

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT

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[Editor's Note: *The following article is adapted by Brian C. Kenner from his master's thesis in Recreation Management, earned in 1984 from the University of Montana School of Forestry. Kenner received a B.S. in biology from South Dakota State University in 1978 and later worked for five summers as a fishing guide on Yellowstone Lake. He spent the summers of 1984 and 1985 as a back country ranger and member of a research and rescue team in Glacier National Park. His current life goal is "eventually to become an NPS administrator."*]

IN THE SUMMER OF 1984 grizzly bears once again became the center of controversy in the national parks. In Yellowstone, National Park Service officials closed to visitors huge portions of the backcountry in order to separate people and bears in prime bear habitat. This decision angered many people and drew the attention of the national media. In *NEWSWEEK* magazine (6 June 1984) an article entitled "Whose Park Is It, Anyway?" cited public concern over whether the bears' welfare outweighs the Park Service responsibility to provide recreational opportunities in the park. The cover story of *LIFE* magazine for August 1984 asked simply, "Can Grizzlies and People Coexist?" Tragedy brought the issue of visitor safety to the forefront of the debate when grizzlies killed a woman in Yellowstone and mauled three other people—two in Glacier and one in Yellowstone—in separate incidents.

At issue in this controversy is not simply national park bear policy or even national park policy in general, but something more basic to the parks: The fundamental management philosophy upon which all park policy is based. Therefore, the answer to the question of whether policies, such as bear habitat closures, are appropriate is dependent upon the underlying philosophy that guides the agency. The problem with the national parks is that their underlying philosophy has never been explicitly stated in the laws that direct the National Park Service; hence, throughout park history, policies have reflected several shifts in philosophy as the national park concept has evolved. Recognizing these shifts and understanding the reasons for them is an important part of understanding national park problems today.

Philosophies of management

In order to understand how changes in management philosophy are related to park management issues, a framework for conceptualizing different management philosophies must first be developed. Hende et

al. (1978) define two opposing philosophical approaches to wilderness management, which apply to national park management. One approach is **anthropocentrism**, in which the primary concern of the land manager is to increase the public's direct use of the park and thereby increase human values and benefits; sociological considerations and cultural definitions take precedence over biological concepts (Hendee and Stankey, 1973). In other words, the manager emphasizes the "benefit and enjoyment of the people" phrase of the Yellowstone Act (16 U.S.C. 21-22), and the "promote and regulate use" phrase of the National Park Service Act (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.); actions are intended to accommodate perceived visitor desires, even to the extent of disrupting natural ecological interactions. Because of their mass appeal, convenience-oriented styles of recreation are facilitated, and "because the production of recreational experiences is a primary goal, actions to increase access, to reduce difficulty and danger, and to facilitate use would be encouraged" (Hendee et al., 1978).

On the other hand, Hendee et al. (1978) define **biocentrism** as a philosophy which "places primary emphasis on preservation of the natural order," and where "recreational use is secondary to maintenance of the natural order." With this approach managers seek to limit disruptions of the natural ecosystem and allow natural environmental processes (erosion, fire, etc.) to proceed to the maximum extent possible; because of the values, including recreational and scientific, placed on preservation of these natural systems, certain benefits will accrue to society (Hendee and Stankey, 1973). In other words, manipulation of visitor behavior is emphasized in order to preserve ecological interactions and thus the naturalness of the area.

In essence, the primary difference between the two approaches is the "extent to which[human] benefits are viewed as being dependent on the naturalness" of the managed area (Hendee et al., 1978). The anthropocentric approach assumes that naturalness is of little importance to the visitor's experience, and therefore permits manipulation of the environment to meet visitor demands and thus provide benefits; the biocentric approach advocates manipulation of visitor behavior in order to preserve natural conditions, which leads to desired benefits.

As Hendee et al. (1978) point out, purely anthropocentric and purely biocentric philosophies are at opposite ends of a continuum of management orientations. Interest groups at both ends of the continuum work to influence policy, and Nash (1982) called the debate between the two philosophies "one of the most sensitive issues in wilderness management." Actual policies for a park or wilderness area are compromises between the two philosophies and thus are a combination of them which lies somewhere along the continuum between the two polar extremes. The use of these terms—anthropocentrism and biocentrism—with respect to resource management was begun only recently. Historically, the choice of a philosophical approach to land

management has been unarticulated and can only be inferred by studying statements and policies issued during the time period in question. Thus, determining the exact point at which a particular policy lies on the continuum is an arbitrary decision, and it is therefore more useful to point out relative differences in the philosophical orientation of policies throughout national park history.

Philosophical Shifts Throughout National Park History

Although a wilderness movement began in the mid-nineteenth century, it did not enjoy widespread public support in the age of manifest destiny, and when Yellowstone National Park was created, its reservation was due to public fascination with the outstanding natural features found there rather than any appreciation of wilderness values. The movement to establish Yellowstone Park was financed in large part by the Northern Pacific Railroad (Runte, 1979), which saw the park as a "national vacation mecca" from which they would benefit as the only transportation line to the area (Nash, 1973); therefore, the reasons for its establishment were anthropocentric. The anthropocentric intentions of the early park supporters can be found in the journal of a man who was a member of one of the first exploratory expeditions into the Yellowstone region and later became the park's first superintendent. Upon viewing Yellowstone Lake for the first time, he wrote:

It is dotted with islands of great beauty, as yet unvisited by man, but which at no remote period will be adorned with villas and the ornaments of civilized life...It possesses adaptabilities for the highest display of artificial culture, amid the greatest wonders of Nature that the world affords, and is beautified by the grandeur of the most extensive mountain scenery, and not many years can elapse before the march of civil improvement will reclaim this delightful solitude, and garnish it with all the attractions of cultivated taste and refinement. Langford, 1905.

Park supporters and early park administrators had virtually no concept of how the new park was to be managed, and they had little help from the Act passed by Congress. It provided no funding, staff, or penalties for violating its protective provisions. However, it did provide for the leasing of portions of land for visitor accommodations, and over the next several years several hotels and lodges were built. Because most of the tourists in those days were wealthy Easterners who preferred to view the "natural wonders" from the comfort of a luxury hotel, in an extremely anthropocentric style of tourism that has come to be called the "portal syndrome" (Hendee et al., 1978), many of the lodging facilities in Yellowstone (and many other early national parks) were extravagant.

The first important shift in management philosophy came more than 40 years after Yellowstone was established, and was not so much a

shift in philosophy as it was a crystallization of ideas that had been forming over several years into formal policy statements. When the National Park Service was created in 1916 it took over administration of the parks from the Army, which had been sent to manage the parks because early civilian administrators had been ineffective and often corrupt. The Army was relatively successful in keeping politics and economic interests (both extractive and exploitative) out of the parks, and Stephen Mather, as first director of the Park Service, sought to continue that effort. The vague direction given the newly created agency left much room for discretion, and Mather and his assistant, Horace Albright, placed preservation first in early policy statements:

First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our time; second, that they are set aside for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks. Ise, 1961.

However, Mather's policies were not as biocentric as some conservationists of his era, including the Sierra Club, would have liked. Although he strictly regulated concessioner activities, he recognized that the greatest threat to the parks in his day was a lack of public support and therefore made every effort to promote and popularize them; he knew that without substantial visitation the parks could easily be turned over to private interests by Congress. Hence, although Mather's policies were rooted in biocentrism, practical reasons kept strong aspects of anthropocentrism in them.

Another important philosophical shift occurred in the years after World War II. Throughout the War appropriations for the parks had been drastically reduced from pre-war levels, and in the first several years after the War, Congress did not increase funding, even though the needs of the system were growing rapidly. In 1940 the national park system included 161 units encompassing 21.5 million acres with approximately 55.6 million visitors and appropriations of only 32.5 million dollars (Wirth, 1980).

Widespread public displeasure with the condition of park facilities in those post-war years made park funding a national issue. In 1955 Director Conrad Wirth responded by asking Congress to fund a ten-year program he had conceived to rehabilitate and expand facilities throughout the park system to meet the expected increase in visitation. The program, Mission 66, was approved by Congress, and over the next several years had a significant impact on virtually every unit in the system. It was responsible for the construction of: 1570 miles of new and reconstructed roads, 1197 miles of new roads, 936 miles of new and reconstructed trails, 330 parking areas, 575 new campgrounds consisting of 17,782 campsites, 742 new picnic areas, 114 visitor centers, 584 new comfort stations, and 50 marinas, boat ramps, and

facilities: plus 535 new water systems, 521 new sewer systems, 271 power systems, 221 new administrative buildings, 218 new utility buildings, as well as hundreds of employee residences, entrance stations, lookout towers, and interpretive exhibits (Wirth, 1980).

Mission 66 was conceived, designed, and carried out within the Park Service with little or no public input, and it reflected Wirth's anthropocentric philosophy. In a manual entitled *Mission 66 For the National Park System* (USDI, 1956), sent out by the NPS Washington office to field employees as an explanation of the program, the Mission 66 philosophy was enunciated. The Forward to the manual, entitled "The Basic Purpose of the National Park System," re-interpreted the National Park Service Act by reducing its double mandate of preservation and use to a single mandate:

This act charges the National Park Service to do one thing—to promote and regulate the use of the parks. This is the one positive injunction placed upon the Service—a clear statement of Service responsibility.

The Act was again referred to in the main part of the manual, in a statement that clearly reflected the anthropocentric philosophy of placing preservation within the context of recreation:

The law insisted that these areas were to be so managed that their natural qualities would remain unimpaired; for only if thus protected would they provide the fullest degree of enjoyment and inspiration for present and future Americans. Without the concept of public use and enjoyment the function of preservation and protection is without meaning.

(emphasis added.)

The manual went on to state, "It is the task of the National Park Service, therefore, to assure the American people opportunity for maximum beneficial use and enjoyment." The use of the word "maximum" perhaps best reveals the approach of the Wirth administration toward park use.

Mission 66 began July 1956 amid a great deal of publicity put out by the Park Service, and was planned to culminate in dramatic fashion in 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the National Park Service. The program was initially welcomed by the public as a step in the right direction, but soon after it began and new facilities were being constructed criticism of its development orientation started to surface. Without specifically mentioning Mission 66 Joseph Wood Krutch (1957) wrote:

Up until now the original purpose of the national parks and monuments has been fairly well preserved, partly as the result of more or less conscious policy, more perhaps because limitations of money and time have slowed down the tendency to prevent it. But now that the integrity of the parks is being increasingly threatened by would-be exploiters as well as by

the simple pressure of an increasing population looking for "recreation"—a definite policy of protection from both ought to be formulated. Along with the question of "good roads," especially within the parks themselves, it would have to consider all the other "improvements" and "facilities" proposed and sometimes provided.

He went further by stating, "...parks should not be turned into resorts. And the distinction should be not **how long** the visitor stays, but **why** and **under what inducement.**" He then went on to reflect upon the current Park Service philosophy and to hint at the need for a more biocentric approach:

Are parks doomed in their turn to become mere resorts? Ultimately perhaps. But how rapidly will depend largely upon the philosophy which the Park Service formulates and the support it can win for it. A wise one could make them last out not only my time and yours but that for generations yet to come.

Conservation groups were among the early critics of Mission 66. The National Parks Association stated in 1958, "Conservationists and the lovers of our national parks in general are becoming increasingly apprehensive about the trend toward some national parks becoming recreational resorts" (Everhart, 1972). Also, the NPS at this time did not support the wilderness legislation that was being debated by Congress and refused to incorporate its passage as an objective of Mission 66. Lon Garrison (pers. comm.) felt that this caused many conservation groups to turn against the program.

By 1961 criticism of Mission 66 had become relatively widespread. In February of that year *ATLANTIC MONTHLY* published a series of articles under the heading "Our National Parks In Jeopardy." One article in the series (Brooks, 1961) referred to the "much disputed Mission 66," and wrote of some of the interest groups who had pushed for much of the park development being done:

Some development is necessary; the danger today is that, under pressure, it may be going hog-wild. I venture to suggest that much of this activity—particularly the building of roads for fast cars and marinas for fast boats—is based on a mistaken premise. It is assumed that the public (as distinguished from the automobile and motorboat industries) demands these things and that the parks cannot be used without them. Is this true?

It was amid this controversy surrounding Mission 66 that the most important shift in national park philosophy occurred. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall established a department-level advisory board to examine wildlife management in the national parks, and the board's report, the Leopold Report (Leopold et al., 1963), was published in 1963. Although the report dealt primarily with resource issues, the board looked at park management as an integrated science and made

fundamental recommendations which differed significantly from Mission 66 policies. The report stated that rather than promoting and regulating use, the "primary goal" for park management should be:

...that the biotic associations within each park be maintained, or where necessary recreated, as nearly as possible in the condition that prevailed when the area was first visited by the white man. A national park should represent a vignette of primitive America.

The report then questioned the appropriateness of many facilities existing in the parks, including many being built under the Mission 66 program:

...it seems incongruous that there should exist in national parks mass recreation facilities such as golf courses, ski lifts, motorboat marinas, and other extraneous developments which completely contradict the management goal. We urge the National Park Service to reverse its policy of permitting these nonconforming uses, and to liquidate them as expeditiously as possible (painful as this will be to concessionaires). Above all other policies, the maintenance of naturalness should prevail.

Although the Leopold Report was not an outright rejection of existing NPS policy and did not specifically criticize the Mission 66 program, it did advocate a dramatic shift in NPS policy toward biocentrism. It sought to direct the Park Service away from merely providing recreational opportunities and toward scientifically managing the parks as complex ecosystems. It urged the Service to expand its research programs because of their importance as the basis for management decisions. Perhaps, as Graber (1983) contends, the Leopold Report is outdated in some respects today because it saw park ecosystems as static entities and advocated some now-obsolete management actions. However, the report is still tremendously important today because it was the first document to explicitly call for an ecologically based management philosophy, and it remains to this day the most concise statement of park principles.

The Park Service was directed by Udall to adopt the report as policy (Barbee, pers. comm.), and while it is doubtful that the agency was completely pleased with the directive, visitation to the system in 1963 had already exceeded the Mission 66 estimate for 1966 by 20 million people. The NPS most certainly recognized that constructing facilities to keep up with visitation was no longer feasible, and probably also felt the need for an adjustment in policy. The Leopold Report became "a kind of manifesto" for the Park Service (Barbee, pers. comm.). Meanwhile, Mission 66 did not culminate in the dramatic fashion Wirth had originally intended. Annual visitation by 1966 exceeded early Mission 66 estimates of 80 million people by 53 million, in spite of several revisions of the program (Wirth, 1980), and according to Garrison (pers. comm.), the Service did not end the program but

merely incorporated its objectives into long-term planning. However, Haines (1977) states that the program "passed quietly out of the picture" when Udall announced a new program entitled "Road to the Future," which "deemphasized construction of facilities."

The 1960s were an era of tremendous social and legislative changes in the United States. One significant change that occurred during that time was the recognition on the part of the American public that an environmental crisis existed, and for the first time Americans began to hold their government responsible not only for the environmental problems the nation faced, but also for finding solutions for those problems. The national parks were a focal point for this "environmental revolution." They suffered from many of the same environmental problems as the rest of the country—pollution, overcrowding, extinction of wildlife species—and many felt that if those problems had already reached these supposedly pristine areas there was little hope for the rest of the nation. NPS Director George Hartzog compared the parks to the miner's canary as an early warning system for the environment (Darling and Eichhorn, 1969).

During this period perhaps more was written and spoken about the national parks than ever before in their history. Restatement of the purpose of the parks and the role they would play in American society in the future, redefinition of appropriate types of uses, and advocacy of limiting use were common themes. In general, most of what was written during this time was very biocentric; the idea that the Park Service should seek to maximize use was generally considered obsolete and replaced with various ideas to limit the types of use allowed. Hill (1972) wrote:

The environmental revolution is doing something to save the Park Service from its own follies of political accommodation. The clamor for an improved "quality of life" has included pressures to get the schlock out of the national parks and not let their use eclipse preservation.

Conservation organizations were leaders in the effort to push the parks toward more biocentric management. The Conservation Foundation sponsored a study by an ecologist and a geographer which examined park policy. The report of that study (Darling and Eichhorn, 1969), first published in 1967, reiterated the Leopold Report's criticisms of park development policies and the underlying anthropocentric philosophy:

If national parks are to continue to be a retreat from urban civilization for increasing numbers of people, much of what was permissible in the less-crowded past will need to be more carefully controlled or eliminated....the only absolute administrative principle in the National Park Service is to make ecological health or repose of an area the first consideration.

In 1968 Edward Abbey spoke out against anthropocentric management and the leisure-seeking park visitor, and attacked what he

called "Industrial Tourism," the modern tourism which created and is dependent upon the travel industry (Abbey, 1968):

Industrial Tourism is a threat to the national parks. But the chief victims of the system are the motorized tourists. They are being robbed and robbing themselves. So long as they are unwilling to crawl out of their cars they will not discover the treasures of the national parks and will never escape the stress and turmoil of those urban-suburban complexes which they had hoped, presumably, to leave behind for a while.

By 1974 the anthropocentrism of the Mission 66 era had been fully supplanted by biocentrism, at least in theory if not in practice. An assistant director of the NPS wrote, "Indisputably preservation comes first in law. Indisputably it comes first in logic—without preservation the rest is utterly pointless" (Utley, 1974). His statement was a complete turnaround from the Mission 66 edict that "without the concept of public use and enjoyment the function of preservation and protection is without meaning" (USDI, 1956).

However, in 1965 Congress helped continue anthropocentrism in park policy by passing the Concessions Policy Act (16 U.S.C.S. 20 et seq.). The Act was intended to insure quality service to park visitors by protecting concessioners and insuring them a reasonable opportunity to make profit. It gave legal backing to the longstanding policy of monopolies in the parks, granted preferential rights to satisfactory concessioners in the granting of new contracts, and gave possessory interest to concessioners who constructed facilities within the parks. The Act limited concessions to "those that are necessary and appropriate....and that are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the area." However, it did not define "necessary and appropriate" facilities or activities. Mantell (1979) articulated the objections of critics of the Act:

The Concessions Policy Act of 1965, outdated when written, has provided concessioners with too much protection. It has helped entrench concessioners in the parks and has enabled them to wield an unjustifiable degree of influence over management policy and to obscure the purpose of the parks. In order to stimulate investment and create more services, the Act's design was to assure the concessioners a profit. As a result, those services with a low cost, but high return ratio, such as souvenir stores, snack bars, and liquor stores are particularly favored.

The Park Service has been entangled in a statutory web of promoting and encouraging use of concessions. Park preservation and the concept of the park experience providing a contrast which reinvigorates have been virtually forgotten, giving way initially to the political necessity of creating park use, then acceding to concessioner pressure and, finally, to "user" desires.

Although the environmental revolution subsided by the mid-1970s, environmental awareness did not end, and efforts to push the NPS toward more biocentric management continued. Joseph Sax (1980) perhaps wrote the definitive argument for the biocentric philosophy. He offered what he called the "preservationist point of view," and presented an argument for biocentric management based on the experience provided for the park visitor:

The preservationist does not condemn the activities he would like to exclude from the park. He considers them perfectly legitimate and appropriate—if not admirable—and believes that opportunities for conventional tourism are amply provided elsewhere: at resorts and amusement parks, on private lands, and on a very considerable portion of the public domain too. He only urges a recognition that the parks have a distinctive function to perform that is separate from the service of conventional tourism, and that they should be managed explicitly to present that function to the public as their principal goal, separate from whatever conventional tourist services they may also have to provide.

Sax urged the Park Service to "unbundle" their goals; rather than trying to be all things to all people they should provide an opportunity for a specific type of recreational experience, one in which the visitor is challenged to discover the park ecosystem unhindered by conventional tourist facilities and activities. He condemned existing concessions policy for allowing "facilities that are attractions in themselves" and cited souvenir shops, swimming pools, and organized concessioner activities such as horseback rides as inappropriate because they discourage the visitor from experiencing the park in his own way.

Like Sax, McCool (1983) believes that recreational preferences are changing. He bases his opinion on the Wave Theory presented by Toffler (1980). Toffler theorized that cultural development occurs in waves. The First Wave, which lasted thousands of years, dominated early cultural development and was characterized by small agrarian communities with primitive technology and substantial leisure time, used primarily for religious celebrations. The Second Wave was characterized by the Industrial Revolution, with more urban societies, advanced technology, and limited, structured leisure time. The Third Wave, which is overtaking society today, is characterized by greatly increased technology, flexible work schedules, and a shift of the work place back to the home, all of which help decentralize society. The Third Wave is also characterized by increased, flexible leisure time. McCool asserts that the Third Wave theory has important implications for recreation managers such as the Park Service:

....recent trends in recreation activity participation suggest that the Third Wave holds the possibility of major surprises. Less emphasis on entertainment, more focus on involvement,

appreciation rather than consumption, self actualization in place of mass amusement. These suggest that the park experience may be more demanding—and more rewarding—for both the visitor and the manager.

In spite of the 20-year trend of biocentrism providing the philosophical basis for park policy, and predictions that recreational preferences in the future will continue to demand more biocentric management, the 1980 presidential election served to reintroduce anthropocentrism into national park management. Upon his appointment as President Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, James Watt sought to give more power to private interests, including concessioners, in national park management, and openly placed public use ahead of preservation (Frome, 1981). Although he was forced from office more because of his style than his substance, the lack of support for his policies, including national park policies, is evidence that at least open support of anthropocentrism in park management continues to be an unpopular position for public officials. Nash (1982) spoke for Watt's critics when he wrote, "The Reagan administration's championing of the frontier perspective might be a final flare-up of values approaching obsolescence."

Philosophical Shifts and the Grant Village Development

In order to illustrate how these philosophical shifts can affect the national parks, the Grant Village development in Yellowstone will be examined. Upon cursory examination, Grant Village as it exists today appears to be an example of an extremely anthropocentric development being built in an age of biocentric management. A closer look at its history makes judgment more difficult.

Grant Village originally arose from an essentially biocentric desire on the part of the Park Service to remove visitor facilities from the fragile thermal areas at the Upper Geyser Basin (Old Faithful) and the West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake. Although that desire first appeared in 1930s' park master plans (Wirth, 1980), no action was taken until long after World War II ended, when Grant Village became part of the Mission 66 plan for Yellowstone. Grant was one part of a triad of major new developments planned for the park under Mission 66; Firehole Village was planned to replace and expand facilities located at Old Faithful, Canyon Village was planned to replace and expand facilities located on the rim of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River, and Grant was planned to replace and expand facilities located on the shore of Yellowstone Lake at West Thumb (USDI, undated). These projects were to be joint ventures between the Park Service and the concessioners, Yellowstone Park Company and Hamilton Stores. The NPS would build visitor centers, roads, parking lots, and utilities, and the concessioners would build their lodging units, stores, and restau-

rants. Because they were intended to replace facilities located on fragile areas they may be considered somewhat biocentric, but because they were planned to modernize facilities and expand overnight guest capacity in the park from 8,500 to at least 14,500 people per night their basic purpose was far more anthropocentric than biocentric.

Canyon Village was the first to be built; it was completed in 1958 (Haines, 1977), but cost overruns caused severe financial problems for Yellowstone Park Company (Haines, pers. comm). The government went on to Grant Village and cleared the forest and built its part of the development, and Park Superintendent Garrison later wrote:

The whole thrust at that point in time was to serve more visitors. Travel was on the upswing. The roads could handle more cars with only minor work, such as turn-outs, vista clearing, and curve straightening. But the pressing need was for visitor services. We were still destroying wilderness. Grant Village was a normal outcome of this growth pattern in 1963.

.....Garrison, 1983.

Yellowstone Park Company, however, was unwilling or unable to build its part, and the project was stalled at this stage while the NPS tried to find a way to force the concessioner to build. It was at this time that the Leopold Report was published, but due to agency inertia and the fact that Grant was already under construction, it had no immediate effect on the project.

In 1966 a conglomerate, General Host Corporation, purchased the concession rights from Yellowstone Park Company, and their contract was renewed by the Park Service with the stipulation that they complete Grant Village within ten years (NPS Advisory Board (2), undated). However, General Host later decided that Grant was not feasible and refused to invest money in it. At that time, the Superintendent suggested that the parking lot be converted into a recreational vehicle park in order to use that and the campground as overnight facilities in lieu of the planned development (Anderson, pers. comm.). The Director rejected his proposal, and instead asked Congress for funding to buy out General Host's interest in the park (Everhart, 1972). His request was denied.

The Mission 66 program in Yellowstone drew considerable criticism. The expansive, modern Canyon Village was quite unpopular with conservationists, and Grant was seen to be worse because it was planned to be even bigger. As Mission 66 ended the NPS began a new master plan process as a readjustment of policy (Anderson, pers. comm.), and in 1973, after years of study and public debate, the final draft of the Yellowstone Master Plan (USDI, 1974) was completed. It was a "conceptual document" which outlined in broad terms the future direction of the park's management, rather than tying the Service down to specific management actions (Barbee, pers. comm.). The Plan was rooted in biocentrism, but because of the efforts of several interest

groups, it was not as biocentric as earlier drafts. It called for a ceiling of 8,300 overnight guests in park hotels, cabins, and trailer parks. Firehole Village, as planned under Mission 66, was abandoned; Grant Village was to be completed as an immediate replacement for the West Thumb development, and a future replacement for the Fishing Bridge development and some of the Old Faithful development. Thus, Grant came to be seen as a way to remove facilities from three ecologically important areas by making use of an area of less importance which was already impacted.

Today Grant Village is nearing completion as a development of 700 lodging units being built by the new concessioner, TW Services, who received the concessions contract after the federal government bought out General Host's interests in the park. TW Services has a contractual commitment to complete Grant. The Park Service is committed to removal of the facilities at Fishing Bridge, Old Faithful, and West Thumb, but there has been considerable opposition from historic preservation groups, recreational vehicle organizations, and economic interests (particularly those in Cody, Wyoming, who feel that removal of Fishing Bridge facilities will discourage park visitors from travelling through their community on their way to the park). Conservation groups, on the other hand, support the NPS plan to remove Fishing Bridge facilities because the area is prime grizzly bear habitat. However, because bears also frequent the Grant Village area, they feel the tradeoff of the two developments may be a marginal one. The US Fish and Wildlife Service also has expressed some reservations about the tradeoff (USDI, 1979). The controversy which surrounds Grant likely will continue for several years regardless of any actions the Park Service may take.

An Argument for Biocentric Management

The history of Grant Village illustrates that the Park Service is a flexible agency able to adapt to changes in the political climate [or a feeble agency unable to resist even a faint political breeze?], and that the philosophical shifts caused by these changes can result in long term effects—many of the grand hotels and lodges built in the age of portal tourism still exist today. Also, it provides a sample of the wide range of special interests who work to influence park policy: various conservation interests, convenience-oriented tourism groups, and the tourism industry. This diversity of interests keeps the Park Service in a position of trying to please all of them through compromise and accommodation, or by "balancing preservation and use," as the task is often referred to by many.

Shreyer (1976) claims that this situation leads to "lowest common denominator (LCD) management," in which the visitor is offered the "most bland and least distinctive line of values." According to Shreyer

LCD management has as its basis two fundamental misconceptions: one, because, according to the Yellowstone Act of 1872, the parks were established "for the benefit and enjoyment of the people," maximizing visitor use is equivalent to maximizing benefits; two, since the parks are established for all people, all visitors are to be treated "as a vast, indistinguishable, amorphous mass" and management policies are designed to accommodate all interests, with the assumption that all visitors desire all the activities. The appeal for the Park Service, states Shreyer, is that LCD management is politically safe—although no one is entirely satisfied, no one is openly discriminated against, and therefore no one is likely to take action against the agency.

In the case of Grant Village, however, polarization of interest groups and goal conflict among them seems to have created a situation where everyone is dissatisfied with the NPS solution, and is therefore evidence that the Park Service cannot always find refuge in LCD management. Thus, Grant Village ultimately illustrates the need for the Park Service to select a desired clientele for whom they will manage the parks. The trend toward biocentric management that has occurred in the last 25 years indicates that the NPS mandate is not one of balancing preservation and use but of defining what types of use are consistent with preserving natural ecosystems. It follows that if the NPS remains committed to the principles of the Leopold Report and recognizes that the only way to preserve the attributes (such as wildlife, scenery, vegetation) that make the parks so important to the public is to maintain the natural biotic associations upon which those attributes are dependent for their existence, then the clientele to be managed for must be one whose experiences are directly dependent upon those attributes and whose activities do not disrupt those natural associations. Considered individually, such resort-style services as fast food services, gourmet-style dining, machine groomed cross-country ski trails, houseboat excursions, and hot tub rentals (all of which are provided within Yellowstone) may not threaten park ecosystems. However, their cumulative effect may be such that they not only cause disruptions of the ecosystems (if only by promoting more visitation), but they present the public with an image of the parks no different from that of resorts, which exist in surrounding areas, and attract a clientele which will demand more and more artificiality in its park experience.

One cannot expect the NPS on its own to actively adopt a more biocentric philosophy and to formulate policies directed at a clientele whose activities do not conflict with that philosophy. It is indeed a "slender reed in the executive branch" (Abbey, 1968) and is subject to tremendous pressures from the public and from higher levels in the federal government. For this reason, the strength for the choice of biocentric management must come from Congress. Anthropocentric interests, more often than not economic interests, are extremely powerful, and on a case-by-case basis Congress will likely be sym-

pathetic to those interests. However, if Congress were to consider legislation enunciating an overall philosophical basis for park management (based on the principles of the Leopold Report), it would likely find a great deal of support throughout the general public. The management philosophy should dictate what facilities and activities will be provided within the parks, rather than having the facilities and activities demanded in a particular park by economic interests dictating how the philosophy is perceived by the public.

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