



National Park Owner's Manual for New Citizens of the United States of America





North Rim, Grand Canyon National
Park, Arizona

COVER
Riverside Geyser, Yellowstone
National Park, Wyoming

Welcome to Your America!



Statue of Liberty National Monument,
New York & New Jersey



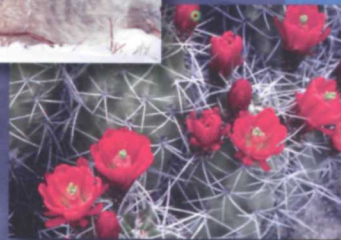
Biscayne National Park, Florida



Everglades National Park, Florida



Yellowstone National Park,
Wyoming



White Sands National Monument,
New Mexico



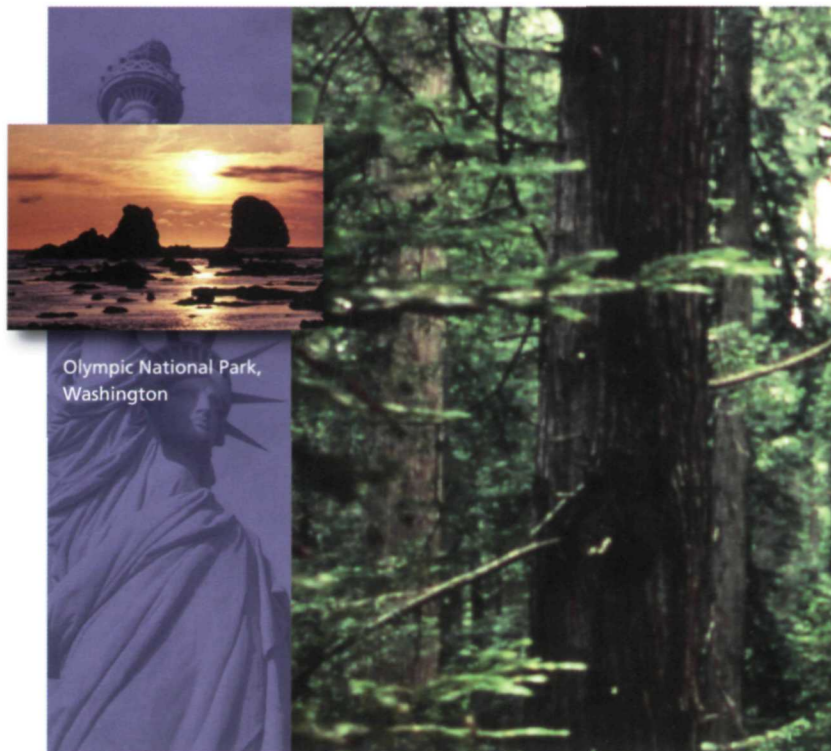
Jefferson National Expansion
Memorial, Missouri



Yosemite National Park,
California



Welcome Fellow Citizen!



Olympic National Park,
Washington

Many years ago I became a U.S. citizen by the same process you have just completed. As the director of the National Park Service, I would like to invite you to visit and experience your national parks, which are part of the network of public lands that belong to you as a citizen of this country. Some national parks focus on natural wonders. Others honor an important event or pay tribute to a group of people. National parks can cover hundreds of square miles, or be less than a city block in size. They can be in wilderness, underwater, on rural farmland, or in an urban environment. The National Park System's nearly 400 sites are truly remarkable.

Why would you visit such places? I'll suggest four reasons.

Parks contain examples of all kinds of nature. You can see animals, trees, plants, rivers, streams, mountains, deserts—almost anything in our natural heritage can be experienced in a national park.

Parks are examples of the diversity of American culture, history, and landscapes. Parks tell amazing, true stories that collectively describe our nation's story. They are "classrooms" and "libraries." By visiting national parks, you can better understand cultural traditions that define us as Americans.

Parks are a legacy. National parks are lands that have been intentionally set aside and preserved because of their



important role in our nation's development. They are links to the past—gifts from earlier generations that we will pass on to future generations. And they are real. Rather than reading about them in a book or viewing images of them on television or a computer screen, you can go to national parks yourself and physically experience why these places are special.

Parks belong to all Americans. All citizens share in the privilege of owning national parks and in the responsibility of protecting them. Parks are for our enjoyment. But, we must all do our share to preserve and protect these national treasures. I hope you will.

I encourage you to explore your national parks. Learn more about your new nation's history and culture. See the majestic canyons and rivers. Experience the towering, ancient trees or cool streams overlooked by towering mountains. Stand near a battlefield and sense the history that surrounds you. Feel the solitude of a desert sunset.

Join us in preserving, protecting, and enjoying these important places. National parks unite us all as Americans. From one "American by choice" to another, congratulations!

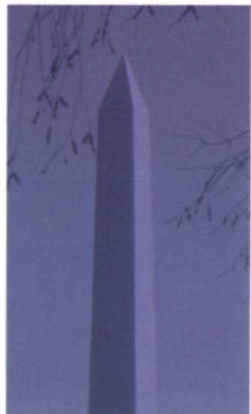
Mary A. Bomar
Director,
National Park Service

Redwood National and State Parks,
California



Director Bomar

Public Lands for Everyone



National parks and monuments are part of a large system of public lands that include national forests, national wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, national marine sanctuaries, and state and county parks. These lands were set aside for your use and enjoyment and are to be maintained for you now and in the future. As a U.S. citizen you own these special places, which are administered for you by the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and many other federal and state agencies.

In general, public lands are open to the public; however, each government agency develops its own rules for how you can use and enjoy them. For example, on public lands you may be permitted to collect firewood, or this activity may be prohibited. Fishing is another popular activity that is regulated on public lands. With a permit it is allowed in many areas, though not all.

We invite you to find out about the public lands near your home, including the National Park System.



National Mall, Washington DC

Learn what they offer and how you might enjoy them. A visit to the national parks and other public lands will surely deepen your experience as an American citizen.



Park Ranger William
Newman, National Mall,
Washington, DC



Your National Park Service: Mission

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.

History

On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service, a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior. The National Park Service promotes and regulates the use of national parks, monuments, and reservations. Our responsibilities are to conserve the scenery, natural and historic objects, and living things in the national parks; to keep these resources in good condition; and to make them available for people to enjoy now and in the future.

The National Park Service still strives to meet these goals, while filling many other roles as well: guardian of our diverse cultural and recreational resources;

world leader in the parks and preservation community; and pioneer in the drive to protect America's open space.

What does this mean for you?

The National Park Service invites you to visit and enjoy *your* 391 national parks. We hope you will learn about the history they memorialize and the living plants and animals and other wonders of nature they preserve.

In addition to enjoying your national parks, you play an important role as a caretaker and protector of these special places so that your family and future generations can also visit and experience them.

... that nature is not harmed in a way that would lessen the experience in a national park for us, our children, and future generations.

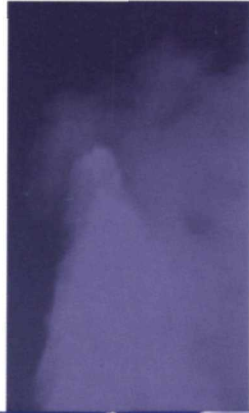
Michael Soukup,
Chief Scientist



Mesa Verde National
Park, Colorado

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

National Parks, Monuments, and Preserves



Yellowstone National
Park, Wyoming

Different Names for Different Places

The National Park System contains 391 sites, including national parks, seashores, lakeshores, battlefields, historic sites, and national monuments. Generally, a national park exhibits a variety of resources and encompasses large land or water areas to help provide adequate protection of those resources. A national park can be created only by an act of Congress. Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming, Montana, Idaho) was established in 1872 as this country's (and the world's) first national park.

A *national monument* protects nationally significant historic or scientific objects or sites. It is usually smaller than a national park and lacks its variety of attractions. It can be designated by presidential proclamation. Devils Tower (Wyoming) was the first national monument (1906).

In 1974, Big Cypress (Florida) and Big Thicket (Texas) were authorized as the first *national preserves*. This category is for units of the National Park System that are established primarily to protect particular resources. For example, Big Cypress was established to protect the freshwater supply for the Everglades. Activities such as hunting and fishing or the removal of minerals and fuels may be permitted

in national preserves if they do not jeopardize the natural values of the area.

National reserves are similar to national preserves. Their management may be transferred to local or state authorities. The first national reserve, City of Rocks (Idaho), was established in 1988.

Preserving shoreline areas and offshore islands, *national lakeshores* and *national seashores* protect natural resources and their related values, such as clean air and scenic vistas. At the same time they provide for water-based recreation.



Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming

National rivers and *wild and scenic rivers* preserve free-flowing streams that have not been dammed or otherwise altered and the ribbons of land that border them. Besides preserving rivers in their natural state, these areas provide opportunities for outdoor activities such as canoeing, rafting, and hiking.

National scenic trails are generally long-distance footpaths winding through areas of natural beauty.

Though the National Park System is best known for its great scenic parks, more than half its sites honor important persons, events, and activities in the nation's history. These range from sites where pre-historic Indian civilizations lived to homes and other places that were important in the lives of modern Americans. Historical sites are usually preserved or restored to reflect their appearance at the time of the historical event or period.

These historical areas have often been called *national historic sites*, especially in recent years. However, many other names are also used to distinguish historically important areas. For example, *national historical park* refers to areas that are often larger than national historic sites, preserving historical districts and more complex historical events or periods. A wide variety of names—*national military park*, *national battlefield park*, *national battlefield site*, and *national battlefield*—are used for areas that commemorate American military history. The lone *international peace memorial*, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, is a site relevant to both U.S. and Canadian history.



Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Alaska

National Park Sampler

Statue of Liberty National Monument
New York & New Jersey



The famous 152-foot copper statue bearing the torch of freedom was a gift of the French people in 1886 to honor the alliance of the two nations in the American Revolution. Located on Liberty Island in New York harbor, the statue came to symbolize freedom for immigrants. Nearby Ellis Island, through which 12 million immigrants passed (see photo), was reopened to the public in 1990 as this country's primary museum devoted entirely to immigration.

Independence National Historical Park
Pennsylvania



The park preserves structures and sites in central Philadelphia from the time of the American Revolution: the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, the First and Second Banks of America, and others. The old cracked bell still proclaims liberty, and Independence Hall echoes the words, "We the people." Explore Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia and learn about the past and America's continuing struggle to fulfill the founders' declaration that "all men are created equal."

Gettysburg National Military Park
Pennsylvania



The Battle of Gettysburg was a turning point in the Civil War and a new birth of freedom. The Union victory in the summer of 1863 ended General Robert E. Lee's second and most ambitious invasion of the North. It was the war's bloodiest battle with 51,000 casualties. It also provided President Abraham Lincoln with the setting for his most famous address.

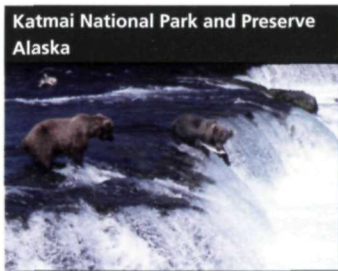
George Washington Carver National Monument, Missouri



The national monument is the birthplace and childhood home of George Washington Carver, African-American agronomist, educator, and humanitarian. It features a museum, Discovery Center, and short trail passing the birthplace site, Boy Carver statue (above), restored 1881 Moses Carver house, and the Carver family cemetery.



Use the enclosed map of the National Park System to learn more about your national parks and to plan your visit.



Variety marks this expansive land: lakes, forests, mountains, and marshlands all abound in wildlife. The Alaska brown bear, the world's largest carnivore, thrives here, feeding upon salmon that spawn in the many lakes and streams. Wild rivers and renowned sport fishing add to the attractions of this subarctic environment. Here, in 1912, Novarupta Volcano erupted violently, forming the ash-filled "Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes" where steam rose from countless fumaroles.



This national park displays the results of 70 million years of volcanism, migration, and evolution—processes that thrust a bare land from the sea and clothed it with unique ecosystems and a distinct human culture. The park highlights two of the world's most active volcanoes, and offers insights into the birth of the Hawaiian Islands and views of dramatic volcanic landscapes.

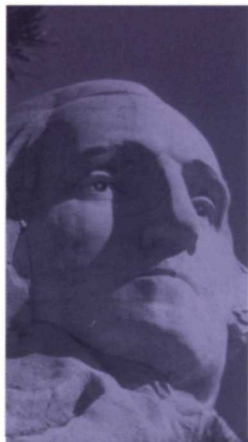


Olympic is a land of contrasts and variety where you will find Pacific Ocean beaches, rainforest valleys, glacier-capped peaks, and a stunning variety of plants and animals. Roads provide access to the outer edges of the park, but the heart of Olympic is wilderness: a primeval sanctuary for humans and wild creatures alike.



The largest subtropical wilderness in the United States, this area boasts rare and endangered species, such as the American crocodile, Florida panther, and West Indian manatee. It has been designated an International Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site, and a Wetland of International Importance, in recognition of its significance to all the people of the world.

How to Use and Care for Your National Parks



As you now know, national parks have been established across the United States for Americans to visit, discover, and enjoy. Your attention to following rules and regulations will help maintain national parks, and all public lands, for the benefit and enjoyment of all:

DO call ahead to check hours of operation and entrance fees (if any).

DO wear appropriate clothing (e.g., comfortable shoes, jacket).

DO leave the park and all its contents as you found them.

DO take pictures.

DO ask about guided tours, ranger presentations, and other ways to learn about the park.

DO inform yourself of park rules and regulations before you visit.

DO NOT cut trees or bushes or any plants, flowers, wild herbs, ferns, or other living things. National parks generally are not places where plants can be harvested.

DO NOT feed or approach any animals. They are wild and can be dangerous.

DO NOT litter or leave trash behind.



Ranger-guided walk

For further information contact the National Park Service at (202) 208-6843 or visit the National Park Service online at <http://www.nps.gov>.



Getting Involved

Taking care of your national parks can be as simple as picking up a piece of trash during your stay at a park or as involved as pursuing a career with the National Park Service. Citizen groups, associations, volunteers, and park visitors all have the potential to contribute to the protection of our national treasures.

Volunteer

Volunteers come from all over the world to help preserve and protect America's natural and cultural heritage for the enjoyment of this and future generations. History buffs, amateur naturalists, reenactors, artists, campground hosts, gardeners, and many more volunteers of all ages give of their time and expertise to help our national parks.

Youth programs

Through youth programs, young people develop a lifelong commitment to support our national parks and protect our natural environment and cultural heritage. More than 25 youth programs now operate throughout the National Park System.

Internships

Across the nation, interns apply knowledge from the classroom while gaining experience and meeting professionals in the field or office. Possible fields

range from archeology and interpretation to Web site development.

Partnerships

The National Park Service works with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. Citizen groups assist parks in supporting needed programs and projects that are beyond the reach of appropriated funds.

Employment

The employees of the National Park Service care for the special places that are the heritage of America. This work requires a wide range of skills in a variety of disciplines from biology and law enforcement to computer programming.

Contact the National Park Service at (202) 208-6843 for further information on these opportunities.



Volunteer, Sequoia
National Park, California

Find Out More about Your Public Lands

The National Park Service manages only a portion of the public lands available to you. We encourage you to explore all public lands and waters operated by the federal government:

National Park Service
<http://www.nps.gov>

(202) 208-6843

Bureau of Land Management
<http://www.blm.gov/nhp>

(202) 452-5125

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

(800) 344-WILD

USDA Forest Service
<http://www.fs.fed.us>

(202) 205-8333

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<http://www.usace.army.mil>

(202) 761-0011

For information on state, county, and local public lands and waters search the Internet or consult your phone directory under STATE, COUNTY, or LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

National Park Service
Natural Resource Program Center
Lakewood, Colorado, and Washington, DC
June 2007, D-1815

Chisos Mountains, Big Bend National
Park, Texas

BACK COVER
Bison, Yellowstone National Park,
Wyoming

Congratulations!



As of this day, you are an owner and caretaker of
the national parks of the United States of America

United States of America Citizen

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary A. Bomar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mary A. Bomar
Director, National Park Service

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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<http://www.nps.gov>

The National Park Service cares for special
places saved by the American people so
that all may experience our heritage.



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