

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PLANNING PROCESS

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INTRODUCTION

Planning is a process of imagining and evaluating possible futures. The steps involved in this process — the identification of problems and definition of goals, the gathering of information about resources, the design of strategies for solving problems and achieving goals, and the assessment of these strategies — are all directed toward one end: to provide a rational basis for determining the best future.

In the National Park Service, most planning is conducted to determine the future of the nationally significant areas that have been set aside as units of the National Park System. The purpose of this planning is to develop alternative strategies for achieving the stated management objectives of national parks, to assess these strategies, and to provide decisionmakers with sufficient data to allow selection and implementation of the most suitable and feasible strategy. The following are basic principles of National Park Service planning:

Park Service planning must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and other pertinent statutes, executive orders, and federal policies. It must reflect concern with the spirit as well as the letter of these laws and policies and must be consistent with the mandate stated in the National Park Service Organic Act.

Emphasis must be placed on the gathering of sufficient information for thorough assessment of alternative strategies, for forecasting the consequences of these strategies, and for making final decisions.

Planning must be accomplished by a multidisciplinary team.

The public must be encouraged and given opportunities to participate in the planning process. Further, a public record must be maintained to document this process.

The planning process must be flexible in order to adapt to changing management needs and budgetary and manpower limitations. It must facilitate regular assessment of each park's planning needs and must include a feedback system for self-correction so that unrealistic objectives and strategies can be identified and culled and more viable ones can be developed.

Coordination with federal, state, and local agencies having jurisdiction in the park's region or expertise relevant to addressing planning problems must be achieved on a continuing basis.

The planning process applies to all established areas of the National Park System; its applicability to new areas will be addressed in an appendix to this document to be issued at a later date. The process involves the following seven essential steps (the documents produced at the end of each step are shown in parentheses):

The development of management objectives designed to achieve a park's purpose (statement for management)

The identification of planning tasks required to achieve the objectives (outline of planning requirements)

The specification of a method for conducting the programmed planning tasks (task directive)

The collection of sufficient information to place the park in its regional context and to permit the formulation, analysis, and culling of alternative strategies for meeting management objectives (information base)

The development of alternative strategies and the analysis of their probable consequences (environmental assessment)

The selection of the most acceptable strategy, the documentation of the rationale for its selection, and the evaluation of the nature, significance, and controversiality of its consequences (environmental review)

The amplification of proposals included in the selected strategy and the further assessment of consequences as required (plan, and where necessary, environmental statement)

The following sections discuss the planning documents mentioned above and indicate the tasks, procedures, and responsibilities involved in preparing these documents.

STATEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE AND CONTENT

The first document to be prepared as part of the planning process is the statement for management. Each park must have an approved statement for management, which is subject to annual review and revision.

The statement for management can be used to guide short- and long-term management of the park and to determine the nature and extent of planning required to meet the park's management objectives. In the absence of more specific planning documents, the statement for management provides a general framework for directing park operations and communicating park objectives to the public.

The statement for management includes the following sections:

Purpose of the Park

Each park must be managed to preserve park resources and provide for environmentally compatible public use in accordance with existing National Park Service management policies and the park's purpose. The purpose is normally defined in, or deduced from, its enabling legislation or other legal documents providing for its establishment (reports from congressional hearings, memoranda of agreements, presidential proclamations, secretarial orders). In clarifying the purpose of the park, other generally applicable guidelines, such as those found in the Antiquities Act of 1906, the act establishing the National Park Service (August 25, 1916), and the Historic Sites Act of 1935, may be utilized. The park purpose section should also identify all relevant legal documents, and copies of these documents should be appended to the statement for management.

Because many units of the National Park System were authorized decades ago when different environmental and social conditions existed, park purpose should be carefully reexamined during the preparation of statements for management for such areas. If necessary, corrective legislation to redefine park purpose should be proposed.

Significance of Park Resources

This section includes a concise description of the resources that prompted the park's inclusion in the National Park System. Supplemental resources should also be described briefly, as appropriate.

Influences on Management

The section on intra- and extra-park influences begins with the identification of legislative and administrative constraints on management and use of the

park. Relevant statements from the park's enabling legislation, from state and local ordinances, and from memoranda of agreement with federal, state, and local agencies or private interests are either quoted or paraphrased.

Second, regional influences are identified and described. These influences may include resources and their uses, environmental problems, and any organizations or activities outside the park's boundaries that affect and/or are affected by the park. Groups having particular interest in the park, planning commissions, transportation systems, research projects, and professional societies or organizations are examples of subjects to be discussed.

Third, a brief description of the events, trends, or processes within the park that influence and/or are influenced by day-to-day or long-term management is included. Unusual changes in visitor use patterns or concession operations and deterioration of critical natural or cultural resources are examples of relevant topics.

Land Classification

This section defines **existing** management zones in the park and briefly describes the management action for each zone. Natural, historic, development, and special use zones, as appropriate, are identified on the basis of existing management practices. General criteria for establishing these zones are described in chapter II of the National Park Service *Management Policies* (April 1975). If the park contains more than one management zone, a map is prepared on a topographic base to show the locations of the zones.

The definition of existing management zones and subzones requires adequate information on the location of park resources and facilities. Every effort should be made to ensure that these zones are delineated as accurately as possible. Maps showing precise locations of resources and facilities must be available before land classification is undertaken.

The relationship between zones and subzones as descriptions of existing management practices within a park needs careful consideration. A **zone** describes the controlling management practice for a park or portion of a park. A **subzone** defines a specific management practice within a zone. For example, a road managed as part of a development zone would be mapped as an integral part of that zone and not identified as a subzone. The same road, when it enters a natural zone, would be mapped as a development subzone within the natural zone.

Historic zones include lands containing resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In most cases, boundaries of

historic zones will be identical with the boundaries of properties listed on the National Register. Where a property is eligible or potentially eligible for or is being nominated to the National Register, its boundaries should enclose an area designated as a historic zone pending nomination to the National Register, and the area should include sufficient land for the protection and public appreciation of cultural resources and their setting. Subzones within the historic zone should describe existing management practices that are compatible with the controlling policies of the parent zone. For example, if a visitor center, trails, roads, or picnic area exist within the boundaries of a historic zone, they will be identified and mapped as a development subzone.

Certain historic resources, such as local cemeteries and minor historic sites, may be worth preserving for interpretive or other management purposes, but not eligible for listing on the National Register. In such cases, a historic subzone should be defined within a nonhistoric zone and mapped to indicate that historic preservation is the existing management practice. In no instance should a property eligible or potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register be placed in a historic subzone.

No planning projects may be undertaken unless the land classification accurately describes the existing management practices for the park's land base.

Management Objectives

The management objectives are the heart of the statement for management. All decisions concerning the management, use, and development of the park are directed toward achieving these objectives and fulfilling the park's purpose. The management objectives provide a framework for conserving park resources, for integrating the park into its regional environment, and for accommodating environmentally compatible public use in accordance with existing National Park Service management policies.

Essentially, the management objectives are a list of desired conditions. Because they spell out **ends** rather than **means**, they do not preclude alternative planning strategies. Rather, they provide a framework that enables planners and managers to work toward fulfilling the park purpose, while applying Park Service policy. In fact, in some cases, the management objectives may be park-specific restatements of more general Park Service management policies.

Management objectives are grouped into two broad categories:

Resource Preservation and Management

Objectives in this category concern natural and cultural resources such as wildlife, soils, vegetative communities,

water, and historic and archaeological structures, sites, districts, and objects.

Visitor Use

Objectives for visitor use concern information, interpretation, activities, programs, services (including concessions where appropriate), and safety and protection requirements. These objectives should focus on the unique park values to be communicated to visitors, the kinds and levels of visitor activities and services, and the required regulation or control of uses.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As stated, each park must have an approved statement for management. The regional director schedules the preparation of this document, providing assistance to the park as necessary and soliciting technical and professional support from other offices where appropriate. The superintendent is responsible for the actual preparation of the statement for management. In consultation with staff of the regional office, he also determines the appropriate time for involving the public and park concessioners in the document's preparation and review.

When the draft statement for management is completed, it is reviewed by staff of the regional office and then sent to the Director for policy review. When cleared, the document is made available for public review and comment for a period of no less than 30 days. After consulting with regional office staff, the superintendent may during this period hold workshops or provide other opportunities for public comment on the statement.

At the end of the review period, public input is summarized and evaluated. The statement for management is then revised as necessary and approved by the regional director. Changes in management objectives or other changes that may affect park management must be submitted to the Director for policy review prior to approval.

The approved statement for management is subject to annual review by the superintendent and regional director, during which it is revised as necessary. Any revisions must be reviewed and approved, following the same procedure as for the original statement. The approval date of the revised statement or, if the document is not revised, the date the regional director checked the original statement for currency is indicated on the document's cover sheet. If no revisions affecting park management are made, policy review by the Director is not required.

Planning documents must reflect the purpose, objectives, constraints, and policies indicated in the statement for management. If conditions change or new information is brought to light during the planning process rendering the statement for management out-of-date, the statement must be revised, reviewed for compliance with existing policy, and approved. Opportunities for public review of the revised statement must be provided.

An impact analysis is not prepared on the statement for management because the statement provides information and policy guidance only, and does not authorize actions having the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. Such actions are subject to impact analysis and public scrutiny during the planning process.

The approved statement for management is distributed by the superintendent to interested citizens, concessioners, and park employees. The public is notified of the statement's availability through local and regional news media.

The superintendent and regional director are authorized to continue or initiate **only** the following actions indicated in bold type based on an approved statement for management:

Management actions that cause no significant changes in the park environment and that reflect the approved management objectives. Major actions affecting the capacity of an area for public use or having the potential to cause significant environmental impacts cannot be implemented without appropriate advance planning.

Improvement or rehabilitation of existing facilities for maintenance or refurbishment purposes, or minor improvements to fulfill health and safety requirements. Upgrading of visitor accommodations, construction of facilities (such as parking lots and utilities) to meet existing or projected public needs, or other similar actions cannot be initiated.

Resurfacing and normal maintenance of roads and trails. Realignment, upgrading, or changing the status of roads and trails, except for emergency and safety purposes, is not authorized.

Routine maintenance to prevent damage to or deterioration of historic sites, structures, and objects. Restoration, reconstruction, or adaptation for other uses cannot be initiated without advance planning.

OUTLINE OF PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE AND CONTENT

The outline of planning requirements (OPR) provides the rationale for planning, special studies, and planning-related research within the park and defines the planning tasks required to achieve the park's management objectives. The OPR identifies planning needs only, and does not address design and construction project requirements. The OPR is not a programming document, although it can be helpful in establishing priorities and formulating the regional planning program.

The OPR is developed by the park superintendent, who then meets with the regional director — and various professional personnel as appropriate — to discuss planning needs and establish planning priorities. The purpose of the meeting is to evaluate the needs defined in the OPR and to determine which, if any, require programmed planning. In cases where the park's needs can be met without programmed planning, professional consultation or other assistance may be recommended. The regional director reviews all OPRs for parks within the region, arranging their planning requirements

in priority sequence, and then submits the OPRs and a proposed regional planning program to the Washington office where national priorities are established.

The outline of planning requirements contains:

- A statement of the problem or situation for which planning is required

- A list of the planning tasks and information needed to resolve the problem or improve the situation

- Identification of who will be responsible for accomplishing the planning tasks

- Cost estimates for the tasks involved

- A list of all plans currently in effect

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The draft OPR is prepared by the superintendent — with assistance from regional office staff — following approval of the statement for management by the regional director. After the draft OPR is developed, reviewed, and revised according to regional recommendations, it is reviewed by representatives of the regional office, Denver Service Center, and Harpers Ferry Center who are involved in preparing the development and professional-services program. The OPR, as modified during this meeting, is approved by the regional director and submitted to the Washington office along with the region's proposed planning program. The OPR is reviewed annually and if necessary is updated according to the same procedure.

Each park must have a current OPR. If no planning is required, the OPR consists of a statement justifying that determination. While the OPR is being drafted, a development package proposal (NPS Form 10-238) is prepared for each planning task or package of tasks. All previously prepared development package proposals related to planning tasks not approved in the current OPR are immediately considered null and void, and are removed from the program files.

TASK DIRECTIVE

PURPOSE AND CONTENT

Once a planning task is approved and programmed, a task directive is required. The task directive (formerly the planning directive) defines the focus, magnitude, components, and schedule of the planning task to be accomplished, as well as the nature of the planning product. It is an agreement between the regional director and those who are to perform the task, and it provides an understanding of what is required in terms of dollars, personnel commitments, steps to be taken, information to be gathered, presentations to be made, documents to be produced and copies required, and projected completion dates. The task directive indicates opportunities for public participation as well as the procedures for complying with statutory requirements. Disciplines required to complete the task are identified, as are informational needs and the proposed means of securing data in a timely fashion.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The task directive is prepared and kept up-to-date by the office that has been assigned the task, in consultation with management and professional personnel as appropriate. Following concurrence between the superintendent and the responsible official of the assigned office, the task directive is transmitted to the regional director for approval. Any revisions to the directive must also be reviewed and approved.

INFORMATION BASE

Systematic park planning requires relevant information on:

The ecological resources of the park and its region

The cultural resources of the park and its region

The aesthetic environment of the park and its region

The physical facilities of the park and its region

The socioeconomic environment of the park and its region

The capability of facilities in the park and its region
to support existing and projected uses

Visitor characteristics and their influence on park use

An up-to-date information base is essential for developing a clear picture of current park and regional conditions, for developing management objectives, for delimiting management zones, and for estimating the capability of park

lands to support desired uses without unacceptable resource impairment, expense, decreases in the quality of visitor experiences, or other adverse consequences. Such information provides the basis for the formulation, analysis, and comparison of alternative planning strategies and for specific decisions on the management, use, interpretation, and development of the park in its regional context.

An established park may have on hand the information necessary for the preparation of a statement for management. If certain needed information is not available, the park superintendent prepares a draft statement using the information on hand and simultaneously generates a listing of information needs for inclusion in the OPR.

To allow the systematic accomplishment of subsequent planning tasks, an information base relevant to the problems identified in the park's OPR is prepared prior to or coincident with the initiation of those tasks. Available park data are culled, and pertinent information is assembled in a form that planners can use readily. Any new information that is required to complete the tasks is obtained as early as possible in the planning process in order to facilitate formulation and analysis of alternative strategies.

The kinds and amount of new information required for planning depend on the nature of the park's resources, the objectives of the planning effort, and the adequacy and relevance of the information already available. Judgment must be exercised to ensure that the additional data gathered are pertinent to the planning task at hand and that funds and manpower are not expended unnecessarily in procuring, storing, and evaluating marginally related or excessively detailed information.

The OPR and task directive fix responsibility for securing the data needed to accomplish a given planning task. The regional office is responsible for determining the most appropriate funding source — planning funds (under project type 19), regional reserves, or operating funds. If additional data requirements are identified during planning, the task directive must be revised, and if more funds are needed, appropriate program change/innovation proposals (PC/IPs) must be approved.

Wherever possible and appropriate, information-gathering efforts by parks and regional offices, as well as other government agencies and regional interests, should be coordinated.

**DEVELOPMENT,
ANALYSIS,
AND
SELECTION
OF
ALTERNATIVE
STRATEGIES**

The development and analysis of alternative strategies is the basic activity of planning. The analysis of strategies ensures that all the reasonable ways of achieving the management objectives have been considered and both the beneficial and adverse consequences of implementing each strategy have been identified. The analysis facilitates objectivity in planning and decision-making, and may result in the identification of additional conditions or problems that require changes in the management objectives or planning tasks. Opportunities for involvement by the public and park concessioners are made available while the analysis is in progress. Wherever possible and appropriate, these efforts are coordinated with those of other agencies that have jurisdiction in the park region.

The analysis of alternative strategies may include some or all of the following activities, each of which is documented in appropriate files:

Analyzing management objectives to ensure that they are not outdated, and are valid objectives — not solutions or approaches. New objectives are formulated, evaluated, and approved, as necessary

Developing alternative strategies for meeting the objectives

Identifying and quantifying the effects of alternative strategies on the natural and cultural resources of the park and its region

Analyzing socioeconomic implications for the park and its region

Analyzing effects on visitors and on the kinds and amounts of public use of the park

Analyzing the effects on park management

Estimating costs, manpower requirements, and time frames

Preparing an environmental assessment

Status reports, informational brochures, charts, tables, specific analyses, and graphic displays may be prepared during the analysis of alternative strategies to communicate facts or proposals to the public, to identify decisionmaking factors, or to facilitate evaluation and culling of strategies by planners and decisionmakers (see exhibit 1).

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

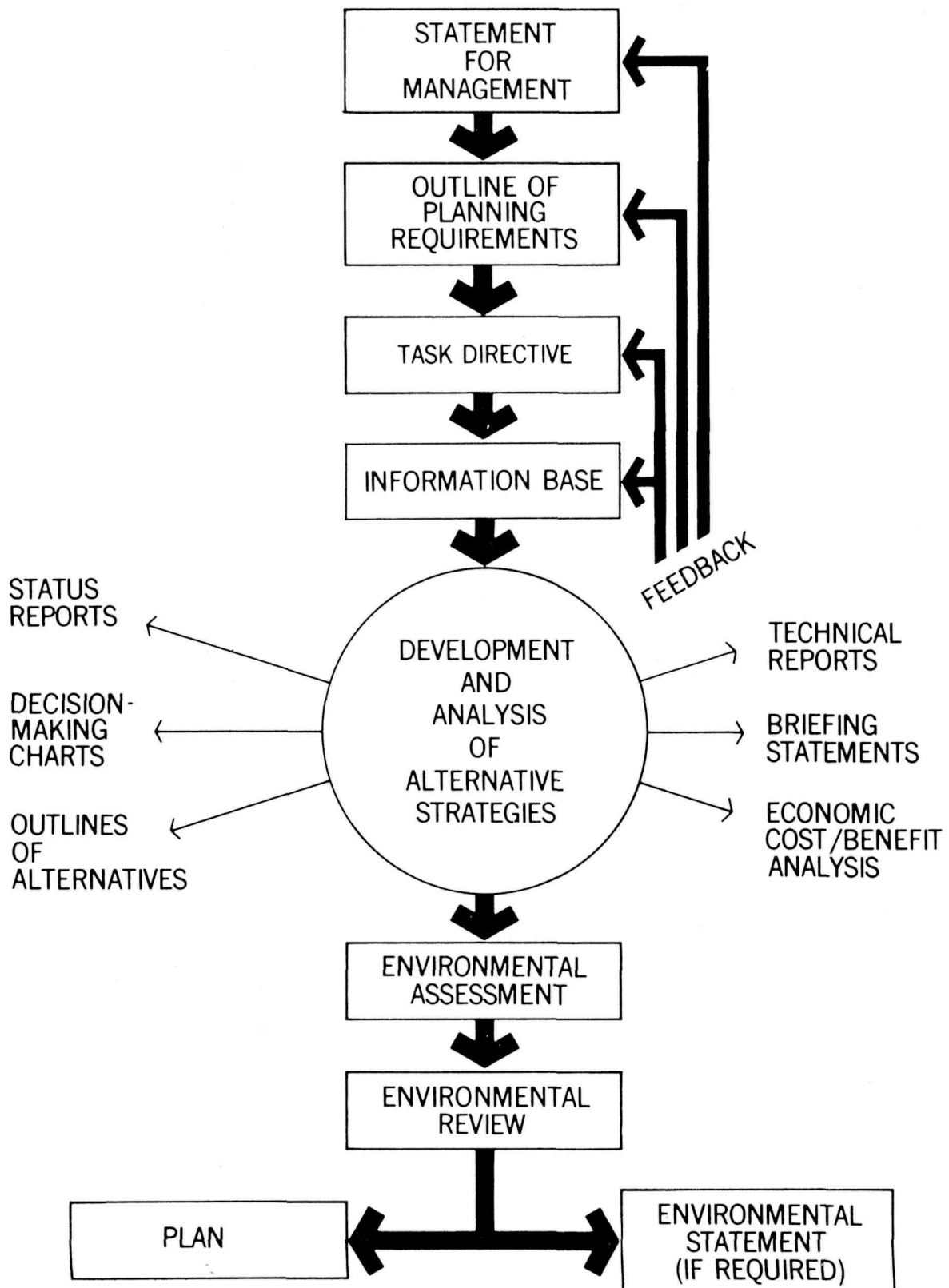
The end product of the analysis of strategies is the environmental assessment, which indicates the cost, feasibility, time frame, environmental consequences, and other implications of the reasonable alternative strategies remaining at the end of the analysis. The format of the document is flexible. In some cases, a detailed narrative may be required; in others, the document may consist largely of charts, displays, and other graphic presentations. The environmental assessment is prepared by the office assigned the planning task and is made available for public review for a period of not less than 30 days (60 days is recommended). It is then used by decisionmakers in selecting the strategy or strategies that will constitute the subsequent plan. As a result of public review, considerations may be identified that have been overlooked or insufficiently emphasized in the analysis. These considerations should be noted, evaluated, and added where appropriate before the document is submitted to decisionmakers.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

When all phases of the analysis are complete, the environmental assessment is transmitted to the regional director who weighs and evaluates the alternative strategies, determining whether their environmental consequences are significant or controversial. An environmental review, outlining the rationale for selecting one or more strategies and rejecting others, is then prepared by the regional director. The relative importance of environmental, technical, monetary, managerial, and other considerations is discussed. A determination is made as to whether the selected strategies constitute a major federal action with significant or controversial environmental impacts. If so, a commitment is made to prepare an environmental statement. If not, the decision not to prepare an environmental statement is documented.

Environmental assessments and environmental reviews normally are not reviewed in the Washington office. However, copies of these documents should be forwarded for reference purposes.

The Development and Analysis of Alternative Strategies



**PLANS
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL
STATEMENTS**

Upon completion of the environmental review, a park plan is prepared for use as a management tool and as a public statement of National Park Service management intentions. If required, an environmental statement is also prepared concurrently with the plan.

PLANS

The general management plan (GMP), formerly the master plan, is the parkwide plan for meeting the management objectives of the park. It charts in succinct language a long-range strategy for resources management, visitor use, and development at a level of detail that will facilitate implementation of proposed actions. The general management plan also defines what is required to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and management policies and procedures.

The park's regional context is carefully considered when preparing the general management plan. Reciprocal influences between the park and its surroundings are identified, and the means of harmonizing these influences are proposed wherever possible. For some parks, regional influences and problems may be minimal and may not require any action. However, where these influences are of sufficient magnitude, joint planning with adjacent agencies, organizations, and other entities that have jurisdiction in the region may be desirable and is recommended (see *Management Policies*, chapter II-6).

The GMP contains four interrelated parts, which may be prepared separately or concurrently, as appropriate:

The statement for management, defining the purpose of the park, constraints and influences on management, land classification, and management objectives. Originally prepared by the park superintendent to serve as a basis for ongoing management of the park, the statement may be revised during the planning effort. Revisions normally focus on refinement of the land classification and management objectives.

The resources management plan, outlining strategies for protecting, perpetuating, and preserving natural and cultural resources. The resources management plan contains one or two parts, as appropriate:

The natural resources management plan, detailing strategies for conserving the park's natural resources and delineating a program of research and monitoring.

The cultural resources management plan, detailing decisions on the treatment of cultural resources (preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptive use). The plan includes a strategy for managing natural resources included in historic zones.

The visitor use plan, outlining strategies for interpreting park resources, for providing for visitor use and safety, and for supplying information and support services.

The general development plan, outlining development necessary to accomplish the resources management plan and visitor use plan.

In a large park, implementation plans dealing with specific sites or subjects may be required to supplement the parkwide GMP; such additional plans, upon completion and approval, become part of the GMP. In a small park, the GMP may be sufficiently detailed to eliminate the need for many implementation plans.

Any component of the general management plan and any implementation plan may contain zoning maps that prescribe where specific management practices will be implemented in the future. These maps are distinct from the land classification map in the statement for management, which describes the locations where existing management practices are being implemented.

In order to ensure that park use is compatible with long-term resource conservation, plans will contain appropriate discussions of carrying capacity. The general management plan will establish general capacities for particular uses based on the ability of park resources to absorb impact, the experience of park visitors, and the physical capacity of park development. The general capacities will be estimated more precisely in implementation plans dealing with particular uses.

Complete general management plans are normally prepared only for parks where anticipated major changes in present use and/or development require formulation of new parkwide planning strategies. This would apply to:

Recently authorized parks

Parks without approved master plans

Parks where existing plans are outdated

For parks with adequate GMPs (or master plans), planning requirements are generally limited to site- or subject-specific implementation plans.

Implementation plans may focus on, but need not be limited to:

- Management of one or more wildlife species within the park's ecosystem

- Management of natural and prescribed fires

- Backcountry use and its regulation

- Management of vegetation

- Detailed guidelines for ongoing maintenance of historic resources and natural resources in historic zones

- Development in specific areas of the park

- Interpretive programs and media

- Concession needs and contracted visitor services

- Furnishing of historic structures

- Determination of the suitability of park lands for wilderness designation

- Legislative proposals for boundary adjustments, land use changes, increases in authorized funding for land acquisition, development, etc.

- Studies and research on carrying capacities, visitor use, historic structures, transportation, etc.

The general management plan (or its independently prepared components) is subject to policy review in the Washington office prior to approval by the regional director. Implementation plans normally are not subject to such review, but copies are forwarded for reference. All completed plans are made available for public review and comment for a period of not less than 30 days.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENTS

The National Park Service planning process must be consistent with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852). NEPA compliance requires:

A systematic, interdisciplinary approach to planning, and objective consideration of environmental values

Full involvement of other agencies and the public during the planning process

Procurement and use of relevant environmental information in analyzing alternative strategies

Recordkeeping on planning activities as a basis for decisionmaking and preparation of documents

Preparation of an environmental statement when the plan as a whole constitutes a major federal action or entails significant or controversial impacts

When required, a draft environmental statement (DES) is prepared concurrently with the plan and following the selection of strategy or strategies by decisionmakers. Although similar in scope to the environmental assessment, the DES does not include information on costs, feasibility, or other considerations that are not directly related to the park environment. Its contents are limited to detailed considerations of the effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives on the physical, ecological, socioeconomic, and cultural components of the park's environment. The DES facilitates review of environmental effects **before** final decisions are made. The comments of the public and from other agencies help ensure that environmental considerations are given sufficient weight in the decisionmaking process and that changes are made in the plan where appropriate. When a DES is prepared on a plan, the two documents are made available concurrently for public review and comment for a period of not less than 45 days. After this period has elapsed, a final environmental statement (FES) that fully considers public comments is prepared. The FES is made available for public review for a period of not less than 30 days.

More specific information on environmental statements is provided in existing National Park Service guidelines for preparation and review of environmental assessments and environmental statements.

OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

National Park Service planning must reflect awareness of and consistency with a wide variety of legislative and executive requirements.

All planning efforts must comply with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470f) and Executive Order 11593 of May 13, 1971, "Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment" (36 F.R. 8921), which require all federal agencies to nominate to the National Register of Historic Places potentially eligible historic properties under their control and to consult with state historic preservation officers and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on plans affecting properties on or eligible for the National Register. The Advisory Council's "Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties" (36 C.F.R. Part 800) govern agency compliance with Section 106 and Executive Order 11593.

Among the other laws and orders that are relevant to National Park Service planning are the following:

Acts of Congress

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916, as amended
(16 U.S.C. 1)

The Wilderness Act of 1964, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1131)

Section (f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966,
as amended (49 U.S.C. 1653)

The Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970 (49 U.S.C. 1701)

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended
(16 U.S.C. 661)

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531)

The Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972
(33 U.S.C. 1402; 16 U.S.C. 1431)

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended
(33 U.S.C. 1251)

Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300 f-j)

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1271)

The Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1962)

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended
(16 U.S.C. 4601-4)

The Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1857)

The Noise Control Act of 1972 (42 U.S.C. 4901)

National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241)

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property
Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601)

Concessions Policy Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 20)

Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552)

Executive Orders

Executive Order 11296, "Evaluation of Flood Hazard in
Locating Federally Owned or Financed Buildings, Roads,
and Other Facilities, and in Disposing of Federal Lands
and Properties" (36 F.R. 10663)

Executive Order 11752, "Prevention, Control, and Abatement
of Environmental Pollution at Federal Facilities"
(38 F.R. 34793-97)

Administrative Orders

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The goal of public involvement in the planning process is to reach better decisions. Citizen participation is considered a cornerstone of National Park Service planning and management.

Public involvement is valuable in the search for basic data, the identification of goals and problems, and the formulation and analysis of alternative planning strategies. It also aids in establishing a two-way exchange of information between the public and the agency, in promoting public understanding of decisions, in identifying public values that influence management decisions, and in educating the public about the park, about management capabilities, and about what park management can and cannot do.

Public involvement is first solicited during the formulation of management objectives, and subsequently during the development of alternative strategies to meet these objectives. Participation is particularly important during the analysis of strategies, when input from the public may have a significant effect on the planning effort.

The first step in establishing effective public involvement is to identify affected parties, in order to ensure broad representation. Next, steps must be taken to make certain that all concerned individuals and groups receive advance notice of opportunities for involvement. Public comments must be given full consideration in the development, analysis, and evaluation of alternative strategies. These comments should be carefully weighed in light of the national interest in conserving park resources and providing for environmentally compatible public use. At the end of the planning effort, all contributions from the public must be summarized in a systematic, objective, and traceable manner.

Responsible National Park Service officials must use sound judgment when expending time and energy on public involvement. Every effort must be tailored to the situation. The forms of involvement vary according to the requirements of the particular planning task.¹ Methods of public involvement include, but are not limited to:

¹ For more specific guidance, see:

- Bishop, Bruce. "Structuring Communications Programs for Public Participation in Water Resources Planning," a report submitted to the U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, Kingman Building, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 1974, 122 p. (available in DSC).
- Heberlein, Thomas A. *Principles of Public Involvement — A Primer for Park Service Planners and Managers*, University of Wisconsin, Department of Rural Sociology, Madison, Wisconsin, 1975.
- Hendee, J. C.; R. C. Lucas; R. H. Tracy, Jr.; T. Staed; R. N. Clark; G. H. Stankey; and R. A. Yarnell. *Public Involvement and the Forest Service: Experience, Effectiveness, and Suggested Direction*, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1973, 163 p.
- Hyman, Hebert H. "Planning With Citizens: Two Styles," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35:105-112(1969).

Public meetings

Workshops

Presentations to groups

Ad-hoc committees

Advisory groups

Key contacts with opinion leaders

Analysis of incoming mail

Direct mailings from the Park Service to the public

Questionnaires and surveys

Behavioral observations of park visitors

Reports from key park staff

News releases and mass media

Analysis of mass media

Day-to-day contacts with visitors and the public

Normally, one or more informal workshops are held during the management objectives and analysis of strategies stages of the planning process. Formal public meetings on draft plans and associated environmental statements are optional.

After a general management plan is initiated, opportunities for public involvement are normally announced in the *Federal Register*, in local news media, and often by direct mailings at the inception of the planning effort, at the end of the strategies analysis when the document displaying the strategies and their consequences is made available, and at the time the draft plan is released for public review. At the minimum, the announcements in the *Federal Register* for new planning efforts must be made prior to the selection of strategies as the plan's proposals and following completion of the draft plan.

For implementation plans, opportunities for public involvement are announced in the *Federal Register*, in local news media, and often by direct mailings at the time the draft plan is made available for public review. During the preparation of these plans, other opportunities may be announced, as appropriate.

Specific responsibilities for public involvement are as follows:

Information on public involvement techniques and applications:
Denver Service Center

Federal Register notices: regional office

Notices in local news media: park

Planning and coordination of formal public meetings and regional workshops: regional office, with assistance (as required) from the park and the Denver Service Center

Planning and coordination of informal workshops in the park or its immediate vicinity: park

Maintaining a log of the names and addresses of interested or potentially interested individuals, as well as key contacts in organizations and agencies, and ensuring that such parties are informed of the status of the planning effort, as required:
park

Preparation of status reports and other information for dissemination to the public: park, region, or Denver Service Center, as appropriate

Arranging professional consultations for the purpose of acquiring technical information for plans: responsible office (region, Denver Service Center, Harpers Ferry Center, or park)

Arranging consultations for the primary purpose of determining public sentiment, as well as sources of existing or potential controversy: park

Maintaining a record of all public consultations:
responsible office (region, Denver Service Center, Harpers Ferry Center, or park)

RECORD OF PLANNING

For each planning effort, the planning team captain is responsible for keeping a cumulative record of the planning activities. No information is prepared specifically for this file; it is simply an aggregation of the material used and prepared during the planning effort. At the end of the planning effort, the original copy of the record is stored in the park. When information is likely to be needed to support the activities of other offices, relevant parts of the record may be archived elsewhere, as appropriate. The availability of this record to the public will be determined in response to individual requests pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

The record contains the collections of material in various stages of completion, such as rough drafts, tapes of public meetings, or finished documents. It is arranged in the following order:

The **statement for management** file contains:

The management statement, revisions occurring while plan is in progress, reasons for revising management objectives, and approval dates

The **outline of planning requirements** file contains:

The outline of planning requirements, revisions occurring while plan is in progress, and reasons for revisions

The task directive, changes occurring while plan is in progress, and reasons for changes

Copies of development package proposals (NPS Form 10-238) relevant to the planning effort

The **information base** file contains:

Bibliographic citations for information used in the planning effort, along with the location of each reference

New information prepared specifically for the planning effort (surveys, research reports, summaries of data analyses, interpretations of existing information, sketches, tables, charts, maps, photographic plates); raw data files

and voluminous reports are kept separately and are referenced

Previous planning documents or portions thereof that influence the planning effort

The **analysis of alternative strategies** file contains:

The description of the park and regional environment

Capability and desirability analyses, if appropriate

Alternative land classification zoning plans, if appropriate

Alternative strategies

Environmental impacts of alternative strategies

Other consequences of alternative strategies
(engineering, feasibility, cost, managerial, and
other implications not related to the park environment)

The **record of public involvement** file contains:

Written correspondence between the Park Service and the public

Transcripts, tapes, notes, summaries, and similar material from public meetings, workshops, and presentations to groups (dates and attendance indicated)

Results of consultations with interested groups (dates indicated)

Results of consultations with professional experts (dates indicated)

News releases

News articles

Questionnaires and results

Analyses of public involvement

Address list for all involved organizations and members of the public

The **consultation with outside agencies** file contains:

The dates, subject matter, and results of consultations with local, state, and federal agencies, arranged chronologically by agency. Documentation should include identification of existing and potential conflicts as well as agreements to resolve them, if any

Written correspondence between the Park Service and outside agencies, arranged chronologically by agency

The **record of statutory compliance** file contains:

A listing of all actions taken specifically to comply with legislation, executive orders, and requirements in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, including, but not limited to:

Surveys and studies conducted or commissioned

Consultations with state and federal agencies (dates and purpose only)

Chronological history of preparation and review of environmental documents issued to comply with NEPA, Section 106 (NHPA), Executive Order 11593, as well as existing guidelines of CEQ and USDI

Actions recommended specifically in the plan to comply with statutory requirements relating to design of facilities or land use

The **memoranda** file contains:

All National Park Service memoranda relating to the particular planning effort, arranged chronologically

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Analysis of alternative strategies — The principal activity of planning, in which planners formulate, analyze, and cull alternative strategies for meeting the park's management objectives, and identify the beneficial and adverse consequences of implementing each strategy.

Development package proposal (NPS Form 10-238) — A programming vehicle for parks to describe and justify their planning and development needs.

Environmental assessment — A formal documentation of the analysis of alternative strategies describing the strategies and indicating all the potential consequences of implementation. (This document is normally prepared and made available for public review at the end of the strategies analysis.)

Environmental review — A written analysis prepared by the responsible official outlining the rationale for selecting one or more alternative strategies as proposals to be included in the subsequent plan, and indicating whether an environmental statement is required.

Environmental statement (ES) – A formal documentation of the environmental impacts of implementing the plan (the strategy or strategies selected by decision-makers) and its reasonable alternatives, prepared in accordance with applicable NPS, CEQ, and USDI guidelines for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An ES is made available for review by the public and other agencies upon completion of any plan that constitutes a major federal action with significant or controversial environmental effects.

General management plan (GMP), formerly master plan – A long-range parkwide plan for preservation and use of the park resources identifying strategies for resource management, visitor use, and development directed toward achieving the park's management objectives.

Information base, formerly resources basic inventory – Information necessary for preparing the statement for management or a plan. The information base varies in scope and complexity according to the requirements of the planning effort.

Management objectives – Desired conditions to be achieved within the park.

Outline of planning requirements (OPR) – A park-specific documentation of planning needs, which states the problems, defines the required tasks, identifies the office that should be assigned the tasks, and arranges in-park planning requirements in priority sequence.

Record of planning – A complete record (filed) of planning activities, including the statement for management, the outline of planning requirements, the information base, the analysis of alternative strategies, the record of public involvement, consultations with outside agencies, the record of statutory compliance, and memoranda.

Statement for management – A document prepared by the park superintendent identifying the purpose of the park, the significance of its resources, the influences on management, the existing management zones (land classification), and management objectives.

Task directive, formerly planning directive – A written contractual agreement between the regional director and the office assigned the planning task, establishing the focus, scope, schedule, personnel and funding commitments, required documents, and any other requirements of that task.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The Department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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