



PARK MANAGEMENT



The federal government administers about 560 million acres of land for recreational use, which is equal to about one-fourth of all U.S. land area. This land is managed in its natural state and can be used for recreation. Different departments (also referred to as bureaus or agencies) within the federal government manage these publicly owned lands for all U.S. citizens.





Within the Department of the Interior,
there are three landmanaging bureaus:

- National Park Service
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Bureau of Land Management
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

The National Park Service is the nation's premier park agency that oversees a vast system of parks. A majority of the most famous and most important natural and historical features in the United States are under the care of National Park Service employees. Management categories:

Natural

Cultural/Historical

Recreational

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.

THE MISSION OF THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE IS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT, AND ENHANCE THE NATION'S FISH AND WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND HABITATS FOR THE CONTINUING BENEFIT OF PEOPLE. IN 1903 PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT ESTABLISHED THE FIRST FEDERAL BIRD RESERVATION ON PELICAN ISLAND, FLORIDA. THIS RESERVATION WAS PLACED UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY (WHICH WAS THEN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE). THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY WAS MOVED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR IN 1939.

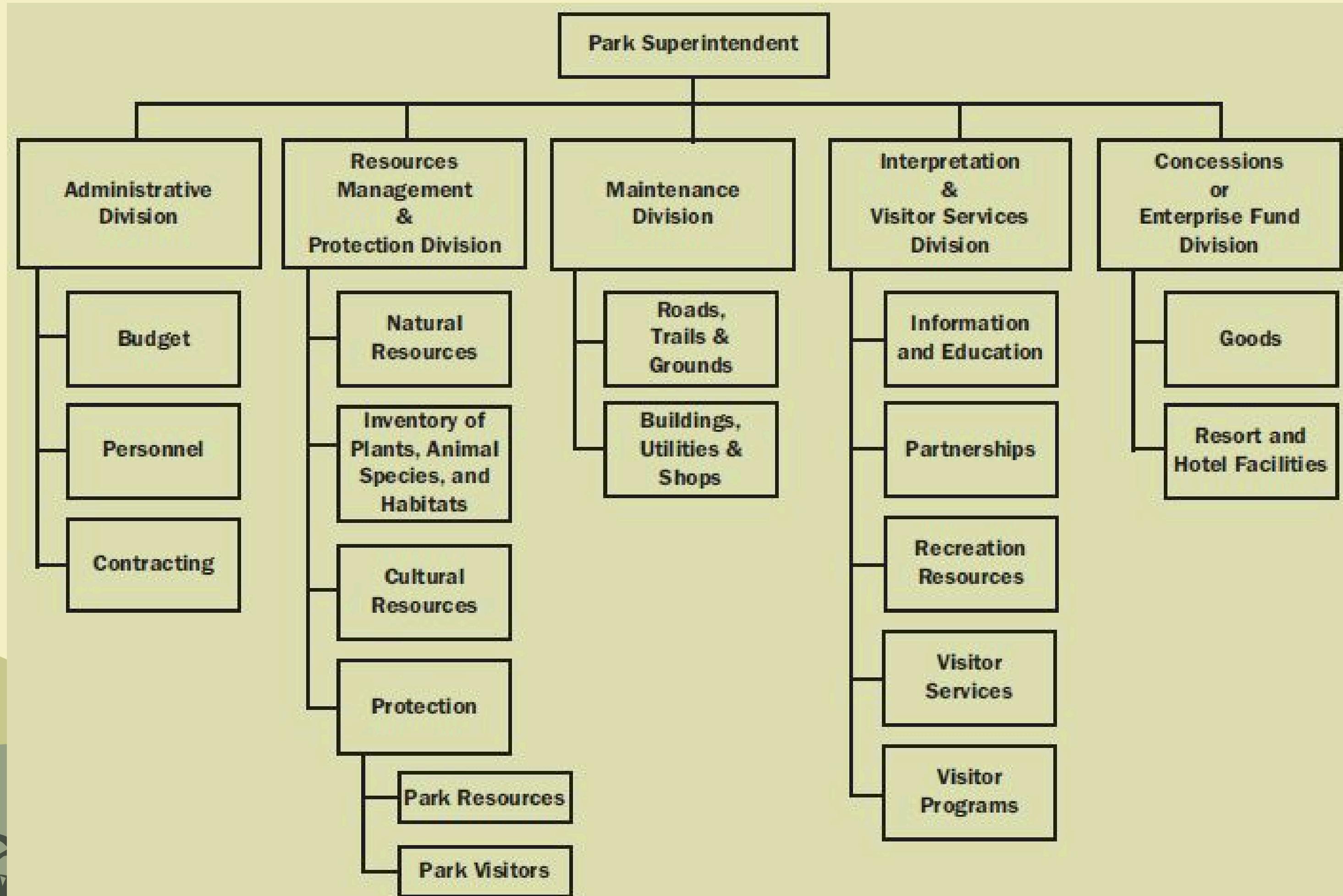
IN 1940 THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY WAS COMBINED WITH THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES TO BECOME THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE. PELICAN ISLAND AND OTHER EARLY FEDERAL WILDLIFE RESERVATIONS WERE REDESIGNATED AS "NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES" IN 1942. IN 1980 THE ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT ADDED NINE NEW REFUGES AND EXPANDED SEVEN EXISTING AREAS, ADDING MORE THAN 53 MILLION ACRES OF LAND.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.

The Bureau of Land Management manages public land for multiple uses

- Recreation
 - Grazing
 - Forestry
 - Mining
 - Wild horse and burro habitat preservation
 - Fish and wildlife habitat preservation
 - Protection of archaeologic, paleontologic, and historical sites
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NATURAL RESOURCES

The park's natural resources are its land, waterways, plants, animals, habitats (including various types of soils), and the other elements that make up its natural environment. Some parks—especially large federal and state natural areas—are managed to perpetuate their natural conditions. The staff of such parks encourage the good health of native plant and animal species either throughout the park or in large areas of the park. In these natural areas, the forces of nature are allowed to predominate.

DATABASE AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

The park's GIS is useful in all of the following aspects of park planning and management of land-based resources.

- Research to learn more about natural resources as they exist today and as they change over time
- Development of programs to protect rare and endangered species
- Monitoring the health and vigor of the park's forests, wildlife, air, and waterways
- Study of known medicinal plants and searching for additional ones
- Study of the sources and effects of pollution
- Removal of non-native species that interfere with the health and vigor of native species
- Re-introduction of now absent native plants and animals
- Reduction of human-wildlife conflicts
- Installation of erosion control measures to protect streams and watersheds

RESOURCE MANAGERS

- Planting of ornamental trees, shrubs, and grass
- Control and removal of undesirable species ("pests") like stinging insects (e.g., yellow jackets and wasps as well as poisonous plants (e.g., poison ivy)
- (During the removal of native species, special care is taken to exert the minimum possible impact on these species.)
- Identification and removal of "hazardous" trees in public use areas
- Planting of trees along roads or streets



CULTURAL RESOURCES

Some of the activities of the cultural resource preservation staff are

- Research into the building techniques used for historical structures
 - Archaeologic excavations to study early human use of parkland
 - Showing present-day park visitors and neighbors how early users of the land (e.g., Native Americans and settlers) cared for the land, conducted ceremonies, and lived
 - Investigation and protection of Native American religious and burial sites
 - Mapping on-the-ground events in Civil War battlefields
 - Restoration of the historical appearance of landscapes and preservation of structural remains from both the original 13 colonies and the western frontier
 - Historical research into the lives of people who lived in what is now parkland
 - Publication of cultural resource reports
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PROTECTION

Park resources. Park rangers perform the following activities to preserve park resources:

- Making arrests, issuing citations, and conducting investigations relating to violations of laws and park regulations
- Conducting patrols of the park to encourage compliance with laws and regulations and provide services to visitors
- Evaluating and eliminating fire hazards and fighting man-made fires as well as naturally occurring wildfires that threaten life and valuable property

Managers of large forested areas such as big parks and state and national forests now know that not all forest fires should be suppressed. Many forest fires occur naturally from lightning strikes. Sometimes fire is necessary to

- Break open seed pods and pine cones, thereby releasing seeds
- Burn up accumulated forest litter—leaves and other organic material—to “bare” the soil so that seeds can put down roots



VISITORS

Park visitors. For the protection of park visitors, park rangers perform the following activities:

- Investigating and making arrests for crimes committed in the park (sometimes this is done by state or local police departments and not park rangers)
 - Conducting searches and rescues of lost persons
 - Investigating accidents
 - Performing safety inspections
 - Inspecting water supplies and food service providers for conformance with public health standards
 - Providing emergency medical service to sick and injured visitors and employees
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