



Foundation Document Overview

Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

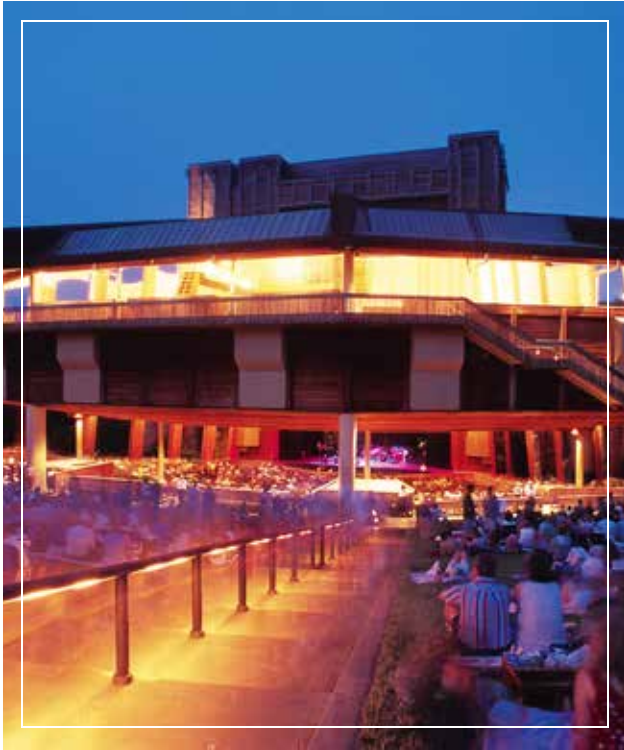
Virginia



Contact Information

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Purpose



The purpose of WOLF TRAP NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS is to provide opportunities to experience live performances, related educational programs, and associated recreation in a pastoral setting within the National Capital area.



Significance

Significance statements express why Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- **First and only national park for the performing arts.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is the first and only national park for the performing arts.
- **Home of the Filene Center.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is home to the Filene Center, a premier outdoor performing arts venue that has developed technical and operational capabilities which supports a high variety, density, and caliber of programming.
- **Collaborative partnership authorized by Congress.** The collaborative partnership between the Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts and the Wolf Trap Foundation was authorized by Congress to aid the park in presentation of performing arts and related educational and cultural programming.
- **Bringing the performing arts to the public.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts was the realization of the vision of Catherine Filene Shouse to bring a diversity of performing arts to the public in the National Capital area. Her donation of the land that became the park allowed the vision to become reality.
- **Cultural arts in an outdoor setting.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts conserves a former agricultural site that allows visitors to experience cultural arts and compatible recreation in an outdoor setting.



Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Performances in the park.** Live performances are fundamental to Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, which was established to provide everyone with an opportunity to experience the performing arts.
- **Cooperative partnerships for assistance in programming and operations of performances.** Cooperative partnerships are fundamental to meeting the challenges of programming, marketing, and operating the park's diverse performing arts programs and performances. For more than 40 years, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts and the Wolf Trap Foundation have enjoyed a successful partnership.
- **The experience of an open air / outdoor venue ensconced in an outdoor setting.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts was envisioned as, and is appreciated as, a place to experience performing arts in an outdoor park environment. This value applies to all venues within the park and includes traditions such as picnicking on the lawn.
- **Performance venues.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is home to multiple performance venues, which provide numerous opportunities to watch and enjoy the performing arts. From the state-of-the-art Filene Center to the rustic Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods to the open meadow, these performance venues accommodate diverse shows and audiences.
- **The cultural landscape of Wolf Trap Farm.** Originally a working farm, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts retains elements of its historic landscape. This setting is a focal point of the Wolf Trap experience and includes fields, woodlands, a stock pond, hills, the Filene Center lawn, manicured landscapes, a historic farmhouse and outbuildings, gardens, and meadows.
- **A diversity of patrons and experiences.** Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts provides a variety of performances that are as diverse as the American public. The park also aspires to appeal to artists as a unique venue and experience.

Other Important Resources & Values

Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Diverse outdoor recreational uses not directly related to performances.** As a national park, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts allows some forms of outdoor recreation in addition to the performing arts. Local residents and visitors can walk in the woods, stroll in the meadow, sled, and enjoy the overall outdoor setting; this use is increasingly valued as the surrounding areas become more developed.
- **Promoting the performing arts and arts education.** By providing a place to experience performing arts, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts advocates for the arts and educates the public through live performances and educational programs, giving visitors the opportunity to develop an appreciation for the performing arts.



Description

In 1966, Congress accepted a gift from Catherine Filene Shouse, a devotee to the performing arts, and authorized the creation of Wolf Trap Farm Park (original name) in Vienna, Virginia, as the first and only national park for the performing arts. Encroaching roads and suburban development inspired Shouse to preserve this former farm as a park where people could find spiritual nourishment in the peacefulness of nature and enjoyment in the performing arts. Shouse donated land for the park, including five existing buildings, and funds towards building the Filene Center outdoor performing arts complex. On July 1, 1971, the Filene Center opened to the public as a world-class entertainment facility. Today, the state-of-the-art Filene Center continues to operate as an outdoor venue, hosting a wide variety of internationally acclaimed performing arts entertainment.

The Filene Center is not the only performance venue in the park. The Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods is an outdoor amphitheater nestled in the woods near Wolf Trap Run that offers diverse programs that introduce children to the world of performing arts. These performances are enhanced by the Workshops-in-the-Arts program and summer junior ranger programs. The Meadow Pavilion also serves as a stage area within the park that offers a third venue for smaller shows and performances.

The success of presenting performing arts at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is the result of a partnership between a government agency—the National Park Service—and a private organization—the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. The National Park Service oversees park management, sponsors both interpretive and educational programs, and directs operation and maintenance of technical equipment and backstage facilities that serve performing artists. The Wolf Trap Foundation, a private not-for-profit corporation founded at the request of the Department of the Interior, is responsible for artistic programming, public relations, and marketing. Together the National Park Service and the Wolf Trap Foundation foster the park's unique performing arts experience that is centered on artistic excellence in an outdoor setting.

