

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Flagstaff Area National Monuments

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Vision Statement

These living, evolving landscapes support an indispensable diversity of life, which has been exploited throughout time, and continues to sustain people in spirit and material. As we learn about the diverse lifeways and technologies of people before us ... and apply this knowledge to our own existence, we increase our understanding of the forces that shape our lives.

- Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, Flagstaff Area National Monuments

The Flagstaff Area National Monuments - Wupatki, Sunset Crater Volcano and Walnut Canyon National Monuments - were established at different times and for different purposes yet are linked by common resources and history. On this landscape, over many centuries, populations fluctuated, volcanoes erupted and people pulled together to preserve both place and tradition.

Today, faced with population growth, urban/suburban sprawl, environmental change, and other influences not yet imagined, we must again pull together to ensure continued preservation of these places. We invite you to share our vision of the National Park Service in its second century:

Parks provide opportunities for visitors to see “the real thing”; to explore; to experience isolation and natural quiet; and to forge their own connections to park resources.

Parks enhance public understanding and appreciation of natural and cultural environments in terms of what was, what is, and what could be. From understanding comes personal commitment through philosophical and monetary support, participation in education programs, and volunteerism.

Parks serve as depositories of scientific knowledge. As integral parts of a shared landscape, parks preserve healthy ecosystems and offer research opportunities to provide the information necessary for protection and restoration of national resources. Citizen participation is encouraged, and research findings are shared with the public to promote understanding of scientific investigation and its relationship to management decisions.

Park facilities are safe, well maintained, appropriate for the site and for staff and visitor needs, and environmentally sustainable.

Parks are integral parts of the local and global communities, cooperating with individuals, organizations, and other agencies in community outreach activities and achievement of mutual goals. Interagency partnerships contribute to a seamless network of public lands.

Parks are adequately funded, through a variety of sources, to carry out the NPS mission with professionalism and integrity.

John F. Shireman, Acting Superintendent 8/5/2007

Stewardship

Objective: Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Performance Goal:

We will upgrade facilities and interpretive media to provide:

- appealing, appropriate and useful information and interpretation when and where needed (before arrival and on-site) to ensure the safety of visitors and resources,
- a variety of visitor experiences suitable for all ages and abilities, and
- alternative experiences where terrain or other insurmountable obstacles prevent full accessibility.

Objective: Improve the condition of park resources and assets:

Performance Goal:

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

We will restore the historic Ranger Cabin at Walnut Canyon National Monument to an appropriate condition (interior, exterior, and grounds/landscaping) to support interpretation of the evolution of land management philosophy in northern Arizona.

Performance Goal:

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

We will develop and implement a series of natural resource projects to restore the most degraded vegetation types, improve habitats for the most at-risk species, and understand and mitigate impacts from accelerating climate change. We will integrate these projects into a landscape-level land management framework with our neighbors and stakeholders, using new educational and interpretive media and approaches.

Specific projects include:

- Protection of pronghorn and associated grasslands, while providing public education on threats to wildlife from highway development, urbanization, and other impacts that increasingly isolate parks in terms of wildlife habitat.
- Enhanced conservation of large carnivores using NPS lands. We will participate in a multi-park collaborative project to harmonize with state-level management of these animals, and integrate human safety with conservation of ecosystem function, while increasing public knowledge and understanding of large carnivores.
- Inventory and video documentation of vertebrate and invertebrate cave-dwelling fauna in Wupatki National Monument and other NPS areas to enhance protection under the Cave Protection Act of 1988.

Objective: Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Performance Goal:

We will ensure that park boundaries are examined and adjusted as necessary to ensure protection of critical natural and cultural resources. Through the General Management Plan, we have recognized that nationally significant resources exist outside the current boundaries of Wupatki National Monument. A 23,000-acre expansion, involving state trust lands, private lands, and lands administered by BLM that are currently within Colorado Plateau National Reserve Lands (CPNRL), would protect critical components of the cultural landscape. Pending the ability to acquire fee interest in these lands, we will explore opportunities to work in concert with non-profit conservation organizations to preclude incompatible uses.

Objective: Serve as the preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Performance Goal:

Building upon an established interagency research program, we will assist in developing dynamic models of future plant distributions significant to the western national parks. Working with universities and organizations including the Merriam-Powell Center for Environmental Research, curricula will be developed for college, primary, and secondary education. We will assist in dissemination of information through a variety of educational efforts, including interactive websites, through which the public can see and engage in discussions of how our parks will be impacted by climate change.

Objective: Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Performance Goal:

We will continually expand existing programs and develop new ones, to establish and strengthen environmental ethics and actions in children of this and future generations.

ENVIRONMENT

Objective: Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Performance Goal:

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

We will increase commitment to environmentally and professionally sound practices in daily activities throughout the Flagstaff Area National Monuments (FLAG). The FLAG Environmental Management System will continue to be registered to the International

Standard, ISO 14001:2004. Employees will be personally responsible for evaluating and making informed choices in purchasing products and services, using and disposing of products and materials, interacting with natural and cultural resources, and communicating these principles to coworkers and the public.

Objective: Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Performance Goal:

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

We will explore ways to showcase our most exemplary environmental practices, both on-site as part of interpretive programs, and through publications and other media for the general public.

Performance Goal:

Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

The new multi-park Northern Arizona cultural and natural history collections/research facility, to be constructed through an NPS/Museum of Northern Arizona partnership, will be designed for sustainability (LEEDS Platinum Level). Upon completion, the facility itself will serve as an educational tool on sustainable practices, as will the collections it houses. Public tours are planned.

Objective: Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Performance Goal:

We will participate in collaborative restoration of water flow through the riparian corridor within Walnut Canyon National Monument. The city of Flagstaff, Coconino National Forest, and NPS have formed an advisory committee to increase flows from Lower Lake Mary into Walnut Creek; the lake was dammed in 1904, at which time seasonal stream flows in the creek ceased. Interest is high also among recreational groups, wildlife conservation organizations, students and faculty of Northern Arizona University, and numerous local citizens. Students at local schools and universities will be invited to use “new media” to develop a pilot interactive interpretive program documenting the history of water development in the watershed, beneficial water use, effects on the riparian corridor, and the restoration process. The program will highlight the role of multi-party, landscape scale approaches in protecting small NPS areas in the 21st century.

RECREATION

Objective: Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Performance Goal:

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

We will make park trails accessible wherever terrain permits; where this is not possible, we will provide valid alternatives through state of the art electronic and other means for those unable to experience the real thing.

Objective: Establish “volun-tourism” excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Performance Goal:

Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

We will cooperate with other local entities to enhance volunteer recruitment and retention for all. We will continue participation in Unilever annual volunteer work days to promote community awareness of resource protection requirements and opportunities for individual action.

EDUCATION

Objective: Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Performance Goal:

We will expand our efforts toward educational outreach for urban and underserved youth in the greater Flagstaff area. Park staff will work directly with reservation educators and American Indian NPS employees to develop ranger-presented school programs focused on the stories, histories, and traditions of Puebloan peoples, which are an integral part of park purpose, significance, and interpretive themes. These stories will be presented as representative of the greater story of American Indian history, demonstrating the difficulty in balancing the rights of individuals with those of society as a whole to preserve local and regional heritage.

Objective: Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Performance Goal:

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Through an outreach and education program, we will educate and train the public in the geospatial technologies that have been implemented throughout the NPS, allowing people to participate actively in investigating and formulating answers to challenging real-world park questions. We will work with local secondary and undergraduate institutions to develop a compilation of education curriculum and in-park experiences for students. An Internet Mapping Website will be developed in concert with the park-focused curriculum to enable public exploration and analysis of park information.

Performance Goal:

We will work with cooperating associations, Harpers Ferry Center, Northern Arizona University, the Museum of Northern Arizona, technology experts, and others to develop new delivery methods for information and interpretive materials both on-site and via the web (podcasts, downloadable materials on-site, and other broadcast, and print media).

Objective: Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Performance Goal:

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

We will expand Junior Ranger programs in the Flagstaff Area National Monuments, in partnership with professional educators and youth group leaders, to encourage participation in engaging and inspiring activities.

Performance Goal:

We will conduct summer-long Native Youth Ruins Preservation Workshops as a training program for local high school and college students. Students will be exposed to the entire ruins preservation and documentation process through extensive field work with NPS archeologists, and may be inspired to pursue careers in this or other sciences.

Objective: Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Performance Goal:

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

We will expand the existing summer NPS/USFS interpretive partnership to create a year-round system of school and community education programs. Programs will be presented

on both NPS and USFS lands, as well as in schools and throughout the community, using local partners as program hosts and/or presenters. Emphasis will be on interpretation of public lands in the context of regional landscapes with shared resource issues and responsibilities. Teachers will play a major role, by participating in the interpretive partnership during the summer, then serving as liaisons during the school year, to stimulate interest in parks and forest as relevant classroom lessons and educational field trips. They will also promote use of existing NPS and USFS curriculum-based education and other programs, while soliciting student and teacher input.

Objective: Model what it means to work in partnership.

Performance Goal:

We will continue participation in a cooperative planning effort involving a large number of stakeholders concerned with the Little Colorado River (LCR) watershed, striving toward a multi-faceted approach to improve water supplies, restore native cottonwood-willow habitat, increase recreational opportunities, and provide economic benefits to local communities. There are opportunities for NPS leadership in undertaking projects within Wupatki, Grand Canyon, and Petrified Forest and in presentation of these as pilot projects to illustrate the potential for restoration by other land managers and entities in this ongoing partnership.