

administrative policies

**for natural, historical and recreational areas
of the National Park System**

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

The National Park System

An American heritage of land and history

From the establishment of the first national park—Yellowstone—in 1872, National Parks have evolved through Congressional enactments into a system containing more than 250 parks in the 50 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Resources for re-creation and recreation

Millions of Americans find enjoyment in their National Parks each year—refreshment of mind, body, and spirit. And billions of dollars, \$6.4 billion in 1967, go to thousands of others who furnish the needs of travelers who every year visit the parks.

Legislative Landmarks

The history of the National Park movement in this country could be viewed as the natural evolution of an *environmental ethic*. This emerging ethic stands as an imperative guideline in carrying out the responsibilities that Congress has entrusted to the National Park Service. It seeks to bring together into a manageable fusion, the two worlds of man—the natural world into which he is born, and the cultural world he has created.

Among many legislative enactments creating the National Park Service and defining its mission, the following have primary significance:

ACT OF MARCH 1, 1872. This legislation established Yellowstone National Park—the world's first national park—thus establishing a new policy for management and use of the public lands.

ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1906. This act extended the public land policy relating to natural parks to provide authority for the President, by proclamation, to set aside as national monuments “* * * historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest * * *.”

ACT OF AUGUST 25, 1916. Congress established the National Park Service and assigned to it the administration of the national parks and most of the national monuments theretofore established, and enunciated a broad framework of policy for the administration of these areas.

ACT OF FEBRUARY 21, 1925. Provided for “securing of lands * * * for * * * preservation as national parks through the acquisition of lands in private ownership * * * through donations.” This action was significant in that prior thereto the national parks and monuments had been set aside from the public lands.

ACT OF MARCH 3, 1933. This authorization for reorganization within the Executive Branch of the Government resulted in transferring to the Department of the Interior for administration by the National Park Service the national memorials and parks of the Nation's Capital, and national monuments, historical, and military parks administered by other Federal agencies.

HISTORIC SITES ACT OF AUGUST 21, 1935. Established a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States. The act also directed the Secretary of the Interior to carry out wide-ranging programs in the field of history and placed with the Secretary responsibility for national leadership in the field of historic preservation. The act also established the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments.

PARK, PARKWAY AND RECREATION AREA STUDY ACT OF JUNE 23, 1936. Authorized, among other things, studies to expand the National Park System to include areas having primary recreational significance.

ACT OF JUNE 30, 1936. Provided for the administration of the Blue Ridge Parkway, thus introducing the rural parkway concept into the System.

ACT OF AUGUST 17, 1937. Established Cape Hatteras National Seashore, marking the beginning of the national seashore concept.

ACT OF AUGUST 7, 1946. The Congress authorized the National Park Service through cooperative agreements to administer recreation on lands under jurisdiction of other Federal agencies.

ACT OF AUGUST 7, 1961. The authorization of Cape Cod National Seashore marked a new concept in the development of the National Park System; namely, the use of appropriated funds at the outset to purchase a large natural area in its entirety for a park. Prior to this enactment, areas, for the most part, were established either by setting aside portions of the public lands or from lands donated to the Federal Government by public or private interests.

JANUARY 31, 1962. The Outdoor Recreation Commission, established pursuant to an Act of June 28, 1958, submitted its report to the President of the United States. The report contained far-reaching recommendations affecting the future of outdoor recreation. Implementation of many of the recommendations of the Commission affect the National Park System. For example, Policy Circular No. 1 of the President's Recreation Advisory Council not only defines national recreation areas but also establishes broad guidelines regarding their management.

APRIL 2, 1962. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation was established and assigned the nationwide recreation planning and related functions of the Secretary then being performed by the National Park Service, under the authority of the Park, Parkway and Recreation Area Study Act of 1936.

ACT OF MAY 23, 1963. This law charged the Secretary of the Interior with the responsibility "to promote the coordination and development of effective programs relating to outdoor recreation."

ACT OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1964. Among other things, established the National Wilderness Preservation System and required the Secretary of the Interior, within 10 years, to review roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more in the National Park System and make recommendations as to whether such lands should be added by the Congress to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

ACT OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1964. Established the Land and Water Conservation Fund from which appropriations may be made by the Congress for allocation to (1) the States, on a matching basis for planning, acquisition of land and water areas, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities; and (2) the Federal agencies, including the National Park Service, for use in acquiring lands needed for outdoor recreation.

ACT OF OCTOBER 15, 1966. Congress broadened its policies for historic preservation and authorized assistance to State and local governments and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The act also established a 17-member Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to advise the President and Congress and to coordinate Federal, State, and private activities in historic preservation.

ACT OF JULY 15, 1968. Increased revenues for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provided additional land acquisition authorities to the National Park Service.

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Natural Areas The National Parks, and the scenic and scientific Monuments, preserve for future generations of Americans—and for the world—those areas of transcendent beauty and wonder which we inherited. These are cultural treasures, as well as places for the refreshment of mind and spirit. They are the remaining “islands” in which life processes go on undisturbed, offering us the opportunity to understand a wilderness environment. In them one can observe the slow processes that have carved and shaped our earth and clothed it with plant and animal life. Without that comprehension, man cannot realize his own social life—so different, and yet with such vital correspondences!



Historical Areas In the historical areas of the National Park System are preserved the epic pages of the story of the national march. The prehistoric dwellings of a people who were on the continent long before Columbus came form a kind of preface to this volume. We tread the trails of the Spanish conquerors, the French furtrappers, the Oregon migrants. We come in actual touch with the sources of our greatness and prosperity. Here great deeds were done; heroic thoughts were transmitted; here great problems were grappled with and decisions made. Sometimes these areas are of themselves, or are surrounded by, great beauty; but the basic theme is the will of man to throw off mental and physical shackles and to achieve.



Recreational Areas Wholesome, restorative, and happy physical recreation is the primary purpose of the National Seashores, the Parkways, and the National Recreation Areas. Here one escapes from the drag of humdrum dailiness and indulges in the play-spirit, using the ocean beach, the impounded lake, the easy progress through ribbons of roadside natural beauty—all to gain mental and spiritual renewal. But of course all such areas have other values beyond those of simple recreation. There may be steep-walled canyons to explore by boat; there is always the strange life community that inhabits the seashore duneland, and if you wish to mingle a little adventure into the natural environment along with your holiday romping, the option is yours.

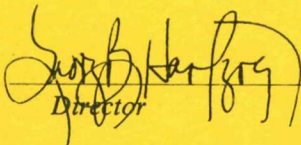
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THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PLEDGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

To the people of the United States, the owners of our Nation's parklands,
we pledge:

- To **PROTECT** man's right to exult in the presence of superlative wildness
and scenic grandeur
- To **COMMUNICATE** to all an understanding of the people and events that
shaped these United States
- To **PROVIDE**, in the recreational areas, opportunities for varied outdoor
recreation of a quality in keeping with exceptional natural and historical
values
- To **MAKE** the beauty and the history of our Nation's urban parklands a
richer and more meaningful part of the life of all Americans
- To **MANAGE** the National Park System so that all Americans, now and in
the future, may be assured of the privilege
 - ☆ of experiencing the serenity of quiet forests and the renewing strength of
nature unimpaired
 - ☆ of letting their spirits return — through the touch of hammered iron,
rough-hewn wall, and treasured relic — to the presence of the men and
women who built America
 - ☆ of knowing the exhilaration of a rushing river, the feel of sun-warmed
beaches and pounding surf, and the high adventure of the great outdoors
- To **SEEK** out and foster the protection of the finest of what now remains
unprotected of the Nation's natural and cultural inheritance and its out-
door recreational opportunities
- To **JOIN** with all people of this and other Nations in conserving and renewing
the total environment to keep this world a delight to live in.



George B. Hart
Director