

## DEVELOPING A GOOD NATURAL RESOURCE FUNDING PROPOSAL

There is probably no national park that has enough base funding to meet all of its needs in resource stewardship. These needs range from programs of inventory and monitoring to complex restoration efforts, to the research needed to guide park management. Consequently, the ability to develop a good funding proposal is fundamental to resource stewardship.

In some ways, developing a good funding proposal is like developing an interpretive program. It needs to integrate knowledge of the resource and knowledge of the audience, and present a compelling story that will be meaningful to the audience.

### Background Information

Before developing a funding proposal, it's imperative to do background research on the problem. What is already known about the issue? Background research should focus on three topics: An understanding of the resource of concern, and its ecology and dynamics, is essential. Equally important is an understanding of the **ecological system** in which the resource occurs. What is it connected to, and what, in turn, are they connected to? How does the resource interact with the larger system? Finally, we need an understanding of the **threat**, and what generated it.

There are several possible sources for this information. One of these is the NPS cc:mail bulletin boards. People who have posed a question on the bulletin boards usually receive many responses. You should be discriminating in accepting the information and advice offered by these respondents, however. You often have little information about the respondents' credentials and the authority on which their responses are based.

Another source is experts in the field. The advice that they give can be useful and reflect state-of-the-art knowledge and concepts. However, it tends to be stated in general terms, with little specific back-up information that you can scrutinize. Experts' opinions should be used not as the final word, but as a jumping-off place from which you do more research.

The most important source of background information is published literature. There is no substitute for a literature review. Surprisingly, many NPS natural resource managers rarely review scientific literature. Certainly all of our adversaries do. Even when it's not an adversarial situation, however, making use of what's already known is fundamental to giving the resources the best care we can. A literature review is also vital to a well-done funding proposal. A proposal that is obviously founded on current research findings, that integrates relevant objective data, and that presents solid information about the exact problem is very persuasive.

### Formulate a Strategy

Once you have an understanding of the issue—the resource, the surrounding ecological system, and the threat—you're ready to look at the alternative approaches that might be taken to resolve it. What is the comprehensive program that is needed? Your funding proposal may be for the entire program, or for a component of it.

Scoping is a useful way to get ideas. In preparation for it, you should do more investigation. This is where it is most useful to talk to others—people in other parks and central offices, your counterparts in other agencies, and agency and university scientists. Learn about approaches they have tried and

## Doing a Literature Review

The usefulness of a literature review goes beyond simply developing an awareness of published information on the topic of interest. By putting it in writing, it also helps you to organize your material and your thoughts and material in preparation for developing a management and funding proposal.

The first step in a literature review is to define the problem as clearly as you can. Being as specific as you can, answer the question: Exactly what is the issue? This can be the introduction for your written literature review and perhaps the beginning of an outline.

The next step is to gain access to a good library with a skilled librarian. The main thing to look for is a library that subscribes to electronic library databases that cover natural resource literature, and a librarian who knows the procedures, strengths and weaknesses, and quirks of each database. The Columbia Cascades Library is one such NPS library. For parks outside of the Columbia Cascades Cluster, the CCSO Library can do limited literature searches using databases available on CD-ROM, or they can do an on-line search on a cost-reimbursable basis.

Working with the librarian, you define the keywords relevant to your issue. This is a skill, and where a good librarian is an asset. What you want is to select keywords that will pick up as much of the relevant literature and as little of the irrelevant literature as possible.

After the search has been run, you receive the search results in the form of a list of publications. Look through the list, paying particular attention to published scientific articles and books. Articles are likely to be more up-to-date than books, but books provide useful syntheses of the most significant information. When considering conference proceedings and agency reports, keep in mind that many of

them are not subject to critical peer review, so the reader needs to be more critical in evaluating the information they present.

Note the books and articles you'd like to review. A library should be able to get copies of books on interlibrary loan and duplicate copies of articles that you can keep.

As you read through the literature, take good notes, indicating important points and keeping track of which publications you read them in. Note the Literature Cited or References sections in the books and articles you read. These are good sources of additional literature. References cited repeatedly are probably well-thought-of, perhaps classics that you should be sure to review. You will also see authors who have published a lot. These may be experts worth contacting.

You may also find conflicting information. This indicates uncertainty in the field, where you might want to be cautious. It may be helpful to ask the assistance of someone knowledgeable whom you respect to help sort it out.

As you take notes, a pattern begins to take shape. You will find that answers to some of your questions are well-documented. You can now focus on filling in the gaps that remain. You may want to do another literature search, focusing on these gaps.

Finally, you'll have enough information to write it all up. Be sure to keep a focus on your original question, and not ramble off on a tangent. This is where the rough outline you developed at the start will be helpful.

Before finalizing your paper, it's a good idea to have it reviewed. The review can not only help ensure the scientific soundness of your understanding of the issue, but it can also help ensure that you haven't made any statements that are unclear or inadvertently misleading.

the results they've had. With the background research you've done and your scientific knowledge of the situation, the results others have seen should make sense to you.

Assemble this information, along with your literature review, and distribute it to the people who will be involved in the scoping.

People who are potential partners in addressing the issue should be involved in the scoping. These include people within the NPS who can contribute to the project and people whose programs may be affected. Partners who should be involved are people who can provide useful insights, such as those who have traditionally had the lead on submitting proposals to a source from which you're seeking funding—sources such as Line Item Construction or Parks as Classrooms. Other partners include people who can provide useful input that will contribute to making your proposal a good one. They may even help write the proposal. Still other partners who should be involved in scoping are people who can help in carrying out the project, and people, such as the Superintendent, whose support is vital to the success of the project. Keep in mind that multiple benefits—to visitors, employees, or other park programs—can help make a natural resource proposal more compelling.

Also look for possible partners outside of the NPS and involve them in scoping the alternative approaches to your issue. Such partnerships can enhance the competitiveness of your proposal, and may enable the proposal to qualify for additional sources of funding such as Challenge Cost Share and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants.

In working with non-federal personnel, it's imperative to be familiar with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Any violations can

compromise future management actions that arise from this project.

## **Funding Sources**

There are many different sources of possible funding (Appendix 1). These include sources at the cluster, regional, and national level of the NPS—what might be considered “natural resource” funding as well as funding from other programs.

Funding is also available from other federal agencies. These sources are in constant flux, as agencies develop new concerns and new initiatives. For example, the U.S. Geological Survey has recently been giving emphasis to geological interpretation projects.

Non-federal sources of funding include the National Park Foundation (NPF), cooperative associations, friends groups, and many environmental grant-making foundations. In considering such a source, it's imperative to be familiar with NPS policies on fund-raising (Appendix 2). Essentially, the role of the NPS is to serve as a facilitator for coordination between NPF and other possible sources of funding.

Learn as much about a potential funding source as possible, including funding sources within the NPS. What are the interests of the decision-makers? Examine the projects that have been funded in recent years as an indication. What are they trying to achieve through this funding?

## **Substance of the Proposal**

Each funding source has a specific format for proposals. Be sure to follow the prescribed format to the letter. Study the instructions, and respond to them fully.

While the format differs with each funding source, there is much information that is requested by virtually all funding sources. By developing this information early, you can get a head-start on any funding call that comes out.

### **Abstract or Executive Summary**

Only long proposals—generally 8 pages or more—have abstracts. The purpose of the abstract is to briefly describe the problem or need that you hope to address. In one sentence or so summarizes each of the following sections of the proposal. Although the abstract comes first in your proposal, it should be the last thing you write, after you have thoroughly thought through the entire proposal. The abstract, often located on the cover page, is vital in capturing the reviewers' attention and making them want to read through the entire proposal.

#### **PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Summary**

- ☐ Appears at the beginning of the proposal.
- ☐ Identifies funding applicant.
- ☐ Includes at least one sentence on credibility.
- ☐ Includes at least one sentence defining the problem.
- ☐ Includes at least one sentence on objectives.
- ☐ Includes at least one sentence on methods.
- ☐ Includes total cost, funds already obtained, and amount requested in this proposal.
- ☐ Is brief.
- ☐ Is clear.
- ☐ Is interesting.

### **Introduction**

In the introduction, you should introduce your park. Don't assume that the reviewer is familiar with it or with your programs. Stress the strengths of your program and past accomplishments relevant to the issue.

The introduction is also where you begin to establish your credibility. It is here that you start building the funder's confidence in your ability to carry out the project.

The sponsor's own goals are more important to them than your needs are. The introduction is the first opportunity you have to draw on your knowledge of the sponsor's interests. For it to be compelling, it should focus on the link between your project and the sponsor's priorities. Make it clear that, by funding your project, the sponsor will achieve their own goals.

#### **PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Introduction**

- ☐ Clearly establishes who is applying for funds.
- ☐ Describes purposes and goals of applicant agency.
- ☐ Describes applicant's programs, activities, and clients or constituents.
- ☐ Provides evidence of applicant's accomplishments.
- ☐ Offers statistics and endorsements from others in support of accomplishments.
- ☐ Supports qualifications in area of activity for which funds are sought (e.g. research, training).
- ☐ Leads logically to problem statement.
- ☐ Is as brief as possible.
- ☐ Is interesting.
- ☐ Is free of jargon.



## Problem Statement

The problem statement *summarizes* the problem. Show your familiarity with current knowledge and work that has already been done on the topic—in your park and elsewhere. Excerpt relevant information from your literature review. This section reinforces your credibility. It shows that you have researched the problem carefully and that you have a workable solution.

This section should state the issue as clearly and as simply as possible. While it may be tempting to include everything you know on the subject, conciseness will contribute to the quality of the proposal.

A common error is to be grandiose and exaggerate the problem. State the problem as objectively as possible, using specific quantitative information where appropriate to clearly convey the extent of the problem.

Don't stop with a statement of the problem itself. Explain the consequences. Again, use quantitative information where possible.

Based on your analysis of the problem, the reviewer should be able to anticipate your solution.

## Objectives

The objectives of your project should flow clearly from the problem statement. Clarify exactly what it is that you intend to accomplish.

Objectives should specifically state what will be attained. List them in chronological order if the project is a phased one. Expected products (output) may be included in this section, or they may be presented in a separate section following the "Methods." The objectives should also address the difference these products will make (outcome).

## PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Problem Statement or Needs Assessment

- ☐ Conveys the focus of the project, early in the narrative.
- ☐ Indicates the relation of your project to a larger set of problems, justifying why you chose your particular focus.
- ☐ Is based on current scientific information and concepts relevant to the issue, including on-going studies as well as past research, in the park as well as elsewhere.
- ☐ Is supported by quantitative evidence, and statistics from authoritative sources.
- ☐ Is of reasonable dimensions — not trying to solve all of the problems of the world.
- ☐ Demonstrates that the problem is solvable.
- ☐ Is stated in terms of clients' needs and problems, not the applicant's.
- ☐ Explains why the problem should be of special interest to the sponsor.
- ☐ Makes no unsupported assumptions.
- ☐ Is free of jargon.
- ☐ Is interesting to read and makes the reviewer want to read further.
- ☐ Is as brief as possible.
- ☐ Makes a compelling case.

## Methods

The Methods section presents your plan of action for achieving the objectives. It describes the precise steps you will follow for each objective, explicitly stating what will be done, who will do it, and in what timeframe.

For a multi-year project, it may be useful to construct a timeline for the entire project by aggregating the action plans for all of the objectives.

### PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Objectives

- ☐ Presents at least one objective for each problem or need identified in the problem statement.
- ☐ Presents objectives clearly, not buried in narrative.
- ☐ Presents objectives as outcomes, not as methods.
- ☐ Demonstrates that objectives are important, significant, timely, and feasible.
- ☐ Describes who will benefit.
- ☐ Demonstrates that objectives are appropriate and important to the sponsor.
- ☐ States the time by which the objectives will be accomplished.
- ☐ Objectives are measurable, if at all possible.

In presenting the methods, discuss why these methods were chosen over others. State whether your approach is a standard one, or is it unique and innovative. If your approach is a novel one, why do you believe it will work? Be open in presenting any risks with these methods and why you are likely to be successful in using them.

### Follow-up Evaluation

This section is often a major stumbling block to the inexperienced funding-seeker. It enables you and the sponsor to determine whether you have accomplished what you set out to do.

This is an important part of the proposal. It demonstrates that you are aware of your responsibility implicit in receiving funding.

### PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Products

- ☐ Explicitly defines the products (output) to result from this work, including degree of change in resource condition, data sets, progress and final reports, and expected publications.
- ☐ Specifies how information will be transferred to others, including park managers, interpreters, partners, other parks and constituents.

### PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Methods

- ☐ Flows naturally from problems and objectives.
- ☐ Presents a reasonable scope of activities that can be conducted within the time and resources of the project.
- ☐ Clearly describes project activities.
- ☐ States reasons for the selection of methods.
- ☐ Describes sequence of activities.
- ☐ Explicitly describes any sampling protocols to be used, as well as quality assurance and quality control procedures.
- ☐ Describes the specific statistical procedures to be used in analyzing data.
- ☐ Describes how the data will be managed and incorporated into the park's natural resource database.
- ☐ Describes what will be done with any specimens collected.
- ☐ Describes staffing of program, identifying key personnel, their positions, and (very briefly) their qualifications to do the work.

**PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**  
**Evaluation**

- ☐ Clearly states criteria for success.
- ☐ Presents a plan for evaluating accomplishment of objectives.
- ☐ Presents a plan for evaluating and modifying methods over the course of the program.
- ☐ Identifies who will do the evaluation and how they were selected.
- ☐ Describes how data will be gathered, including any test instruments or questionnaires to be used.
- ☐ Describes the process of data analysis.
- ☐ Describes any evaluation reports to be produced.

The follow-up evaluation provides for a conscious assessment of how effective the project has been in achieving its objectives. It should evaluate the outcome as well as the process and procedures, taking advantage of the opportunity to learn from these efforts. This is an important section that should not be an afterthought but should be anticipated and built into your Methods.

Questions addressed in the evaluation can include:

- ▶ Did you operate as intended, following the methods outlined in your Methods section?
- ▶ What beneficial changes have been brought about that are directly attributable to your project? Is your project the only variable responsible for these changes?

- ▶ What conclusions may be drawn from this evaluation?
- ▶ What future directions might be taken as a result of your accomplishments with this funding?

**Follow-up Funding Needs**

Describes work that will be needed beyond the term of the funding and how it will be done. Be candid in discussing any future needs that you expect to have for funding related to this project. This may be a need for funding to implement a protocol developed in this project, or funding for a "phase 2." Specify the sources from which you expect to obtain this funding.

**PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**  
**Future Funding**

- ☐ Has minimal reliance on future grant support.
- ☐ Presents a specific plan to obtain future funding if more work is needed.
- ☐ If the work involves construction or restoration, describes how future impacts will be prevented and how maintenance and future program costs will be obtained.
- ☐ If the work involves program development, describes the source of funding to implement the program.

## Budget

In the Budget, be specific. Show the basis for your figures. Don't pad your funding request, but don't underestimate your needs either. Keep in mind that most reviewers are experienced in evaluating costs.

Consider including the following specific line items in your budget:

Salaries — for who? Be sure that the basis for stated salary costs is clear. Will there be any volunteers?

Benefits

Equipment and supplies — Research the costs to be sure they are accurate.

Travel — Why is this needed?

Publication costs

Curation of specimens

Indirect costs — any necessary charges for administration, overhead, space usage, library services, and other costs.

Identify the share that will be contributed by the park. Consider including your personnel costs, the cost for logistical support, and the value of volunteer time.

Clearly state what is being contributed by other sources.

If the proposal is for a multi-year project, break down the costs for each year.

## Proposal Style

In refining the proposal, tailor it to the funding decision-makers. Are they NPS personnel, or are they non-NPS, with little knowledge of NPS jargon and programs? Are they technical or non-technical people? Even if they are technical people, they may not understand the terminology and subtle implications in the specific discipline of your proposal.

### PROPOSAL CHECKLIST Budget

- ☐ Is consistent with the proposal narrative.
- ☐ Is sufficient to perform the tasks described in the narrative.
- ☐ Includes all items asked of the sponsor.
- ☐ Is detailed in all aspects.
- ☐ Details fringe benefits, separate from salaries.
- ☐ Includes all volunteers.
- ☐ Separately details all non-personnel costs.
- ☐ Includes indirect costs where appropriate.
- ☐ Contains no unexplained amounts for miscellaneous or contingency.
- ☐ Identifies all items paid for by other sources, and identifies any savings achieved through cost-sharing, opportune timing, and other strategies.

The proposal should focus on meeting the interests of the funder. Why should they be interested in your proposal? A compelling proposal is one that builds on their interests.

Avoid making assumptions, such as assuming that the reviewers have any knowledge of your park. It's helpful to have an outside reviewer give your proposal a preliminary review, focusing on whether (1) the need is clearly conveyed, (2) the proposal is interesting, (3) it has all of the other characteristics of a good proposal, and (4) it is scientifically sound.

Verify that your proposal meets the screen-out factors. If it doesn't, submitting it will be a waste of your time and a waste of the reviewers' time.

Criteria for ranking proposals may or may not be explicitly stated. If they are not, you can get a feel for them by understanding the "focus" or "emphasis" of this funding source. Whether implicit or explicit, all of the ranking criteria should be clearly addressed in your proposal. Where called for by the proposal instructions, explicitly address the criteria in a separate section. (For an example of explicit ranking criteria, see Appendix 3.)

### Submitting the Proposal

If allowed by the prescribed format, a cover page should be attached, with the title, the park name, the source from which funding is being requested, and, if appropriate, the abstract.

A transmittal memo is not usually needed for NPS sources.

It may be worthwhile to verify that your proposal was received.

### Follow-Up

If your proposal is not funded, you should not consider it the end of the process, since most sources receive many more good proposals than they can fund. Ask for feedback on your proposal, including its strengths and weakness. Ask the funding sponsors whether they would be interested in considering your proposal again in the future, or if they think that another source would be more appropriate.

Also ask whether they are aware of any

additional funding sources you should pursue.

When your proposal is funded, express your appreciation to those responsible for the decision.

During the course of the project, serve the sponsor's needs and interests. Keep them informed on the progress of your project. Submit annual reports on time, as well as any progress reports that would be appropriate. Send the sponsor copies of any publications that result from the project, as well as copies of newspaper or magazine articles about the project.

Through your actions during the project, you will be developing a record. It should be a record showing that you can be relied upon to:

- ▶ Accomplish projects
- ▶ Meet objectives
- ▶ Meet reporting requirements
- ▶ Be accountable for funding

### Finally...

Ask for help at any step of the way. People in WASO, Regional Offices, and Support Offices, as well as the Biological Resources Division are entirely willing to help in reviewing your draft proposal, offering advice, or answering any questions you have. We are all working together toward the stewardship of park resources.



Kathy Jope  
Columbia Cascades Support Office  
National Park Service, Seattle

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## SOURCES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE FUNDING

FUNDING SOURCE	PURPOSE
<b>WASO - Natural Resources</b>	
Air Quality	The Air Quality Program provides support to a number of parks for monitoring stations within its network, based on a monitoring plan and strategy. Technical assistance in air quality is also available. Very limited funds are available for air quality-related interpretive exhibits.
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	Funding allocated to Regions for GIS data, equipment, or services.
Inventory and Monitoring	This program involves two types of funding: Specific inventories of certain basic data themes are funded according to a servicewide schedule based on park and regional priorities and efficiencies. Funding is allocated to a small number of parks, already identified through a competitive process, for development of monitoring programs to be used as prototypes for other parks.
Natural Resources Preservation Program (NRPP)	NRPP funds natural resource management and non-biological research projects, except those addressed by Air Quality and Water Resources programs.
NRPP: Small Parks	A portion of NRPP funding is allocated for projects in small parks. Each Region receives an amount proportional to their share of parks under 10,000 acres in size which have approved RMPs.
Water Resources	This program funds water quality, wetlands, and other water-related projects and technical assistance.
<b>WASO - Other</b>	
Challenge Cost Share Program	CCSP is intended to enhance participation by neighboring communities and qualified partners in the preservation and improvement of the cultural, natural, and recreational resources for which the NPS is responsible. Provides up to 50% federal funds as cost-sharing with non-federal partners.

FUNDING SOURCE	PURPOSE
Cultural Resources Preservation Program (CRPP)	Funding allocated to Regions for use in significant Cultural Resource projects (parallel to NRPP). These may include a natural resource component, such as cultural landscapes or pest management in historic structures.
Fire	Several funding sources that may be used to support activities such as development and implementation of prescribed fire programs, hazardous fuel management, and emergency rehabilitation of wildfire and fire suppression impacts.
Line Item Construction	Funding for major capital projects to benefit resource stewardship and/or visitor services. Projects funded may include relocation of facilities and trails that are causing resource problems.
Parks as Classrooms	Supports educational projects, including components of natural resource projects that involve educating visitors about natural resource stewardship.
Planning/GMPs	Funding may be available for "special resource studies" associated with planning and design efforts.
<b>Cluster/Region - Natural Resources</b>	
Natural Resource Cyclic Maintenance	Applicable to cyclic maintenance activities related to natural resources, including, for example, hazard tree management, restoration of unwanted social trails, and fencing.
Natural Resource Management Projects	Funding to support acquisition of increased understanding of parks' natural resource and social science issues, through original field studies or through technology and information transfer. It may be used in projects such as pilot studies to define problems, formulation of strategies for more in-depth research, development and testing of new monitoring or resource management protocols, continuation of on-going studies with funding shortfalls, continuing education and professional development of natural resource staff, consultation with scientists on natural or social science issues, or facilitation of access to scientific information and technology.
Natural Resource Science Projects	Funding to support application of scientific knowledge toward the protection of park resources and accomplishment of a park's resource-related objectives.

FUNDING SOURCE	PURPOSE
<b>Cluster/Region - Other</b>	
Collections Management	Provides funding tedrring the management of park collections, including natural history specimens, up to standards.
Cyclic Maintenance	Provides funding for maintenance of park roads, trails, buildings, and utility systems, and other facilities on a fixed periodic basis, when the work is predictable and the cycle is longer than one year but less than ten years. Programs are based on functional inventories and accumulated project lists maintained in a ten-year data file.
Hazardous Materials	Provides funding for hazardous waste clean-up and related compliance activities. Addresses management of park-generated hazardous wastes and of petroleum fuel storage, investigations and clean-up of NPS areas contaminated by hazardous substances, and implementation of alternative solid waste management and recycling strategies. Natural resource applications may include investigation and restoration of impacted soil and water quality.
Repair-Rehab	Funds the cost of repair or rehabilitation of existing facilities and utility systems, including repair and rehabilitation of cultural sites, structures, and landscapes. Activities covered are one-time projects or cyclic projects that occur on a cycle of more than ten years.
Training	Funding may be available to fund natural resource training and professional development, either in whole or on a cost-sharing basis. (Training funding may also be available at the WASO level.)
<b>Non-NPS</b>	
BRD Natural Resource Preservation Program (BRD-NRPP)	"Strategic" and "tactical" are two categories that are emerging for research funding by the USGS Biological Resources Division (formerly NBS). BRD-NRPP funding is allocated primarily to address NPS tactical research needs.
Forest Health Management	Funding for management of forest insect and disease problems following assessment by Forest Service personnel. (For information, contact your Cluster IPM Coordinator.)

FUNDING SOURCE	PURPOSE
Natural Resource Damage Assessment	Funding available to all DOI bureaus to support scientific and economic studies assessing natural resource damage resulting from an oil spill or hazardous substance and providing the basis for claims for restoration. (For information, contact DOI Regional Environmental Officer.)
Oil Pollution Liability Trust Fund	This government-wide fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard, provides funding immediately to deal with emergency response to oil or hazardous substance spills and to <i>initiate</i> timely assessment of natural resources damaged by a spill or release, focusing on ephemeral data.
<b>Non-Governmental</b>	
National Parks Foundation (NPF)	Seeks funding from others for grants to help meet parks unfunded needs in stewardship of park resources and public education to enhance appreciation of the parks. Focuses on projects with lasting effect on resources and visitors, high degree of commitment from the NPS staff involved, with potential for involving other partners, and that are achievable. Some grants administered by NPF, such as the Canon grant, fund a number of projects and continue over a period of years.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	Provides funds for projects related to fish, wildlife, and plant conservation. Requires a non-federal match. Initiatives, which provide funding to multiple parks, have included the native plant conservation and noxious weed management.
National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA)	NPCA has limited funds that it grants for small projects, to address natural resource issues as well as historic preservation and education. Projects that provide visibility for NPCA, such as co-sponsoring an event, are favored.
Cooperating Association Partnership Fund	Each year a small number of grants are available through a fund established by voluntary contributions from NPS cooperating associations. The fundamental purpose of this fund is to enhance partnerships at all levels. Projects should emphasize partnerships and have educational value, and must meet specific guidelines.
Cooperating associations	Provide funding for interpretation, resource stewardship, research, and other projects.
Friends groups	(varies)

## PHILANTHROPY AND FUND RAISING IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Philanthropy has a long history in the National Park System. In years past the parks have benefitted from donated money, art, furnishings, historic artifacts, land, buildings – even entire parks. Donations are often explicitly authorized or encouraged by Congress in legislation affecting new parks or existing ones.

In the past the National Park Service has been largely a passive recipient of private philanthropy. Over the last decade, philanthropy in the National Park System has seen gradual change. Donations do not come only from very wealthy people, as many people of much more modest means have taken opportunity to express their appreciation and concern for the National Park heritage through gifts as varied as the parks themselves.

However, fund raising by a Federal bureau is not a common form of activity, and in moving toward a more active role of facilitating private donations, the National Park Service will proceed with orderly caution, not only because such a role is largely new, but also because the Service will take deliberate precautions to avoid problems and conflicts which may possibly arise. For example, the Service will be concerned about the tone and content of campaigns designed and conducted by private organizations on its behalf. The Service will be concerned about who is approached and how. The Service will be concerned at how much fund raising costs and what amount of the funds raised will actually benefit the parks.

Being cautious and concerned about the content of fund raising programs does not, however, mean compromising enthusiasm or building roadblocks to success. A 1985 survey indicates that already 92 percent of all NPS units are involved in some form of fund raising. An Active program to facilitate philanthropy is a positive and timely response to constrained Federal and National Park Service budgets that must, of necessity, focus the limited resources on core mission essentials. Private donations can, however, afford a "margin of excellence" to benefitting National Park System units that will enrich visitors' experiences and afford a measure of resource protection not otherwise available.

This evolution in National Park Service strategy is also a timely response to private initiatives that are often the consequence of spontaneous expressions of appreciative concern for individual parks or their natural, cultural, or recreational resources.



This change is, additionally, a timely response to changes in the general climate surrounding parks and recreation as an object of private giving. In the last decade, parks and park systems at all levels of government have benefitted from increasing philanthropic expressions by park visitors and supporters. Donations are common at museums and other cultural and recreational facilities. The National Park System is in position to similarly benefit as, indeed, it already does in many locations through donation boxes, wishing wells, and similar devices.

The current private initiatives to restore the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island are examples of private groups taking action on behalf of a park, without any prior stimulus or coaxing from the National Park Service. It is appropriate that the Park Service have the capability to interact with such external initiatives -- to provide factual information to set voluntary standards and guidelines for such actions, and to do all it can to assure that funds subsequently donated to the National Park Service are used appropriately and effectively.

Of course, NPS cannot control or assume any measure of practical responsibility for the conduct or operations of private individuals and organizations, but it can respond affirmatively with guidance and leadership.

In moving toward a more activist role, the National Park Service is mindful of the need to avoid potential problems. The National Parks are "special places" in public trust, the care and financing of which are the shared responsibility of the Congress and the President, through the National Park Service. Under our system of government, the major policies and financing decisions affecting the National Park System are subject to elaborate checks and balances and oversight to insure accountability, continuity, and integrity. Private donations may or may appear to circumvent those protective processes and thereby cause concern. NPS must avoid such conflicts so that fund raising efforts run smoothly and positively.

The National Park Service will address these concerns directly, through policies and controls that will to the greatest extent possible extend to these actions the same criteria and internal controls afforded appropriated funds and the goods and services they buy.

Except in limited activities detailed below, NPS's role in private philanthropy will be that of facilitator and coordinator for non-governmental institutions or individuals working on the Service's behalf. The Service's role will be that of authorizing the project(s) to be funded, with the Service providing information and reviewing and approving communications materials intended for the public, within a policy structure that insures the integrity of all activities undertaken for the benefit of the National Park System.

The National Park Service program will include donation boxes, gift catalogs, appropriate authorized fund raising campaigns by outside organizations and institutions, and such other creative undertakings and activities as may be approved.

#### Donation Boxes

Over 120 parks already have donation boxes for voluntary visitor contributions. With each donation box is an official explanation of what the donated funds will be used for. Donation boxes provide a convenient way for visitors to spontaneously express their appreciation for the park during a visit. Monies collected in donation boxes are accounted for in the same way as other cash receipts, including measures for accountability, security, and appropriate documentation.

#### Gift Catalogs

Gift catalogs list giving opportunities for consideration by a variety of donors. Gift catalogs identify items for which donations may be designated, thereby giving potential donors examples of things the park needs and explaining specifically how a donation may support the park. Over 27 catalogs have been produced for NPS units. Several catalogs cover more than one park unit.

#### Fund Raising Campaigns

The third form of fund raising activity are organized "campaigns" associated with individual parks or park projects. The National Park Service will not directly conduct or execute fund raising campaigns, but will respond to the initiative of others. The Service will (1) identify projects or objects for which donations may be sought, (2) sanction specific organizations to conduct campaigns on behalf of a park or project when that body will operate under standards set by the Service, (3) approve all printed and other informational materials distributed to the public, and (4) insure accountability for all donations received.

There are two major elements of a fund raising campaign on behalf of the National Park Service that merit special clarification. Fund raising by and on behalf of this Federal agency is not (and will not be permitted to become) an activity indicating the failure of the normal appropriations process to meet the day-to-day needs of the National Park System. Those needs are, in fact, met as part of the regular budget process and action on the budget by Congress. The needs which NPS may identify as appropriate objects for private philanthropic support are external to those which are included in appropriations requests.

It is important that NPS employees and those outside the Service working on behalf of the parks be sensitive to the roles of the President and the Congress in financing the National Park System. Fund raising campaigns may be undertaken to provide a "margin of excellence" for the System and employees and friends must be careful not to derogate the Congress or the President or to imply the failure of others to meet their responsibilities to oversee and finance the System.

The second element of fund raising that is a point of concern is the degree to which the Service will "control" the fund raisers and the materials used by them and on their behalf.

There are distinct limits to what NPS can do to control private actions, even those for which the Service is the direct beneficiary. The Service will, however, attempt to strongly influence those actions through setting standards, by providing oversight, and, if necessary, through public statements as to the merits of individual efforts. The Service will take special care to make certain its own actions are disciplined and within a carefully drawn policy framework, the substance of which is detailed in the following statements.

#### Policies and Principles

All major fund raising programs in which the Service is an active participant will be carried out only after formal approval by the Director of a plan covering such activities. Plans will spell out, to the extent known, the purposes, goals, schedules, potential donors, geographic scope, costs, proposed use of receipts, and the roles, participants, and sponsorships of all affected parties. On-going activities under approved plans will be coordinated through the Deputy Director, who will serve as the Servicewide program coordinator. Major fund raising programs are defined as those whose goals total \$1 million or more.

The Servicewide coordinator will also be responsible for the review of all individual gifts having a value in excess of \$250,000. Such gifts will be accepted only after approval in advance by the Deputy Director.

Other activities, including donation boxes, gift catalogues, and campaigns for less than \$1 million, will be approved and coordinated by the appropriate Regional Director.

Fund raising activities totaling less than \$250,000 may be approved by the Regional Director or that approval may be delegated to superintendents or unit managers.

All fund raising activities will be in concert with Interior Department standards governing employee conduct and conflicts of interest. (See 43 CFR, Parts 1 through 7.)

The aims of all fund raising campaigns and philanthropic activities sanctioned by the National Park Service will be consistent with approved General Management Plans and other park specific plans, and with the National Park Service "Management Policies."

Major fund raising campaigns will not be directed toward life-safety projects or materials, or recurring maintenance activities, but should emphasize capital improvements or major programs, such as summer-in-the-parks.

Research projects, books, mapping, and all projects requiring planning and design (including films and exhibits) to be funded by donations require the same review and approval stages as similar projects funded through the normal budget process.

Money and other negotiable donations received by the National Park Service shall be deposited to the appropriate NPS donations account. Donations may also be made to third parties, such as the National Park Foundation, a cooperating association, friends organization, or other non-profit institution, etc., on behalf of the National Park Service for subsequent expenditure by the association, etc., on specific approved projects. However, NPS can assume no responsibility for third party donations prior to their formal acceptance by the Service.

Neither appropriated funds nor contributions deposited to an NPS donation account may be used to fund or reimburse the costs of professional fund raising consultations or services, purchase of mailing lists, postage for mass mailings, or telethon or phone bank expenses, or similar activities.

All efforts will be made by the Service to formalize fund raising campaigns on its behalf through a Memorandum of Agreement with the organization conducting the campaign. Such Memoranda shall not impose any liability or obligation of any type on the Government and shall contain a termination-for-convenience clause. Memoranda of Agreement covering fund raising campaigns by outside parties and organizations will also require that all printed and audio-visual materials, posters, advertisements, and other literature be approved in advance by the Service. Memoranda of Agreement will receive policy and legal reviews prior to execution by the park Superintendent or manager. A model Memorandum is available from the Office of the Director.

The level of review follows the dollar levels associated with the delegations. Reviews will cover technical and legal adequacy, and compliance with NPS policy and practice.

Efforts will be made to negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement covering all outside fund raising activities on behalf of the parks. Should this not be possible, the National Park Service will not approve the effort.

Further, in order to remove concerns that donations are being used to circumvent decisions made by Congress, all gifts which will require annual funding for operations and maintenance or staffing (FTEs) or unfunded non-recurring costs may only be accepted when approved in advance by the Deputy Director. Requests for approval must identify the source(s) of funding, whether within current resources or proposed future increases.

There will be no duplication in items accepted for donation or for which donations are being solicited and items included in an annual budget request to Congress.

Accountability will be achieved by requiring that all monetary gifts be accounted for and disbursed under the same standards of accountability and the same internal processes and protections as monies appropriated by Congress. All non-monetary gifts and items purchased with donated funds will be recorded, accounted for, managed, and otherwise treated in the same manner as other property of the United States Government.

Gifts will be appropriately acknowledge, but will not be recognized by any special privilege associated with the park, or through the naming of features after living persons or in wilderness areas. (See also the relevant policies of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.)

As provided in the NPS "Management Policies" (See Memorials, III-15) donors will normally not be recognized by the installation of permanent plaques or memorials. If such recognition is merited, the Director's prior approval is required.

Third party organizations which receive and hold donations prior to transfer to NPS units are expected to maintain accountability for all contributions and interest generated therefrom. It is required that these organizations have independent annual financial audits and that they publish an annual report for the interested public.

All gifts and donations to NPS and to its cooperating organizations are a matter of public record. All records of fund raising activities are subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

The National Park Service will neither knowingly solicit nor accept gifts from concessioners or their principals or beneficial owners, nor permit others to do so on its behalf when such gifts may involve a conflict of interest or an appearance of conflict or when a gift is to be used for a service to or on behalf of a concessioner. Sums provided under legal contracts or agreements are not donations.



NPS will not solicit gifts from businesses or institutions (or their principals or beneficial owners) having a contractual relationships with the Service; the Service may accept unsolicited gifts from such businesses or institutions only where there can be no appearance of conflict of interest or impropriety. This prohibition does not extend to Cooperating Associations operating under a formal agreement.

NPS will publish an annual report on fund raising and philanthropy.

These policies may be waived only by the Director, National Park Service.

Approved: /s/ Denis P. Galvin  
for William Penn Mott  
Director

Date: 10/09/86

## NRPP RANKING CRITERIA

<b>1 • Significance of the Resource or Issue to the Park</b> <b>How important is the resource or issue to the park involved,</b> <b>relative to its other resources and issues?</b> Weighting Factor = 2x		
<p>5 points</p> <p>High significance. Resource or issue is one of the most significant in the park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Defined as unique;</li> <li>- The subject of the enabling legislation;</li> <li>- Fundamental to <u>this</u> park's ecosystem (as opposed to, say, basic resources such as air and water that are fundamental to all parks);</li> <li>- Fundamental to <u>this</u> park's purposes;</li> <li>- High priority in park RMP (this is not sufficient in itself)</li> <li>- On federal or state lists as endangered or threatened;</li> <li>- Required by statute; etc.</li> </ul> <p>To earn a "5" will generally require several of these criteria to be met.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>Moderate significance. Resource or issue is important, but not singularly so for that park.</p>	<p>1 point</p> <p>Resource or issue only peripherally related to park's purposes or uses.</p>

## 2 • Severity of Resource Threat, Problem, or Need(s)

Weighting Factor = 2x

5 points	3 points	1 point
<p>Resource threat, problem, or need is:</p> <p>Current or imminent,</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>Extensive, persistent, immediate, complex, likely irreversible, a risk to public health or safety, and/or hazardous.</p> <p>Delaying the project will result in, or continue, significant resource degradation.</p>	<p>Resource threat, problem, or need is:</p> <p>Potential</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Moderate in extent, persistence, and/or complexity.</p> <p>Delay of the proposed project may result in, or continue, limited resource degradation. A potential public health or safety threat exists.</p>	<p>Resource threat, problem, or need is:</p> <p>Minor</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Infrequent</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Remote</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Temporary</p> <p>Immediate action is not necessary to protect resources.</p> <p>Delaying the project will not result in, or continue, significant resource degradation.</p> <p>Public health/safety is not an issue.</p>

## 3 • Problem definition and information base

How well is the problem defined?

Weighting Factor = 3x

5 points	3 points	1 point
<p>The project statement clearly defines the problem.</p> <p>The information base regarding the problem is:</p> <p>Well-described</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>Provides a sound foundation for problem resolution.</p> <p>If problem is lack of information, project statement clearly documents extent of existing information or lack thereof.</p>	<p>The project statement describes the problem in general terms.</p> <p>The information base is mentioned but only moderately well described.</p>	<p>Problem is poorly defined and/or availability of information is not addressed.</p>

<b>4 • Feasibility</b> Weighting Factor = 3x		
5 points  Objectives are clear;  <i>and</i> Methodologies, procedures, and proposed actions are technically sound;  <i>and</i> Time frame is reasonable to accomplish project objectives.	3 points  Objectives are fairly clear;  <i>or</i> Methodologies, procedures, and proposed actions are more or less technically sound;  <i>or</i> Project objectives may not be accomplished within time frame.	1 point  Objectives are not clearly stated;  <i>or</i> Methodologies, procedures, and proposed actions are not technically sound;  <i>or</i> Project cannot be accomplished within time frames.

<b>5 • Problem resolution</b> Will the proposed use of funds contribute directly to decisions or actions, which, when implemented, will meaningfully resolve a management issue? Weighting Factor = 3x		
5 points  The proposed project implements specific management prescriptions that will result in the final resolution of a natural resource issue or threat.  No additional actions other than follow-up monitoring are anticipated.	3 points  The proposed project contributes to the future resolution of a natural resource issue or threat by clarifying management issues, articulating techniques or procedures, supporting an interagency or regional strategy, etc.  Additional studies, management actions, and/or planning will be necessary to completely resolve the stated issue or threat.	1 point  The proposed project is not directly related to the development of management actions to resolve a specific issue or threat, but contributes basic information about park natural resources. The focus here is on collection of baseline data, rather than implementation of a management action.

<b>6 • Transferability</b> <b>How widely will the project protocols or results be useful?</b> Weighting Factor = 2x		
5 points  The protocols or results of the project can contribute to tangible needs at the national level (NPS or other organization),  <i>and</i>  The park demonstrates the intention and ability to make the information available widely.	3 points  The protocols or results of the project can contribute to tangible needs at several parks or other organizations,  <i>and</i>  The park demonstrates the intention and ability to make the information available to other units or organizations.	1 point  The project's tangible benefits are limited to the park.

<b>7 • Cost-effectiveness</b> <b>Given problem statement and proposed methodology,</b> <b>are cost estimates realistic and commensurate with the results to be produced?</b> Weighting Factor = 2x		
5 points  Costs are:  Realistic <i>and</i> Well-researched <i>and</i> Clearly spelled out <i>and</i> Defensible	3 points  Costs appear reasonable given stated project objectives and procedures,  <i>but</i>  Proposal does not provide supportive data to indicate how they were determined.	1 point  Costs appear disproportionately high or low in relation to the stated project objectives and procedures.  Proposal does not indicate that costs have been accurately evaluated.

<b>8 • Project Support</b> <b>What resources (including in-kind contributions)</b> <b>are the park, region, or other partner(s) willing to commit to this project?</b> <b>A detailed description of total project costs, including contributions is required.</b> Weighting Factor = 1x				
5 points  70% or more of the project costs covered by park, region or partner(s)	4 points  51-69% of project costs covered by park, region, or partner(s)	3 points  39-50% of project costs covered by park, region, or partner(s)	2 points  10-38% of project costs covered by park, region, or partner(s)	1 point  Less than 10% of project costs covered by park, region, or partner(s)