

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Ozark National Scenic Riverways

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: OZAR

Year: 2007

### Vision Statement

The Centennial Vision (CV) for OZAR is multi-faceted and focuses on resources, visitors, partners, communities and current/future employees. The park's creation in 1964 initiated a movement to protect river systems. The park is fulfilling its basic mandate, but is still grappling with issues that require resolution. The future protection and enjoyment of the park depend upon a sound planning effort as we complete our General Management Plan. Our CV makes a concerted effort to re-engage the American public and our own employees with the protection of this Nation's treasured assets. The cornerstone of our efforts will reinvigorate programs and projects along with new ideas to put the park back into the lives of our youth.

The CV is an opportunity to invest in our employees and create a working environment that excites staff when they come to work and instills pride in their accomplishments. Involvement in planning, training, career development, details to other parks, goal accomplishment incentives, and challenging work assignments will be available to inspire our staff as a team of national stewards that is the NPS. Recruitment efforts to bring and retain the best and brightest will be emphasized.

Park resources will receive an unprecedented level of protection. Through a systematic review of current conditions and an analysis of desired future conditions, the park will establish a prioritized list of resource management projects and facility assets that focus on the park purpose. Through the CV and beyond, the park will engage youth in experiencing and learning about the park, protect threatened or endangered species and habitat, restore open fields, preserve springs and caves, protect free-flowing rivers and exhibit greater understanding of archeological and other cultural resources.

Using multiple venues, resources will be interpreted to the public both physically in the park or virtually. Programs, publications, and websites will be improved or created to serve as an inspiration for all populations and develop renewed respect and pride in not only OZAR, but all areas/programs that comprise the National Park System.

Knowing that we cannot accomplish this work alone, the park will seek partners to assist with our endeavors. Identifying individuals and organizations willing to support the ideals of the NPS and building upon those relationships will add to the success of the CV and establish a solid foundation to build beyond 2016.

### Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Noel R. Poe, Park Superintendent -- July 30, 2007



Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Centennial funding would provide seasonal law enforcement rangers and interpreters to curb unacceptable behavior and restore the park as a place to recreate on pristine rivers safely and without disturbance. The park has implemented focused education and enforcement programs that educate persons as to the acceptable behaviors and respect necessary for proper stewardship. These contacts by a uniformed staff have significantly decreased violations and have been met with accolades from the visiting public. Because of this, more family and organized groups are returning to spend time in the park. The park will develop new and strengthen existing agreements with commercial operations to insure protection of resources and the enjoyment of park visitors. Protecting resources with horse riding, watercraft rental and other appropriate commercial operations will be the focus of the new Horse Use Management, the revised River Use Management, and the Commercial Services Plans.

Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

- Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

- The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

The restoration of the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) museum building and the old shower house at Big Spring will be completed and interpretive exhibits will be added. The story of the CCC and the important role it played in local and national areas will be told in these buildings. The newly discovered powder magazine used for the quarry from which the stone came to construct these buildings and many others will be stabilized.

Historic barns throughout the park will be stabilized and protected from vandalism. Interpretive displays will be added where appropriate to assist with telling the story of human occupation along the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers.

The Ozark Heritage Apprentice Institute would provide young students working alongside older craftsmen and women to learn the traditional craft skills associated with living in the Ozark Hills in the 19th Century. Through such a program, younger crafts people could be developed to provide a trained workforce that would preserve the historic buildings and Ozark lifestyle skills.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

Working with other parks in Missouri and Arkansas, the park would establish an Exotic Plant Management Team. A joint Buffalo National River and Ozark National Scenic River Natural Resource Learning Center would provide successful techniques on treating exotic species on a landscape basis. Exotic plant species populations will be mapped and prioritized for eradication. Learning from successes of other teams, cooperation from State and Federal agencies would be sought in the effort. A detailed plan of action would be developed and a systematic approach to managing exotic species and restoring habitats would begin.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**STEWARDSHIP**

**Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

**Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.**

The park would renovate and manage public campgrounds to meet current trends and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements. Updated facilities would be added as needed including comfort stations, larger parking pads, trails, electrical and water hookups. The park has developed the priority asset listing by Asset Priority Index (API) value and would continue toward improving assets to a good or excellent condition. The focus would be on such projects as the Alley Spring Pedestrian Walkway, various water and wastewater systems, updating of other 40 year old utility systems, and renovating or replacing the necessary park buildings. Pending the construction of a formal visitor center, improve the existing ranger contact stations to provide suitable facilities with educational exhibits that stress the individual's role in stewardship.

The additional maintenance seasonals funded by the Centennial Challenge would allow more work to be performed on the high priority structures within the park including maintaining trails and roads.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

**Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.**

The park will work diligently with the Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources to improve water quality in the Jacks Fork River by targeting areas impacted by bacteria contamination. Lessons learned and the protocol developed for vital signs will be utilized early in planning processes to insure the same contamination does not occur in other park areas. Caves and cave-related resources will be protected and habitats restored as needed. An intense education campaign would be instituted to inform the public about the sensitively of Karst systems. Some caves will require gates for protection and all will require monitoring. Open agricultural field permits and use will be evaluated to best meet the historical value, as well as managing cultural landscapes. A joint Ozark NSR and Wilson Creek NB ecosystem vegetation strategy would lead to a subsequent Open Fields Management Plan that would restore open fields with appropriate native species. Successful development of the Buffalo - Ozark Resource Learning Center and the Heartland Inventory & Monitoring will encourage researchers to learn more about vital signs, develop baseline data and provide an avenue to educate the public.

Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Emphasis will be placed on pedestrian surveys to locate and record previously unknown prehistoric and historic archeological sites. These surveys will be coordinated with The NPS Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) in Lincoln, Nebraska. MWAC will continue to conduct site condition assessments within the park and also conduct field reconnaissance for locating unrecorded sites. This research endeavor will focus on side tributaries of the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers which have for the most part not been subjected to cultural resources inventories since the inception of the park. Emphasis will also be placed on identifying and recruiting traditional Ozark craftspeople for the purpose of establishing a formal Ozark Crafts Institute in which skilled artisans will be matched with young apprentices for the purpose of teaching them traditional skills such as basket making, boat building, chair making, and other traditional crafts that will be identified and captured through story telling sessions with "old-timers."

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Close communication and consultation with Native American Affiliated Tribes will be exercised to ensure that their cultural heritage in the southeastern Ozarks is presented to the public. A desired future condition is to recruit Native Americans to participate in major heritage festivals at Big Spring and Alley Mill so that their messages concerning their traditional uses of the land that is now part of Ozark National Scenic Riverways will be communicated to the public. It is anticipated that opportunities will be provided to Native Americans to teach and demonstrate traditional skills such river cane flute making, hide tanning, bow making, and other crafts.

Recommend to Congress the authorization of a Big Spring Wilderness Area that would provide a place within the park to display and teach the stewardship necessary to provide for formal wilderness experiences without nearby motorized vehicles.

Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

STEWARDSHIP

Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park would continue to maintain the Powder Mill Research Facility to accommodate visiting researchers and park volunteers. Working with Buffalo NR and the Heartland I&M Network the park will initiate the Natural Resource Learning Center concept and will hire an Environmental Education Specialist to serve as the liaison between researchers and the visiting public.

The park would work toward expanding the staff of the Resource Management Division and working closely with the CESUs to develop an internship program for resource management trainees. An Environmental Management Specialist will be hired to assist management with NEPA planning to make prudent decisions that have a positive benefit on the environment.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**STEWARDSHIP**

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

In the next three years, the park with its partner, The Green Center, based in St. Louis, MO, will open an environmental education center at the Welch Lodge, known as Camp Current River. The primary purpose of this center will be a summer camp for students who would not normally have the opportunity to learn about the environment in a remote natural setting. The educational curriculum would teach late middle school children the importance of environmental stewardship and build the next generation of conservationists. The values these students would learn after camp will lay the foundation for their lives and teach how each has a responsibility for protection of natural and cultural resources. The Green Center and park will work closely to provide for future summer experiences for the students that "successfully graduate" from the initial camp. These latter opportunities would expand their exposure to resource stewardship.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**ENVIRONMENT**

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

The park will reduce the number of weapons firing ranges from three to one. Only green ammunition would be used and impacts to the environment from the other ranges will be mitigated. Stockpiles of nonessential materials in "bone yards" will be eliminated and recycled to the extent possible. Other non-historic dumps will be cleaned. Use of four stroke engines for park-owned boats will be the standard. Older engines will be phased out of use. By re-organizing staff and establishing an Environmental Management Specialist reporting to the Deputy Superintendent, this person will have the time to stay up-to-date on ideas and to assess park operations to ensure that the park is as climate-friendly as possible.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**ENVIRONMENT**

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

One of the park's proposed centennial projects is to construct the first visitor center for the National Riverways. During the planning of this visitor center every effort will be made to incorporate energy efficiency and develop interpretive displays that speak to the effectiveness of the green technology. As a demonstration project the use of the latest environmental practices in construction will showcase the opportunity to a region that is not known for energy conservation and climate-friendly practices.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

At least one alternative fuel vehicle or piece of equipment will be purchased by the park each year.

When planning construction or reconstruction of facilities in the park, green technologies meeting the LEEDS standards will be utilized to help reduce utility cost and serve as demonstration projects for local communities. Camp Current River will maximize the use of alternative systems such as solar energy, in-stream electric turbines, and passive solar lighting.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

When planning construction or reconstruction of facilities in the park, green technologies meeting the LEEDS standards will be utilized to help reduce utility cost and serve as demonstration projects for local communities.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**ENVIRONMENT**

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park is the focal point and the economic base for much of the rural area surrounding the park. Most every decision made for the park impacts the partners and communities in some way. The park enlists comments and inclusion of partners so that a unified effort to protect public resources is put forth. Park partners are in agreement that the health of public resources is very important to the area's economic health and that all share a role in the protection of our resources.

The park will participate in Take Pride in America events to recruit volunteers, work with local Stream Teams to keep the rivers clean, and interact with organizations such as the Backcountry Horseman Association promoting responsible horse use.

As the General Management Plan process continues, the park will be fully engaged with partners, communities and visitors to develop planning alternatives and the desired future conditions that are designed to protect park resources

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**RECREATION**

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

The park will cooperate with the U.S. Forest Service and Ozark Trail Council (OTC) to reestablish the connecting trail between Big Spring and the Ozark Trail. The park will continue the partnership between L-A-D, OTC, and the Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources for the establishment of a designated trail in the Round Spring area that provides the first unique float-hike experience along the rivers. The park will properly plan for and develop a horse trail in the Upper Current District. Development of a Horse Use Management Plan would define the areas appropriate for horse use and provide for that opportunity of responsible use.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

RECREATION

Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Establish a "Friends of the Ozark Riverways" that will build an advocacy for the park that could extend to incorporate a volunteer pool that assists staff in accomplishing the park's mission. This effort would recruit an even larger community of volunteers and maintain them by providing a sense of "family" through the use of e-mail, newsletters, individual/group recognition and special events. The Friends group and park staff will expand cooperation with non-profit organizations such as the Cave Research Foundation, Backcountry Horsemen Association, Streamteams and extend to other groups that support the park's purpose and significance.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

The park will continue renovation of amphitheaters providing a variety of multi media visitor experiences. These updated facilities will serve as attractive and comfortable venues for visitors to enjoy ranger-facilitated programs. Selected trails, including water routes, will be designed and developed for use as self-guided or ranger-guided activities.

The park will increase promotional efforts of special events through increased use of the park website, through e-mail group listings, and make available a greater number of events stressing local community involvement.

Expand topics covered in interpretive programs addressing a variety of park resources and the public interests in the traditional Ozark crafts. All programs will follow appropriate curriculum guidelines.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**EDUCATION**

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Multiple programs will pass on craft traditions in the Missouri Ozarks to ensure their practice in future generations. An apprentice program in which traditional arts and crafts would provide a venue where elders with culturally significant manual skills can pass on their knowledge to ensure that these crafts are not irretrievably lost. The envisioned craft institute will involve partners such as The Missouri Arts Council that has already funded three apprenticeships in the park on skills such as turkey calls and johnboat building. It is desired that young women be recruited into the apprenticeship program to learn quilting, spinning, soap making, etc. Workshops are also planned for the instruction of several adults in the skills of traditional crafts such as hickory chair making and blacksmithing. "OutsideU" will draw students into field-based mentoring programs. Offering both the intellectual and economic capital of parks to students, youths can better compete with sound resume experience. Efforts will be made to involve youths from diverse ethnic groups to join this internship focused on natural and cultural resource career opportunities.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

EDUCATION

- Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.
- Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

The park will establish an electronic Junior Ranger Program for our website, paralleling the NPS JR website. The park's website will also include a detailed, printable map of the rivers with specific information that enhances their visit. This map would provide information on resources, cultural history, local traditions and instill an appreciation of the park. The park will create a digital media library to provide for long distance visitation via the Internet to include archeology programs, interpretive programs, photographs, and live web cameras.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

- Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will utilize new technology at contact stations and amphitheaters including electronic interactive programs.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

EDUCATION

- Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.
- Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

The park will join the Servicewide electronic version of the Junior Ranger (JR) Program. Children participating in the program will be able to communicate directly with a Park Ranger via e-mail when questions arise. Certificates and badges will be provided upon completion. The park's Junior Ranger Program will be updated and materials suitable for different age groups will be available. The electronic JR Program would be enhanced by providing advanced study materials and activities for those that come to the park after "graduating" from the electronic JR Program

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**EDUCATION**

**Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.**

**Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.**

Ozark National Scenic Riverways does not have a Visitor Center. Relying instead upon small contact stations, the opportunity to serve visitors is greatly diminished. The park will begin the process of identifying the best possible avenue of securing funding for the planning, construction, furnishing, and staffing of a state-of-the-art Visitor Center that provides the venue to accomplish interpretive goals identified throughout all park planning documents. Since the park is the first federally protected river system, this center needs to address the river experience.

ONSR will institute a volunteer program that mimics the Missouri Department of Transportation program of adopting sections of highway for litter cleanup. The park's program will partner with volunteer groups or individuals to adopt sections of Jacks Fork and Current Rivers for litter patrol. A similar program would be developed for the park trails that also include light maintenance in addition to litter patrol. Recognition for these services will include plaques for homes or businesses and a citation in the park's volunteer newsletter.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Engage the public in park planning projects. The enlightened interest generated through these efforts will guarantee plans that are useful, can be implemented and assist with the protection and enjoyment of the park for future generations.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

**Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.**

**Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.**

Working with the Midwest Regional Office the park will utilize recruitment techniques that attract and retain the best and brightest people representing the entire country. The "OutsideU" signature project will provide interns from a diverse university pool for the Service's resource management program. "Researchers of color" participating in the Resource Learning Center would provide mentorship for the younger intern RM students. The Camp Current River educational center will also bring diverse students into the park to experience resources and provide an avenue for successive intern, seasonal and permanent employment.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

**Attain the highest employee satisfaction rate of all federal agencies, as measured by Office of Personnel Management surveys.**

The Centennial Initiative is an opportunity to invest in our present and future employees. The park will strive to create a working environment that our people are excited to be part of when they come to work and are proud of their accomplishments when they go home to be with their families. Every employee will have a realistic career development plan in place that will assist them with accomplishing their career goals. Training opportunities will be focused on skill sets that allow employees to perform their jobs more effectively. Detail assignments to other parks will afford opportunities to experience other resources and expand experiences so employees can better compete for their next position. Parkwide goal accomplishment incentives will encourage employees to complete assignments accurately and on time while serving as a support network for peers. Challenging work assignments will be made available to inspire our staff to be part of the team of national treasure stewards that is the National Park Service.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

The "NPS GoodIdeas" Signature Project will provide an electronic suggestion award system for the entire Service that encourages and recognizes employees that develop good ideas that save money, better protect resources, are more climate friendly, provide an avenue for better public or visitor education or encourage visitor and employee safety.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

By using the "NPS GoodIdeas" Signature Project (electronic suggestion award program) NPS management would encourage employees to excell in their positions and develop good ideas that save money, provide for visitor and employee safety, share ideas on being more climate friendly and allow an avenue for better public or visitor education. This program would be similar to the successful U.S. Postal Service's e-Ideas and the National Weather Service's S\*M\*A\*R\*T\*.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

The park will maximize the use of its Safety Committee to identify hazards that may result in employee or visitor injury. Steps to minimize the hazards will be taken. When developed by the Service the "NPS GoodIdeas" will provide an avenue for NPS employees to exchange safety tips and strategies.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Centennial funding over the next few years will provide professional educators and seasonal law enforcement rangers on the river to curb unacceptable behavior and restore the park as a place to recreate on pristine rivers safely and without disturbance. The park has implemented and increased educational and enforcement programs at the point of launching or at the beginning of their park visit to educate persons floating the park as to what are acceptable behaviors and how to respect the park's resources. These live contacts with a uniformed ranger have significantly decreased violations and have been met with accolades from the visiting public. Because of this, more families and organized groups are returning to spend time in the park.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: OZAR

**PROFESSIONALISM**

- Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.**
- Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.**

Many people who enjoy the park's rich natural and cultural resources want to help maintain and enhance the park but do not know how they can help. Over the next few years, the park will provide information and opportunity to those who want to give to the park by addressing the public through community and business meetings, and through the park website. Those who cherish the natural and cultural treasures our park and the National Park Service have to offer will be more widely reached through these efforts.

The park establishes a friends group to serve as an advocate for park resources and programs. The park works in partnership with the National Park Foundation to raise awareness of the opportunities for endowments and bequests by developing a pamphlet for donor opportunities to provide for an endowment.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS