

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Tennessee--North Carolina

MISSION 66

MISSION 66 is a ten-year program of increased development, protection, and maintenance of the National Park System designed to put the system in shape to adequately care for the increased visitation expected by 1966, the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service.

This is a forward-looking program intended to develop and staff these priceless possessions of the American people to permit their wisest possible use, maximum enjoyment for those who use them, and maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources that give them distinction.

Construction is an important element of the program. Modern roads, well planned trails, utilities, camp and picnic grounds, and many kinds of structures needed for public use or administration, to meet the requirements of an expected 80 million visitors in 1966, are necessary; but they are simply one means by which "enjoyment-without-impairment" is to be provided.

Under this program, outmoded and inadequate facilities will be replaced with physical improvements adequate for expected demands, but so designed and located as to reduce the impact of public use on valuable and destructible features. It will provide both facilities and personnel for visitor services of the quality and quantity that the public is entitled to expect in its National Park System. It is intended to assure the fullest possible degree of protection, to both visitors and resources. The program has received enthusiastic endorsement by the President of the United States and his Cabinet, and has been well received by the Congress and Nation at large.

The MISSION 66 program for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park provides for the following:

Reconstruction of major roads where needed. The completed system will provide 172 miles of major roads.

Construction of additional trails and conversion of some now existing to a different standard will provide a trail system comprising approximately 700 miles of horse and foot trails.

Additional campgrounds and picnic areas are planned. By 1966 five campgrounds in North Carolina and a similar number in Tennessee, as well as 12 picnic areas equally distributed are to be built.

Interpretive and information services are to be augmented with both facilities and personnel. Two visitor centers--a Natural History Center in Tennessee and a Historical Center in North Carolina--will be provided; campfire circles and shelters will be constructed at campgrounds and the staff will be enlarged with sufficient seasonal and permanent personnel to provide an adequate and entertaining program.

Foothills Parkway, a scenic route 70 miles long, along the north boundary of the park is to be constructed

The program is planned to provide adequate facilities and services for an estimated 4,500,000 people in 1966 in such a fashion that these visitors will be able to enjoy a worth while experience in visiting the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.