

COALITION OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RETIREES

STRATEGIC PLAN

A VISION FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IN ITS SECOND CENTURY

As the National Park Service nears the beginning of its second century the parks and all they represent have evolved from units of a respected national system into the combined expression of our most valuable and inalienable national heritage. They are the unchanging measure of a rapidly changing world, repositories of information against which human progress or its opposite can be gauged, touchstones of who we are as a people and even as members of the human species, the best hope for preserving the cultural record that defines American civilization and the global biological diversity upon which life itself depends. At a crucial time—when the United States may decide whether to retain the benefits of victories painfully won over decades or to risk losing them to narrow, short-term, and private interests—the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees declares its vision of a National Park Service that by August 25, 2016:

- Preserves and enables visitors to enjoy the truly special places of our common heritage—the inalienable heritage—of our nation, without confusion about its mission.
- Is deeply involved with the American people in what it means to be American and with the people of the world about what it means to be human.
- Is viewed by the public and government officials not as a “land management agency” but as an agency that manages ideas and ideals.
- Educates visitors through deeply personal experiences of profoundly important places.
- Leads, encourages, and assists all others in our country who pursue similar goals; and on behalf of the United States assists all others in the world who pursue similar goals.
- Is free of burdens that impede accomplishment of its mission, and has leadership that is free of inappropriate constraints and conflicting goals.
- Is well-funded, well-staffed, sophisticated, professional, value-driven, motivated, innovative, daring, and excellent, within a context of long-term continuity.
- Provides education, training, and career opportunities that maximize fulfillment of the professional potential of each employee.
- Is managed as a coherent system rather than as independent areas and programs.
- Is driven by a current and constantly-renewed vision, nationally and in each individual park.

VISION FOR THE COALITION

Recognized as the “Voices of Experience” and respected as truthful, energetic, and capable professionals, the Coalition through public education and action fends off threats to parks and

Service mission-related programs. With kindred organizations, we shape a well-informed national dialogue about the post-2016 National Park Service and provide appropriate collaborative services to the NPS and affiliated organizations. From public dialogue and education we secure Federal laws, policies and other actions that will achieve our vision for the National Park Service.

MISSION OF THE COALITION

In pursuit of its vision for the National Park Service, the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees studies, educates, speaks, and acts for preservation and protection of America's National Park System and the mission-related programs of the National Park Service.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CNPSR

As a unique, spontaneous coalition of principled experts who feel compelled to contribute to the protection of the National Park System, we will be guided by these principles:

- We will uncompromisingly defend the mission of the National Park Service, recognizing that, at times, no other entity may exist that is willing, or able, to do so.
- Recognizing that the National Park Service is the stewardship guardian of places that embody irreplaceable beauty, events and ideas that define the nation's character—those places that deserve the highest levels of reverence and protection—we will make affirmative, principled, factual arguments that call attention to what the nation cannot afford to lose—the heritage it has placed in trust for future generations.
- We will defend the public's right to know the truth about its National Park System—communicating facts and perspective to the Congress, to the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service and through the media to the public about how the National Park System is being managed.
- We will act to influence all parties involved to understand and act on the premise that appropriate management of the National Park System must be carried out in a nonpartisan way and must place the national interest above political, local and other special interests.
- We will work in a nonpartisan manner to help the National Park Service and the National Park System succeed. Success means that responsible officials of the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, and the Congress:
 - Respect and properly execute the NPS mission, including all applicable legislation, court decisions and appropriately developed policy. They further respect and build upon the decisions of past

and current generations regarding the composition of the National Park System and the standards of care for the system.

- Respect and protect the inherent values (including intangibles such as natural sounds, night sky, and visibility) and purposes of the National Park System and of each unit therein.
- Recognize, stimulate, and cultivate understanding of and reverence for the inherent values and purposes for which each unit of the National Park System was established, as well as for the system as a whole. They further recognize that this understanding and reverence should form the fundamental rationale for defining the quality of experiences provided to visitors and the relevant education of the public.
- Recognize and support the role of science and scholarship in guiding decisions and actions affecting mission and the integrity and future of the National Park System and its resources.
- Respect and develop the experience and wisdom of career professionals in the National Park Service and encourage, value and give appropriate consideration to their contributions.
- Understand that they must exercise moral and legal responsibility for protecting National Park resources, and in doing so, they must not be compromised or influenced by motivation for personal gain or power.
- Recognize that the National Park System Constitutes an inalienable patrimony belonging to the nation's present and future citizens as a whole, that the programs and activities associated with the parks extend their benefits throughout the public and private sectors and to the people of all nations, and that any risk resulting from commercialization or privatization of the national patrimony held in the public estate is unacceptable.

STRATEGIC GOALS OF CNPSR

1. Protect and defend the units of the National Park System and the mission of the National Park Service.
2. Instill public understanding and appreciation of the origins, purpose, and ideals of the National Park System and the National Park Service.
3. Initiate or engage in activities that will contribute to, or educate others about, the significant role of the National Park System in a healthy planet and a vigorous American society.
4. Develop alliances and engage in collaboration in support of the National Park System and National Park Service.

5. Sustain CNPSR as an organization capable of achieving its vision, mission and strategic goals.

OBJECTIVES

1. Protect and defend the units of the National Park System and the mission of the National Park Service.

- 1.1. Monitor legislative and regulatory activity that has Service wide implications and take appropriate actions (Policy Creation).

Desired outcome: Key decision makers, elected officials and the public fully understand the consequences of proposed adverse actions and act to thwart such actions. CNPSR provides appropriate support for officials and leaders who defend mission of NPS.

- Prepare briefing papers on emerging legislative or regulatory issues and provide them to decision makers.
- Monitor initiatives and provide expert analysis to the public, officials and to Congress providing expert testimony as appropriate.

- 1.2 Monitor internal compliance with law, regulation and policy (Policy Execution).

Desired outcome: NPS management policies are implemented, with appropriate employee training, and are supported by top NPS leadership.

- Provide information and updates to members and collaborators to facilitate outreach work.
- Monitor policy proposals and management actions to assure accurate fidelity to the law and policy, best available sound science and the long term public interest.
- Maintain professional communication networks with the NPS to facilitate effective communications and build on a constructive relationship with senior NPS leadership.

- 1.3 Using membership expertise, develop potential new approaches or changes to legislative and administrative actions; where appropriate (New/Modified Policy/Legislations).

Desired outcome: Recommendations to the NPS for improvement are well informed and thoughtful based upon the collective years of expertise found in the organization.

- Build increased effective membership outreach to manage new Service-wide issues and local park-based issues resulting in broader coverage of issues and better input and direction.

2. Instill public understanding and appreciation of the origins, purpose, and ideals of the National Park System and the National Park Service.

- 2.1 Educate elected officials and key decision-makers about the importance of maintaining operational sustainability in parks and NPS mission-related programs.

Desired outcome: Educated elected officials and key decision-makers promote and support sustainable resources and mission-related programs in parks, adjacent lands and beyond.

- Identify elected and appointed officials for targeted contact and education effort and conduct a regular dialogue on a regular basis on issues important to the mission of the NPS and the System.

- 2.2 Educate the public, in the United States and elsewhere, about the value of parks, park programs, and the work of CNPSR.

Desired outcome: The public increasingly understands national parks as extraordinary places of inalienable national heritage and appreciates the leadership role of the Service in providing assistance to communities nationwide in preserving the Nation's significant natural and historic places outside NPS management. The CNPSR's reputation as Voices of Experience is known and respected by a greater number of Americans. The CNPSR's Vision for the National Park Service in its Second Century, and steps for reaching it, become well known to the American public.

- Continue an effective media program to educate, inform and guide the public in the best practices to protect the National Park System.
- Develop a targeted media program that keeps CNPSR vital and involved providing their Voices of Experience as a way to connect to the public's interest in parks.

- 2.3 Influence the Hartzog Institute

Desired Outcome: Highly qualified experts in the Institute will study a wide range of topics relevant to the mission of the National Park Service and make the results available to the people of the United States and their elected representatives; and to the leaders, managers, and employees of the National Park Service.

- Serve on appropriate Boards and Councils to assure the direction of the Institute is consistent with the CNPSR vision and original intended purposes.
- Work in the broadest collaboration to facilitate success of the Institute with other organizations.

- 2.4 Support the recommendations of the Second Century National Parks Commission to encourage and enrich the public dialogue about the preservation and protection of the

National Park System leading up to the 2016 Centennial of the establishment of the National Park Service.

Desired outcome: The National Park Service begins its second century of operations with a renewed sense of mission, positioned to meet the challenges of a new century and supported by a public that recognizes the non-partisan value of the agency's leadership in the sustainable conservation of the resources entrusted to its care.

- Monitor the implementation of the Commission recommendations using CNPSR as a source of expertise to further the achievement of these recommendations.
- In concert with other organizations work with the public and officials to develop legislative packages and proposals that further the achievement of the Commission recommendations.

2.5 Develop a detailed strategy for using CNPSR's unique character and position to further understanding of park and protected area values, and enhancing CNPSR's capacity for education.

Desired outcome: A strategy is in place that identifies actions to be taken to assure that effective communication exists between CNPSR and the public, its members, NPS employees and leaders, its partners and with elected and appointed officials.

- Issue a CNPSR Annual Report to members, collaborating organizations and key officials.
- Continue monitoring the organization's communications strategy through surveys and other feedback mechanisms to assure it is responsive to the members and to others

3. Initiate or engage in activities that will contribute to, or educate others about, the significant role of the National Park System in a healthy planet and a vigorous American society.

3.1 Assist and collaborate with the National Park Service to provide support with critical current issues.

Desired outcome: The National Park Service welcomes assistance and advice from CNPSR in meeting the mission of the NPS that further the vitality and effectiveness of the Service and System. This collaboration will involve the broadest applications of Service work promoting healthy communities, connecting citizens to their natural and historical heritage, reaching out to citizens to make parks more responsive to their needs and interests, providing a positive leadership force in our national education strategy, and to developing partnerships that further the interests and needs of both parties.

- CNPSR will work with the NPS in targeted collaborative opportunities that will improve Service training and leadership programs, mentoring, and quality of employee preparedness to meet second century challenges.
- CNPSR will work with the NPS and other national leaders on targeted issues to buffer the NPS from ideological political partisanship destructive to the legislated intent, mission, and policy framework of the NPS.

3.2 Promote constructive, cooperative relationships with other park and protected area systems.

Desired outcome: The National Park Service, through appropriate assistance by CNPSR increases its reputation and stature as a leader in park and protected area management beyond the boundaries of the US National Park System.

- CNPSR will better engage collaboration in the international arena through targeted contacts and CNPSR member's international assignments thereby assisting the NPS in achieving a restored international stature in the protection of parks and protect areas.

4. Establish alliances and engage in collaboration in support of the National Park System and National Park Service.

4.1 Become an effective partner with the National Park Service.

Desired outcome: The National Park Service recognizes and makes use of CNPSR as a valuable support organization.

- Work with IMR RD on pilot program to utilize the experience and knowledge of CNPSR members on issues within that region.
- Continue to press for CNPSR participation in the Superintendent's Academy and similar training courses.

4.2 Strengthen and increase alliances with kindred organizations.

Desired outcome: CNPSR is seen and used by other non-government organizations as a valuable ally in the overall effort of protecting the National Park System.

- Remain a participant in the Winter Use Coalition dealing with snowmobile use in Yellowstone.
- Support organizations that deal with threats to the parks and programs of the National Park Service.

5. Sustain CNPSR as an organization capable of achieving its vision, mission and strategic goals.

5.1 Operate CNPSR as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation according to IRS and State of Arizona requirements.

Desired outcome: CNPSR meets all operating requirements of a non-profit corporation.

- File all tax, financial, and legal reports in a timely fashion.

5.2 Increase membership numbers and membership involvement in Coalition activities.

Desired outcome: 800 members by the end of 2011, compared to current 750; 150 members actively involved in Coalition activities, compared to current 75.

- Launch pilot recruiting plan in the Pacific West Region under guidance of EC member Gary Cummins.
- Encourage the trend of members taking ownership of nearby park issues and acting as the Coalition point person with guidance from specific EC members.

5.3 Launch effective fundraising strategies aimed at diverse funding sources to meet program goals.

Desired outcome: \$20,000 from membership and additional funds from foundations.

- Increase number of emails from the chair updating members on Coalition activities.

5.4 Develop the systems, processes, staff and infrastructure to meet program, fundraising, and membership needs.

Desired outcome: Information technology (including website) and databases are in use to develop and track members, funds acquisition, accomplishments, and finances; work groups and state networks assist in carrying out programs; one or more paid staff coordinate the membership services, CNPSR activities, and internal and external communications; and an effective executive council with an appropriate skill mix is in place.

- Have revised website up and running by March of 2011.
- Renew contract with membership coordinator.