site Manager	
Supervisory Leadership Program Support	Who sets/what guides park's critical path/ Milestones/ Objectives?	Keeper of the Parks Critical Path Milestone Objectives	NER	Keeper of the Parks Critical Path Milestone Objectives	NER/ Park	Keeper of the Parks Critical Path Milestone Objectives	Park/ NER
	Is there a Regional Delegation of Authority needed and in place to support leadership?	Park Champion (with Line Authority)	NER	Park Champion (with Line Authority)	NER/ Park	Park Champion or Mentor Relationship	Park
		Anticipate an Appropriate IDP Addressing key new (incoming) park operational requirements	NER	Regional Liaison Assigned / DRD	NER	DRD	
Establishment Requirements	Who/what guides/oversees compliance w legislative requirements for establishment?	Establishment requirements are determined w regional and WASO concurrence – Capital Investment Board Review.	NER	Communicate applicable 'Core Team' planning framework documents to new park leadership as historical baseline	NER	NA	
	Initial Core Team > A DRD, NER Comms and Leg, superintendent, planning person, facilities manager, I&E lead or mgr, and an operations person)	Establishment requirements are implemented.	NER				
		Unit established (via Secretarial determination, NR notification, etc.)	NER				
		Initial Regional Core Team Evaluating the park conceptually at the program concept level	NER				
Understanding Legal Authorities	Proclamation, Establishment Criteria, Special Mandates, Agreement Authorities	Insuring all activation and initial developmental activities have initial SOL review and engagement and advice	NER	ALSO See: * Lands, *Partnerships, *Agreements, *LE Jurisdiction	Park/ NER	DRD	
Organization/ Management Operating Concept/s	How is park management and oversight structured? Is park operational?	Define what conditions must be met to make park minimally operational.	NER	Management relationships are formalized and being put in place	NER	Management relationships are well-defined, formal, documented, supported and sustainable.	NER
		Management relationships are defined.	NER	Less complex operating agreements formalizing key management relationships are in place.  Fee collection strategies are evaluated.	Park	Complex organizational relationships such as 'friends groups', 'state or municipal management requirements' or 'resource protections' are being evaluated and developed.	NER/ Park
		Critical shared operating responsibility agreements are identified.	NER	Shared operating responsibility agreements/contracts/leases are formalized and being put in place.	NER/ Park	Shared operating responsibility mechanisms are being re-evaluated and updated.	Park
		Initial Park Planning Needs requested	NER	Critical operational actions identified in initial planning efforts are implemented.	Park	Long term planning outcomes inform continued park development	Park
Programming Base Budgeting: Operations, Maintenance, Support & Endowments	At what level is the park based funded? And from where?	No ONPS Budget		In ONPS – \$180,000 +/- supports limited start up only	Park/ NER	Operational ONPS Budget is Established	Park
		New Park Needs budget request/s is developed and submitted.	NER	Operating Increase/s approved and implemented, or park operating models are reevaluated.	Park/ NER	Budgets largely in sync w admin and operational requirements including Fees & Business Revenues	Park
		Initial endowments and other operational support funds identified and programmatically understood	NER	Endowments and other operational support funds identified and developed	Park/ NER	Endowments and other operational support funds sync w admin and operational requirements	Park/ NER
Business Services	Determine Appropriate Business Services Opportunities	Evaluation of potential initial non-ONPS revenue generation as part of park mgt & operations strategies	NER	Any viable Concessions, Leases, Fees and other appropriate revenue generating activities are identified and developed	NER/ Park	Concessions, Leases, Fees and other appropriate revenue generating activities sync w admin and operational requirements	Park/ NER

**Northeast Region - New Park Unit Support System - Universal Framework**

Topic	Core Questions/ Decision Points	Pre-Establishment/ Pre-ONPS Budget		Activation Phase Years 1 - 3		Initial Operations Years 3 -10	
		Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead
Position Management Plan	What is the appropriate staffing structure for this unit/ operational relationship to other units/ operational relationship to partners?	Preliminary operational strategy: staffing and support requirements and desired end state are defined for varying stages of park development.	NER	Position Management Plan (Scalable) for years 1 through 5 is prioritized, completed and approved	Park/NER	Park continues to operate under present DRD approved position management plan; may occur at varying points in its implementation.	Park
		Resource sharing & partner resource opportunities are evaluated.	NER	Initiate implementation of initial limited position management plan with any sharing & partner resource opportunities	Park	Review and re-evaluate Position Mgt Plan Strategy with current operating models and funding limits	Park
Community Relations/ Managing Expectations	What messages are being conveyed to the community & vested stakeholders in both words and actions?	Messaging is consistent with what is expected and/or what the park is capable of at each stage of park development and closely monitored by Regional Comms. No surprises.	NER	Operational messaging is consistent with status of the park's current capability. Trending complex items in continued development are monitored and communicated through the regional office. No surprises.	Park/NER	Messaging is consistent established bureau and regional protocols for a fully operational park unit or site.	Park
		NER Congressional and Legislative Affairs are fully engaged in all developmental activities of political interest.	NER	NER Congressional and Legislative Affairs monitors all complex continuing developmental activities of political interest.	NER		
Planning Needs	What planning needs must be met to advance the park's development?	Identifying/Setting priorities for new park unit (scalable) planning framework outline	NER	Foundation Document	Park/NER	Unit Management Plan	Park/NER
		Prioritize framework and initiate Budget request/s and support coordination for critical start up planning requirements	NER	Strategic Planning management framework	Park/NER	Specific Resource Studies and or Plans as specified	Park
		Scholars Round Table to determine significance if needed. Begin establishing and collecting FD Documentation pre-writing research materials.	NER	Visitor Use Capacity Analysis for Desired Operating Conditions	NER	Other Implementation Plans as defined by Foundation Document, Unit Mgt Plan. Transportation Plan, Resource Protection Plan etc.	Park
		Evaluate Interpret & education themes. Community Engagement Strategy with an NER planner	NER	*See Public Program/Delivery Concepts			
Administrative & All Things Data Systems Program Support	Is the park integrated into existing administrative and programmatic systems?	Establish park unit identification in Federal and Bureau Data Systems as appropriate.	NER	Baseline Park Unit requirements have been entered into existing systems.	Park/NER	Responds to regular program calls in all operational areas.	Park
		Baseline Unit and Budget programs have been identified and requested.	NER				
LE/ Jurisdictions	Has appropriate jurisdiction been defined and properly authorized?	Establish and communicate appropriate jurisdictions	NER	Prepare Superintendents Compendium	Park/NER	Sustain programmatic operations as appropriate	Park
		Evaluate Mutual Aide Support Requirements	NER	Establish LE presence or appropriate park relationships	Park/NER		
				Establish Mutual Aide Agreements as appropriate	Park/NER		

### Northeast Region - New Park Unit Support System - Universal Framework

Topic	Core Questions/ Decision Points	Pre Establishment/ Pre ONPS Budget		Activation Phase Years 1 - 3		Initial Operations Years 3 - 10	
		Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead	Milestone/ Marker/ Indicator	Lead
Public Program/ Delivery Concept	What is the appropriate level of public programming/ program development per stage in park development?	Managing Expectations - Prepare initial community and stakeholder Communication Plan	NER	Managing Expectations	Park/ NER	Enhanced media (unigrid, interpretive signage)	Park
		Passive Information Strategies are Evaluated	NER	Typical Start up actions (web site, trifold, passport stamp, legislative update briefings)	Park/ NER	Formalized Interpretive/ Educational program delivery is in place	Park/ Proj
		Community Outreach Strategy	NER	Strategy defined for creating/ implementing programming	Park/ NER	Special Events and Permitting / Agreements are in place	Park
		Special Events	NER	Limited # of programs & special events per year	Park		
		Develop initial limited Interp & Education Programming Concepts	NER	Initial visitor contact locations created/ staffed	Park		
Land Acquisition & Boundary	Is the park's boundary (boundaries) defined? Is NPS land acquisition complete?	Land acquisition priorities are identified.	NER	Land acquisition priorities are identified for non-donated lands intended for government ownership	NER/ Park	Land Protection Plan prioritizes any future acquisition are evaluated	Park
		Government Land Ownership, Boundary and Land Protections are put in place for donation lands.	NER	Highest priority lands have been acquired for initial park operations.	NER/ Park		
				All Legal LARs requirements are undertaken and completed.	NER		
Facility Infrastructure Program	What is the appropriate level facility infrastructure/ program development per stage in park development	Evaluating resources in context of potential manageable unit definitions	NER	Inventory and any critical stabilization of infrastructure studies are undertaken	NER	Facilities and infrastructure have appropriate multi-year cyclical and rehabilitation plans and core assets are available or are becoming available for use.	NER/ Park
		New Park Proj Mgr or Unit Mgr has assigned operational space to carry out work	NER	New Park Proj Mgr or Unit Mgr has administrative support facility capacity in place	NER		
		Any existing facility and infrastructure data has been assembled	NER	Facilities and infrastructure are being evaluated (preliminary condition assessments; research)	NER/ Park	Facilities/ Infrastructure maintained in good condition.	Park
		Initial concept Annual O&M Plan prepared	NER	Initial operating facility requirements are met and operational using Park Asset Management Plan protocols	NER/ Park	Federal Real Property Plan is put in place and appropriately managed.	Park
		Initial operating facility requirements are evaluated and made scalable in park operating contexts	NER	Underutilized and surplus property and infrastructure is evaluated for mission purposes and or alternative uses or disposition	NER/ Park		
Resource Management Program	What is the appropriate level of resource mgmt./program development per stage in park development?	Evaluating resources in context of potential manageable unit	NER	Resource inventories are initiated and critical items for effective management are understood	NER/ Park	Core Research/study program/s underway	NER/ Park
		Any existing natural and cultural data has been assembled	NER	Long term research needs identified	NER/ Park	Park-level oversight of res. Mgmt.. activities	Park
		Appropriate NHL nominations are prepared	NER	Stabilization of core critical resources may be undertaken	NER/ park	Resources are maintained in good condition	Park
Other Topic as Appropriate							

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