

ATTACHMENT E
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SIGN INVENTORY

1. **Total Number of Signs in the National Park System**

There are 388 units within the National Park System. There is not an inventory of signs for the entire system of parks; in fact, it is difficult to obtain reliable counts for numbers of signs in individual parks. A number of methods were employed to estimate the number of signs in the National Park System. The gross estimates for numbers of signs in the National Park Service range between 100,000 and 800,000 signs.

For the purposes of this Request for Information, there are estimated to be 150,000 signs within the 388 units managed by the National Park Service. For the purposes of this Request for Proposal, it is estimated that approximately 21,200 signs are replaced each year within the National Park System.

Three estimation methods for total number of signs are presented below:

ESTIMATE 1

Fact:

UNICOR (Federal Prison Industries) is a mandatory source for road guide signs in the National Park Service. The UNICOR program manager reported that in 2003, the National Park Service ordered 36,219 signs from UNICOR. He further stated that this was a typical volume of orders for a one-year period.

Information:

In an informal survey of facility managers of a representative sample of parks (small, medium and large), it was determined that 40% of the signs in those parks are obtained through UNICOR.

Assumption:

Average life span of a sign is seven years.

- 36,000 signs from UNICOR in one year × seven years = 252,000 signs from UNICOR in inventory
- 252,000 is 40% of total number of signs
- $$\frac{252,000}{\text{total number of signs}} = \frac{40\% \text{ of signs}}{100\% \text{ of signs}}$$
- Total number of signs = $\frac{25,200,000}{40} = 630,000$ signs in National Park Service

ESTIMATE 2

Facts:

Shenandoah National Park has an accurate inventory of signs in the front-country of the park. (Front-country is a term used to denote developed areas accessible by paved roads.) There are 1,700 signs in the front-country of Shenandoah National Park.

Shenandoah National Park has an annual operating budget of about \$10 million. The average annual park operating budget (as derived from the National Park Service annual budget request – National Park Service Green Book) is \$2.5 million.

Assumption:

The staffing, operations, and facilities within national parks can be estimated by comparing the size of annual operating budgets for parks. Since the Shenandoah National Park budget is 4 times larger than the average park budget, the average park will have $\frac{1}{4}$ the number of signs as Shenandoah National Park.

- $1,700 \div 4 = 425$ signs in average size park
- 425 signs in average park \times 388 parks in National Park Service = $164,900$ signs in National Park Service

ESTIMATE 3

Facts:

Shenandoah National Park has an accurate inventory of signs in the front-country of the park. (Front-country is a term used to denote developed areas accessible by paved roads.) There are 1,700 signs in the front-country of Shenandoah National Park.

The primary artery for vehicular traffic in the front-country of Shenandoah National Park is the 105-mile long Skyline Drive.

There are 8,000 miles of roads in the National Park Service.

Assumption:

The number of signs along Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park is typical of the number of signs per mile along roadways in other parks.

- $1,700$ signs \div 100 miles of roadway = 17 signs per mile of roadway
- 17 signs per mile \times $8,000$ miles of roads in National Park Service = $136,000$ signs in National Park Service

2. **Numbers of Signs by Sign Type**

Under the UniGuide sign system, signs are divided into three general types – 1) Visitor Information System, 2) Motorist Guidance and Traffic Regulatory, and 3) Park and Facility Identification.

Estimates for the numbers of signs by type are as follows:

Park and Facility Identification

These signs comprise approximately 4% of the National Park Service sign inventory.

- $150,000 \times .04 = 6,000$ park/facility identification signs

Motorist Guidance and Traffic Regulatory

These signs comprise approximately 22% of the National Park Service sign inventory.

- $150,000 \times .22 = 33,000$ motorist guidance/traffic regulatory signs

Visitor Information System (VIS)

These signs comprise approximately 74% of the National Park Service sign inventory.

- $150,000 \times .73 = 109,500$ VIS signs

3. **Numbers of Signs to be Fabricated each Year by Sign Type**

Assumptions:

The average life span of a sign is seven years; therefore, $1/7^{\text{th}}$ of the sign inventory will be replaced each year on average. The following totals have been rounded.

Motorist Guidance and Traffic Regulatory

- $33,000 \div 7 \text{ years} = 4,700$ motorist guidance/traffic regulatory signs per year

Park and Facility Identification

- $6,000 \div 7 \text{ years} = 850$ park/facility identification signs per year

Visitor Information System

- $109,500 \text{ signs} \div 7 \text{ years} = 15,600$ VIS signs per year

4. **Current and Pending UniGuide Sign Program Projects**

It is not possible to determine precisely how many signs will be ordered through the Servicewide Sign Management Program once a source for planning, design, and fabrication has been selected. Predictions based on past or current practices are not possible because:

1. Few parks keep accurate inventories of current signs;
2. Parks acquire signs from a variety of sources including multiple local or regional sign vendors, and do not provide purchase reports to a central authority; and
3. The primary single sources for NPS signs (UNICOR) does not keep clear records of past orders.

Future sign needs are also not possible to determine because the principal budgeting system (PMIS) does not require a sufficient level of detail to make the necessary projections. PMIS data does include reference to signage, but it is often concealed within a much larger project like visitor center or road construction. Future planning is also complicated by the annual budget cycle of the federal agencies including the NPS.

Perhaps the best indicator of future sign planning and fabrication requirements are the requests for assistance that the Office of NPS Identity has -- and continues weekly -- to receive. Although far from being a perfect indicator, these requests do provide some evidence of the type and -- to some degree-- the volume of work that lies ahead.

Below are a list of sign projects that have been completed during the last several years, that are currently underway, or that await attention. Some of the projects include only a few signs. Others (as noted by *) represent projects that involve large areas within a park or an entire park. In some cases, planning and fabrication has already been accomplished; in others, planning (or planning and design) has been accomplished and fabrication is holding pending the establishment of a fabrication contract and/or the identification on funding.

Again, these projects are a good indication of the *variety of projects* that the Servicewide Sign Management Program will address. The projects listed here are a less reliable indicator of the *number of projects* that the program will include. Readers must keep in mind that because the Servicewide Sign Management Program has yet to be officially launched, parks are not submitting requests for assistance at nearly the rate that is eventually expected.

PARK	STATUS
*Yosemite National Park	Planning completed for much of Yosemite Valley
*Grand Canyon National Park	Planning completed for much of South Rim
*Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park	Planning completed for eastern end of Canal
*Mount Rushmore National Monument	Parkwide signs planned, designed, and installed
*Fire Island National Seashore	Planning completed for much of park
*Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area	Variety of signs installed
Adams National Historical Park	Variety of signs installed
Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site	Entrance signs installed
George Washington Birthplace National Monument	Entrance and highway guide signs installed
Niobrara National Scenic Riverway	Planning for much of park completed
*Jewel Cave National Monument	Variety of entrance and other signs installed
Shiloh National Military Park	Planning and design of a variety of signs is completed
Fort Stanwix National Monument	Planning and design of a variety of signs is completed
Chickasaw National Recreation Area	Expression of Interest
*Craters of the Moon National Monument	Planning of a variety of signs is completed
*Grand Canyon Parashant	Planning of a variety of signs is completed
Voyageurs National Park	Road guide signs planned
Lake Clark National Park	Planning and design of a variety of signs is completed
Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site	Entrance sign installed
Albright Training Center	ID signs planned and designed
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area	Planning and design of a variety of signs is completed
*Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area	Parkwide sign planning assistance requested
Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial	Entrance and Park ID signs installed
Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site	Planning and design of a variety of entrance and ID signs is completed

PARK	STATUS
Death Valley National Park	Planning and design of a major campground is completed
Valley Forge National Historical Park	Planning and design of seven entrance signs is completed
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park	Expression of Interest
New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park	Expression of Interest
Weir Farm National Historic Site	Expression of Interest
Gateway National Recreation Area	Expression of Interest
Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve	Expression of Interest
Rocky Mountain National Park	Expression of Interest
Cuyahoga Valley National Park	Expression of Interest
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park	Expression of Interest
Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site	Expression of Interest
San Juan Island National Historical Park	Parkwide sign planning assistance requested
Morristown National Historical Park	Road guide signs planned
Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts	Three entrance signs installed